



Education Improvement – Equality and Diversity Team



Advice for Parents of EAL pupils



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Parental involvement is greatly welcomed and valued by teachers working with your child in school. Teachers need to have as much background information about your child as possible in order to meet her/his needs.

If your child can read and write in your first language then dual language dictionaries are a great help in supporting your child's learning in class. Teachers will be able to highlight key vocabulary in English. Using the dictionary, your child can find the meaning of these words.

It will be helpful to set up a two-way diary between home and school. This way the teacher can inform you about what is going on in school and ask for your help with school work. You can also use this home-school links book to ask questions or send notes to the teacher.



Continue to use and develop the home language

Your child will grow up to be bilingual and this has many advantages.



Learning more than one language is good for the brain. Bilingual children develop better thinking skills and get higher marks in intelligence tests.

If their first language is strong, they will find it much easier to learn English and cope with their schoolwork.

Your children will continue to learn more about and appreciate their culture through their language. They will be able to converse with grandparents and other people from their linguistic background.

Learning a new language can be tiring and stressful. Your child needs to come home, relax and enjoy the security and comfort of being able to converse in the home language.

Encourage your child to take books in the home language to school. These books can be read during 'quiet reading' time.

How to help your child learn English



This is usually best done by playing games or reading books.

Join the public library and take out interesting books for reading. Use the library regularly in the holidays. Children can use the internet and also borrow story CDs with books to listen to.

Read books with your child by talking about them in your home language and, if possible, English too. It is helpful to read to your child in both languages.

Select good television programmes for your child to watch. Ask your child's teacher to suggest suitable programmes.

When watching television, use sub-titles in English. This will help your child's listening and reading.

Teachers will sometimes send home information about subject/topic areas that are going to be taught in the classroom the following day/week.

You could prepare your child by discussing this work in advance and this will improve your child's understanding when the work is completed in the classroom and also help the learning of English.

If possible invite English children home. Your child's friends in school will play an important role in developing English social language skills.

Your child's teacher will give homework which is suitable to meet his/her needs. It is important that s/he tries to do the homework set. Your help will be needed. If your child finds that the homework is too difficult, please let the teacher know.



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