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Adapted from original Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School published by Integrate Ireland and the Southern Education and Library Board in 2007.
In both parts of Ireland primary education faces the challenge and opportunity of integrating increasing numbers of pupils whose mother tongue is neither English nor Irish. The whole island faces the challenge of creating an inclusive primary school culture: one that not only welcomes children from culturally and linguistically diverse families, but turns linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity to the educational advantage of all.

This toolkit is the second edition of the Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School which was a collaborative project between Integrate Ireland Language and Training and the Southern Education and Library Board. The project was a recognition of the need to provide support for teachers who were working with Newcomer pupils in primary schools and for the development of an inclusive ethos across the curriculum. The toolkit was the outcome of that project. This revised edition has been produced by the Inclusion and Diversity Service in Northern Ireland.

The toolkit has five sections. The first, Planning for Inclusion and Diversity, provides ideas and templates to help schools to examine current practice and plan for the development of inclusive practices across all areas of provision. The second, Getting Ready, addresses the preliminary issues that any school must deal with if it is to be genuinely welcoming and inclusive. The third, Early Days, is concerned with the first steps towards the integration of pupils from other countries, cultures and ethnicities. The fourth, Moving On, looks at how to develop the language skills of pupils from other countries, cultures and ethnicities so that they can fully access the curriculum. It also looks at assessment and planning. The last, Intercultural Awareness, considers the development of intercultural skills with a view to creating a more inclusive ethos across the school.

Throughout its development, this toolkit has been informed by regular consultation with primary principals, teachers and other professional in education, North and South. In addition, the practical activities it contains have been piloted in a large number of primary classrooms North and South, urban and rural. The book draws together a body of experience accumulated throughout Ireland over a number of years. It is also informed by up-to-date research and reflects what has come to be recognised as best international practice. Perhaps the most important thing to emphasise in this regard is that the activities in the book will benefit all pupils equally, whatever their origin.

Together Towards Inclusion was the first book to be written for primary schools on both sides of the border and jointly distributed by the Department of Education and Science (Dublin) and the Department of Education Northern Ireland. With this second edition, our immediate hope is that the book will further help principals and teachers to respond positively to one of the largest challenges ever to confront primary education in Ireland.

Mary Yarr - Regional Adviser, Inclusion and Diversity Service
Barbara Lazenby Simpson - Deputy Director, Integrate Ireland Language and Training
David Little - Director, Integrate Ireland Language and Training
For the first edition of the toolkit, we are grateful to the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) for the two grants that facilitated collaboration between Integrate Ireland Language and Training and the Southern Education and Library Board, Armagh. We are also grateful to the Department of Education and Science (Dublin) and the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) for funding the design, printing and distribution of the toolkit.

On both sides of the border we are indebted to the many primary principals and teachers who piloted parts of the toolkit while it was in development and gave us invaluable and always constructive feedback.

This second edition has been adapted and updated by the Inclusion and Diversity Service.

Thanks are due to Noel Comac who designed the revised Toolkit.
Beacons at Bealtaine

Phoenix Park, May Day 2004

Uisce: water. And fionn: the water’s clear.
But dip and find this Gaelic water Greek:
A phoenix flames upon fionn uisce here.

Strangers were barbaroi to the Greek ear.
Now let the heirs of all who could not speak
The language, whose ba-babbling was unclear,

Come with their gift of tongues past each frontier
And find the answering voices that they seek
As fionn and uisce answer phoenix here.

The May Day hills were burning, far and near,
When our land’s first footers beached boats in the creek
In uisce, fionn, strange words that soon grew clear;

So on a day when newcomers appear
Let it be a homecoming and let us speak
The unstrange word, as it behoves us here,

Move lips, move minds and make new meanings flare
Like ancient beacons signalling, peak to peak,
From middle sea to north sea, shining clear
As phoenix flame upon fionn uisce here.

In the Celtic calendar that once regulated the seasons in many parts of Europe, May Day, known in Irish as Bealtaine, was the feast of bright fire, the first of summer, one of the four great quarter days of the year. The early Irish Leabhar Gabhála (The Book of Invasions), tells us that the first magical inhabitants of the country, the Tuatha Dé Danaan, arrived on the feast of Bealtaine, and a ninth-century text indicates that on the same day the druids drove flocks out to pasture between two bonfires. So there is something auspicious about the fact that a new flocking together of the old European nations happens on this day of mythic arrival in Ireland; and it is even more auspicious that we celebrate it in a park named after the mythic bird that represents the possibility of ongoing renewal. But there are those who say that the name Phoenix Park is derived from the Irish words, fionn uisce, meaning ‘clear water’, and that coincidence of language gave me the idea for this poem. It’s what the poet Horace might have called a carmen saeculare, a poem to salute and celebrate a historic turn in the saeculum, the age.

Seamus Heaney, 1 May 2004

The publishers wish to thank Seamus Heaney for his permission to reproduce this poem and commentary.
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How to use this toolkit

**Organisation**

The toolkit is organised chronologically from Planning for Inclusion and Diversity through Getting Ready, Early Days, Moving On and ending with Intercultural Awareness. It is recommended, however, that teachers familiarise themselves with the entire toolkit as many activities are revisited and developed at different stages.

Each section is colour coded.

**Terminology used**

**Home language** is used throughout to refer to the mother tongue or first language of the pupil. It is the case that many pupils will already know more than one language.

**Newcomer** is used to refer to those parents and children whose mother tongue is not English. It is acknowledged that, increasingly, non-English speaking children entering primary school may have been born in Ireland. Nonetheless, the term Newcomer reflects the challenge facing parents and children from different language and cultural backgrounds in accessing and entering formal education in a new country.

**Interpreter** refers to the use of a third party to provide oral interpretation in an interview or meeting.

**Translator** refers to the use of a native speaker or person who is fluent in the language in question to translate written documents, letters, notices and so on.

**Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)** is a set of benchmarks that help to plan for and monitor language learning. It outlines benchmarks for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

**Lower primary** is used to refer to Junior Primary or Foundation and Key Stage 1

**Upper primary** is used to refer to Senior Primary or Key Stage 2

For a glossary of other terms used in this domain, please see page Appendices.

**Photocopying**

Principals and teachers in primary schools throughout the island of Ireland may photocopy pages from this toolkit as necessary. Other users must seek the publisher’s permission to reproduce any part of the toolkit.

There are many templates and illustrations to accompany the toolkit. These are available on the website. A list of these is available in Appendices.

The availability of templates and graphics is indicated throughout the toolkit by the symbol.  📦
Planning for Inclusion and Diversity
It is important to consider planning for inclusion of all pupils. This section aims to guide schools through the planning process.

**Planning for inclusion entails**
- auditing current practice
- action planning for priority areas of development
- staff development

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**On Website**

Word document: Audit of newcomer provision
Word document: Action plan template
PDF document: Sample audit and action plan
Word document: Sample school coordinator job description
Planning for inclusion

Look at the School Development Plan. Does it need a focus on inclusion?

Where are we now? Consider an audit of provision and practice.

Prioritise 1-2 areas for more immediate development.

Draw up an action plan with clear and simple goals.

Implement the action plan and keep an eye on progress.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan and consider the next steps.

Audit and action plan templates available
What next? The evaluation process

Planning for inclusion

School Development Plan: Inclusion focus needed?

Audit: Where are we now?

Priority/priorities for action

Next priority?

Implementation and review

Action plan
Where there are significant numbers of Newcomer pupils in the school, the appointment of a school coordinator would support the development of a consistent approach.

The school coordinator should work closely with senior management to conduct an audit of school provision, draw up an action plan for the year ahead and consider the training needs of staff.

There are some important factors schools may wish to consider when appointing a school coordinator:

- The person appointed has the skills and authority to work with all staff at all levels
- The post is given adequate recognition as a whole-school coordinator role
- Time is made available for the school coordinator to carry out his or her duties
- The post is reviewed annually

A sample job description is available.
Getting Ready

Getting the school ready
Introduction

An inclusive school has a welcoming ethos for parents and pupils. It identifies staff roles and responsibilities to ensure effective communication of pupils’ backgrounds and needs. There is a clear and supportive admissions procedure. Class teachers have access to professional development and/or work in partnership with English Language Support staff to develop programmes tailored to pupil needs. Peers are prepared for the arrival of new pupils. Methods of monitoring and assessment are in place to allow pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Time and money are allocated to produce and purchase suitable resources that support access to the curriculum.

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<td>• List of translated letters available on website</td>
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The importance of the home language

Why encourage the use of home languages?

- Using home languages allows pupils to draw on their total language experience and skills.
- Maintenance of home language skills enhances second language acquisition.
- Acknowledging home languages provides a better emotional environment and a link with home.
- It helps maintain confidence and self esteem.
- It gives a clear message that the school accepts the language, the family, ethnicity and culture.
- The home language is one of the greatest resources bilingual pupils can offer the school.

Celebrating home languages

- Multi-lingual displays and signs around the school and in classrooms give a strong message that all languages are welcomed and valued in the school.
- Explain the importance of maintaining home languages to parents and pupils. Encourage parents to use the home language at home.
- Ask pupils about their home language: ‘How do you say that in ……..?’
- Encourage pupils to write or make notes in their home language.
- Display pieces of work written in other languages in the classroom. More confident pupils may be prepared to read out what they have written.
- Encourage pupils to translate words from key word glossaries into their home language.
- Encourage the use of other languages at assemblies and other events.
- Have multi-lingual resources in the school library.
(Sources for these are listed at the end of this toolkit.)
School environment

Welcome display

A welcome display is inviting. It sends out a clear signal that the school invites and respects all languages and cultures. A suitable display makes visitors aware of the school’s ethos and respect for diversity.

One suggestion is a display entitled, ‘Where in the world do you come from?’

You will need:

- A world map
- Paper arrows or pieces of ribbon or string
- Photos of various children (with their parents’ permission)
- Captions written in the children’s home languages as well as English
Welcome book

A Welcome Book provides a highly visual means of communicating school information with a minimum of educational jargon. A Welcome Book is a visual version of the school prospectus, providing a pictorial overview of the school, including:

- My school day (times)
- People and places in the school
- What I need for school
- School dinners/lunch rules
- School bus
- School clubs
- School rules

Welcome Presentation

A useful alternative to a welcome book is a digital presentation. The contents are similar. It is easy to create and has the capacity to include short video sequences to support explanations.

A welcome presentation can be an excellent project for older pupils in the school. It contributes to a sense of community and supports the development of many skills. It may be updated at intervals with photographs and information about school events and achievements. It can also be taken home to view, sent to families abroad, transferred to a school website or used for parents’ meetings.
Explaining the education system

The education system may differ significantly to the education system with which Newcomer parents are familiar. It is important to explain the system and the terminology. Areas that may cause confusion are:

- School starting ages
- Attendance policy
- Ages when pupil transfer from one school to another
- Assessments and examinations and when these occur
- The curriculum: terminology and curriculum areas for different age groups
- Transfer from primary to post-primary and choices available

Templates available on the website.
**Signs, labels and displays**

Multilingual signs and displays speak volumes to a new family, particularly when they can identify their home language.

Label important areas in the school in different languages.

Print the labels from the website. They will be A4 size. Ask a parent if they would help you by writing the translation into their home language in the box below the English, using a large marker.

It is not advisable to use on-line translation websites as they often give inaccurate translations. Using the wrong word can create serious difficulties (and embarrassment!).

Templates available on the website.
To ensure that all teachers are fully prepared for the arrival of new children, the following supporting actions should be carried out at school level.

- Deciding on first point of contact for parents
- Preparing school (environment, staff and students)
- Interviewing parents
- Managing and disseminating pupil information
- Organising suitable resources
- Contributing to a welcoming environment
- Organising and monitoring a ‘buddy system’
- Monitoring induction

Who can be involved?

Although duties and responsibilities vary in every school context, it is important that roles should be clearly defined and understood by all. Senior teachers can help to ensure that all staff are fully equipped to meet the needs of newcomer pupils. Expertise and examples of good practice should be shared where possible. The list below reflects the broad range of personnel who can support the overall process.

- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Coordinator
- Class Teacher
- Classroom Assistant
- Buddy
- Home-School Liaison Teacher
- Secretary
- Language Support Teacher
- Board of Management/Board of Governors
- Caretaker/Janitor
- Volunteer helper

It is important to recognise that children new to English have language difficulties that should be temporary and therefore require different approaches to those employed for SEN.
Staff Involvement

Staff involvement in the welcoming process

You may find this form useful for organising the welcoming process.

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<th>What to do</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Review date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Confirm an interview appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gather basic information</td>
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<td>Identify possible interpreter</td>
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<td>Prepare interview</td>
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<th>What to do</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Review date</th>
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<td>Lead parent interview and gather detailed information</td>
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<th>After interview</th>
<th>What to do</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Review date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate interview information to class teacher and other key staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare year group for new arrival (whole school or class assembly)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up a meeting to support class teacher (with language and cultural information and resources)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare suitable resources (labels, visual timetables, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare buddies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set up and maintain welcome display</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make Welcome Book/video/CD</td>
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<td>Timetable support staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect newly-arrived families with the existing community where possible</td>
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* Remind all pupils how it feels to be new and discuss how they can help. Practise saying ‘hello’ in a new language and point out the country of origin of new pupils on a world map.

Template available on the website.
A whole-school process

Changing schools can be a daunting prospect for any pupil. The impact is particularly significant for children facing induction into a new country, a new culture and a new language. Welcoming and inducting a child into school is a whole-school process. Procedures to ensure effective communication with families are essential.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that pupils and their parents are welcomed, informed and supported. It is important that everyone is clear about his/her role.

The key is not to rush the admissions process. Take time to ensure that staff are prepared and pupil information is communicated effectively.

First Contact

The welcome process begins with the first point of contact, which is usually the school office. It might be useful to organise a second meeting following the arrival of a pupil. This gives staff time to prepare.

At first contact, effective welcoming procedures include:

1. Setting a date for interview and informing parents (appointment card)
2. Determining whether parents require the assistance of an interpreter
3. Gathering basic details on child (name, address and age) to pass on to principal and class teacher.
4. Offering a Welcome Book or prospectus
5. Supporting the procedure with a checklist for admissions.

Making an Appointment

When making an appointment with Newcomer parents, consider the points below:

- Do the parents have/need access to somebody who will interpret for them?
- Do you need to contact an interpreting service to check availability of a professional interpreter? (Make the call while parents are there.)
- Do you have a regular time in the week to conduct parent/carer interviews?

An appointment card is an effective way to communicate with parents regarding the initial admissions meeting.

See the following page.
Interpreting

If there is a language barrier, an interpreter may be essential in order to gather vital information about the prospective pupil.

It is true that basic information can be communicated to parents without interpretation. However, for a school to fully support its pupils, more detailed background information is required. Use of an interpreter can help avoid potential misunderstandings between school and home, and also serves to reassure parents that the school cares about their child. Interpreters may be available from different sources:

- The community (inexpensive and available quickly)
- Through local workplaces
- A contracted interpreter (more expensive but more reliable, accurate and professional)

Friends or relatives understand and are able to communicate the parents’ specific needs. However, for confidential matters and accuracy, it may be preferable to use a professional interpreter.

Using children as interpreters is not to be encouraged as it places them under pressure and may involve them in dealing with personal, sensitive or confidential matters.

Sample appointment card

Meeting with _____________________________
Date _____________________________
Time _____________________________

Please bring:
Birth Certificate / Passport
Name of your doctor
Information from your school in
Your telephone number

Friend or relative understand and are able to communicate the parents’ specific needs. However, for confidential matters and accuracy, it may be preferable to use a professional interpreter.

Using children as interpreters is not to be encouraged as it places them under pressure and may involve them in dealing with personal, sensitive or confidential matters.

Template available on the website.
Initial meeting with parents

What is the purpose of the initial meeting for newcomer families?

A detailed meeting with parents, prior to their child starting school, is essential because:

- The parents often have little or no knowledge about the education system and require more information.
- Parents’ expectations of education will be based on their own school experiences and may vary considerably.
- Differences in school meals/food allowed, the classroom environment, homework, and general school systems are particular examples of where misunderstandings may occur.
- It is vital to clarify previous educational experiences of pupils in as much detail as possible, and to communicate this to class teachers as early as possible.

What information do parents require from school?

Nothing can be taken for granted. The majority of newcomer parents will not understand our education system fully, including the routines and procedures in our schools. So, what do they need to know?

- The national school system
- Details about:
  - The school routine
  - Key people
  - What children need for school
  - School rules and procedures
  - Expectations of the school
  - The curriculum
  - Homework and books
  - How the school will communicate with them
  - School clubs and activities
  - School holidays and special events
    (Talk through the Welcome Book)
- Information about local community groups and interpreters

What information is required from parents?

Background information on family, home circumstances in the country of origin, languages etc. is needed in order to cater properly for a child’s emotional wellbeing.

Details of previous schooling, such as absence of previous schooling, interrupted education, or the child’s having been educated previously through English, will make a significant difference to how the school will manage a child’s induction.

It is best to get this information early, rather than to discover it piecemeal (which, in turn, can contribute to teacher anxiety). It should be passed on to the class teacher as soon as possible.

Through establishing pupil needs early, other staff (classroom assistants, coordinators, home-school liaison officers, teacher-mentors etc.) can be deployed from the outset to support both the teacher and the child.
### Suggestions for the initial meeting

The following questions / suggestions are to guide principals / teachers through the initial meeting. The school may wish to adapt the standard school data capture form to include additional information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newcomer pupil data capture form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonetic spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other family members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are all members of the family in Ireland?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st person with parental responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd person with parental responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country of origin of father</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country of origin of mother</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents level of English</td>
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<tr>
<td>What name do you use for your child?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where was your child born?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has your child lived in another country?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How long have you lived in this country?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When did your child arrive?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What languages do you speak with your child?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you speak any other languages in your family?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What languages does your child speak with others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What languages can you child read and write?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How well can your child read in their first language?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who, besides you, does you child spend time with?</td>
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<tr>
<td>brothers &amp; sisters</td>
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<tr>
<td>other family members</td>
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<tr>
<td>other children</td>
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<tr>
<td>others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please estimate how many words your child knows in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>less than 10</td>
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<td>50 - 100</td>
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<td>more than 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you belong to a particular religious group?</td>
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<td>Is there any food that your child is not allowed to eat?</td>
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<td>Does your child have any health problems?</td>
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<td>asthma</td>
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<td>anaemia</td>
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<td>epilepsy</td>
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<td>migraines</td>
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<td>allergies</td>
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<td>can't see well</td>
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<td>can't hear well</td>
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<td>can't sleep well</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does your child take any medication?</td>
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<td>What does your child like to do?</td>
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<td>Does your child tell you about his / her day?</td>
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<td>If your child was in school in another country, did he / she enjoy it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What type of school was it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many years of schooling does your child have?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What were his / her best subjects?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did he / she find any subjects difficult?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did he / she wear a school uniform?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did the school set homework? How much?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How was he / she doing in school?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have any school reports or books?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did your child ever see an educational psychologist?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If so, do you have a report?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In your family, is going to school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Was your child’s attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you hope your child will achieve from his / her education in this country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like your child to have withdrawal support to help with English and other subjects?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you allow the information on this form to be given to relevant outside agencies and to be used for other purposes in the school?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent’s signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher conducting interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Template available on the website.
### Other suggestions:

- Introduce buddies to parents
- Take parents on a tour of the school and introduce key people
- Allow parents to observe a lesson (if possible and time permits)
- Explain how the school communicates with parents. Show the visual letters and explain their purpose
- Give parents a sheet which provides an overview of the year ahead
- Explain homework and the home-school journal

---

Some parents are reluctant to attend parent-teacher meetings because they feel that they do not have enough fluency in English. Such meetings may not have been a typical feature of education in their home country. It is important to explain the purpose of parent-teacher meetings and to indicate if interpreters may be available.

---

### School Calendar

A school calendar indicating school closures at a glance can be very useful. This could be attached to the back of the Welcome Book. It is important to talk through the school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

= NO SCHOOL
You may find the following checklist useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist for admissions</th>
<th>Completed and installed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admission interview</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- School admissions and other necessary forms completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preferred name underlined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Phonetic spelling written down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- School procedures etc. explained (through Welcome Book)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The national school system</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Details about:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The school routine</td>
<td></td>
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<td>- Attendance</td>
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<td>- Key people</td>
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<tr>
<td>- What the child needs for school</td>
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<td>- School rules and procedures</td>
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<td>- Expectations of the school</td>
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<td>- The curriculum</td>
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<td>- Homework and books</td>
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<td>- How the school will communicate with parents</td>
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<td>- School clubs and activities</td>
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<td>- School holidays and special events</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Information about local community groups and interpreters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Calendar of the school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tour of school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Visual timetable provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduction to buddies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Start card completed and explained</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admission interview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Records from previous school requested</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Admission form copied for:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- class teacher</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- language support staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Whole staff informed of new admission(s)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Template available on the website.
Preparing all pupils

Preparing all pupils for the arrival of a new child from another country is an important part of a successful welcoming process. All pupils will be enriched by a culture of diversity, through:

- An appreciation of their own identity
- Inter-cultural awareness
- Language awareness
- Awareness of personal strengths, values and attitudes
- Communication skills

Pupil preparation may be addressed in the following ways:

- General group awareness sessions, for example, class/year group/whole school assemblies
- Classroom and playground buddies

Assemblies

Assembly times are useful for communicating information about a new pupil and generating understanding and empathy from all pupils (not only the new pupil’s class). Consider discussion of any or all of the following:

- Being new – how would it feel, what would a newcomer pupil need to know?
- Cultural information – find the new pupil’s country on a map, what do pupils know about this country? Provide a few facts.
- Language – Recognise the value of speaking other languages. Learn how to say hello in the pupil’s language. Celebrate the language and culture of the incoming pupil.
- Engagement – Discuss ways to communicate other than in English. What can you do to help? Plan for support out of class (playground, etc.)

Buddies / mentors

Welcome buddies are most effective when they understand fully what is expected of them. This preparation can be done either formally or informally. Different buddies may be appointed for different purposes, for example bilingual, playground or class buddies. Beware, however, of creating dependency.

How to be a good buddy

- Be friendly and smile
- Show the new pupil around (school, class)
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Don’t use big words
- Show them what to do
- Include new pupils in your games, but don’t force them
- Don’t crowd around the new pupil
- Get help if there is a problem

Highlight the value of being a buddy through:
- School newsletters
- Assemblies
- Parent meetings
- School reports
- Notice boards
- Rewards systems

Be sure to give plenty of time to talk buddies through their roles and involve them as early as possible in the welcome process.

Buddy leaflets available on the website.
Peer involvement

The Playground

Let us ensure that the playground is a safe and happy place.

**Supervision**
- Introduce newcomer pupils to playground supervisors
- Show pupils the zones or boundaries of the playground
- Explain and demonstrate the rules of the playground and how to play safely
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Check understanding

**Organisation**
- Keep rules to a minimum and ensure that they are understood. It may be an idea to represent these pictorially and reinforce during P.E. classes.
- Consider zoning the playground into areas such as active area, equipment area and quiet/time out area

**Behaviour**
- If problems occur in the playground, the discipline and anti-bullying policies of the school should be applied
- Parents should be informed if their child is involved either as a culprit or a victim

**Typical playground activities**
- Organised games (e.g. ‘What’s the time Mr Wolf?’/’Scarecrow’ or ‘tag’)
- Skipping games (e.g. ‘Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around’)
- Clapping games (e.g. ‘Have you ever ever?’)
- Ball games

**Buddies**
Make sure that playground buddies know how to:
- Include new pupils in games
- Explain games using gesture and demonstration
- Alert supervisors

**Getting Ready**
Getting the classroom ready
Getting Ready

Getting the classroom ready
What is a welcoming classroom?

The atmosphere reflects a sense of belonging and pupils feel safe and secure with each other. The environment stimulates learning and reflects diversity. Pupils are prepared to welcome new arrivals. The teacher encourages pupil participation and interaction.

Contents

The welcoming class
- Welcome posters and displays about the class
- Map displays and birthday trains
- Class Welcome Book
- Sense of place: our school and our local area
- Games
- Buddies

Everyday activities
- Visual timetable
- Calendar
- Weather chart
- Classroom instructions
- Classroom routines
- Classroom areas
- Using visuals

Handy references
- Help symbols and classroom instructions
- Alphabet card and high frequency words
- Dictionaries and visual references
- Multi-lingual resources

On website

The welcoming class
- Languages, people & places record sheet
- Template for class welcome book
- Template for explaining games
- Buddy leaflet and letter to parents

Everyday activities
- Classroom labels
- Classroom instruction visuals
- Template for visual timetable
- Template for poster on local area
- Buddy leaflets and letter to parents

Visuals for everyday activities
- Numbers 1-100
- Classroom instructions
- Classroom labels
- Classroom rules
- Duties poster
- Foundation classroom vocabulary
- Template for visual timetable for parents
- Visual supports booklet for parents
- Visual supports for younger pupils

Handy references
- Help symbols for pupils
A ‘Welcome’ or ‘Hello’ poster in different languages gives a clear message that other languages and cultures are valued in this classroom.

The pupils can practise saying the words, and new arrivals can teach their classmates how to greet in their own languages.

If the new pupil’s language is not represented, it should be added by writing it on the poster or using a sticker.

The pupils might enjoy memory or matching games, which involve matching the word to the language or relevant country.

Displays about the pupils in the class are a quick and fun way of introducing the class to new arrivals.

Buddies could talk to the new pupils about the class, using the display as a visual reference.

When new arrivals feel more confident, they should be encouraged to add to the display.

As the year progresses, additions may be made by pupils. This is an excellent way of recording the events of the year and creating a sense of community and belonging.
Maps displays and birthday trains

World maps may be used in a variety of ways. It is best to use a laminated map so that the pupils can add personal touches using Blu-tak™. All additions can be removed at the end of the year and the map reused.

- Pupils can locate the country of a prospective new arrival and try to find out a little about it. A template to guide pupils in finding information is shown below.
- Pupils from different parts of the world, including those born elsewhere in Ireland, can place a picture of themselves or something representative of their home place on the map.
- Place photos of the pupils around the map and use pieces of string to link the photos to the countries. Encourage the pupils to write a little about themselves in their first language.
- Use the map to trace the journey of new arrivals from their home country to their new country.
- Postcards from relatives and friends in other countries may be added.

Birthday Trains

Birthday trains can be a simple yet effective way of helping all children to feel part of the class. You may wish to include the names of the children and dates of birth, names and ages or simply names.
Creating a Class Welcome Book may be a collaborative project that pupils work on and then read together.

**Making a Welcome Book**

1. Explore the purpose of the book with the pupils.
2. Copy the template for each class member.
3. Discuss how the pupils can personalise their own pages.
4. The pages may be compiled and bound into a book.

You may like to ask the pupils to come up with their own book title.
Sense of place

“Knowledge of the culture and community or communities in which a language is spoken is very important in the language learning context. The learner should develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between his/her culture and other cultures. All language and intercultural competence should be acknowledged equally.”

European Language Portfolio (ELP) guidance (SELB 2003, p7)

It is a good idea for the pupils in a class to think about how to present information relating to their school and local area. Such activities develop communication, thinking, problem-solving and collaborative skills. They also develop a sense of belonging and ‘pride in our place’.

For new pupils, both the information and the related activities create a welcome atmosphere and a feeling of security as well as providing some key survival vocabulary relating to immediate surroundings.

Choose 2-3 activities. Suggestions about using the work produced with new pupils are included in the ‘Early Days, Classroom’ section.

---

Our school: Suggested activities

- Draw a picture of the school and discuss what you could say about it
- Draw a picture of your favourite place in the school and discuss it
- Take photos of places in the school and make a display
- Create a classroom photo book for new pupils
- Create a school photo book for new pupils
- Make up your own symbols for places in school
- Make a plan of the school with symbols and labels
- Plan a school tour
- Discuss favourite games and how you might explain these

Our local area: Suggested activities

- Draw your favourite local place and discuss what to say about it
- Take photos of places in the local area and make a display
- Create a book of photos for new pupils
- Make your own symbols for the local town and area
- Make a map of the local area using symbols or drawings, or get a map from the local tourist office or website
- Make a poster or brochure about the local area
Making a poster about the local area

Introduce the activity by asking pupils to name their favourite place in the local area.

1. Discuss all the facilities, services and activities that are available locally (e.g. football club, launderette, cinema) and collect the vocabulary on the board.
2. Categorise the vocabulary. Categories may include, for example, places where we can enjoy sports, places where we buy different things, places that look after our money, and places where we eat.
3. Divide the class into groups, each group taking a category.
4. Copy a local map or get some pupils to draw a sketch map of the main streets in the town.
5. Each group draws symbols to illustrate facilities and places in their category and sticks them in position on the map.
6. Older pupils could also write a description of the facilities or places in their category and these would be displayed around the map.

Template for poster available on the website.
Games are an excellent way of helping pupils get to know each other. Encouraging pupils to think about how to explain games helps develop communication skills, the language of instruction, and sequencing.

This template may be used to help structure explanations. The pupils may choose to write and draw their explanations or to explain them orally. It is important to stress that the drawing does not have to be perfect!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This game is called</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For this game you need ________ people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You also need ______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First you have to ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then you have to ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then you have to ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The winner is the person who ______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Template available on the website.
Buddies

You may find the headings below useful when preparing buddies.

Template for leaflet available on the website.
Dear __________________________

We use the buddy system in our school as part of our pastoral care provision.

_________________________ has been chosen as a buddy because he/she is a friendly, reliable and helpful pupil.

__________________________will benefit from this by:

• Making a new friend
• Learning about other cultures
• Learning to listen and explain
• Developing a sense of responsibility
• Feeling valued

Well done ____________________________!

If you have any queries, please contact us.

Yours sincerely
Everyday activities

Timetable
A visual timetable is a helpful way of making school routines clear to all pupils, no matter what age.

Calendars
Refer to a calendar every day to reinforce:
- Days
- Dates
- Weeks
- Ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th …)
- Reading
- Spelling
- Class/School/Community/Cultural/Religious events
- Language patterns:
  - Today is
  - Yesterday was
  - Tomorrow will be
  - Last week/month/year
  - This week/month/year
  - Next week/month/year

Weather Chart
Refer to a weather chart every day to reinforce:
- Calendar language
- Weather vocabulary
- Predictive language: I think it will be….
- Classroom interaction

Encourage new pupils and their buddies to complete the chart every day. Add this activity to the duties list that is included on page 38.

Page 36
Classroom instructions

New pupils can feel confused and intimidated by their new environment because they don’t know what to expect.

It is important to explain rules and routines very clearly and visually. Referring to the classroom instructions chart when required can reinforce the message. You can use:

- Flash cards displayed in a prominent place
- A class poster with pictures or photos of pupils following the instructions
- Flash cards or photos compiled into a mini-book to be talked about at home

Classroom instruction visuals available on the website.
Everyday activities

Duties

Being involved in classroom duties helps newly arrived pupils to feel part of the class. A laminated list is useful for display in the room. The names of pupils assigned to each task should be added beside the list. Rotate pupil duties regularly. Pupils may wish to complete duties in pairs.

Here is an example of a list of typical classroom duties.

| Clean the board. | Water the plants. | Tidy books away. |

Classroom areas

Labels help pupils new to English, navigate their way around the classroom. Use the labels provided on the disk or take photos of areas in your own classroom.

- Crayons
- Aprons
- Bricks

Chill-out or quiet area

A new pupil may need to take a short break from classroom activities. Suitable ‘chill-out’ areas may include: the library/book corner, computer or play area. This will depend on the available classroom resources.

Photographs or the pupils’ own illustrations may be more meaningful for your class.

Time on the computer should be limited and should not be used as a substitute for pupil interaction.

Template for duties poster and classroom area labels available on the website.
**Using visuals**

**Why use visuals?**

Visuals assist in helping children know exactly what is expected of them (routines, washing hands, using the toilet, tidying up), especially if they speak a different language than that of the adult.

Visuals are helpful in supporting and increasing both receptive and expressive communication.

Regular routines, when represented visually, can be taught to children at a very young age. Once taught, the adult can step away and allow the child to complete the routine independently.

Just as adults use visuals reminders such as calendars or ‘to do’ lists, children also benefit from visual reminders.

Visuals are static, meaning that they remain present after words are spoken. They serve as a reminder of the spoken direction.

For many children, visual cues are most beneficial when used along with spoken language and gestures.

Visuals can be used as cues to teach appropriate behaviour.

**Making visuals**

Remember that children communicate and understand at different levels.

Consider the ‘visual stage’ of the children in the classroom:

- Object stage: use of actual objects and items to communicate
- Photo stage: use of photos of objects and areas in the classroom
- Picture symbolic stage: use of colour drawings
- Line drawing stage: use of black and white line drawings
- Text stage: use of words and numbers for communication

Use written text along with visuals. This ensures that everyone interacting with the child uses the same language for a particular item or action.

If presenting more than one visual, consider presenting these from left to right. This can help with horizontal orientation, in preparation for reading.

Taking photographs: Place the item on a solid high contrasting background. Take the photo from the child’s perspective. Try to avoid having any other objects in the picture. For example, if you are trying to communicate washing hands and take a picture of the taps or the sink, try not to have the hand dryer or towels in the same picture. The child might focus on the hand dryer rather than the intended picture of the sink.

Make sure the picture is sturdy and easy to handle.
Using Visuals

Sort out the visuals you will need for a particular activity or routine in advance if possible.

Sit, kneel or hunker at the child’s level.

Show the visual, say the word or instruction and show the child the real object or area in the room.

Use gestures to help demonstrate.

Keep instructions simple and consistent and avoid unnecessary words:

Now let’s see, well you put your coat on this hook, look, see, there is your name. 🗴
Put your coat here. (Point to the hook and the child’s name / label) ✓

Don’t use ‘pigeon’ English as the child will model your language. Use simple but grammatically correct phrases and try to avoid colloquialisms.

Always accompany a visual or a gesture with spoken language.

If the child does not seem to have understood, repeat the instruction in exactly the same way.

When introducing choices, keep the language simple and consistent. Start with 2-3 choices only. These can be increased as the child becomes more settled and confident with the language.

Once an activity is finished, put the visual away so that the child knows that that it is finished and it is time to move on.

Place communication visuals such as choice cards, emotion fans, toilet cards etc.... in a location that is accessible to the children and make sure they know where to find these.

A stop sign may be a useful visual to indicate the end of activities. A larger sign for doors may also be useful to indicate ‘out of bounds’ areas or that the children must stay in the room.

Be aware that some children may be colour blind and find it very difficult to work with coloured visuals and cues.

See web address below.

http://www.colourblindawareness.org/teachers/pre-school-primary-school/
Help symbols

You may wish to prepare an emergency set of symbols for the new pupil to use in the first weeks of arriving into the class. Pupils can use these cards to indicate their basic needs without having to express them in English.

![Toilet](image1)

**Toilet**

![I feel sick](image2)

**I feel sick**

![I feel unhappy](image3)

**I feel unhappy**

Two pieces of card cut into circles, one red and one green and pasted back-to-back, may be useful to help Newcomer pupils indicate level of comprehension.

**Green:** I understand.  **Red:** I don’t understand.

Classroom instructions

New pupils find it easier to understand instructions if they are supported with pictures and gestures. It is a good idea to display pictures on the wall and refer to these when you give instructions.

![Listen](image4)

**Listen**

![Be quiet](image5)

**Be quiet**

![Write](image6)

**Write**

If reinforcement is needed, make a mini-book with classroom instruction visuals. Parents can talk about these in the home language and maybe translate.

Be aware that non-verbal communication such as gestures may differ from one culture to another.

See page 45.

Help symbols and classroom instruction visuals available on the website.
Alphabet card

Pupils unfamiliar with the Roman alphabet will find it useful to have an alphabet card on their desks. Ideally the handwriting card should be written in the agreed style of the school, showing size and starting points. It may be helpful also to indicate directionality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aa</th>
<th>Bb</th>
<th>Cc</th>
<th>Dd</th>
<th>Ee</th>
<th>Ff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gg</td>
<td>Hh</td>
<td>Ii</td>
<td>Jj</td>
<td>Kk</td>
<td>Ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mm</td>
<td>Nn</td>
<td>Oo</td>
<td>Pp</td>
<td>Qq</td>
<td>Rr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>Tt</td>
<td>Uu</td>
<td>Vv</td>
<td>Ww</td>
<td>Xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yy</td>
<td>Zz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List of high frequency words

High frequency words are those used most often in speech and print and are useful to have as a reference to support reading and writing. High frequency words are often difficult for a pupil learning English because they are abstract. Having list at hand will speed up the process of recognition.

Colour the words you know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>and</th>
<th>we</th>
<th>my</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dictionaries

Using dictionaries is an excellent way to promote and celebrate new languages. Pupils may also produce their own dictionaries, picture or word books. These can be tailored to specific needs and content areas. It is not always necessary to have bilingual dictionaries in the classroom if good picture or photo dictionaries are available. Some publishing companies produce bilingual picture dictionaries.

Possibilities:
- Monolingual picture dictionaries
- Monolingual photo dictionaries (very good for older children)
- Bilingual picture dictionaries
- Subject specific dictionaries
- Dictionaries for different content areas
- ‘Home-made’ dictionaries for specific content
- Word glossaries for curriculum vocabulary

Good picture/photo dictionaries:
- Have clear themed pictures
- Have carefully chosen vocabulary directly related to the pictures
- Contain vocabulary relevant to education
- Are easy to navigate and use

My classroom

My Word Book

Visual references

Pupils new to English require as many visual cues as possible to make sense of their new world. It is a good idea to prepare these in advance. Even older children will need to refer to colour and number charts as well as topic-related vocabulary.

Ideas for visual references:
- Colours
- Numbers
- Seasons
- Word families
- Topic word lists

English-speaking peers also find visual word lists useful as spelling references.
Multicultural and multilingual resources

Resources from other cultures and languages help all pupils to develop their own knowledge of the world. Their display in the classroom reinforces the message that diversity is valued.

Make a chart with the word ‘Welcome’ in different languages, and if a new pupil arrives whose home language is not represented, add this immediately.
Early Classroom Days
Introduction

What is a supportive and inclusive classroom?
The classroom environment is safe and comfortable so that learners have the confidence to make friends and take risks. The language used during learning/teaching is planned and there are explicit opportunities to learn about new language within the context of the curriculum. There are planned opportunities for meaningful interaction between peers. The peer group is a powerful resource for the learner. Children are given opportunities for collaborating and problem solving.

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A sense of belonging
• Identity card template
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• Match picture and word template
• Plan of school template
• School symbols coordinates template
• Template for poster about local area

Learning a new language
• Mainstream observation sheet
• Silent period observation sheet

Starter activities
• All about me booklet and teacher pack

Language games
• Template for bingo
• Template for snakes & ladders
• Template for blockbusters with numbers
• Template for blockbusters blank
• Template for dominoes

Inclusive teaching strategies
• Visuals to support classroom instructions

Communication with home
• Home-school journal
• Visual letters
• Curriculum leaflet for parents (two templates)
• Overview of the year template
• Sample overview of the year
• School routine leaflet for parents
• Translated letters (list of letters available)
• Visual timetable template
Dos and don’ts

Do

Do – Find out the name of their home/first language and learn how to pronounce the pupils’ first names correctly
Do – Face the pupil and speak clearly
Do – Use repetitive phrases
Do – Use as many gestures and key visuals as possible
Do – Allow pupils to stand back and watch at first as receptive language skills develop before productive skills
Do – Remove the pressure to speak – accept nods, gestures, pointing and facial expression for some time
Do – Treat pupils equally
Do – Encourage first language use
Do – Encourage culture sharing and comparing in class
Do – Provide opportunities for peer interactions and friendships during lesson time and break-times; pupils make excellent teachers and helpers
Do – Use songs and action rhymes at every opportunity, even for older pupils
Do – Choose textbooks carefully
Do – Encourage and praise all attempts at communication, regardless of accuracy
Do – Give the pupils time to settle and observe what they can do
Do – Make sure pupils understand what is expected; use the same rewards and sanctions for all

Don’t

Don’t – Panic! Many pupils remain silent for six months or more. Listening comes first
Don’t – Insist on parents using English at home. Supporting their child’s first language development will help with learning English
Don’t – Confuse language difficulties with learning difficulties
Don’t – Put the pupil on the computer for long periods of time
Don’t – Ask the pupil to write or copy, if they don’t understand what it is they are writing or copying
Don’t – Carry out formal assessment in the early days
It is important to be aware of differences in values, attitudes and beliefs so that misunderstandings may be avoided.

Greetings
In some cultures people commonly greet each other with kisses. However, in other cultures people almost never touch each other and may find even a pat of approval unusual and upsetting. However, a warm, friendly yet relatively formal greeting from teachers, other staff and pupils can make a world of difference to newcomer pupils and parents.

Gestures
Non-verbal communication through use of the eyes, the hands and the body differs between cultures. Pointing at people is not acceptable in some cultures. The thumbs up sign may mean nothing or appear rude. Using the thumb and the forefinger to form a circle expressing OK is a very rude gesture in some Middle Eastern countries. It is important to be aware of body language and the signals it may give out.

Dress code
There are noticeable cultural differences in levels of formality, dress for boys and girls, use of cosmetics and so on. For example:
• Parents and pupils arriving from Asian countries may be used to more formal dress codes in schools
• Pupils from other cultures may find the idea of school uniform very strange
• School and PE uniforms may cause difficulty for pupils for whom culture or faith require particular dress codes.
It is important to be aware of sensitivities in issues of dress.

Social interaction
Modes of social interaction can differ significantly across cultures. Members of some cultures may seem loud or boisterous to those of quieter cultures. It is customary in some cultures to wait for a pause in the conversation before speaking. Therefore, some pupils may appear unwilling to participate because they have not recognised an opportunity to speak. Some newcomer pupils may not be used to group work and it is important to provide a safe environment for this.
In some cultures it is customary to offer an answer to a question only when asked by the teacher. Therefore, pupils may not volunteer answers even if they know the correct answer. Other pupils may not volunteer an answer unless they are certain that it is correct.
In many cultures, children must show great respect to older people, teachers and other adults. That respect may be demonstrated by avoiding eye contact with the teacher which may seem disrespectful to us.

Rewards, punishment and expectations
Individual achievement, in some cultures, is less important than group success. Members of these cultures may respond poorly to individual incentives but may be motivated by group work and group goals.
In some educational systems corporal punishment is the norm.
Be aware that parental expectations may be based on different experiences and it is, therefore, most important that parents understand fully the expectations of the school.

Punctuality and attendance
Attitudes to punctuality and attendance may vary greatly from one culture to another. We may have different rules about time, depending on the occasion. It is important to explain school routines and times and the need for punctuality in the school situation.
It is also advisable to explain the need to attend school for the pupil to make progress and become fully involved in school life. It may be necessary to explain the legal consequences when a child does not attend school.
The comments below have been made by some Newcomer pupils in our schools.

I'm scared. I've never been to school before

I'm angry. I was happy in my own country. I miss my dad, my grand-dad and my friends

I'm confused. I haven't done anything wrong but my mum has to go and speak to the teacher about me.

I'm frightened. There is one pupil who pushes me and calls me names. I don't know what to do.

I'm exhausted. All this new language around me... I can't follow it!

I'm lonely. I can't join in with the others, so I have no friends. Everyone ignores me.

I'm worried. I don't know where to go or what to do.

I feel quite shy. I don't like to speak in class in case everyone laughs at me.

The following pages outline activities to help Newcomer pupils to settle in, feel secure and become familiar with the expectations and routines in the school.
Seating

Things to consider when seating newly arrived pupils:

- Where should new pupils sit?
- With whom should they sit?

With whom?
Sitting beside a same language peer reduces the stress of being new and provides some security and moral support.

However, this can create dependency in the long term and can exclude English speaking peers.

Sitting beside good language and learning role models will help the language development of new pupils and encourage them to engage with formal learning.

Where?
Pupils should sit near the front of the room, so that they can see and hear the teacher, and see any visuals clearly.

Don’t seat new pupils alone at the computer or to the side of the room.

Don’t assume that same language peers will automatically get on well together!
Some useful activities for the first day

- Welcome and introduce new pupils to the class and to key staff
- Introduce buddies and say their names clearly
- Ask buddies to show new pupils around the class and point to labelled areas and objects
- Ask buddies to show pupils around the school and point out important areas: toilets, lining up area, playground, office, lunch room
- Ask buddies to introduce their friends
- Involve the new pupils in friendship and welcome games
- Include the new pupils in class activities but don’t expect them to speak immediately
- Encourage buddies to show new pupils the class Welcome Book

Small-group games for the early days

Games that don’t require much language use, and have clear rules, will help a new pupil to get to know peers in a non-threatening, small-group setting. Try one of the following:

- Board games such as ‘Snakes and Ladders’ or ‘Ludo’
- Barrier games, where one pair of players cannot see the others: ‘Battleship’ or ‘Spot the difference’
- Memory games: ‘Kim’s game’, ‘Find the pairs’ (using cards faced down), ‘Snap’
- Lotto games with pictures

Whole-class games

The following games help pupils get to know each other. Choose age appropriate games.

**Who is the leader?** One child (the detective) moves away from the circle and closes his/her eyes while a leader is chosen. The leader is responsible for an action that the class must copy. It is the job of the ‘detective’ to determine who the leader is as quickly as possible. ‘Wink murder’ is an alternative game, where a pupil feigns death upon a wink from the leader.

**Loud and quiet:** One child (the searcher) moves away from the circle and closes his/her eyes. The class decide where to hide an object in the classroom and call the searcher back. The class chant the name of the searcher quietly, if he/she is far away from the object, and loudly if close, until the object is found.

**List game:** Each pupil thinks of an action. One pupil performs an action and then says his/her name. All the class repeat the name. The next pupil does an action and says his/her name. The class must repeat the first pupil’s action and name, and then the second. Continue taking turns and adding to the list of actions and names.

**Get the beat:** Start a beat that the class can copy; two thigh taps and two claps work well. Once a rhythm is established, pupils take turns to say, ‘My name is …’ to the beat. Move on to the next pupil. Alternately the class can respond immediately by saying, ‘Your name is …’ before the next pupil takes a turn.

**Buzz buzz:** All pupils stand in a circle and a soft ball is used. The teacher leads the chant ‘Buzz buzz, bee bee, can you say your name for me?’ and throws the ball to a pupil. The pupil receiving the ball says, ‘My name is …’, or simply gives the name. The class responds with ‘Your name is …’. The pupil with the ball then throws it on to another and the chant begins again. Younger pupils may prefer to roll the ball across the circle.

Pupils may need adult help initially in explaining rules and guiding turn-taking
Circle Time Activities

Circle Time provides opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, interact and share concerns. It aims to encourage greater tolerance of each other’s opinions. However, it can be difficult for Newcomer pupils to participate if they speak very little English. The activities below may provide you with some ideas for including all pupils in Circle Time.

Suggested rules for Circle Time:
- One person speaks at a time
- Listen to others
- You may pass
- It’s OK to make mistakes
- No ‘put downs’
- Look for and point out positive qualities in others
- Encourage one another
- You must leave the circle if the rules are not respected

Sentence starters
- My name is . . .
- I feel . . .
- I like to play . . .
- At home I . . .
- I am proud of . . .
- A friend is . . .

Pass the Message
Pupils in turn pass a short message from one person to the next.

Simon Says
Pass the Parcel

Who’s Who?
Pupils in turn introduce the pupils to their left or right, or both. They may also say something positive about the other(s).

What’s My Line?
Pupils mime a job, hobby or activity and the other must guess what it is.

People hunt
Find someone who is: taller; the same age as; has the same favourite colour etc.

Soft Ball
Discussion / question-and-answer session using a soft ball. See ‘Games’.

Fruit Salad
Pupils are given pictures from specific categories; for example, fruit, animals, colours. They must change seats when their category is called.

Memory Game
Teacher starts, ‘I went to town and I bought . . .’ Pupils in turn repeat the phrase and add their own items. Phrases may be changed, for example, ‘I’m making a cake and I will put in . . .’

Clapping game
- 1 clap means sit down
- 2 claps mean walk on the spot
- 3 claps mean walk around the inside of the circle

Things to consider:
- Demonstrate rules for circle time
- Introduce the topics with a picture or object
- Allow time for new pupils to observe many other peer responses before it is their turn
- Encourage pupils to use actions with their answers
- Provide opportunities for Newcomer pupils to participate non-verbally
Rules and routines

Rules and routines provide clarity and security in the classroom. However, they need to be explained, modelled, constantly rehearsed and encouraged. It is important that pupils understand:

- What happens each day and when
- How to access books, computers and other resources
- How to behave when carrying out everyday activities such as sharpening pencils, going to the toilet, hanging up coats, retrieving lunch boxes and so on
- How to behave when entering and leaving a classroom, in the playground and in any other rooms in the school
- How to behave at break and lunchtime
- How to gain the teacher’s attention
- The signal used by the teacher to gain attention
- The appropriate noise levels at different times of the day

Visual timetables

Visual timetables help pupils become familiar with the daily routine. It would be useful to give a copy of this timetable to parents so that they can talk about it with their child. Using a visual timetable in the following way can help:

- Enlarge the pictures for the visual timetables and sequence them on the wall or at the side of the board at the beginning of each day, including break and lunch times
- Talk through the timetable for the day with the class. It may be useful to ask some pupils to come up and point to pictures to show that they understand
- Before starting an activity, point to the appropriate picture and say what is going to happen: ‘Now we are going to...’
- When an activity is finished, remove the picture so that pupils can see that it is finished and can look for the next activity

Some pupils may find it useful to have a small copy of the visual timetable on their desks.

Classroom visuals

Classroom labels can help pupils to access resources quickly. These should be pointed out to newly arrived pupils during a classroom tour.

Pictorial cues, or a rules poster, or photographs of pupils carrying out everyday activities as instructed, are very useful in reinforcing classroom and school rules. These may be placed on the wall or made into a book and sent home for discussion in the home language. Refer regularly to the classroom visuals to reinforce routines, for example, ‘Before we go to P.E., who can remind us of what we need to do once we are inside the hall?’ Celebrate good behaviour in the classroom and around the school.

A volume control symbol may be useful to indicate acceptable noise levels at different working times during the day!
Sense of place activities

When new pupils arrive, use the pictures, maps or plans produced by other pupils in the class. This will provide immediate support by introducing basic survival vocabulary.

Some of the activities will fall naturally into curriculum areas such as mathematics or numeracy, literacy, geography, PE and so on, and will help to develop important skills such as communication, problem solving and working together.

For mid-term admissions consider asking other pupils, or adults, to help with the activities. Later, new pupils may wish to share similar information about their home and so widen the cultural experiences of all pupils.

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Our School

School tour with buddies, referring to signage if available.
Giving directions using the plan of the school
School treasure hunt.

Related vocabulary activities for new pupils:
- Listen and identify symbol or picture
- Picture bingo with symbols or photos
- Match symbol and word
- Matching photo and word
- Drawing own symbol to match word
- Picture crosswords
- Labelling plan or drawing of school
- Drawing school in home country and labelling

Our Local Area

Practising giving directions using a map of the local area.
Making an ID card with details about own house
Making a poster or brochure about the local area.

Related vocabulary activities for new pupils:
- Listening and identifying a symbol or picture
- Picture bingo with symbols or photos
- Matching symbol and word
- Matching photo and word
- Drawing own symbol to match word
- Picture crosswords
- Labelling a map of the local area
- Drawing a favourite place in the home country
- Make a poster of your local area
A sense of belonging

Sense of place activities

Listen and choose

1. School bus
2. Classroom
3. Library

Match the word to the picture

1. Bus stop
2. Office
3. Canteen

Listening and reading activities with pictures

- Pupils listen for the word and identify the picture
- Pupils read words and identify the picture
- Picture bingo with pictures using a dice or picture cards as on the previous page
- Bingo with words and pictures: instead of using picture cards, use word cards that require pupils to read the word and match it to the picture
- Pairs using picture or picture and word cards
- Snap along the same lines

Bingo

Pairs

the canteen
the computer room
the classroom
the office
the bus stop
the library

Templates available on the website.
A sense of belonging

Sense of place activities

Giving directions to a place in the school

This can be a whole class group or pair activity. For pupils with limited English language proficiency it is helpful if the teacher uses an enlarged copy of the plan of the school on the board to demonstrate the activity at whole-class level first.

There are a number of possible activities:

- Each group or pair should have enlarged copies of the school plan.
- For each symbol card there should also be a number card.
- Give one pupil a card with a number on it. He/she has to describe where it is located on the plan and the others have to guess. They must put the correct symbol at the place described (e.g. classroom, office, PE room etc.) This provides practice in prepositional language.
- The teacher calls out directions and the pupils have to follow them.
- One pupil is given directions on a card. He/she calls out the directions and the others find the correct destination on the plan.
- Pupils make up their own directions for other groups.

Local area maps and symbols

Similar activities may be based on a map of the local area. Tourist maps are very good for this purpose as they are clear and basic and often contain illustrations of important buildings. For these activities you will need to make a grid to lay over the map. The grid should have references:

For younger pupils use letters only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aa</th>
<th>Bb</th>
<th>Cc</th>
<th>Dd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ee</td>
<td>Ff</td>
<td>Gg</td>
<td>Hh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ii</td>
<td>Jj</td>
<td>Kk</td>
<td>Ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mm</td>
<td>Nn</td>
<td>Oo</td>
<td>Pp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For older pupils use letters and numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Picture bingo in pairs or groups: The group will need a dice, a copy of a map and 6 counters each. The pupils throw the dice in turns. When they get a number, they name the place in that square, and then cover it with a coloured counter. If a number comes up that is already covered, they miss a turn. The winner is the first person to cover all squares.

Pairs: Pupils play in pairs or small groups. Give each pupil a copy of a map and 2-4 sets of picture cards to match the map. Take it in turns to turn over the cards. If the card matches a place on the map, the pupil names the place and then covers it with the same picture. The winner is the person who has covered most squares.

Templates available on the website.
Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)

Research has shown that it may be possible for newcomer pupils to develop survival English within one year and basic conversational English within two or three years. This basic communicative ability is described as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS).

Cummins 1979

The iceberg model below is often used to demonstrate second language development. BICS are ‘above the surface’ as the development of these is immediately visible.
The Silent (non-verbal) Period

For some children, immersion in a new language causes them to become ‘silent’. This well-researched response may last for a relatively short time but may also persist for many months. Research suggests that the younger the child, the longer the Silent Period may endure. A non-verbal response does not signal that a pupil has special learning needs. When the pupil begins to speak the teacher will be able to identify learning that has taken place weeks, or even months, previously.

This checklist allows the teacher to monitor a pupil’s responses in the absence of spoken communication. If the pupil is demonstrating some of these responses and actions, even if they are only occasionally apparent, it is important not to intervene but to allow the pupil to emerge from the Silent Period when he/she is ready.

Checklist for observing progress during the Silent Period

Name of pupil: _____________________________________________  Age: _________________________

The pupil is: ____________________________________________

(Write the date of observation in the relevant column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>OCCASIONALLY</th>
<th>REGULARLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using his/her mother tongue with teacher/peers despite their inability to understand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making eye contact with the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching other pupils closely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitating other pupils’ actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using facial expressions to communicate feelings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing particular objects, books, etc. to teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to communication through gesture/mime by teacher or other pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention-seeking by interacting with other pupils or teacher (e.g. handing them objects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting help by making signs, pointing, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicating dislike of an object or activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protesting by making sounds or appearing aggressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitating non-verbal behaviour of other pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimenting with sounds of English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeating and rehearsing words or phrases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following verbal instructions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Template available on the website.
The non-verbal stage of language learning

Hands-on interactive activities will give Newcomer pupils the opportunity to participate in the curriculum. Remember that pupils who are learning a second language will be able to understand more than they can communicate and may feel very shy about communicating orally. They are learning during this silent, non-verbal stage and are acquiring language every day.

At this stage Newcomer pupils may have up to 500 words in their receptive vocabulary but they are not yet speaking. Some pupils may repeat everything you say but they are not really producing language themselves.

Newcomer pupils at this stage may listen attentively and may even be able to copy words and short phrases. They will be able to respond to pictures and other visuals. They can understand and duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension and may be able to participate in choral or physical activities. Teachers should focus attention on listening comprehension activities and on building a receptive vocabulary.

English language learners at this stage will need much repetition of English. Remember that the school day is exhausting for Newcomer pupils as working in another language requires a huge effort.

Production of language in the early days

During this stage pupils will develop a receptive and active vocabulary of about 1000 words. Pupils can usually speak in one or two word phrases. They can use short phrases that have been memorized although these may not always be used correctly.

Here are some suggestions for working with pupils in this stage of English language learning:

- Ask yes/no and either/or questions.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate understanding non-verbally.
- Accept one or two word responses.
- Give pupils the opportunity to participate in whole class activities.
- Use pictures and objects to support questions and explanations.
- Use simple language structures and avoid colloquialisms.
- Build vocabulary using pictures or picture dictionaries.
- Provide key vocabulary in advance of new topics.
- Provide listening activities.
- Use simple books with predictable text.
- Support learning with diagrams, charts and graphs.
- If appropriate to age, use highly scaffolded writing tasks: labelling, matching, gap-fill, for example.

The rest of this section provides concrete ideas and activities to help foster second language development in these early days.
An ‘All about me’ project provides the teacher with information about the new pupil and can help Newcomer pupils to think about themselves in English. Younger pupils might simply draw or bring in pictures to stick into the book. An adult might talk to the pupil about the pictures and add some basic words. The project is best supported by a buddy or adult, regardless of the pupil’s age.

An ‘All about me’ booklet and teacher’s resource pack is available on the website.
Getting to know you

The activity below may be more suitable for older pupils. You will need a set of ready-made identity cards, like those below. This activity provides opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, interact and share information.

- Distribute reading cards to pupils
- Pupils read
- In pairs, pupils exchange the details on their cards
- Redistribute reading cards. Pupils read a new card
- Pupils complete the blank card with their own details using the scaffold of the reading card
- Pupils then individually present their own details to the group or class, using their reading card as support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Where I live</th>
<th>View from house</th>
<th>Ideal house</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peadar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>Hills, houses</td>
<td>Farmhouse in the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adina</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Block of flats</td>
<td>House at the seaside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beli</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dundalk</td>
<td>Houses, trees</td>
<td>A nice flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mantas</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Randalstown</td>
<td>Fields</td>
<td>Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piotr</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Newry</td>
<td>A big church</td>
<td>A house with a garden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yourself

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Where I live</th>
<th>View from house</th>
<th>Ideal house</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Dictionary activities

The following suggestions are based either on using published dictionaries or on creating personal and content-specific dictionaries.

- **Pair new pupils with partners to talk about specific pictures, as an introduction to starting a new topic.**
- **Ask the language support teacher or other adult to pre-teach key vocabulary, using a picture dictionary.**
- **Send the dictionary, or specific pictures from it, home so that parents can discuss in the home language.**
- **Put specific words from the dictionary on post-its. Ask the pupil to match these to pictures in the book or label a larger picture.**
- **Use picture and word cards derived from the dictionary to play language games. A detailed section on language game is included later.**
- **Use the dictionary to play alphabet-ordering games. Encourage the pupils to make their own word books with specific content pages, for example:***
  - Myself
  - My family
  - My home
  - My school
  - My class
  - My favourite things
  - My body
  - Colours
  - Numbers
  - Food
  - People I know
- **Arrange time for another pupil or adult to help name and, perhaps, label the pictures. Send the book home for parents to talk about it and, perhaps, help label in the home language.**
- **Use the dictionary to play speed word-finding games.**

A number of publishers produce word and picture cards to accompany their dictionaries. It is also possible to find dictionary skill activities and picture dictionaries on the Internet.
Fast word-finding games

Give the pupils a number of seconds to find:

- A specific word
- A word, or words, beginning with a specific letter
- The equivalent word in their home language
- A picture to match the word

Alphabet ordering activities

- Print letters of the alphabet on small cards and ask the pupils to order them
- Give the pupils a list of familiar words and ask them to highlight the first letter
- Give the pupils a list of familiar words to put in alphabetical order.
- Print groups of letters on cards and ask the pupils to put in order: pqrst efg h lmn
- Call out the alphabet quickly and stop at a letter. The pupils have to provide the next one. This can be done in reverse order also
- Identify a word category such as ‘fruit’. The first pupil names something beginning with A, the next B, and so on. Or identify a letter and each pupil names something beginning with that letter
- Activities requiring the pupils to fill in the next or previous letter in writing
- Give pupils alphabet bingo cards with 4-6 familiar letters. Number the boxes. Throw a dice to select the boxes. The pupils must name a word beginning with the letter. If they can say a word, they cover the letter or put an X through it. The winner is the first person to cover all letters. (If the same number comes up again, throw the dice a second time)
Mini-books, personal diaries and ‘my news’

A mini-book is designed to focus on common phrases and vocabulary. The ideal size for a mini-book is A5. It is useful to prepare blank copies in advance, with no more than 5-6 pages including the cover. Write the title and the phrase on each page for the pupil to complete and then illustrate.

**Suggestions for mini-books**

- I am
- I can
- I like
- I don’t like
- I can hear
- I can smell
- I can see
- My friends
- People I know

**Personal diary**

Writing a personal diary gives new pupils an opportunity to express themselves. If the pupils are literate in their first language, encourage them to write in this language. Younger pupils could draw a picture of their day and talk about it with a buddy, an adult or at home.

If possible, it is good to timetable ten minutes a day for diary writing. It may be a useful whole class ‘calm down’ activity after break.
The language corner

In a language corner, pupils have opportunities to choose literacy activities that they enjoy, progressing from listening and speaking to reading and writing. The language corner may be used by those pupils with free time or could be timetabled for use throughout the week. You may wish to add the task of looking after the area to the duties list.

Resources for the language corner:

- Handwriting reference sheets or alphabet cards
- Audio, computer or recording equipment
- Recordings of familiar class songs, poems, prayers and favourite music
- Monolingual, bilingual and picture/photo dictionaries
- Pamphlets, menus, letters, business cards, comics, greeting cards, school newsletter
- Samples of pupils’ finished work
- Stationery such as envelopes, postcards, bookmarks, Post-its™ and labels
- Multilingual resources - eg. language books on countries around the world
- Magazines and catalogues to cut up

Activity prompts

- Listen to a recording
- Record a song or a story or an interview
- Write something for others to read
- Write something for just you
- Make a mini-book
- Practise handwriting
- Choose something to read
- Create a poster, card or menu
- Design your perfect bedroom

In the early days, Newcomer pupils may be encouraged to use their home language in language corner activities.

Some of these activities may be done collaboratively, using a computer.
Songs introduce children naturally to accent, intonation and the rhythm of language. They may also be used to introduce vocabulary and structures.

Songs help children to remember words and structures because they are usually repetitive. Children generally enjoy participating and performing songs, and can accompany songs with actions.

It is important to draw pupils’ attention to the cultural context of songs. Many songs are based on a historical event, or what children typically did in the past, or the experiences of children in everyday life.

It can be useful to use pictures or flashcards and actions to illustrate meaning.

Some ideas for using songs include the following:

- The teacher distributes flashcards. When the word associated with the picture occurs in the song, the pupil holding that card must show it.
- Children listen and add/change a word or verse.
- Children listen and accompany by miming or clapping.
- Children listen to a verse of a song and draw a picture to illustrate it.
- The teacher uses a well-known tune and makes up a song to teach particular vocabulary.
- Many children (and teachers) prefer to chant. Use chant to practise key words and structures, particularly if you are not musically gifted.
- Children may dramatise songs. The teacher gives certain children roles to sing and the rest of the class sings the chorus.
- Children may substitute a word or phrase in a song and create their own song.
- Children simply listen for pleasure.

Don’t forget traditional nursery rhymes. The tune may already be familiar.
Story telling

Children of all ages enjoy a good story. Storytelling is an important aid to language development. For Newcomer pupils, hearing a story read aloud provides experience of a good model of pronunciation and intonation. Pupils should be encouraged to listen actively and to participate in the story, for example to chorus key words or phrases. They may mime the actions or dramatise the story.

Stories that work:
- Traditional and familiar stories, e.g. Little Red Riding Hood
- Stories linked with a theme, e.g. Dear Zoo
- Simple, repetitive stories created or adapted by the teacher

Telling the story:
The teacher is a very important medium in making the story accessible to all through use of gesture, facial expression, and voice changes which encourage pupil involvement.

The teacher may choose
- To enter straight into the story using gestures and pictures to convey meaning, then consolidate the key language in follow up activities, games, art, drama, music
- Lead into the story by pre-teaching key language using flashcards and games

20 story-based activities are provided as suggestions (See pages 68 and 69)

Before telling the story, the teacher should:
- Identify the key language to be delivered through the story
- Identify a range of activities based on using the key language areas which will prepare pupils to understand the story
- Identify a range of activities leading on from the story when the pupils are familiar with it
- Identify any additional materials required for the activity
### 20 activities based on stories

#### Word frequency grid
The teacher distributes picture grids showing the different characters/words from the story. Working in pairs, the pupils listen to the audio recording, or the teacher narrating the story, and tick the grid each time the characters/words are mentioned.

#### Hunt the thimble
One pupil leaves the room and the teacher hides a picture of a character/animal. The pupil returns and searches for the picture. When he/she approaches the hidden picture the class shout the key word(s). When he/she moves away from the hidden picture the class whisper the key word(s).

#### Simon says
This game can be used to reinforce vocabulary or pronunciation and intonation, e.g. Simon says ‘pig’ and the pupils make pig sounds.

#### Card games
Using either the images provided or their own drawings, pupils make mini-flashcards which may be used to play snap, dominoes or memory games.

#### Gradual reveal
Using flashcards, the teacher gradually reveals the picture on the card. Pupils guess who/what is in the picture. This activity can be done against the clock.

#### Kim’s Game
The teacher displays a number of pictures or objects related to the story. The pupils close their eyes. The teacher removes or covers one of them. The pupils guess what has been hidden. The teacher removes a second picture or object. This can be done with teams in competition.

#### Noughts and crosses
Pupils are split into two teams. Pictures of e.g. animals are placed in the nine squares. Pupils must name the animal in the picture before placing an X or an O on the picture. The winning team is the first team to get a row of X’s or O’s.

#### Charades
Pupils mime animals/characters and the rest of the class, divided into two teams, guess.

#### Stepping stones
The teacher puts pictures of, for example, characters/animals on the floor to form stepping stones on an imaginary river. In teams, pupils have to move across the river by naming each character/animal correctly.

#### Chain game
The teacher initiates the chain. The first pupil repeats what has been said and adds another word/phrase, e.g. ‘On the farm I saw …’

#### Hungry wolf (a version of ‘Musical chairs’)
The teacher chooses one pupil as wolf and puts a mask on him/her. He/she leaves the room. The class says ‘Here comes the wolf’. The wolf enters the room saying, ‘I’m hungry, I’m hungry’, and runs towards an empty chair. The pupil with no chair becomes the wolf. (Possible variations – Hungry witch/Hungry giant/Hungry fox)
Starter activities

| Sequencing | The teacher distributes a different picture to each pupil. The pupils listen to the audio recording or the teacher narrating the story and, using the pictures, sequence themselves according to the storyline. |
| Mime | Selected pupils adopt the roles of animals/characters and mime the story to accompany the teacher as it is narrated. |
| Masks | Pupils make masks of the animals/characters by drawing their faces on paper plates. The teacher narrates and selected pupils act out the story while the rest of the class act as the chorus. |
| Puppets | The teacher uses a puppet of an animal/character to introduce and act as narrator for the story. Puppets can be used with teacher narration, audio recording, video recording or interactive books. |
| Drama | Pupils are encouraged to perform the story, using props, for an audience, at a school assembly or concert. The performance can be recorded on video and put on the school website. |
| Role-play | Selected pupils play the characters using a short dialogue from a story clip. |
| Frieze | Pupils make a frieze. They may match the images to text supplied. |
| Creating a picture | Following instructions from the teacher or another pupil, pupils draw what they hear to create a picture. |
| Identity cards | Using ICT, the pupils create identity cards for the characters of a story based on a template and insert appropriate images. Their work could be saved and further details added as the pupils progress. The identity cards could be used for classroom display or e-mailed to a partner. |

Some further suggestions:

**Pupils may:**

- Make a poster of a story
- Mime to accompany a narrated scene from the story
- Sequence pictures as they hear a story
- Predict what happens next
- Hold up, or point to, pictures as the teacher says a related word or phrase
- Mime the scene presented on a card and other must pupils guess the story
- Record the story on disc or video
- Act out the story using props and costume for an audience, e.g. younger pupils, parents
- Add more characters to create their own version and act it out, involving more pupils
- Make a picture dictionary, matching pictures and words and gradually building up a personal picture dictionary for the story
Learning language through games

Games provide the opportunity for meaningful interaction. Pupils should be encouraged to ask and answer questions, agree and disagree, count and check, and practise a range of vocabulary. Games can also be used across the curriculum to practise basic survival vocabulary and to familiarise pupils with rules and routines.

In addition, games:

- Encourage the participation of all pupils
- Create a non-threatening context for less confident pupils
- Develop co-operative skills
- Allow repetition without monotony
- Encourage the use of language for an authentic purpose
- Create a relaxed and ‘fun’ atmosphere

Points to remember:
- Make sure that pupils know the key vocabulary before they start
- Make sure the instructions are clear
- Demonstrate the game first
- Stop the game at the appropriate time
- Have a good follow-up activity

On the following pages there are suggestions for different types of games. While this section is included under Early Classroom Days, these games can obviously be used at any time.

The games fall into the following categories:
- Language skills
- Matching
- Sequencing
- Information gap
- Categorising
- Memory
- Rules and routines
Games for developing language skills

Snakes and ladders
Snakes and ladders can be used simply to practise counting. However, it can also be used to practise vocabulary and language skills:
Make a copy of a blank template.
Insert pictures or words related to a specific topic in the boxes where there are snakes or ladders. When a pupil lands on a square with a word or picture, they must say the relevant word or put the word in a short phrase. If they can do so, they go up the ladder or don’t go down the snake.
An alternative is to use a standard board and have the words or pictures on cards. When the pupil lands on a ‘snake’ or ‘ladder’ square, they turn over a card and name the object in the picture or put the word in a short phrase.

Soft ball
The pupils sit in a circle. The teacher throws a soft ball to a pupil and starts the conversation by saying a phrase or asking a question. The pupil repeats the phrase or answers the question and throws the ball back to the teacher. Alternatively, the pupil could say another phrase or ask another question and throw the ball to another pupil. This activity can be used to get all children involved, to introduce a new pupil, to review recently learnt material, and so on.

Paul Jones
Form two circles, one inner and one outer. The circles move around in opposite directions to music. Stop the music. Pupils must speak to the person opposite, for example: ‘Hello, how are you?’ Then the music starts again.

Bingo
Bingo has been mentioned before in this toolkit. This approach can be used to practise numbers but also many items of vocabulary and grammar or curriculum terms.
Make copies of blank bingo cards and fill in numbers, pictures or words relating to specific vocabulary or topics.
The teacher can play with the whole class, as the caller. For pupils with limited language, it may be advisable to show the picture or word as you say it.
Pupils can also play in small groups. Make several copies of the words or pictures on separate cards. These cards are put in the middle of the table, much like a deck of cards. The pupils turn over the cards in turn. If they can name the object in the picture or put the word they find on the card into a short phrase, they place that card over the matching square on their bingo card.
If you don’t have time to make the extra cards, number the squares on the bingo card 1-6. The pupils use a dice. When they throw a number, they must name the object or put the word in a phrase, from the corresponding square on their bingo card. It they can do so, they place a coloured counter over that square.

Blockbusters
This is a game for two teams which may be played on the board with groups or the whole class. The aim of the game is to get from one side of the grid to the other (horizontally or vertically).
Pupils have to choose a letter on the grid and identify the word/phrase correctly. The first team to get across the grid wins.

Template available on the website.
Matching activities

Pairs
Make pairs of picture or word cards relating to specific vocabulary. Depending on the age and language proficiency of the pupils, you may ask them to match pictures only, words and pictures, or words and words. The pupils play in groups of 2-4 players.

Turn the cards face down on the table. Pupils take turns, to turn over two cards to try to find a matching pair, two pictures, or a word and picture.

This game can be played at whole-class level with enlarged cards or in a number of teams where competition to finish could be introduced between the teams.

Snap
Use the same cards as for pairs but play the game of ‘Snap’. Players can count the number of cards they have at the end. This may be done in English, or pupils from other countries could teach English-speaking children to count in their languages.

Dominoes
Prepare sets of dominoes relating to basic vocabulary or curriculum areas. Play the game in the usual matching manner but the pupils must say the words before laying down their dominoes. This can be played at whole-class or small-group level. Groups will need adult guidance until they fully understand the rules.

Another alternative is one that will practise listening, speaking and reading. Prepare sets of dominoes with basic questions and answers, a question on one side and an answer on the other. Mark the starter domino with the word ‘Start’.

Hand out the dominoes to the pupils but keep the starter yourself. Start by saying, ‘We’ll begin with this domino’ and show it to the group. Then start the sequence off with the trigger question for the start card, for example, ‘Hello, what is your name?’ The pupil with the domino containing the answer to that question must reply, for example, ‘My name is Ben’. He/she then lays the domino down and must ask the question on the other side of it, for example, ‘What age are you?’ The pupil with the next answer must listen and reply, and so the sequence continues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A START</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My name is . . .</td>
<td>Where do you live?</td>
<td>I live in . . .</td>
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<td>Question</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What age are you?</td>
<td>I’m . . . years old</td>
<td>How are you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Template available on the website.
**Sequencing activities**

**Alphabet and number sequencing**
Give the pupils a set of cards with letters, numbers or words and they must put these into alphabetical or numerical order.

**Class chain**
Prepare word or picture cards depicting a sequence: numbers, letters, the production of milk, the production of bread, the life cycle of a frog, and so on.
Give the cards to individual pupils. Make sure that a pupil with less English gets a card.
Ask the pupils to come to the front of the room.
The class must help the pupils at the front to organise the cards into a correct sequence.
A further stage is to have text on the cards which matches pictures on another set of cards. Put the pictures on the board and ask pupils to come up and match the text to the pictures.
Information gap activities

Information gap activities are based on the transfer of information from one pupil (or one team) to another. The task depends on effective communication and is an excellent way of developing general communication skills and the ability to describe accurately.

Co-ordinates
Prepare ‘grid pictures’ for pupils to play in pairs or small groups. Each grid has 4-6 different pictures relating to a specific topic. The pupils must give grid references for their blank squares to find out what is in their partner’s grid: ‘What have you got in square … ?’ They then draw in that picture. Grids are compared at the end.

For younger pupils you might simply number the squares 1-12.

Spot the difference
Although ‘Spot the difference’ can be played individually, there are many more language benefits if pupils play in pairs or small groups, or as a whole class.
Each person or team has a picture relating to a specific topic, with 5-6 differences from the other team. They must ask questions to work out the differences.
Example: Has your house got a red roof?

Listen and draw
This can be played at whole-class or small-group level. The teacher or a pupil has a coloured picture. The others have either a blank page or a line drawing of the image with no colour. The person with the coloured picture describes it and the others must draw or colour in accordance with the description.
Compare pictures at the end.
An alternative is that everyone has exactly the same line drawing and the pupils take it in turn to say what colours to use. Then compare at the end to see if all pictures are the same.

Who am I? What am I?
One pupil has a picture or word on card and the others ask questions to find out what is on the card. Alternatively, put a sticker on the pupil’s back for the others to see and the pupil, who cannot see his/her picture, has to ask questions to find out who or what it is.
It is a good idea to list a possible 10-15 words or pictures for younger pupils, so that the field is narrowed and the game is more focused.
Slow reveal
Put a picture or object related to a specific topic in a folder or bag. Reveal a little at a time. The pupils have to guess what it is. They can make predictions when they think they have some idea.

Hunt the thimble
Pupil A leaves the room. The rest of the class decide where to hide a picture or an object relating to a specific topic. Pupil A returns to the room. The rest of the class say the word for the picture or object in a very low voice, if pupil A is far from it, and more loudly as the pupil gets nearer. This game is excellent for oral language practice as the word is said repeatedly.

Hiding and finding
An alternative to ‘Hunt the thimble’ is to hide an object or picture and ask the class to give directions to help pupil A to find it.
Categorising activities

Beetle drive
This is a game for 2-6 players. Sets of pictures are needed, 6 pictures per set and a dice. The sets of pictures are a collectable group of items such as parts of the body, parts of a plant, classroom objects, rooms of the house and so on.
The sets of cards are numbered 1-6 on the reverse side.
Put all the ones, twos, threes and so on together, face down on the table.
Each player takes a turn to throw the dice. He/she then picks up a card corresponding to the number thrown and tries to get the other 5 cards in that category as the game continues.
If the card picked up does not match the category, it must be placed back on top of the set.
If a player repeats a number he/she must miss a turn.
The winner is the person with a complete set of cards and he/she must name all the items before being declared a winner.

‘Go fish’

This game is for 2-6 players. Sets of pictures are needed, 3-6 pictures per set. The sets are a collectable group of items as above. The players need a sheet showing what is in each set, either in a list or in pictures.

All the cards are shuffled and then each player is given 5 cards. The deck is set in the centre. Players sort their cards according to the categories listed and place any matching category cards face down beside them.
The first player asks the player to the left if they have a specific card. For example, if they have one or more fruit cards, they might ask, ‘Have you got an apple?’

If the person to the left has an apple, they must hand it over. If not, they say, ‘Go fish’. The first player must ‘go fish’ in the deck of cards in the centre. If the card lifted doesn’t match any category, it is replaced.

If it matches, the player keeps the card.

The winner is the first person to get a full set; alternatively, the game can be extended until all cards are used up. The winner is then the person with the most cards.
Memory activities

Kim’s game
Put a number of pictures on the board or objects on a desk. Make sure that you name each object or picture for pupils with less English. Give the pupils 10 seconds to memorise them. Ask them to cover their eyes and then remove one. They have to guess what’s missing. You can cover more than one picture.

What’s in the bag? What’s in the folder?
Put a number of objects in a bag or pictures in a folder, one by one. Remember to name them as you put them in. Then ask pupils if they can remember what you put in.

Chain games
Chain games are good for practising verbs, constructions, prepositions and word families. The teacher starts with a statement, pupils in turn repeat the statement and add one more item. Some suggestions:
I went to town and I bought ……….
I’m making a cake and I’m putting in ……….
Last night I saw a ……… in the garden
Reinforcing rules and routines

Simon says
This is a good game to practise rules and routines. Pupils new to English will hear the instruction and observe the other pupils following it.

Miming game
One pupil is given a card with an instruction in writing or in picture form. They must mime this for the others to guess.

Follow the leader
The teacher or another pupil leads the line and the pupils must follow copying the actions. It is important to say the instruction as you do the action so that pupils new to English can learn to associate the instruction and the action.

Kim’s game, Bingo, Hunt the thimble, Pairs, Snap
Pictures relating to rules and routines can be used for Kim’s game, Bingo, Hunt the thimble, Pairs and Snap. These help familiarise pupils with rules and routines.
Handy teaching references

You may wish to keep some things close by for quick improvised references throughout your day. The following may be useful in supporting curriculum access:

- A map, atlas or globe
- A picture/photo dictionary (refer to the dictionary section)
- A children’s encyclopaedia
- Topic-specific pictures and charts, diagrams, mind-maps and flow-charts
- A calendar
- Signposts (see below)

Signposting lessons

This simply means making the activities that you have planned clear to the pupils. You can do this by using flashcards.

For example, you may have 4 activities in your lesson:

- Listening activity to begin
- Some group or pair work
- Written activity
- Correction of work

These can be represented by 4 pictures:

1. [Image of a boy listening]
2. [Image of two children working on a book]
3. [Image of a boy writing]
4. [Image of a tick]

Pupils with limited English now have some idea of what is going to happen and, as a result, they will feel more secure. You should remove the pictures as each phase of the activity ends. This makes the progression of a lesson clear to everybody.

Flash cards available on the website.
Key Visuals

- Can be entertaining
- Help pupils to memorise information
- Provide simple and immediate references for pupils
- Introduce, reinforce and revise language
- Promote active participation and learning
- Can improve sequencing skills
- May be used for group, pair and whole class activities
- May elicit a verbal response
- Create opportunities for games, for example card and interactive board games
- Inspire creativity: pupils may create their own visuals in response to listening, speaking and storytelling activities
- Have sensory appeal, which may be combined with tactile, hearing- and movement-based support
- May elicit a non-verbal response

Inclusive teaching strategies
Maintaining Interest

Pre-teaching/prior knowledge
- Using pictures to introduce and reinforce key vocabulary
- Memory games:
  - Kim’s game
  - Slow reveal
  - Pairs
- Oral starters: Large picture related to topic on board. Ask class to say what they know about it. Write key words around picture.
- Quickwrites: Give groups or pairs a large page. Display word and picture. Groups write word in centre of page and write or draw ideas around the page that are related to the word/picture. Alternatively, the page is passed around the group and each child writes or draws something.

Active listening
- Give younger children a picture of a character in the story. When they hear the character mentioned, they hold up a picture.
- Distribute colour cards. When pupils hear their colour, they raise the card.
- Keep children involved through repetition, mime, counting, and choral work.
- Hide the next page and invite pupils to guess what happens next.
- Using a set of pictures or key words, pupils sequence these as/after they hear a story.
- Give pupils a sheet with a selection of pictures or words. They tick what they hear in the story.
- Listen and mime
- Listen and draw

Whole/class practice
Oral practice
- Oral gap fill (pupils supply the next word or phrase)
- Retell story or poem
- Recite poems and clap rhythm (whole class activity)
- Making new poems/songs with frame provided, for example:
  - The mouse eats cheese, cheese, cheese
  - The cat eats fish, fish, ______
  - The bird eats ______, _______, _______
  - The ______ eats ______, ______, ______
- True/false

Working with pictures/text (talk through processes)
- Distribute pictures or text on cards to pupils, for example days of week/letters of alphabet. Pupils must put in the correct order.
- Group/pair discussion matching pictures and text, titles and text, questions and answers.
- Cloze procedure orally as a whole class activity

Consolidation
- Pupils write or draw three things they remember from the lesson
- Class discussion, teacher summarises key points on board
- Say or draw one thing you enjoyed in the lesson
- Match 4-5 key words from the lesson to pictures or definitions
- Record any/all of the above in Home School Journal
- Record

Paired work
- Picture sequencing using guided worksheet
- Cutting and matching pictures or pictures and words/short phrases
- Pupils create storyboards together
- Pupils explain favourite part of story to partner
- Sorting activities with pictures or words based on size, colour, plants, animals, weather, etc.
- Information gap activity
- Picture bingo
- Cloze procedure
Demonstrating understanding

In their early days in school, pupils with little English will have limited capacity to communicate orally, but they may well understand some of the lesson. It is important to find ways to allow them to demonstrate their understanding, other than by writing or speaking. The activities below suggest how this might be done.

By matching:
- Picture to picture
- Picture to word
- Picture to shortphrase
- Word to word
- Title to text
- Labels to diagram

By drawing:
- A character, a place, a map
- Favourite part of a story/lesson
- Diagram
- Storyboard

By making charts, using pictures:
- Flow chart
- Mind map
- Simple graphs

By sorting pictures or objects:
- Size, colour, shape
- Plants and animals
- Metal and nonmetal
- Weather and seasons

By making a poster with pictures:
- My favourite things
- My favourite character
- Pollution
- Recycling
- Seasons

By using jigsaw methods:
- Put pieces of a picture together and add 4-5 labels
- Put pieces of diagram together and add labels. For example, parts of plant, body, digestive system …

By labelling:
- Use Post-its™ to label 5-6 things in a book or picture
- Write labels on picture or diagram
- Write words on ready-made sticky labels and ask pupil to place on picture or diagram

Working alone may be intimidating for a new pupil. Working with a partner allows opportunities to use specific language and to check understanding.
Group work

Why?

- Pupils benefit from observing learning strategies used by their peers
- Pupils benefit from hearing language modelled and used for a specific purpose
- It promotes face-to-face verbal interaction in a meaningful context
- It takes the pressure off individuals because responsibility is shared
- Pupils are encouraged to show understanding, express opinions and feelings, and acknowledge the contributions of others
- Pupils learn how to take turns
- Pupils learn how to assume responsibility for their allocated role within the group

Ideas for providing a ‘safe’ environment for group work

1. Agree the rules for group work with the class and re-establish these each time they work in groups
2. Select groups carefully so that pupils with less English will experience good models of language, behaviour, and learning
3. Assign roles within groups so that each person has a task: time keeper, collator, illustrator, scribe, reporter, chair. Two pupils may take on the same role.
4. Limit the materials to increase the need to share
5. Give each group task instructions (visual if possible)
6. Break the task down into shorter activities
7. Provide a framework for recording ideas
8. Place a time limit
9. Leave enough time for oral feedback

Possible difficulties

- Newcomer pupils may not have had any experience of group work
- Group work may be intimidating and some pupils may be reluctant to participate
- Some pupils may not understand the value of group work
Your space ship has crashed! Your group must decide on which five objects you would salvage from your craft to complete the 300km journey to the moon base.

In your group, agree on five things to take on your 300km journey to the moon base. You have 20 minutes to explain to each other why you would like to keep or leave each item.

- a radio
- a rope
- water
- a torch
- a first aid box
- a parachute
- a compass
- matches
- food
- scissors

Enlarge and cut out these pictures separately to hand around the group.
Sample activity: Our Museum (upper primary)

Your group is in charge of a local museum. Your museum has four objects from Viking times, but has space to put only two of these on display.
Your group has to:

- Decide on two objects
- Make a large drawing of the objects
- Use the questions below to help you explain why you chose them

You have 15 minutes. Then you will have to report back to the class.

1. We chose to display the ___________________________________________________________________
2. People will look at this because
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
3. If people ask us about this object we will tell them these things:
   It is ________________________________________________________________________________
   You can ______________________________________________________________________________
   It show us ____________________________________________________________________________
Maintaining good communication with home is vital, but this may be difficult when there is a language barrier. The following suggestions can make communication a little easier.

**Explaining routines**

Some class routines are culture-specific and may be misunderstood. It is important to explain these in the initial interview with parents by:

- Talking through the class rules and expectations. You may prefer to present this as a mini-book, using photographs of pupils working in typical ways
- Explain the importance of attendance
- Talking through the Home-School Journal. Show parents how they can help their child by using their home language
- Walking the parents around the class, showing them how you manage rewards, morning routines (such as greetings, calendar work, homework, money collection), and group work
- Showing where PE takes place and what the PE kit looks like. Explain when it takes place, using the visual timetable
- Explaining trips and visits by showing visual letters (see page 86) and the calendar for the school year
- Explaining the value of group work because it may be considered inappropriate by parents from other countries
Overview of the year head

An overview of the year groupings, curriculum, topics for the year ahead and homework will help parents to support their child and makes links with prior learning.

What we will do in school each month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sept - Oct</th>
<th>Nov-Dec</th>
<th>Jan-Feb</th>
<th>March-April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>World around us</strong></td>
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Template available on the website.

Include pictures to explain the curriculum. A wide selection of illustrations and clipart may be found on-line.
Home-School Journal

Parents of newcomer pupils expect that their child will have homework. It is important, therefore, to assign homework to them even though their English may be very limited.

Younger pupils may take home picture books and discuss these with their parents in the home language. Older pupils may label, draw, fill in, tick, colour, or sequence pictures. Homework may simply be to talk about, illustrate or, for older pupils, translate the key words in the Home-School Journal.

What is a Home-School Journal?
This is a booklet into which you put the pupil’s visual timetable and key pictures or words for the work ahead.

It may contain a section where teachers write comments on pupil progress. Parents may use this booklet to communicate with the teacher. It may also contain a homework section, so that all essential information is in one place.

Why use a Home-School Journal?
It provides the pupil and parents with information on the work to be covered in school. The pupil is then more ready to participate. It also involves parents more fully in their child’s education and encourages both pupils and parents to discuss school and make connections with prior learning experiences.

Dear Parent or Guardian

This is __________ talking and listening book.

In this book you will see some pictures and words about the things we are going to talk about in class.

Please talk about these at home in English or in your home language.

If you have any questions, please write them in the book.

Thank you

Key words | Geography | Weather
--- | --- | ---
English word | Picture | My language
the sun | | |
the rain | | |
the wind | | |
the snow | | |
the frost | | |
stormy | | |
**Visual letters**

You may find it helpful to use visual letters when communicating with newcomer parents. It is important that these should not be seen as patronising; they are intended to meet a very critical need on the part of the parents as well as the school. Therefore, it should be explained to parents that these letters are used to help everybody, before one is sent home for the first time.

The best way of sending a visual letter is to photocopy it onto the back of the original letter so that the parent receives both versions.

When visual letters have been prepared for different purposes, it is a good idea to put a master copy into a shared folder, or keep a file centrally at the school office. Then the letters will be readily available for different purposes throughout the school year.

**Typical information includes:**

- Book fair
- Nurse
- Sports day
- Confirmation
- Optician / Eye test
- First Confession / Holy Communion
- School report with symbols
- School closures
- School trips
- Prize day or night
- Permission for photo
- Hearing test
- Permission to provide extra help
- Parent meeting with an interpreter
- Dentist
- Feis
- Concert
- Internet permission
- Religious service
- Attendance

Translated letters covering the above areas and others are available on the Inclusion and Diversity Service website: [www.eani.org.uk/ids](http://www.eani.org.uk/ids)

---

**Home–school communication**

If parents are failing to communicate with the school when, for example, a child is absent regularly due to a medical condition, it is necessary to find an effective way of supporting communication (e.g. informal interpretation, formal interpretation, Home-School liaison, use of Home-School Journal, blank template for parent to fill in details).

Visual and translated letters available on the website.
Communication with home

Parent - Teacher meetings

- Arranging parent-teacher meetings
- Communicating progress

It is most important to achieve a means of communicating with newcomer parents, as they may feel excluded from their child’s education due to their own lack of proficiency in English.

Points to remember for parent-teacher meetings:

- Parent-teacher meetings may not be a feature of some education systems and parents may feel that something is wrong if they are invited to the school. It is important to explain the purpose and importance of such meetings during the initial meeting with parents.

- It may be difficult for some parents to attend meetings due to working patterns. Is it possible to arrange alternative meeting times?

- Some parents do not feel that they could cope with a meeting. If it is possible to arrange for interpreters to be available, it is important to communicate this at the initial meeting with parents.

- Do not ask another pupil to interpret.

- Newcomer parents may not be familiar with the routines of parent-teacher meetings, such as where to go, where to wait and so on. Make sure that there is a helper to smooth the way.

- Create a welcoming environment in the room and remember that the parent will be depending on visual cues from the teacher.

- Set aside additional time for interpreting and extra explanations. Remember that newcomer parents are new to the education system and may not be aware of some of the most basic routines and procedures. Consider whether there is anything that you may need to explain.

- Have some examples of the child’s work, such as the CEFR progress record, books or resources that are used, and the pictorial report form shown on the following page.

Encourage parents to:

- Use their home language with their children
- Talk to their children about what they are learning using the Home-School Journal. In doing so, parents can keep contact with what is happening in school and understand what is important to their child
- Contact the school if there are any concerns

Available on website: 

Template for visual report
Parenting Top Tips: Translated guidance
Moving On
Safe and secure in their new environment, Newcomer pupils must be supported with language development and curriculum access. Teachers therefore require a knowledge of the skills involved in language learning and how to develop these and an awareness of the stages of language development. It is important to plan for inclusion to ensure curriculum access for all.

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<tr>
<td>- Communication of progress to parents</td>
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### On website

- The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)
  - Primary benchmarking kits
  - Booklet about the CEFR
  - Pupil record template lower primary
  - Pupil record template

- Developing Language Skills
  - Listening templates
  - Reading templates
  - Speaking frames
  - Talking and writing templates
  - Dictionary skills leaflet
  - Guidance on using dual language books

- Planning for language learning
  - Sample planning for language development based on CEFR levels for lower, middle and upper primary

- Ongoing Assessment
  - Observation sheets
  - CEFR pupil records
  - CEFR benchmarks and approaches
  - Visual report template
While pupils typically develop basic survival and conversational language skills within two years, it will take longer for Newcomer pupils to operate on a par with their English speaking peers in the use of academic English. This is described as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

Cummins 1979

The base of the iceberg represents CALP: the learner’s cognitive and linguistic awareness needed to fully access the curriculum. Language development needs are often masked by well-developed conversational skills. The model below outlines some expectations based on the CEFR indicating what you might expect of a pupil at this level and how long it might take to develop this level of language proficiency.

This section looks at stages of language development, how to develop Newcomer pupils’ cognitive academic language proficiency and how to use this knowledge to monitor language acquisition.
The Common European Framework of Reference

What is the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)?

The CEFR is a set of global benchmarks for language proficiency. It distinguishes five communicative skills: listening; reading; spoken interaction; spoken production; writing. There are six levels of proficiency within each skill:

A1 Breakthrough
A2 Waystage
B1 Threshold
B2 Vantage
C1 Effective Operational Proficiency
C2 Mastery

The benchmarks and descriptors on the following pages are derived from the first three levels of the CEFR. There is a working towards A1 level which teachers in lower primary may find useful. The benchmarks have been adjusted from the CEFR to take into account the wide range of communicative situations that are typical of primary classrooms. They are based on the first three levels and reflect the minimum proficiency required for full participation in mainstream classrooms.

As a general guide, most children will reach most benchmarks at A1 level within their first year in the school. Most children will reach most benchmarks within A2 level over 2-3 years and B1 level over 4-6/7 years. However, as with all children, progress will vary depending on previous schooling, levels of literacy in the home language and cognitive ability.

The framework recognises partial competency. This means that a child may be working towards a level in one skill such as listening but towards a different level in another skill. Most children will develop different skills at different rates. For example, progress within the reading and writing benchmarks may be delayed in lower primary or where a child has limited literacy in his / her home language.

The benchmarks within a skill area (L, S, R, W) from levels A2—C2 build on the benchmarks for that skill from the previous level. Therefore a child could not be working towards A2 listening for example, unless he / she were fully competent in all benchmarks within A1 listening.

For productive skills (speaking and writing) bear in mind: At level A1 the pupil is beginning to produce 1-2 word utterances. At A2 he / she is beginning to produce short phrases but there are mistakes, however the meaning is clear. At B1 the pupil is producing reasonably accurate phrases about familiar concrete topics and is showing ability to use a greater variety of tenses with regular and common irregular verbs.

A booklet providing more detail and outlining examples for each of the benchmarks is available in the folder for this section on the website.
### Common European Framework of Reference: Global Benchmarks of Communicative Proficiency for Primary Learners: Levels working towards A1 - B1

#### Levels:
- **Working towards A1** (May be useful in lower primary)
- **A1 Breakthrough**
- **A2 Waystage**
- **B1 Threshold**

#### Listening

**The pupil can**

- Respond to spoken word non verbally
- Respond to simple questions or directions supported by visual cues/ gestures/ objects
- Show awareness of objects of reference e.g. music signifies tidy up time.
- Distinguish between, identify or repeat sounds: clapping, clicking, and tapping
- Keep a steady beat e.g. marching to a song or nursery rhyme
- Follow a single step routine instruction

**§**

- Understand simple questions and instructions when teachers and other pupils speak very slowly and clearly
- Show awareness of objects of reference e.g. music signifies tidy up time.
- Distinguish between, identify or repeat sounds: clapping, clicking, and tapping
- Keep a steady beat e.g. marching to a song or nursery rhyme
- Follow a single routine instruction

**§**

- Respond to sign language or symbols
- Recognise a sequence e.g. a series of pictures
- Understand basic concepts of print e.g. front and back, left to right, turns pages
- Recognise own name accompanied by photo
- Recognise own name
- Differentiate one object / picture / letter / word from another

**§**

- Recognise the letters of the alphabet (sounds)
- Recognise the letters of the alphabet (names)
- Recognise and under stand basic signs and simple notices in the school
- Recognise and understand basic words on labels in the classroom
- Recognise and understand basic words on a simple poster in the classroom
- Identify basic familiar words and phrases in a new piece of text

**§**

- Recognise and understand frequently used words relating to him/herself and family, classroom activities and routines, school instructions and procedures, friends and play
- Understand the main point in short, clear simple messages and announcements
- Follow a general level topics covered in the mainstream class provided key concepts and vocabulary have been studied in advance and there is appropriate visual support
- Follow and understand a story if it is read slowly and clearly with visual support such as facial expression, gestures and pictures

**§**

- Understand the main points of topics that are presented clearly in the mainstream classroom
- Understand the main points of stories that are read aloud in the mainstream classroom
- Understand a large part of a short film on a familiar topic provided that it is age-appropriate
- Understand detailed instructions given in all school contexts (gym, playground, classroom) when delivery is clear
- Follow classroom talk between two or more native speakers, only occasionally needing to request clarification

#### Reading

**The pupil can**

- Respond to sign language or symbols
- Recognise a sequence e.g. a series of pictures
- Understand basic concepts of print e.g. front and back, left to right, turns pages
- Recognise own name accompanied by photo
- Recognise own name
- Differentiate one object / picture / letter / word from another

**§**

- Recognise the letters of the alphabet (sounds)
- Recognise the letters of the alphabet (names)
- Recognise and understand basic signs and simple notices in the school
- Recognise and understand basic words on labels in the classroom
- Recognise and understand basic words on a simple poster in the classroom
- Identify basic familiar words and phrases in a new piece of text

**§**

- Read and understand very short and simple texts that contain a high proportion of previously learnt vocabulary on familiar subjects (e.g., class texts, familiar stories)
- Find specific predictable information in simple material
- Use the alphabet to find particular items in lists (e.g., a name in a telephone book, simple dictionary)

**§**

- Read and understand the main points in texts encountered in the mainstream class, provided the thematic area and key vocabulary are already familiar
- Read and understand descriptions of events, feelings and wishes
- Use comprehension questions to find specific answers in a piece of text
- Use key words, diagrams and illustrations to support reading comprehension
- Follow clearly written instructions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken Interaction</th>
<th>A1 Breakthrough</th>
<th>A2 Way-stage</th>
<th>B1 Threshold</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pupil can ……</td>
<td>Greet, say please and thank you with prompting</td>
<td>Greet, say please and thank you</td>
<td>Ask for attention in class</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make a request through visual cues / gestures / objects</td>
<td>Ask for directions to another place nearby in the school</td>
<td>Greet, leave, request and thank appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond non-verbally to staff and other children within the classroom setting</td>
<td>Respond non-verbally to basic directions to a place nearby in the school when the other person supplements with signs or gestures</td>
<td>Respond with confidence to familiar questions clearly expressed about family, friends, school work etc. But is NOT always able to keep the conversation going</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to basic questions through facial expression and gestures</td>
<td>Give simple answers to basic questions when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help</td>
<td>Generally sustain a conversational exchange with a peer in the classroom when carrying out a collaborative/paired learning activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to visual cues / gestures / objects to make a choice verbally or non-verbally</td>
<td>Convey immediate needs</td>
<td>Express personal feelings or give an opinion in a simple way (e.g. why I like….)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convey immediate needs using visual cues / gestures / objects</td>
<td>Make basic requests in the classroom or playground and respond appropriately to the basic requests of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoken Production</td>
<td>With prompting will use one or more words to respond to simple questions</td>
<td>Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where he/she lives and people he/she knows</td>
<td>Use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms his/her family, daily routines and activities, and plans for future</td>
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<tr>
<td>The pupil can ……</td>
<td>Repeat modelled sentences</td>
<td>Use very limited number of grammatical structures (e.g. My name is…)</td>
<td>Use simple grammatical structures that have been learnt in class (frequent mistakes with tenses, personal pronouns, prepositions)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Begin to join in with a familiar rhyme or story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Make marks on paper with a range of materials</td>
<td>Copy his/her name</td>
<td>Write a diary or news account with accuracy and coherence</td>
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<tr>
<td>The pupil can ……</td>
<td>Convey meaning through personal drawings</td>
<td>Write his / her name independently</td>
<td>Write a short letter describing an event or situation</td>
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<td>Hold writing tools effectively</td>
<td>Copy words and short phrases that are being learnt in class</td>
<td>Write a brief summary of a book or film</td>
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<td>Make short sentences</td>
<td>Copy some words and short phrases independently</td>
<td>Write an account of his/her feelings</td>
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<td>Copy labels on a picture</td>
<td>Copy labels on a picture</td>
<td>Spell and show basic punctuation accurately enough to be followed most of the time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write some labels independently</td>
<td>Copy short sentences</td>
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(If appropriate to the age of the pupil)
## DESCRIPTORS FOR SPOKEN LANGUAGE USE (These are not benchmarks and are for guidance only.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANGE</th>
<th>ACCURACY</th>
<th>FLUENCY</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COHERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him / herself with some hesitation or inaccurate phrasing on topics such as family, school, hobbies and interests, holidays, and everyday events</td>
<td>Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used structures and patterns associated with more predictable, everyday situations</td>
<td>Can keep going comprehensively, even though pausing to check grammar and structure or to self-correct, especially in longer stretches of free production</td>
<td>Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations</td>
<td>Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes</td>
<td>Can make him / herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident</td>
<td>Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his / her own accord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td>Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations</td>
<td>Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire</td>
<td>Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to check communication</td>
<td>Can ask and answer questions about personal details</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### DESCRIPTORS FOR WRITTEN LANGUAGE USE (These are not benchmarks and are for guidance only.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANGE</th>
<th>GRAMMAR</th>
<th>ACCURACY</th>
<th>SPELLING / PUNCTUATION</th>
<th>COHERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Can use a lot of vocabulary additional to basic items. Confidently combines and extends vocabulary in free writing</td>
<td>Uses a wide range of grammatical structures with confidence and control. Basic tenses generally accurate. Errors generally confined to attempts to use new or unfamiliar patterns.</td>
<td>Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used structures and patterns. Use of tenses, pronouns, prepositions, word order etc….generally accurate.</td>
<td>Spelling generally accurate with errors confined to attempts to use new less familiar terms. Accurate layout, range of punctuation, and use of capitals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>Can use an increasing amount of basic vocabulary. Has no difficulty in recalling and reproducing basic items of vocabulary.</td>
<td>Uses simple familiar grammatical structures correctly. Still makes basic mistakes with tenses, pronouns, prepositions, word order etc….</td>
<td>Can structure sentences from a picture or other prompt with accuracy. Can write familiar words and short phrases accurately.</td>
<td>Spelling of familiar words, use of simple punctuation (such as capitals and full stops) generally accurate. Some minor errors. Can spell some less familiar words with phonetic accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td>Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.</td>
<td>Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire.</td>
<td>Can copy or fill in very basic words and short phrases accurately.</td>
<td>Can copy words accurately. Can spell some very simple familiar words. Punctuation may not be accurate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The four skills of language learning are:

- listening
- speaking
- reading
- writing

The language skills are all inter-related and cannot be developed in isolation. It is likely, however, that they will not all develop at the same rate. Teachers need to consider each language skill and how it may be developed.

Points to think about

**Listening**

Pupils in the early stages will understand much more than they can say, so non-verbal responses are very important. The more opportunities provided to hear the language, the better. Each opportunity that a pupil has to hear English spoken in the classroom is also an opportunity for the pupil to acquire new language and absorb the sounds and patterns used.

**Speaking**

In order to use language effectively and in meaningful interaction, Newcomer pupils will use teachers, other pupils and adults as models for their own oracy development. Planned oral activities in the classroom are of particular importance.

If a pupil has not heard certain sounds within the first few years of learning to speak, he/she may find it extremely difficult to hear or reproduce these sounds when taught at a later stage. In fact, he/she may never be able to reproduce these sounds accurately.

**Reading**

Approaches taken to develop reading skills depend on pupils’ literacy background in the home language. It is a good idea to find out as much as possible about previous educational experiences. If the home language uses the Roman alphabet and the pupil has already learned how to read, then the focus should be on reading for meaning. It is not necessary to teach a full phonics programme from the beginning. Be aware that there may be different word order and sound/symbol relationships in different languages.

If the home language does not use the Roman alphabet, then the teacher will need to spend time on this. The methods used to teach any child to read are appropriate. It’s important to be aware that we use world and cultural knowledge to understand what we read. Newcomer pupils may not have the cultural knowledge assumed in some reading materials.

It is also important to choose engaging and age-appropriate materials when teaching basic literacy to older pupils.

**Writing**

When learning to write, pupils have to pay attention to pencil control, the relationship between sound and spelling, the direction of English script, word order and the message.

Pupils will make mistakes with handwriting, spelling and word order. These can be corrected over time and with practice.

Praise all efforts, no matter how small, and display as much of the pupils’ writing as possible.

Written work may provide stimuli for other activities such as reading or oral presentation and discussion.

Pupils need time to listen to others talking about writing and to talk about their own writing.
## Listening

Understanding what is heard depends on pre-existing as well as new knowledge. **Difficulties encountered when listening and suggested activities to help.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Difficulties</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguishing sounds</strong></td>
<td>• Make comparisons with sounds in home language</td>
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<td>• Sound bingo for initial sounds, rhyming sounds, practising vocabulary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sorting objects or pictures according to sound</td>
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<td>• Listen and identify the correct picture/letter</td>
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<td>• Identify the odd one out</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use recordings and age-appropriate software</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Following instructions</strong></td>
<td>• Support instructions with gestures or pictures</td>
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<td>• Write instructions on the board</td>
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<td>• Give one instruction at a time</td>
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<td>• Ask another pupil to clarify</td>
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<td>• Use pictorial clues along with written instructions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Listen and do, draw, or colour activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding oral introductions to lessons</strong></td>
<td>• Send a picture or book home that is related to the new topic, or ask another adult to talk it through in advance</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Send key words and pictures home in Home-School Journal</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pre-teach key concepts and vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use visuals and activities suggested under ‘Inclusive Teaching Strategies’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short concentration span</strong></td>
<td>• Give younger pupils a picture of a character or object in the story. Each time they hear or see the character or object, they hold up the picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Give pupils colour cards. When they hear or see something in the story that is that colour, they raise the card; ask them to explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difficulty following unfamiliar topics or stories</strong></td>
<td>• Keep pupils involved by inviting, at intervals, someone to show something, ‘Show me the …’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Involve pupils in repetition, actions, and so on.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask older pupils to use a sequencing sheet to put appearance of characters, objects or events in order</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Give pupils a page with a selection of characters or objects. They have to tick or circle what they hear in the story or account</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Listen and mime the actions in the text</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide frameworks to encourage listening for gist or a specific purpose:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Circle the correct picture(s)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Put pictures in order</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• True/false questions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Gap-fill</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spot the mistakes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Multiple choice questions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Pupils find it difficult to hear sounds that do not exist in their home language and will need extra practice and time with these.**

**It is a good idea to record some stories, rhymes, songs and listening activities, so that the pupils can practise independently.**
**Speaking**

Teachers can support pupils when they are starting to speak English by:

- Modelling the language needed
- Repeating full and correct phrases if the pupil uses incomplete or incorrect ones, e.g. ‘Me go toilet?’ ‘Oh, you would like to go to the toilet?’
- Talking through actions and activities
- Encouraging all efforts made to speak English, no matter how small
- Listening carefully when pupils speak and not interrupting to correct small errors

**Difficulties encountered when speaking and suggested activities to help**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhythm and intonation</strong></td>
<td>- Use familiar songs, rhymes and chants at whole-class level, in groups and in pairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Encourage groups to perform and dramatise whole or parts of familiar rhymes and chants</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Encourage groups to make up their own rhymes and chants and present to class</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Encourage pupils to clap or click in rhythm, for example to practise syllable stress</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Provide recordings with familiar songs, rhymes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Choral speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
<td>- Provide opportunities for activities such as sound lotto, sorting games, hunt the thimble, pass the message, to give pupils time to try out and play with new sounds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Show pupils how to articulate difficult sounds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Praise all attempts at new sounds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Correct pronunciation by repeating the correct sound and asking the pupil to do so, from time to time. However, over-correcting and interrupting can discourage pupils.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Play games such as ‘I spy with my little eye’ or ‘I hear with my little ear’. Rather than say the first letter, make the first sound, such as ‘something beginning with sh…’. These games can be with the class, in groups or in pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence structure and grammatical mistakes</strong></td>
<td>- Provide opportunities for pupils to hear sentences modelled correctly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Correct mistakes by repeating the correct structure, sometimes asking the pupil to repeat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Provide opportunities for pupils to play around with words and sentences through age-appropriate software programmes, magnetic boards, cut-up sentences, creating songs and poems</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Practise sentence ordering activities at whole-class and group level using enlarged words on cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusting speech to appropriate register: formal/informal, adults/peers</strong></td>
<td>- Provide opportunities to hear speech modelled for specific purposes: the teacher, other pupils, recordings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Correct register by repeating phrases using correct register</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Provide frameworks to scaffold talk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Use drama to model register for specific contexts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Send pupil and buddy on messages to other adults in the school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Focus on formality and repeat phrases during registration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*It can be very difficult to produce sounds that do not exist in the home language, for example ‘th’ or the glottal stop.*
**Reluctance to speak/keeping only to familiar topics**

- Ask another pupil or adult to practise key words and phrases with the newcomer pupil in advance of new topics by:
  - talking about a picture or picture book
  - practising a specific set of words or phrases
  - helping with illustration or translation of new words
- Encourage repetition
- Circle time/circle games.
- Encourage talk with same-language partner or peer mentor if possible
- Accept and praise all attempts to speak
- Provide puppets or masks
- Provide opportunities to hear phrases modelled many times before asking the pupil to contribute. For example, ask the same question of a number of pupils before asking those with less English
- Provide opportunities for pupils to work in small groups and pairs. They may feel more confident in this setting and have more opportunity to talk and question. More able pupils can report back to the class.
- Partner news telling
- Provide opportunities for language games
- Allow time for pupils to talk about topics of interest: favourite group, sport, toy …
- Use mini-books as a stimulus for talk with the teacher, another adult or peer
- Record own mini-books, news, stories or presentations
- Provide frameworks to scaffold talk

**Sequencing thoughts**

- Encourage pair work so that pupils can talk through ideas with partner first
- Thought trains: The teacher begins with the first thought and pupils in turn add new thoughts. Pupils may pass if they can’t add anything
- Chain games: ‘I went to town and I bought …’
  ‘On my way to school I saw …’
- Use storyboards, slide show stories and flowcharts so that pupils can illustrate ideas first and then talk about them
- Oral sequencing prompts: First, second, third, next, then
- Provide frameworks to scaffold thoughts

---

New pupils may not speak for some time. This period could last for one to three terms and is known as the ‘Silent Period’. If the pupil does not wish to speak, that is OK. They will still listen and absorb a lot of English and speak when they are ready.
Sample frameworks to scaffold talk

Pupils with less proficiency in English may prepare orally or in writing with a partner, other adult or at home.

Tell us what you made

Pupils show object

What is it called?
What does it look like?
How do you use it?
What do you like best about it?
Anything else?

Tell us what you made

Pupils show object

We made a ............................................................
It is ............................................................................
(big, small, round, long, colour etc.)
To use it you have to..............................................
The thing I like best about it is..............................
....................................................................................
One other thing about it is.................................
....................................................................................

Storyboard template for thought sequencing

Title

1  2  3  4

Less structured scaffold for older pupils

My favourite person

My favourite person is ..........................................
He/she is from..........................................................
He/she is ..............................................................
He/she has ............................................................

Some interesting things about his person
I like ............................................................................
....................................................................................

Pupils could use a picture or something related to the topic as a further prompt.

Some of the templates provided for the reading section may be useful as a stimulus for speaking activities.
Pupils may wish to write ideas in the smaller boxes or simply use pictures.

Templates available on website.
Let’s talk

This is a time set aside in the day when children talk in pairs about a particular topic. The topic may be chosen by the teacher or the pupils.

**Procedure**
- Organise pairs and allocate each person a number, either 1 or 2
- Explain the activity, for example: We’re going to do some partner talking. In a minute I am going to ask you to talk about a topic I’ve chosen for today. This is a time when we have to remember the rules for speaking and listening
- Introduce the topic and nominate one child in each pair to share their ideas first, for example: Partner 1, I want you to tell your partner what you did before you came to school this morning
- Allow 2-3 minutes for the children to complete sharing, then instruct the other child to have a turn
- Invite 2-3 children to share their partner’s information with the whole group. This gives practise in moving between first to third person narratives
- When children are familiar with the news sharing procedure, they may come up with self-initiated topics

**Some ideas for children with limited English:**
- Give time to prepare a picture or 2-3 short sentences with an adult or peer prior to the session
- Use a speaking frame
- Make sure the partner speaks first
- The child may not be able to contribute but may well understand what their partner said. They may wish to record this in a drawing. The partner can then help put 2-3 words or phrases with the drawing
- Include the child in a group of 3 and allow him/her to listen

**Personal information:**
- Where I live
- My family
- My routine
- My home/my school in…

**Likes and dislikes:**
- Two things I like to do in school
- My favourite…
- When it’s raining …

**Self esteem:**
- Things I’m good at doing
- Things I’d like to do
- A job I’d like and why

**Experiences**
- What I did at the weekend
- A good film I saw
- My last holiday

**Explaining:**
- A game
- Your favourite room
- How to make your favourite sandwich
Pupils will need many opportunities to listen to and use the new language in meaningful ways before they are ready to read. Therefore it is wise to avoid formal reading in the early stages.

Exposure to reading can occur naturally in the classroom in various ways: posters, environmental print, big book reading, or the library. These will all precede formal reading.

Pupils often encounter difficulties with reading texts because the context is unfamiliar. For example, a child arriving from the Philippines does not understand the word ‘autumn’ because this is not part of his/her culture. He/she is only familiar with a wet or dry season. Once the pupil has experienced autumn, he/she will understand the word.

### Difficulties

- **Not familiar with Roman alphabet**
- **Unfamiliar with segmenting and blending sounds**

### Suggestions

- Have the classroom and school clearly labelled and refer to these labels regularly
- Ensure that the pupil has an alphabet strip or card on the desk
- Teach the letter sound, not the letter name in the initial stages
- Put the letter sounds on tape or use age-appropriate software to teach the letter sounds
- Allow the pupils to play with letter sounds: saying it loudly, softly, quickly, slowly, whispering
- Build up letter sound books. Use one page for each letter and ask the pupils to find pictures of objects that they know beginning with that sound. Stick these around the letter
- Play alphabet games
- Feel the letter: children close their eyes and touch cut-out textured letters on card

- Make the pupils aware of patterns such as rhyming words
- Use games and songs that focus on sounds
- Help them focus on visual sound patterns such as cl cluster in class, clap, clock and identify these in songs, poems and shared book activities
- Colour and highlight the patterns on words/cards and display some of these
- Encourage pupils to play around with magnetic or tactile letters, making words found in environmental print around them
  
  Change the initial / end sound to make new words:
  cat – bat, cup – cut, block – clock

It can be very difficult to produce sounds that do not exist in the home language, for example ‘th’ or the glottal stop.
**Word recognition**

- Refer to labels in the classroom and on pictures around the room
- Mix up the labels in the room and see if the pupils notice, then ask them to fix the labels
- Have lists of common words with visuals displayed
- Use picture dictionaries
- Ask pupils to label pictures using familiar words
- Use Post-its™ to label pictures in reading books
- Match picture and word at whole-class, group and individual level
- Scan for and highlight key words in a photocopied text
- Play word games such as hunt the thimble, snap, pairs, bingo, odd one out
- Point to and repeat words regularly and encourage other pupils to do the same
- Use a regular bank of familiar words when writing comments on pupils’ work. These may be illustrated at the front of the book or with stickers, and could possibly be taken home to be translated

**Reading phrases**

- Timetable diary or news writing on a regular basis
- Make the pupils aware of repetitive phrases during big book reading and have them join in and repeat these. Trace your finger along the phrase as it is said aloud
- Ask small groups of pupils to chorus specific phrases from a story
- Put words from familiar phrases in a story on cards and practise sentence ordering following the story. This can be done in pairs or individually
- When talking to individual pupils about a book, write down what they say on strips of card and read with the pupil
  - Let the pupils read these aloud
  - Cut the strips up and ask pupils to put them together
  - Keep the cards as flash cards or glue into work book for regular review
- Refer to what pupils have written for phrase recognition
- Put bits of phrases from familiar stories on cards and let the pupils put together in various combinations
- Matching activities: phrase to picture
- Shared reading with a peer or older pupil
- Use age-appropriate computer software

**Reading for meaning**

- Set tasks for the pupils so that they have to read to complete them:
  - Read two reading cards or part of a story and tell others what they are about
  - Read a set of instructions to make, draw or colour something
- Set tasks related to readers, stories or magazines that require reading for a specific purpose
- Play games where reading is needed to play the game
- To check understanding of the gist, use storyboards or copy pictures for picture sequencing
- Matching text to pictures
- True/false statements
- Gap-fill activities
- Character profiles
- Book reports
Tackling unfamiliar texts

- Try to make links with prior knowledge before approaching the text. Talk through the pictures first or, if possible, send home a small version of the big book or a copy of the text in advance
- Send home pictures, a picture book or key words related to the new text in advance
- Arrange for a peer, older pupil or adult to talk about key words and pictures related to the text in advance
- Read the text aloud with the whole class first or ask another pupil to read with a partner
- Encourage pupils to use titles as clues
- Enlarge the text so that it is easier to read
- Number the lines and refer to specific lines where they may find answers
- Cut up the text and use for re-ordering, matching titles with paragraphs, matching paragraphs with pictures
- Be clear about what you want the pupil to get from the text and provide frameworks to help elicit this information
- Encourage older pupils to build up a personal dictionary of new words and phrases and to use this when reading

Poor motivation to read

- Try to build up a bank of multicultural books reflecting various cultures including books in other languages
- Have books and magazines that the pupils can read for pleasure
- Factual books with plenty of pictures
- Have famous people, favourite sport cards available. The pupils can fill these in, stick on pictures and display, after having read a story or article
- Award certificates or prizes for reading

Pupils may wish to record their response to reading in their home language. This is excellent for their self-esteem. It is also good for other pupils to see different languages written. You can use what has been written as a basis for discussion/explanation.
Reading phrases

The pupils may work with these cards in pairs, groups, or alone, to make and sequence new sentences.

She's  This is  at home  sometimes  a lot  walking
Honey  my dog  She lives  She licks  I like her  She loves
Jack  fell asleep  Jack  planted  his cow  was
the giant's money  Jack's mother  stole  very angry  The giant  sold
on the table  wanted to eat  the beans

Games where pupils must read instructions in order to play.

Colour the house

Pupils must read labels to carry out tasks

Example of snakes and ladders board with instructions

Pupils must read and follow the instructions in order to move around the board. A larger template and full explanation are available on the accompanying CD. Other games that require reading are suggested in the 'Games' section.
Newcomer pupils will want to bring a reading book home, just like the others in the class. Do send highly visual books home. Books with pictures only are good for beginner readers. The pupil can talk about the book in the home language. Pupils may not be ready to read text until they have developed a good bank of vocabulary in English.

When the pupils are ready to read, you may find activities like these useful.

**Activity 1**
Select five words from the book that you would like the pupil to read. Use the template below to help the pupil understand the words. For younger pupils you could put the words on Post-its™ and stick them on to pictures in the book.

**Activity 2**
Put the five words you selected in the smaller boxes. Copy pictures from the book that correspond. Ask the pupil to stick the correct picture with the correct word.
## Writing

Pupils need time to think about and talk through ideas before committing them to paper. Pupils must understand what they are writing. Writing about things of personal interest and for a specific audience is more meaningful.

### Suggestions

- Make sure that the alphabet is displayed clearly in the room and/or pupils have an alphabet strip on their desk.
- Practise letter shapes by:
  - Rainbow writing - a large letter is traced over with many different colours. It is important to identify starting point first.
  - Tracing over dotted letters, around cut out letters, making the shape in the air.
  - Asking pupils to put their initials on their work.
  - Palm writing: One pupil closes his/her eyes. Another pupil traces a letter on his/her palm and then has to guess the letter.
  - Back writing: same principle as palm writing.
  - Use small whiteboards and markers so that pupils can experiment. They can rub it clean and start again.

- Use Post-its™ to label familiar pictures.
- Label familiar pictures and diagrams.
- Crosswords with visual cues.
- Hangman.
- Writing lists: recipe, shopping list, favourite things.
- Filling in missing letters in words.

## Difficulties

### Word recognition

### Reading phrases

- Use Post-its™ to label familiar pictures.
- Label familiar pictures and diagrams.
- Crosswords with visual cues.
- Hangman.
- Writing lists: recipe, shopping list, favourite things.
- Filling in missing letters in words.

### Reading for meaning

- Spell aloud at the board and ask pupils to help.
- Ask pupils to highlight specific spellings or grammar items in a text.
- Encourage pupils to build up their own word glossaries and use these.
- Concentrate on one or two specific spelling or grammar mistakes when correcting.
  - Either indicate that it is incorrect and ask the pupil to correct it, if they can.
  - Or, write the correct version and give a second example where the pupil has to write in the correct version.
- DON’T CORRECT EVERY MISTAKE.
- Practise sentence ordering, punctuation and other grammar activities at whole-class and group level using enlarged words and punctuation cards.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
<th>Moving from speaking and reading to writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During whole-class discussions, write pupils’ ideas on the board and encourage choral reading of this.</td>
<td>Discussing ideas in the home language can help pupils clarify ideas before writing. Encourage writing in the home language from time to time. Pupils can explain orally what they have written.</td>
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<tr>
<td>During whole-class discussions, write pupils’ ideas on the board and encourage choral reading of this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When talking with pupils, write what they say and read through with them. The pupil may copy what you have written and read with a partner or at home.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paired writing encourages pupils to talk about what they want to write first.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage pairs or groups to write puzzles or questions for the class or other groups, following an oral or reading activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>At the end of an activity, ask pupils to write a word that they remember on a card. They must not let others see. The class can then play a question-and-answer game to guess the word. Pupils may wish to do this with a partner for extra support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write phrases that the pupils have used on strips of card. Cut up and ask pupils to put in order. This helps with sentence structure and can be done at whole-class, group or individual level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give pupils copies of pictures from familiar stories or other texts. Ask them to find the phrase to match the text and write it below.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cloze procedure with familiar phrases or sentences.</td>
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<td>Make up slogans and posters.</td>
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<td>Add captions to cartoon strips.</td>
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<td>Replace words in short sentences to make new sentences.</td>
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<td>Match beginnings and ends of sentences.</td>
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<td>Complete the sentence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole-class rewriting of a story, event or process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picture sequencing and adding text at whole class, group and individual level. Pupils may need to be given text to match to the pictures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create own storyboards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put sentences in the correct order to give a set of instructions, explain a process or retell a story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cut up paragraphs from a text and ask pupils to put in the correct order.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide writing frames.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is important to teach genre where appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think aloud while writing in front of the class, for example, ‘What should I put next?’ ‘Is that right?’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construct a piece of writing with the class or a group of children. Wall stories are a good idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read aloud from a variety of texts. This provides models of writing for a range of purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give the pupils good quality models of the written product.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set topics for writing as well as allowing free choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set writing tasks for pairs and groups. This allows less competent writers to work with pupils who will provide good models.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Language skills

Writing more freely

- Encourage pupils to write for fun, for example:
  - Write instructions for making, colouring or drawing something
  - Write clues for a treasure hunt
  - Make up crosswords
  - Write letters, notes, e-mails to other pupils
  - Pen-pals
  - Create ‘Who am I?’ quizzes
  - Code-breakers
  - Write in the home language – a personal diary for example
- Personal books: pupils can make their own or work collaboratively on topics such as:
  - Our favourite things
  - Our favourite people
- Rewrite and illustrate familiar stories
- Create own short stories or comic strips

Combining the four language skills

- Dictagloss
  - Read a text several times at normal speed. On first reading pupils listen and don’t write anything
  - During the next reading they each write as much as they can while listening
  - In pairs, pupils discuss their notes and try to make them as complete as possible
  - Each pair then joins with another pair to pool information
  - Finally, the group of four reconstruct the text in writing, containing as much of the original information as possible

  Don’t tell the pupils to use their own words as part of the value of this exercise is that the pupils have an opportunity to use the language modelled by the text

Dictagloss is good for:

- Involving all four skills
- Presenting new factual information across the curriculum
- Listening for key points
- Supporting less confident writers
- Involving talk about content and language
- Collaborative work
- Modelling language needed for writing

Encourage pupils to read each other’s work. This provides a real audience and encourages pupils to make it interesting and to present work well. Activities may be done on computer or by hand.
All teachers plan for learning and teaching. This section is designed to help you adapt your planning to make the curriculum accessible for all pupils.

All planners contain common elements and this section will show you how to adapt these. It will also draw your attention to the use of the CEFR benchmarks to plan for Newcomer pupils.

The diagram below illustrates points to bear in mind when planning for all pupils, including those with limited English. You may adapt existing plans to include these. However, if starting anew, consider these points from the beginning.

**Planning for language learning**

**Learning intentions**
What do you want the pupils to understand, know and be able to do at the end of the topic? Are the learning intentions differentiated for different groups of pupils?

**Demonstrating understanding**
Consider how pupils will demonstrate understanding. Pupils may have partial competencies: some skills may be more developed than others. Pupils may be at A2 level in listening but not in speaking.

Do assessment opportunities take account of this?

**Links to prior learning**
Making links to prior learning and experiences helps the recall of concepts and language already learned, either in English or in a home language.

Making these connections means that pupils are more ready to learn new concepts.

**Planning for language learning in the curriculum**

**Key Language**
Consider what language pupils will need to understand and be able to use for the topic so that they can, for example:
- A1: Copy or write labels on a picture
- A2: Recognise and understand frequently used words relating to … classroom activities

Consider creating opportunities to hear this language modelled and to use it.

**Opportunities for learning**
These are the activities that will help the pupils meet the targets set out in the learning intentions.

Do activities provide opportunities for meaningful interaction and are there differentiated activities for various groups of pupils?
The following three pages outline a possible approach to planning for language learning, based on the CEFR. It involves identifying:

- language descriptors for the topic which outline what you would like the pupil to be able to do with the language. These are based on the CEFR benchmarks
- language structures that the pupils will need to learn in order to understand the topic and express his/her ideas.
- key language involved in the language structures
- resources that are needed for the topic, including useful Toolkit references

The language development planner on page 114 is based on the teacher’s planner on page 113.

**Language descriptors**

It is important to start with the language descriptors (based on CEFR benchmarks), as this clarifies what the pupils need to be able to do. It is also useful to cover the same skills at each level, if possible, and to ensure that the same sub-topics are covered at each level. For example:

**Spoken Interaction:**

- Give simple answers to basic questions relating to life-cycles when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help (A1)
- Respond with confidence to familiar questions clearly expressed relating to life-cycles but not necessarily keep the conversation going (A2)
- Engage with other pupils in discussing life-cycles (B1)

**Language structures**

Language structures will become more obvious once the language descriptors have been identified. For example, in order to answer basic questions about life-cycles, pupils working at A1 level will need to understand and use language structures such as:

“What is it?”
“It is a small egg. It is a caterpillar. It is a pupa. It is a beautiful butterfly. This is a ……”

**Key language terms**

When identifying key language, it is useful to subdivide this into nouns, adjectives, verbs etc. as this provides clarity and focus. For example, in the language structures above the following key language is used:

**nouns:** an egg; a caterpillar; a pupa; a butterfly
**adjectives:** small, beautiful
**verbs:** to be (is)

On page 115 there are examples of a key language grid and a language structure grid. These are very useful in giving Newcomer pupils practice with the language needed to access the curriculum.
Planning for language learning

Sample planner: At the seaside

**Language and Literacy**

**Learning Intention**
To listen and respond to a variety of stories and poems about the seaside and summer time.
To construct a sentence about the seaside using their phonic skills for words such as ‘sand, crab, sun, hat etc’.
To recount and retell stories of their own experiences at the seaside or other holidays.

**Sample Activities**
Recite poems and rhymes about the seaside.
Complete written activities.
Phonic games with the names and sounds related to the seaside.
Opportunity to blend sounds to make the words for the CVC mat- Going on Holiday.

**Mathematics and Numeracy**

**Learning Intention**
Will match and sort for appropriate criteria-clothes, objects associated with the seaside.
Will recognise 1p 2p 5p 10p 20p 50p £1.
Will program Beebot for a variety of constructions.

**Activities**
Complete Venn and Tree diagrams for seaside features and objects.
Use correct coins to buy seaside objects-ice cream, spade, glasses, sun cream.
Send Beebot on a journey using forwards, backwards and turns.

**Personal Development & Mutual Understanding**

**Learning Intention**
To be aware of the dangers at the seaside and ways we can keep safe.
To be aware of the importance of keeping the beach clean- after picnics etc.

**Sample Activities**
Discuss the book ‘A visit to the seaside’ during circle time lesson and relate to own experiences.

**The Arts**

**Learning Intention**
To recognise and describe seaside animals- jellyfish, crab, seagull’s, fish etc.
To recognise and describe the features of the seaside.
Children will know the role of a travel agent.
Will explore a range of transport-pilot, train driver etc.

**Sample Activities**
Make a seaside animal and a seaside scene.
Roleplay ‘the travel agents’, seaside holidays, airport, packing a bag etc.
Roleplay the different modes of transport- be a pilot, train driver, sailor, a car motorist.

**ICT**

**Learning Intention**
To use Clicker 5 with guidance.
To log on independently using their name.

**Sample Activities**
Use clicker 5 to construct sentences about the seaside and summer.

**The World Around Us**

**Learning Intention**
Recognise and name some animals that live by the seaside or in the sea- e.g. fish, crab, jelly fish.
Describe the characteristics of the seaside landscape e.g. sand, water, pebbles, rocks, driff, shells.
Compare and contrast a town landscape (eg house or garden) with the seaside.
Discuss the different modes of travel-sea, land and air.
To sort appropriate clothes and equipment for a day at the seaside- (e.g. sunglasses, swimming suit, picnic, sun cream, bucket and spade, arm bands etc).

**Sample Activities**
Make a seaside scene using appropriate materials- sand, tissue paper, shiny paper, marbling, shells, pasta.
Make seaside animals- jellyfish, crab, fish.
Make a display table of seaside objects-and play games e.g. cover up and remember the objects, what they are, what is missing etc.
Children will explore a range of transport-toys-boats, lorries, trains, cars, planes, jet skis.
A visit to Peatland’s park and go on the train.

**ICT**

**Learning Intention**
To use Clicker 5 with guidance.
To log on independently using their name.

**Sample Activities**
Use clicker 5 to construct sentences about the seaside and summer.

**Religion**

**Learning Intention**
Children will be aware of the change of season from spring to summer.

**Sample Activities**
Children will watch video scenes of summertime.
Will say prayers of thanks for nature and summertime.
Will complete ‘My summer holidays’.

With thanks to Christian Brothers’ Primary School, Armagh
Sample language development planner based on teacher’s planner: At the seaside (ages 4-5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Intentions and Activities</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See planner for ‘At the Seaside’.</td>
<td>Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School: Pages 91-94 CEFR Page 85 Home School Journal (Learning log of Key words) Pages 64-66 Advice on storytelling Pages 67-75 Language games CEFR Primary Exemplar Booklet Picture dictionaries Visuals cues such as flashcards and concrete materials</td>
<td>Language descriptors are CEFR benchmarks adapted for the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A1 Language descriptors (What the pupil may do with the language)
- Recognize and understand basic words and phrases relating to travel and the seaside.
- Understand basic questions and instructions when teachers and other pupils speak slowly and clearly.
- Give simple answers to basic questions when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help.
- Use very limited number of grammatical structures relating to travel and the seaside.

### A1 Sample Language Structures (What the pupil or teacher may say or write)
- **What is the weather like?**
  - It is sunny. It is warm.
- **Show me the sand.**
  - How much is the ball?
- **What can you see in the picture?**
  - I can see a bird.
- **What colour is the sun?**
  - It is yellow.

### A1 Sample vocabulary
- **Nouns**
  - the seaside
  - sunny
  - sand
  - warm
  - the sky
  - cold
  - the sun
  - size and
  - the sea
  - colour:
  - a seagull
  - big
  - a fish
  - small
  - a starfish
  - basic colours
  - a jellyfish
  - a crab
  - Verbs
  - shorts
  - is / are
  - a hat
  - see
  - sandals
  - hear
  - sunglasses
  - have
  - a swimsuit
  - like / don’t like
  - a bucket
  - Prepositions
  - a spade
  - on
  - (a beach) ball
  - in
  - sun-cream
  - beside

### A2 Language descriptors (What the pupil my do with the language)
- Recognize and understand frequently used words relating to classroom activities on the topic of the seaside and weather.
- Understand the main point in short, clear, simple messages and instructions.
- Generally sustain a conversational exchange with a peer in the classroom when carrying out a collaborative / paired learning activity.
- Use simple grammatical structures that have been learnt in class (frequent mistakes with tenses, personal pronouns, prepositions).

### A2 Sample Language Structures (What the pupil or teacher may say or write)
- **What is the weather like in summer?**
  - It is sunny. Sometimes it rains.
- **Find the coin you need to buy…..**
- **Find two that are the same.**
- **What can we use for the sun?**
  - We can use shiny paper.
  - Have you got any glue?
  - There is glue in the box.
- **I went to the seaside at the weekend.**
  - I saw a starfish.
  - I played in the sand and I made a sandcastle.
  - I like the seaside.

### A2 Sample vocabulary
- **Nouns**
  - the seaside
  - the beach
  - rocks
  - pebbles
  - shells
  - sunhat
  - swimming
gear
  - Verbs
  - flip-flops
  - a towel
  - a kite
  - an ice-cream
  - a cold drink
- **Adjectives**
  - windy
  - hard
  - soft
  - shades of
colour: light
  - blue
  - (present and
regular verbs)
is / was
  - go / went
  - see / saw
  - have / had
  - use / used
  - play / played
  - make / made
  - like / liked
  - eat / ate
- **Prepositions**
  - far from
  - near to

Pupils may make mistakes with language structures but practice makes perfect!

A document outlining CEFR benchmarks and language structures for each level is available on the website.
### Sample key language grids for A1 level

Your child will learn to:
- Describe the seaside

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word in English</th>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Word in my language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the sand</td>
<td>![Sand Picture]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the water</td>
<td>![Water Picture]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the sun</td>
<td>![Sun Picture]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cloud</td>
<td>![Cloud Picture]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some points to bear in mind when making key language grids:

- For pupils working at A1 level, keep the language basic. For example, if the pupils are learning about body organs and functions, a Newcomer pupil may need to start with parts of the body.

- Use articles or determiners before nouns: a ball; the beach; some ice-cream; or no article, as in ‘pebbles’.

- At A2 and B1 level, teach pupils how to use articles and determiners (the; a; some; any etc…) with regular and irregular plurals.

- Group vocabulary into sub-topics: see the sample grids on the website.

- In general, use lower case letters: a ball; run; yellow.

- Use verbs in the infinitive: evict; run; eat.

- It is important to model / teach different forms of the verb along with pronouns: I run; he runs; I like running. At B1 level, it is important to teach forms of the verb in different tenses: run; is running; ran; will run.

---

These cards may be useful to help with sentence structures. Some ideas for use:
- Read the sentences together
- Cut the picture(s) out and ask the pupil to insert these
- Cut the sentences into two parts and ask the pupil to put together
- Cut up phrases into word cards for sentence building
- Record the sentences and send home

Templates available on the website.
This section looks at assessment for learning and considers how teachers may observe and assess pupils’ progress and help them to assess their own learning. It also suggests ways of communicating progress to parents.

Accurate assessment of a pupil’s proficiency is unlikely in the early days for the following reasons:

- the pupil may be suffering from shock or trauma and may be unable to communicate
- the pupil’s previous formal education may have been non-existent, minimal or interrupted
- the pupil may have been told by parents not to give information
- concepts in different curriculum areas are not necessarily taught in the same order in other educational systems and the pupil may not be familiar with what is being taught in class
- a ‘Silent Period’ often occurs when children are immersed in a new language. This does not necessarily indicate a learning difficulty. Assessment is not appropriate at this early stage.
  
  See *The Silent Period in Early Days*

The abilities of Newcomer pupils should be viewed in relation to the peer group. It is important to identify what skills, other than language proficiency, the child may need to learn, or, conversely, may have gained ahead of the peer group.
Effective planning
It is important to think about:
- What pupils will learn
- Meaningful and interactive opportunities for learning
- How pupils will demonstrate their understanding

Self-assessment
It is important for pupils to know what they have learned but also how they learn. The European Language Portfolio, Language Biography section, provides a useful framework for this.

Using speaking frames can help pupils talk through what they have learned.

Feedback
Consider using a bank of simple comments and symbols throughout the school. These may be pasted into pupils’ books or home-school journals.

Feedback should encourage the pupil and help him/her improve.

The CEFR is an effective tool for feedback to pupils and parents.

Assessment for learning
Assessment for learning is about helping pupils to know where they are in their learning, where they need to go, and how to get there.

Shared learning intentions
If pupils know what they are to learn and why, this supports deeper understanding and ownership of the learning process.

The Home-School Journal can be an effective means of communicating learning intentions to pupils and parents.

Shared success criteria
It is important that pupils know and understand how their learning will be assessed.

Consider how pupils with limited English will demonstrate what they have learned.

Effective questioning
Use a variety of questions, including short, clear and directed questions, for pupils with limited English. Consider also non-verbal responses. Giving more thinking time and allowing pupils to share ideas in pairs before answering can help them feel more confident and explore their understanding.

Consider the impact of teacher comments on pupils and parents, where expectations may be very high.
Observation

Teachers may find the following observation sheets useful in assessing a pupil’s progress in the early days and thereafter. The answers to the questions on these sheets will help identify on-going areas of priority for the pupil. These areas may be addressed by a language support teacher or classroom assistant, if available. This information would be useful at intervals throughout the year.

It is not necessary for teachers to complete these forms in writing as information may be exchanged informally. The forms are merely to provide guidance.

Mainstream observation sheet for the first 6-8 weeks after arrival of a newcomer pupil

| Name of teacher: | _____________________________________________ |
| Class: | _____________________________________________ |
| Name of pupil: | _____________________________________________ |
| Date: | _____________________________________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there evidence of this pupil mixing with other pupils?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil volunteered information in class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Has this pupil asked for clarification or help in class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there evidence of this pupil making progress in general?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any insights into what the pupil already knows in different curriculum areas?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What curriculum areas does the pupil seem most comfortable with?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What curriculum areas are creating the most difficulty?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If support were available, what areas would benefit from language support? If possible, some key language and sample tasks would be helpful.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Remember that requests by pupils for clarification or help may be non-verbal.

Template available on the website.
## Mainstream observation sheet for ongoing monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there increased evidence of this pupil mixing with other pupils?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this pupil responding more frequently in class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this pupil asked for explanation or clarification either in class or individually after class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there increased evidence of this pupil making progress in general?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this pupil doing homework and any other work that is assigned?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In which curriculum areas is this pupil performing well or at a satisfactory level?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What curriculum areas are creating the most difficulty?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If support is available, what areas would benefit from language support? If possible, some key language and sample tasks would be helpful.

Template available on the website.
Using the Common European Framework of Reference to monitor progress

The benchmarks from the CEFR allow you to monitor Newcomer pupils’ progress as second language learners. The pupil progress record on the following page allows you to:

- indicate what the pupil can do
- identify gaps within skill areas
- set targets for the pupil

Templates for the pupil progress record are available in the ‘Moving On’ folder for this section on the website. The online template allows you to:

- check boxes on computer to indicate what the pupil can do
- select targets from drop down menus on a second page
- store your Newcomer pupils’ records electronically

A template with the ‘working towards A1’ level is also available on the website. See also page 94 - 95.

General points to bear in mind when completing the pupil progress record.

If the pupil has demonstrated complete competence at an age appropriate level, then that benchmark should be ticked. As the pupil gets older, the competence should develop in line with peers, as the next stage is covered with the class. However, the competencies reflected in some benchmarks may not develop until a later stage.

It is important not to tick a benchmark unless the pupil has demonstrated competence in all aspects of that benchmark consistently and independently.

You may find the following terminology useful:

- working towards a level
- working well within a level
- independent and solid at a level (ready to move on to the next one)
Using the CEFR to monitor progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Arrival date</th>
<th>Form updated:</th>
<th>Teacher's initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**A1 Breakthrough**
- Recognize and understand basic words and phrases concerning him/herself, family or friends and school.
- Understand simple questions and instructions when teachers and other pupils speak very slowly and clearly.

**A2 Waystage**
- Recognize and understand frequently used words relating to him/herself and family, classroom activities and routines, school instructions and procedures, friends and play.
- Understand the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.
- Follow at a general level topics covered in the mainstream class provided key concepts and vocabulary have been studied in advance and there is a suitable visual support.
- Follow and understand a story if it is read slowly and clearly with visual support such as facial expression, gestures and pictures.

**B1 Threshold**
- Understand the main points of topics that are presented clearly in the mainstream classroom.
- Understand the main points of stories that are read aloud in the mainstream classroom.
- Understand a large part of a short film on a familiar topic provided that it is age-appropriate.
- Follow classroom talk between two or more native speakers, only occasionally needing to request clarification.

**Listening**
- Recognize the letters of the alphabet and sounds.
- Recognize and understand basic signs and simple notices in the school.
- Recognize and understand basic words on labels in the classroom.
- Identify basic familiar words and phrases in a new piece of text.

**Reading**
- Read and understand very short and simple texts that contain a high proportion of previously learnt vocabulary on familiar subjects (e.g., class texts, familiar stories).
- Find specific predictable information in simple material.
- Use the alphabet to find particular items in lists (e.g., a name in a telephone book, simple dictionary).

**Spoken Interaction**
- Greet, say please and thank you.
- Ask for directions to another place nearby in the school.
- Respond non-verbally to basic directions to a place nearby in the school when the other person supplements with signs or gestures.
- Give simple answers to basic questions when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help.
- Convey immediate needs.
- Make basic requests in the classroom or playground and respond appropriately to the basic requests of others.

**Spoken Production**
- Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where he/she lives and people he/she knows.
- Use very limited number of grammatical structures (e.g., My name is...).
- Use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms his/her family, daily routines and activities, and plans for future (this evening I'm...).
- Use simple grammatical structures that have been learnt in class (frequent mistakes with tenses, personal pronouns, prepositions).

**Writing**
- Copy his/her name.
- Copy words and short phrases that are being learnt in class.
- Copy labels on a picture.
- Copy short sentences.
- Write his/her name independently.
- Write some words and short phrases independently.
- Write some labels independently.
- Copy short sentences (if appropriate for age).
- Write his/her address.
- Write the name of the school.
- Write short texts on specific or familiar topics.
- Write words that he/she knows orally with phonetic accuracy but inaccurate spelling.
- Use capital letters and full stops.

Template available on the website.
Ongoing assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands for A1 level:</th>
<th>Prodigy approach to</th>
<th>Writings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Picture dictionaries</td>
<td>Use visual tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Storyboards, flowcharts</td>
<td>Engage in collaborative writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>Word maps</td>
<td>Explore word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Use sound mapping</td>
<td>Listen and understand names, simple words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Visual tools</td>
<td>Use reading and writing books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies for B1 level

1. **Listening**
   - Listen for gist or for a specific purpose & listen for general meaning.
   - Listen for information & listen for details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.
   - Listen for information & listen for specific details.

2. **Reading**
   - Read for gist or for a specific purpose & read for general meaning.
   - Read for information & read for details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.
   - Read for information & read for specific details.

3. **Writing**
   - Write a short message (e.g., a postcard) to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.

4. **Speaking**
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.
   - Speak to a friend or a peer in a group setting.

5. **Interaction**
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.
   - Participate in active listening activities.

6. **Production**
   - Write a diary or a news account with accuracy and coherence.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.

7. **Writing**
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.
   - Write a short note to a friend.

Template available on website.
Underachieving?

Teachers may find the following questions useful in deciding whether underachieving is due to a language or a learning difficulty. If answers are generally ‘yes’, then the difficulties experienced are probably related to English language development alone. If answers are generally ‘no’, then there may be a learning difficulty. It is important to collect evidence in a variety of situations and over a period of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening and responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil had less than 6 months’ exposure to English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the language used by the teacher too complicated for the pupil’s stage of language development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the content of classroom discussions culturally unfamiliar to the pupil or beyond his/her experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil listen attentively to other pupils or adults who are using the home language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil respond through body language, signs, symbols or drawing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty with oral expression over a range of skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil had less than two years’ exposure to English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could the pupil feel uneasy with the classroom situation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the pupil’s errors in speaking generally typical of those produced by pupils learning English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the errors appear to be influenced by the home language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the pupil use his/her home language over a range of skills appropriate to age and educational experience?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty in progressing in other areas of the curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are instructions and explanations too complicated for the pupil’s level of language development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the pupil understand the task when supported by visual materials or if the task is language-free?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the pupil understand the task if it is explained by a peer using the same home language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil understand the essential stages leading to the task?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slow or little progress with reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil lack sufficient vocabulary to make a meaningful start?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil little exposure to English text or letter forms?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil read text in the home language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do reading books contain specific cultural information, content or idiomatic language beyond the experience of the pupil?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties with writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the pupil unfamiliar with the Roman alphabet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it possible that the pupil has not had previous formal schooling which included opportunities to write?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil’s home language use a script with a different orientation, for example right to left or top to bottom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the pupil sequence events and ideas orally or pictorially?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do difficulties with structure in writing reflect similar difficulties in oral expression?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the pupil write in the home language at an age-appropriate level?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioural, emotional or social difficulties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the pupil experiencing trauma or confusion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil had only a short experience of formal education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pupil come from a very different educational experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the pupil’s lack of skill in oral English causing frustration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the pupil being asked to carry out an activity that is beyond his/her previous experience or in conflict with cultural or religious beliefs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pupil feel pressured to respond orally?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the tasks chosen appropriate for the pupil’s language and cognitive level?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication of progress to parents

- Arranging parent-teacher meetings
- Communicating progress

It is most important to achieve a means of communicating with newcomer parents, as they may feel excluded from their child’s education due to their own lack of proficiency in English.

Points to remember for parent-teacher meetings:

- Parent-teacher meetings may not be a feature of some education systems and parents may feel that something is wrong if they are invited to the school. It is important to explain the purpose and importance of such meetings during the initial meeting with parents.

- It may be difficult for some parents to attend meetings due to working patterns. Is it possible to arrange alternative meeting times?

- Some parents do not feel that they could cope with a meeting. If it is possible to arrange for interpreters to be available, it is important to communicate this at the initial meeting with parents.

- Do not ask another pupil to interpret.

- Newcomer parents may not be familiar with the routines of parent-teacher meetings, such as where to go, where to wait and so on. Make sure that there is a helper to smooth the way.

- Create a welcoming environment in the room and remember that the parent will be depending on visual cues from the teacher.

- Set aside additional time for interpreting and extra explanations. Remember that newcomer parents are new to the education system and may not be aware of some of the most basic routines and procedures. Consider whether there is anything that you may need to explain.

- Have some examples of the child’s work and books or resources that are used in your classroom. You may wish to use a visual report such as the one on the following page. Another idea is to bring along the pupil progress record to show parents how their child is progressing with his/her language learning.

Encourage parents to:

- Use their home language with their children.
- Talk to their children about what they are learning using the Home-School Journal. In doing so, parents can keep contact with what is happening in school and understand what is important to their child.
- Contact the school if there are any concerns.
Communication of progress to parents

Teachers may find visual reports useful in communicating with parents either during parent-teacher meetings or when sending written reports home. It may be appropriate to send home a standard report accompanied by a visual one, depending on the level of English at home.

Templates for upper and lower primary available on the website.
Intercultural Awareness
Intercultural awareness is the gradual acquisition of the intercultural skills to make communication possible across cultures. Schools can play a crucial role in promoting intercultural awareness. This does not mean that teachers have to possess all sorts of facts. They need rather to develop the intercultural awareness that will enable children and young people to operate as active citizens in a multi-cultural society. The skills and competencies necessary for intercultural dialogue are acquired over time and need to be embedded in the school ethos.

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What are intercultural skills? 128
Intercultural awareness at whole school level 130
Intercultural awareness at classroom level 131
Useful websites 135

On website

Templates for Whole School
- Photo-Story 3
- Intercultural profile of the school templates
- International links
- Places in school labels

Templates for Classroom
- Intercultural portfolios
- Sample European language portfolios
- Ways of Seeing resource
- 20 ideas for lower primary
- Identity card
- Starting a new school
- Sense of place poster
- World religions

Useful Phrases in Different Languages
- Useful phrases in 16 languages
What are intercultural skills?

People see the world through their own set of assumptions and attitudes. Our culture influences the way we deal with people and our approach to problem solving. Culture may be defined as a system of beliefs and values shared by a particular group of people. As culture influences every aspect of our lives, from the way we dress to the way we do business, we need to develop certain attitudes and skills to enable us to interact both effectively and in a way that is acceptable to others from other cultural backgrounds.

We need a range of intercultural skills:

- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Behavioural flexibility
- Communicative awareness
- Knowledge discovery
- Respect for otherness
- Empathy

Tolerance of ambiguity is the ability to accept lack of clarity and to be able to deal with ambiguous situations constructively.

Behavioural flexibility is the ability to adapt your own behaviour to different requirements and situations.

Communicative awareness is the ability to identify and use communicative conventions of people from other cultural backgrounds and to modify your own forms of expression correspondingly.

Knowledge discovery is the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and to use that knowledge in our own communication and interaction.

Respect for otherness is about curiosity and openness, as well as a readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about your own.

Empathy is the ability to understand what other people think and how they feel in given situations.

The following page outlines more detailed descriptors for levels of competency within each of the skills.

Council of Europe: Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters: Context, concepts and theories
www.coe.int
## Framework for intercultural competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>1. Basic</th>
<th>2. Intermediate</th>
<th>3. Full</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tolerance of ambiguity</strong></td>
<td>Deals with ambiguity on a one-off basis, responding to items as they arise. May be overwhelmed by ambiguous situations.</td>
<td>Has begun to develop approaches to cope with some ambiguities. Begins to accept ambiguity as a challenge.</td>
<td>Is constantly aware of the possibility of ambiguity. When it occurs, he/she tolerates and manages it.</td>
<td>Social conventions such as differences in what is perceived as polite or rude from one culture to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioural flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Adopts as reactive / defensive approach to situations. Learns from isolated experiences in a rather unsystematic way.</td>
<td>Previous experiences of required behaviour begin to influence behaviour in everyday parallel situations. Sometimes tries to conform to other cultures' behaviour patterns.</td>
<td>Is ready and able to adopt appropriate behaviour in a variety of cultural contexts.</td>
<td>Greetings. How people of different cultures greet each other. What is acceptable according to age, social status and relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicative awareness</strong></td>
<td>Tends to hold on to his/her own communicative conventions and expects adaptations from others. Is aware of difficulties in interaction with non-native speakers but has not yet found ways to solve them.</td>
<td>Uses a limited repertoire of strategies to solve and prevent problems when interacting with a non-native speaker.</td>
<td>Is able to identify and ready to adapt to different communicative conventions. Can clarify misunderstandings and uses a variety of strategies to prevent, solve and mediate problems when interacting with a non-native speaker.</td>
<td>Explanations. Ability to explain a subject specific concept in a different way such as using a visual or a diagram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge discovery</strong></td>
<td>Draws on random general knowledge and minimal factual research about other cultures. Learns by discovery and is willing to modify perceptions but not yet systematic.</td>
<td>Is motivated by curiosity to develop his/her knowledge of his/her own culture as perceived by others. Modifies and builds on information in the light of actual experience.</td>
<td>Has a deep understanding of other cultures and can offer advice and support to others in various situations.</td>
<td>New arrivals. Using various sources to find out about newcomer pupils’ home country and language. Challenging commonly held perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect of otherness</strong></td>
<td>Is not always aware of difference. Adopts a tolerant stance and tries to adapt to low-involving demands of the foreign culture.</td>
<td>Accepts the other’s values, norms and behaviours in everyday situations as neither good nor bad. Is motivated to put others at ease and avoid giving offence.</td>
<td>Respects diversity and is able to cope tactfully with personally unacceptable attitudes and behaviours of others.</td>
<td>Attitudes and beliefs. The roles of the sexes in society. Dress codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy</strong></td>
<td>Tends to see the other culture’s differences as curious but confusing. Nonetheless tries to ‘make allowances’.</td>
<td>Has begun to recognise how others may perceive, feel and respond differently to a range of circumstances.</td>
<td>Tends increasingly to see things intuitively from the other’s point of view.</td>
<td>Parents. Understanding how and why the school communicates with home. Understanding new procedures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When considering the development of intercultural skills and competencies, it is important to look at the school environment, extra-curricular activities, whole school events, the whole curriculum and non-formal learning outside school.

The role of the management team in the school and all staff is crucial in creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all pupils. As role models for intercultural awareness, staff must be aware of the impact of attitudes and behaviours in the classroom and whole school context. It is important to take a critical look at teaching methodologies and resources.

### Ideas for developing intercultural awareness at whole school level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Intercultural skills &amp; competencies</th>
<th>Templates available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official celebrations such as the European Day of Languages</td>
<td>Knowledge discovery Empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-lingual signs and displays throughout the school</td>
<td>Communicative awareness Knowledge discovery</td>
<td>Templates for dual language signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-lingual texts in the library See list of useful websites in appendices</td>
<td>Communicative awareness Knowledge discovery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals around the world: Pupils from each country make displays throughout the year about religious and cultural festivals in their country. Pupils may wish to present their work in digital format and include their home languages.</td>
<td>Communicative awareness Knowledge discovery Respect for otherness Empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural profile of school: Older pupils conduct interviews with others from different countries to create a profile of the diverse cultures within the school. Findings may be presented in the form of displays: Did you know facts; graphs; podcasts with snippets of interviews with pupils. Findings might be put onto school website or in school prospectus.</td>
<td>Tolerance of ambiguity Communicative awareness Knowledge discovery Respect for otherness</td>
<td>Templates for interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT to create photo-stories welcoming new pupils in various languages: Welcome to our school, club, choir, class, team</td>
<td>Communicative awareness Empathy</td>
<td>Advice for using ‘Photostory 3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our town, your town / our school, your school: Collaborative projects giving pupils opportunities to compare their home towns and schools. Findings might be displayed in various forms and in dual-language.</td>
<td>Tolerance of ambiguity Communicative awareness Knowledge discovery Respect for otherness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International links with other schools</td>
<td>All skills</td>
<td>Advice on how to establish international links</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupils may wish to present as assembly based on the work they have done.
Intercultural awareness at classroom level

**The teacher’s role**

Teachers have an important role in providing opportunities for all pupils to develop intercultural skills and so prepare them for living in a multicultural society. The ability to communicate effectively is a critical skill in a world of increasing mobility. This does not only apply to those schools with ethnically diverse populations.

**The classroom**

A classroom that is open to otherness is the ideal context for the development of intercultural skills. It also allows pupils to understand and develop pride in their own cultures while recognizing the similarities and differences they share with people from other cultural origins.

It is important to:

- look critically at the methods, books and curriculum and see if lesson plans and approaches offer different perspectives and ideas on concepts
- involve the pupils in the learning process. Find out what they know, what questions they would like to ask and provide opportunities to explore different perspectives together
- ask probing questions to help pupils understand that the information they receive may be subjective
- understand the different cultures represented in your classroom and find out how culture might influence understanding, perspective, or learning style

**Fostering a supportive classroom environment**

It is important for teachers to be aware of attitudes and interpersonal behaviour within the classroom. Concerns about negative attitudes or behaviour which appear to be racist, sexist or in any other way discriminatory, should be brought to the attention of appropriate staff for action. It may be necessary to review school policy in the light of such concerns.

Consider areas of the curriculum where such topics or themes might arise naturally.
## 10 ideas for developing intercultural skills at classroom level

### Identity card

| Purpose: | To encourage all pupils to get to know each other |
| Objective: | By the end of this activity, pupils will have got to know classmates a little better |
| Ages: | 7-12 |
| Materials: | Templates |

1. Pupils fill in the identity card about themselves
2. Pupils then share information from identity cards with a partner, using template if necessary
3. Pupils use peer identity cards to introduce partner to the class
4. Display identity cards in the classroom

For younger pupils consider a class display or book including photos of the pupils and postcards or photos from the different communities or countries. These might be discussed during circle time.

### Starting a new school

| Purpose: | To encourage all pupils to get to know each other |
| Objective: | By the end of this workshop, pupils will know a little more about each other and the similarities and differences between schools in different places |
| Ages: | 9-12 |
| Materials: | Templates |

1. Pupils fill in the first template about their new school
2. Pupils then find someone who went to a different school and discuss the questions in the second template
3. Pupils who have found significant differences may wish to feed back to a larger group or a whole class level.

### A sense of place

| Purpose: | To encourage all pupils to appreciate their own and other's home towns |
| Objective: | By the end of this activity, pupils should have a better appreciation of the positive aspects of their own area and the importance of respecting their own and other's places |
| Ages: | 9-12 |
| Materials: | Templates for younger pupils, Paper and pens / pencils etc, Access to computer for internet and printer |

1. Pupils work in pairs or small groups to list what there is to do in the local area
2. Pupils then use the internet to find pictures or more information about the activities they have listed
3. Pupils who may find the task difficult use the poster template to display information on their local area
4. Older or more able pupils may wish to create a leaflet, small brochure or presentation on their local area. This may be created using a computer programme.
5. One member of each pair or group feeds back to the class using their completed poster, leaflet brochure or presentation.
6. Work displayed in classroom.

### Making a 'community tree'

| Purpose: | To find out about the wide range of people who have lived or live in the local community and to develop a sense of cultural heritage |
| Objective: | By the end of this activity / project, pupils should have a better sense of belonging |
| Ages: | 7-12 |
| Materials: | Newspapers, magazines, leaflets, photos from communities represented in the class |

1. The teachers introduces the topic of 'the local community' by looking at pictures of important places locally, reading some local historical information, going on a walk to gather information, looking at the names of local shops, taking photos and so on.
2. Pupils bring photos to school which show families, homes, personal involvement in local activities (past or present).
3. Pupils begin to identify important local events (past or present), local families, newly arrived families and their surnames.
4. Pupils prepare a large poster, set of posters or a display which illustrates local facts and history, local people and activities and include the 'new' members of the community.
## Intercultural awareness at classroom level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Intercultural skills &amp; competencies</th>
<th>Templates / information available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning the basics about different religions</strong></td>
<td>Tolerance of ambiguity, Communicative awareness, Knowledge discovery, Respect for otherness</td>
<td>Templates for research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To raise awareness one's own and other faiths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: By the end of this activity, pupils should have investigated world faiths and become aware of the diversity of faiths within our community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages: 9-12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials: Research frame for internet investigation, Access to computer and printer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Using the internet, a digital or paper encyclopaedia, pupils work in groups to research a number of world religions.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pupils, working in groups, are assigned a particular religion and make a poster containing the principal points about that religion, such as: where it is based; how many followers; important days of celebration; main events of the religion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A calendar is created of the main religious festivals of the world and this is copied and distributed to all classes so that important days for pupils in particular classes may be noted throughout the year.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ways of Seeing</strong></td>
<td>Behavioural flexibility, Communicative awareness, Knowledge discovery, Respect for otherness, Empathy</td>
<td>Resource books and templates for 'Ways of Seeing I and II'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To raise awareness one's own and other faiths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: By the end of these activities, pupils should have investigated world faiths and become aware of the diversity of faiths within our community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages: 9-12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials: Ways of Seeing resource book and CD (contents also on IDS website), Access to computer and printer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>This resource pack encourages inclusivity in the classroom and will provide teachers and pupils with resources and frameworks that explore diverse faiths and cultures: Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and ancient Egyptian culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language of the Month</strong></td>
<td>Behavioural flexibility, Communicative awareness, Knowledge discovery, Respect for otherness, Empathy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth/">www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To raise awareness of other languages and cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: By the end of these activities, pupils will have developed a greater awareness of other languages and cultures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages: All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials: Available on the 'Language of the Month' website</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The materials and activities on the website may be used at any time to introduce primary pupils to other languages and cultures. Some schools choose a different language for each month and spend 10 minutes each day or 2-3 times a week, using the activities on the website. It is an excellent and very accessible resource. New words, phrases and facts might then be added to pupils’ intercultural portfolios.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Making little people</strong></td>
<td>Behavioural flexibility, Communicative awareness, Knowledge discovery, Empathy</td>
<td>Knowledge discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To explore similarity, difference and emotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: By the end of this activity, pupils will have developed a greater awareness of themselves and others and how to respond to others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages: 4-6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials: A 'front' and 'back' picture of each pupil, Empty rolls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a digital camera, the teacher takes front and back photographs of each pupil. Pupils stick their own photos to the front and back of the roll to make a 'little person'. Pupils put their 'little people' together in a line or group. The teacher asks questions such as: 'How many children have dark / blond hair?', 'How many children have blue eyes?', 'Can you see anything that we all have?'. The teacher asks questions such as: 'What makes Tiago sad?', 'What makes Magda happy?' The pupils reply through their own 'little people'. 'Little people' may also be used in Circle Time to explore feelings and worries or to explain something that has happened.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Travelling teddy bear

**Purpose:** To help pupils bridge the gap between the immediate, familiar environment and unfamiliar environments

**Objective:** By the end of this ‘project’ pupils will have a greater awareness of other people and places.

**Ages:** 4-6 (possibly older)

**Materials:** A teddy bear or other soft toy

A travelling teddy bear or other character is introduced to the class. The pupils may take him home, on holidays or day trips, take photos and talk about these in class. Adults may also wish to take the teddy bear on holidays! The teddy bear’s appearance in unfamiliar places and environments helps the pupils to relate to them. Seeing the bear in the classroom and then pictures of his adventures in faraway places helps bridge the gap between the immediate familiar environment and unfamiliar environments. The website in the third column may provide some more ideas.

### Intercultural portfolio for pupils

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of one’s own and other languages and customs

**Objective:** By the end of these activities, pupils will have developed greater awareness of themselves and others, such as names, words in mother tongue, special celebrations and so on.

**Ages:** All

**Materials:** Templates for intercultural portfolio at different levels

1. Pupils may fill in parts of the portfolio during PDMU / SPHE
2. Pupils are involved in planning an international day / event and in what they could contribute
3. Pupils fill in their contribution to the international day / event in the portfolio
4. The portfolio builds throughout the pupils’ time at the school. Information may be transferred to the more suitable format as the pupil gets older.

### The European Language Portfolio (ELP)

**Ages:** 7-12 (some sections may be appropriate for younger pupils with mediation)

The ELP is designed specifically for use in primary language learning. There are two versions available, one developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT) and one by the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB).

The ELP helps pupils:
- Record what they can do in languages, including the home language
- Record what they have learned and what they need to learn
- Organise their work so that they can remind themselves about what they have already learned
- Show teachers what they can already do in English or another language, particularly if they change class or school

The ELP helps teachers:
- See what languages pupils already know and what they can already do help pupils understand and plan what they need to learn
- Promote intercultural awareness

The ELP helps parents:
- See how their children are progressing in school

Activities in the ELP may be completed at any time. The intercultural portfolio may form part of the ELP. It should follow the pupils through the school.
www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/

This website contains a downloadable version of 'Compasito' which is 'A Manual on Human Rights Education for Children'. The book contains:

- guidelines for practitioners
- 42 practical activities with accompanying resources
- background information on human rights (some documents adapted for children)
- background information on the Council of Europe

It is designed for children aged 7-13.

www.europa.eu/teachers-corner

This website contains lesson plans, resources and activities relating to various aspects of the EU such as diversity, climate change, global trade and so on. It is divided into sections for different age groups.

http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/AUTOBIOGRAPHY/

This is a link to the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* which has been developed to support the learning and teaching of intercultural competences. It is a personal document which encourages users to think about and learn from the intercultural encounters that have made a strong impression or had a long-lasting effect on them. This site contains the two versions of the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*, a standard version and a version for younger learners, as well as various support documents.

If the link does not work, an internet search *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*, will take you to this site.

www.krysstal.com

This site has many facts and figures about world faiths, cultures, inventions, countries and nationalities, languages and so on. It is a good reference source for teachers.
Appendices
There are many acronyms used to refer the teaching of English in different contexts and for different purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESL</strong></td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
<td>English is a second language when the English language replaces the first or home language for important or critical aspects of daily life, such as education or work. Learners are generally learning English in order to access daily communication needs in an English-speaking environment. This does not necessarily imply that the learner knows only one other language, it is the use to which the language is put that accords it the ‘second’ place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAL</strong></td>
<td>English as an Additional Language</td>
<td>This term is used to refer to learners who may have more than one other language. English is therefore an additional language and may be a third, fourth etc. language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFL</strong></td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
<td>This term refers to learners who are learning English as a foreign language, comparable with the foreign languages curricula in school. In general, learners of English as a foreign language return to their own country of origin and may continue to use English in that country for educational or work purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESOL</strong></td>
<td>English for Speakers of Other Languages</td>
<td>This is a broad term, generally used to refer to classes for learners of English in an English-speaking country. It may include English as a Foreign Language and English as a Second Language. It is often used to describe classes held for adult learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEFL</strong></td>
<td>Teaching English as a Foreign Language</td>
<td>This term refers to teachers who are teaching English either in a country where English is not the first language or in language schools offering courses to children and adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TESOL</strong></td>
<td>Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages</td>
<td>This term refers to teachers who are teaching English to speakers of other languages in an English speaking country. Learners may be either foreign language or second language learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpret</strong></td>
<td>Interpret / Interpreting</td>
<td>This term is used when a person interprets because there is not a common language shared by others. Interpreting is oral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Translate</strong></td>
<td>Translate / Translation</td>
<td>This term is used to refer to the translation or written documents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This website provides good information about education systems across Europe and may be helpful in finding out about pupils’ educational backgrounds.

**www.milet.com and www.mantralingua.com**
These websites contain information about dual language and multicultural resources. A catalogue may be ordered on-line or you may wish to order by phone. Contact details are listed on the websites.

**www.eslkidstuff.com**
This is an American website for young learners of English. It provides flashcards for many topics as well as activity sheets to practise vocabulary. There is a small yearly subscription.

**www.britishcouncil.org/kids**
This site for pupils learning English has animated stories, alphabet and grammar activities suitable for different ages. There is a section called Story Maker, under 'Get Writing' where children can choose pictures for various elements of their story and the programme writes their short story.

**www.dltk-kids.com**
This site is for young learners and has pictures, puppets and activities for many common stories: Hungry Caterpillar, Brown Bear, Three Little Pigs and so on. You can also make your own custom-made bingo cards with pictures available on many topics.

**www.kizclub.com**
This website has pictures and activities for young learners, including stories and general language development. There are also some talking books for different age groups on topics such as myself, my school, my neighbourhood and so on. A printable version of each book is also available.

**www.primaryresources.co.uk/letters**
Useful website for some translated letters. This is a temporary address and may change.

**www.enchantedlearning.com**
This site has many activities for various curriculum areas starting at a very basic level. There is a selection of mini-books with clear pictures which provide opportunities for pupils to add or copy text below.

**www.phillipmartin.info**
This website provides clipart images for many primary curriculum areas.

**www.primarytreasurechest.com**
This website provides teaching resources and clipart for many primary curriculum areas.

**www.newburyparkschool.net**
This website hosts a section entitled Language of The Month which promotes intercultural awareness throughout the school. It provides ideas and resources for teaching pupils about other languages and cultures.

*This list is my no means exhaustive.*

*There are many websites containing ideas and resources for teachers of pupils with limited English.*
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Templates available online