

ETHNIC MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT TEAM (EMAT)



**HINTS AND TIPS FOR SUPPORTING NEWLY
ARRIVED EAL PUPILS**

PRIMARY PHASE

This booklet has been produced by Middlesbrough Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT)

Contact Details:

Tel: (01642) 728472 / 201881

Email: georgina_chinaka@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Introduction

For the bilingual child newly arrived in this country and for his or her family, school often becomes the focal point of their lives. Their initial school experience will never be forgotten. A good, positive experience at this stage can set the child on the right course and provide a strong basis from which they can achieve their full academic potential.

Approximately one in seven pupils in English primary schools are learning English as an additional language (EAL). Some of these pupils join schools and classes with limited or very little knowledge of English. These pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. They may be the children of families fleeing persecution in other countries. They may be the children of visiting health and education professionals employed to work in our schools, hospitals or universities. They may be the children of EU citizens who have chosen to settle in the UK. Whatever their diverse backgrounds, they share a common and distinctive task which is to 'catch up' with a moving target by learning an additional language whilst simultaneously learning National Curriculum content, skills and concepts.

Teaching EAL pupils is very rewarding as they usually learn very quickly and have great motivation to do well.

This booklet is designed to support teachers and support staff working with pupils at early stages of learning EAL. It provides a mix of information and practical advice.

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Team can provide support in school, staff training, interpreting services and general advice. If you want to know more or have a question or query, Please call us on 01642 201881 or email us at georgina_chinaka@middlesbrough.gov.uk.



Breaking down the Barriers: how a child might be feeling

I'm shy

I don't want to say "Yes Mrs Davis" in front of everyone.

They might laugh at me.



I'm tired

All this new language around me. I can't follow all.

I've never been to school before.



I'm worried

Everyone else can do the work, knows where to go and what to do next.

I'm confused

Am I allowed to play all the time?

Can I eat this?

Will I like it?

My clothes are different to theirs.

Why do we keep moving around?



I'm lonely

I can't join in with the others so I have no friends. Everyone ignores me or treats me like I'm stupid.

I'm frustrated

At my other school I had much more stimulating work to do.

All I do here is colouring.

School was very different back home....

I don't know how to use a computer.

We have to go out at playtime.



I'm unhappy.....

I don't want to sit with boys / girls.

That boy pushed me!

I want to go home!

Breaking down the Barriers: how you can help?

- Make sure that you know the correct spelling and pronunciation of the child's name.
- Try to learn a greeting in the child's home language
- If possible pair her/him up with a child who will act as a good role model as well as a friend.
- Seat her/him with a group and not alone.
- Place her/him in a group where purposeful language takes place.
- Have someone show her/him around the school.
- Allocate jobs that are non-verbal with a partner e.g. Giving out pencils, mixing paints etc.
- Provide labels for everyday objects.
- Equip the child with a picture dictionary.
- Spend some time with the child as an individual.
- Place the child with able children who can act as a good role model for language
- Provide picture prompts for basic requests e.g. toilet, drink, sit down, line up



Learning the Language: things to remember

There is a considerable evidence that bilingualism can benefit overall intellectual progress where both languages continue to develop and children feel they are adding English to their language repertoire. The first language has an important role in a child's sense of personal identity.

- Let the child be silent if s/he wishes, this is an important learning stage.
- The child knows how to talk, but in another language.
- Language development in the second language parallels that of the first.
- The child will understand more than s/he can say.



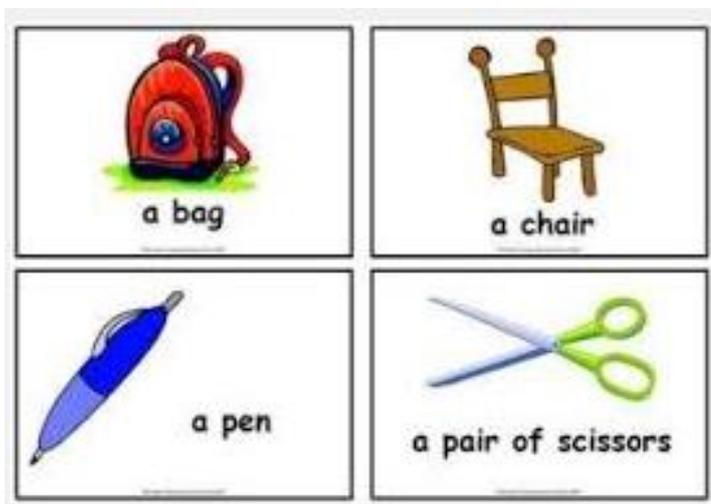
- The child will only acquire language if it is spoken and heard and if s/he uses it.
- You and the other English speakers in the class may be the child's only English language models.
- Language is best taught in context.
- The teacher must create a need to communicate.
- A silent classroom is not conducive to language development.
- First language should be valued, allow the child to write in their first language when they are learning. Allow the children to speak in their first language, particularly at social times. It is very tiring to have to speak a new language all of the time!

Start at the beginning

It should be emphasised that all written work should only be set after a long period of access to spoken language, and understanding should be developed and demonstrated orally before writing tasks are presented and viewed as evidence of understanding.

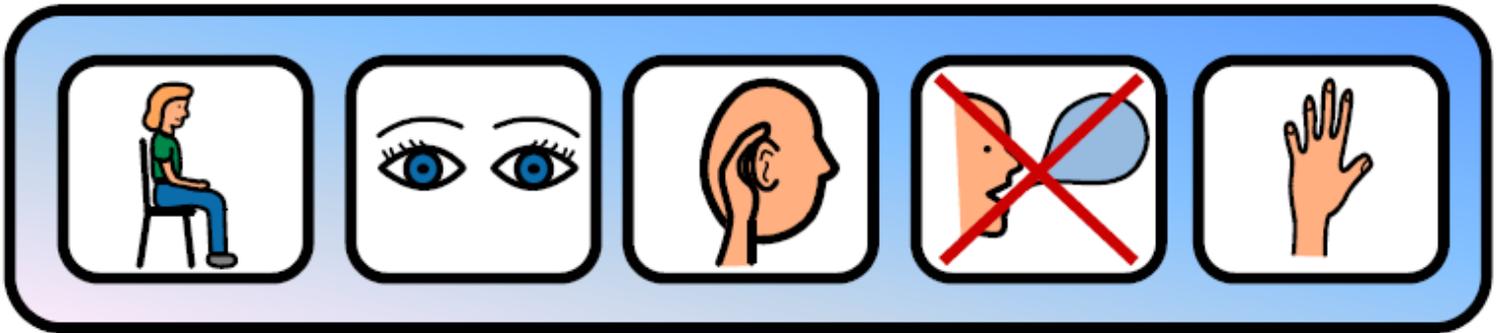
Basic language includes:

- Survival language – please, thank you, yes, no, hello, can I go to the toilet?
- Myself – personal details, home, family, clothes, food, parts of the body.
- School – classroom language.
- Maths – ordinal/cardinal number, shapes, size, days, months, seasons, time.
- Spoken language structures – possessives, prepositions, questions, instructions.
- Writing – alphabet, letter formation, upper/lower case letters, cursive script.
- Other topics – animals, transport, occupations.



Simple Strategies

Remember to use lots of visuals, actions and gesture, and don't forget that what is good practice for all pupils is also good for the pupil learning EAL. The latter just requires a little more time to listen and absorb what is going on around him/her, and help with key vocabulary and language structures to understand and demonstrate understanding.



- Focus on a particular area and provide opportunities to practise this (topic work, a story, etc).
- Focus on the language needed in the classroom and always build on previous learning.
- 2/3 new sentence structures per week plus 6/10 words per day is a good aim at first.
- Reinforce new language through the related skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing – in that order.
- Give as much visual help as possible.
- Avoid open ended questions and abstract language at first.
- Be aware of the language that you use: Keep it simple and repeat key phrases.
- Practical activities such as science, art, etc., lend themselves more to language teaching than the “language” lesson.

Some ideas for the early stages in class

As with all pupils, it is the teacher's role to provide diversified resources and to ensure their efficient use by planning a variety of learning activities for the class including plenty of opportunity to develop spoken language through pair and small group work, use of Teaching Assistant support as well as whole class work.

- A “myself” topic book.
- A picture vocabulary book.
- Writing/labelling in first language
- Dual language books and CDs/Story book Apps.
- Sequencing activities.
- Games – matching games, picture dominoes, snap, pelmanism, board games.
- Computer programs.
- Wordless picture books.
- Puzzles.

