

16

English as an additional language (EAL)

During the course of our Childcare in Schools project, Family Action carried out a small piece of research into EAL. This aimed to identify: early years settings that are developing inclusion by supporting children with EAL; resources and programmes being used by settings and LAs across England to support children with EAL.



Local authorities

Our research involved a number of steps, such as contacting local authorities across England to find out which team (or person) in the LA is responsible for supporting early years settings with EAL, and the type of support they provide (eg training, interpreting, resources).

The responses received revealed that different teams/individuals are responsible for EAL in different LAs, for instance:

- Early Years Inclusion Officers
- Early Years Quality Assurance/Improvement Team
- The Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS)
- EMA/EAL Early Years Consultant.

The responses also showed that different types and levels of support are offered to children and families for whom English is an Additional Language, such as:

- training (eg bespoke, open sessions)
- websites (eg online guidance)
- tools (eg screening)
- mapping/signposting to services (eg interpreting)
- on demand support from staff (eg EY inclusion officers)
- programmes used across a LA (eg REAL, Sign 4)
- volunteer groups from a range of communities to support new families with little or no English
- bilingual staff (eg Roma language assistants employed to carry out screenings)
- interventions for families (eg an 'English Language for Families' programme: a

12 week intervention supporting the parents of newly arrived EAL pupils to navigate the education system as well as to develop their own English).

A wide range of resources, organisations and programmes were cited as being used within LAs, such as:

- Chatter Matters
- Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (REAL)
- Primary National Strategy – supporting children learning English as an additional language
- Every Child a Talker (ECAT)
- NALDIC.

Settings

Some LAs recommended settings in their area that are demonstrating good practice in working with children who have EAL. Family Action staff visited a small number of these settings in order to find out more about how staff support children and families with EAL.

We also invited one early years setting in Wiltshire to speak at our national conference in London, in order to share their practices with other settings.

Resources

- Family Action has collated a list of resources recommended by the LAs. Visit the 'Tips and Templates' section of the Learning Exchange website: www.learning-exchange.org.uk
- Case studies from the settings we visited are available from the 'Learn from Others' section: www.learning-exchange.org.uk

Further information

- Family Action is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) to support school-based childcare providers with developing high-quality and inclusive childcare for 0-5s with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Find out more about the project, and download a wide range of free resources from: www.learning-exchange.org.uk
- Our Learning Exchange Facebook page gives links to events, suppliers, equipment, training and venues that might be of interest to school-based childcare providers: www.facebook.com/pages/Learning-Exchange/904749822892733?sk=timeline

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Registered charity in England and Wales no: 264713

Registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales no: 01068186

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Last updated:
31.3.16

