

EAL: Advice for Parents



Supporting your child in their home language

Supporting your child's home language supports the development of English:

Talk to your child in your strongest language. If your child learns one language well from you, it will be easier for them to learn English or another language. Use your home language when out and about with your child. Encourage your child to feel proud of their home language and of knowing more than one language.

Being bilingual is an advantage and is NOT the cause of a language delay.

Children who grow up being bilingual can have wider access to jobs, friendships, travel and culture. Bilingualism does *not* cause communication disorders.

When a new language is introduced, for example when starting nursery, some children may not talk as much for a little while. This is normal and will pass with time.

This is sometimes called 'the silent period' and is often seen by practitioners at the child's setting. This is fine - your child will still be listening and learning. Your child's setting can monitor this and will continue to support them.



How you can help:



Talk with your child at home in your first language.

This will influence how well and quickly they are able to learn English. It helps if they hear you speak confidently and naturally in a language you're comfortable with. If they use English words in response, then that is fine! Just repeat what they said using your language but do not correct them or try to make them use your language.

Share books with your child at home in your first language.

Sharing books with your child will help them to learn new words. It's good for them to hear stories in your home language.

Sing nursery rhymes with your child at home in your first language.

Singing songs and rhymes in your home language will help to support your child's language development. It's also lots of fun!



Remember!



Talking to your child in their home language is a great way to give them the skills to learn other languages.