

Advice and Guidance for Supporting Black and Minority Ethnic Children in the Early Years

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service



Contents

Introduction		3
Section 1:	Advice and guidance for supporting children with English as an additional language	4
Section 2:	Advice and guidance for supporting pupils from Black heritage backgrounds	7
Section 3:	Supporting BME parents with their child's learning	9
Section 4:	Suggestions for activities and use of resources	10
Section 5:	Useful resources, references and websites	11
Section 6:	Key to abbreviations used	11



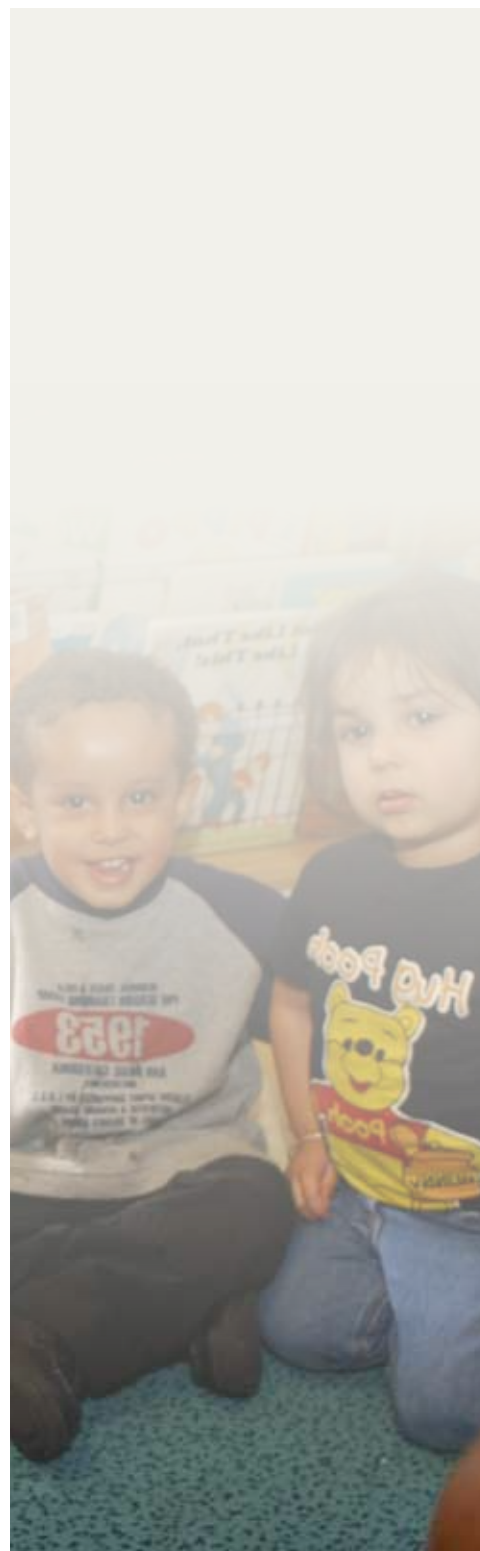
Introduction

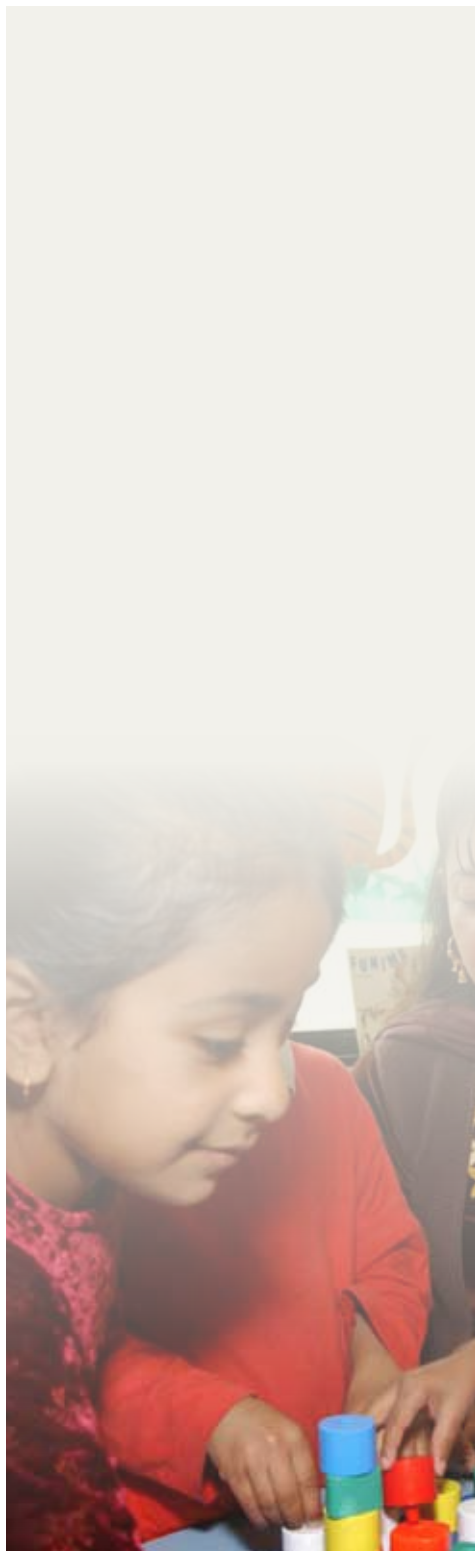
The intention of this document is to provide basic practical information about ensuring equality of access to the learning entitlements of the Early Years Foundation Stage for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children and their families.

The advice and guidance in this document has mostly been collated from two key documents produced by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF): -

- Supporting children learning English as an additional language: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ref: 00683-2007BKT-EN
- Building Futures: Believing in Children, Black Children in Early Years Foundation Stage. Ref: 00008-2009BKT-EN

Further information, guidance and advice can be found in the above documents and in the references given in Section 5.





Section 1:

Advice and guidance for supporting children with English as an additional language

Key points

The following key points are taken from Reference 1 “Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, May 2008”

- A Unique Child recognises that “every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured”.
- Statutory Guidance on organisation of support states that “Providers must promote equality of opportunity and anti –discriminatory practice and must ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.”

In addition research shows that being bilingual bestows cognitive, cultural and of economic advantages to the child.

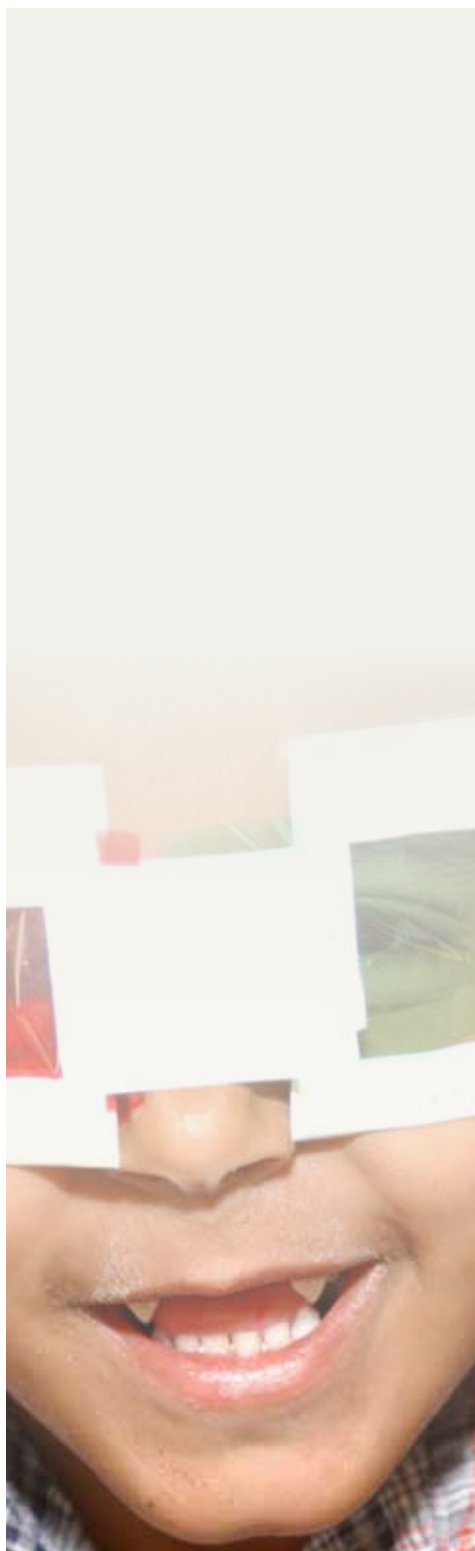
Language Acquisition Theory

Supporting children in their acquisition of an additional language requires an understanding of how a language develops.

Studies show that when more than one language is supported and equally valued in the home, a child will acquire both languages in parallel. Research shows that for example where one parent speaks English and the other French to the child; the child answers one parent in English and the other in French. The child learns two languages simultaneously and understands which language to respond in to the respective parent.

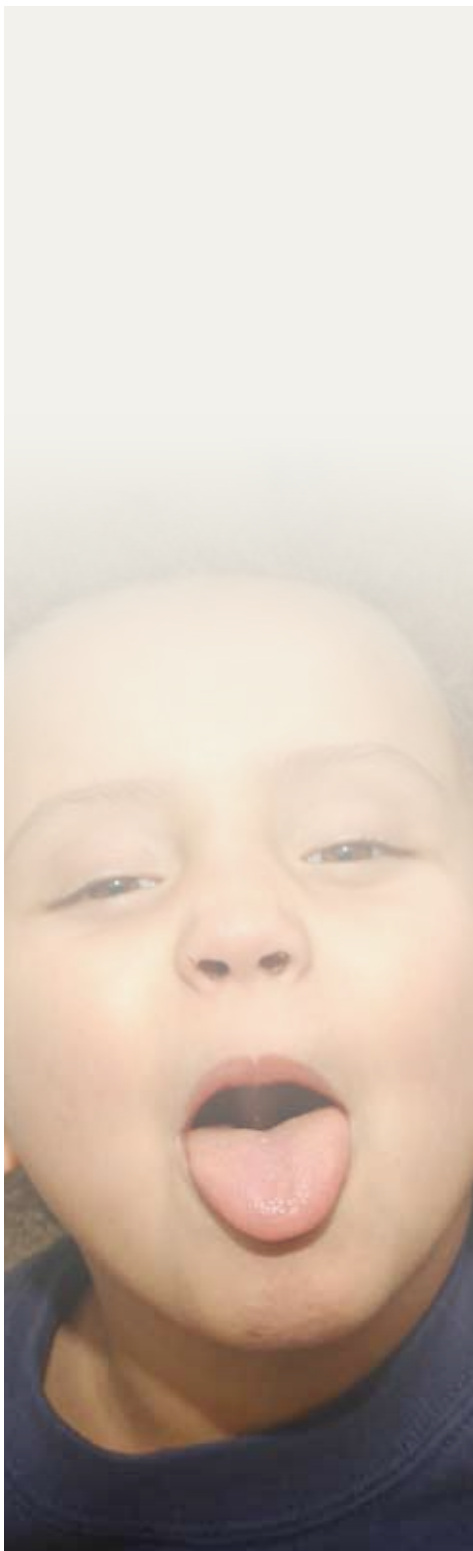
Children attending pre-school or nursery already speaking their first language will be adding new vocabulary to a language they already know, as well as learning a whole new language; this can be described either as an additional language or ‘sequential bilingualism’. Children can be at different stages in their development of home (first)





- Provide opportunities to explore new vocabulary taught with the emphasis being on practical activities e.g. turn taking games, feely bags. Concrete concepts with visual prompts are easier to grasp than abstract ones.
- Use gestures, pictorial clues and real objects whenever possible to enhance understanding.
- Allow time for listening as this is important for the child to tune into a new language and variations in accents, do not pressure the child to respond.
- Sometimes there may be a silent period before a child will feel comfortable to try spoken language – some children do not like to make mistakes and may not speak until they are sure they can say the right thing.
- Encourage friendships with the other children within the age group- ensure similarities are explicit while valuing difference.
- Respond positively:
 - to non – verbal communication
 - by copying words, phrases and songs
- Recordings of songs and stories in the home language give reference to valuing the home language and familiarity in an otherwise alien environment.
- Reinforce the vocabulary taught through repetition.
- Encourage other children to model new vocabulary for the EAL child.
- Expand vocabulary used by the child by using oral frames to help them extend their responses e.g. model phrases when offered single words, short sentences when offered phrases.
- Rephrase inaccurate language or incorrect language structures – do not allow children to get into the habit of using poor English.
- Whenever possible ensure the EAL child is exposed to the best peer language role models so they learn how the most fluent and articulate children speak





Supporting Black heritage children in Early Years' settings

Much of the above advice for supporting EAL children is also relevant to supporting Black heritage children.

- Ensure that you provide a learning environment in which Black children and their families feel welcome, respected and valued.
 - Enter into genuine partnerships with parents of Black children by creating a space for dialogue – listening to the voices of Black children and their parents.
 - Provide a rich learning environment with relevant, appropriate, creative and challenging learning opportunities that reflects diversity of cultural/faith knowledge and experience.
 - Keep careful records to track children's progress from entry to the setting, ensuring that expectations and progress of all Black heritage children are in line with other groups and investigating possible causes where variance arises.
- Consider assessment procedures – are observational assessments of Black children fair, honest and free from influences of stereotyping?
 - Reflect honestly on personal attitudes, feelings, preconceptions and tendencies to stereotype.
 - Challenge negative attitudes and practice within the setting, this is both possible and necessary.
 - Make race equality a priority for whole-setting professional development.

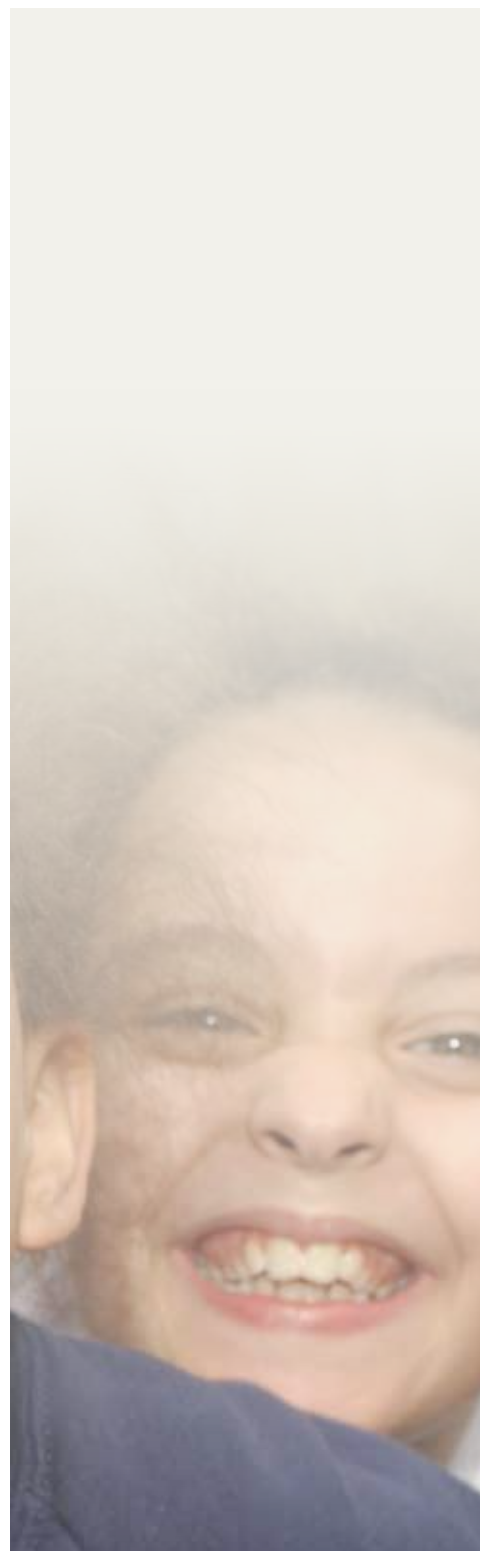


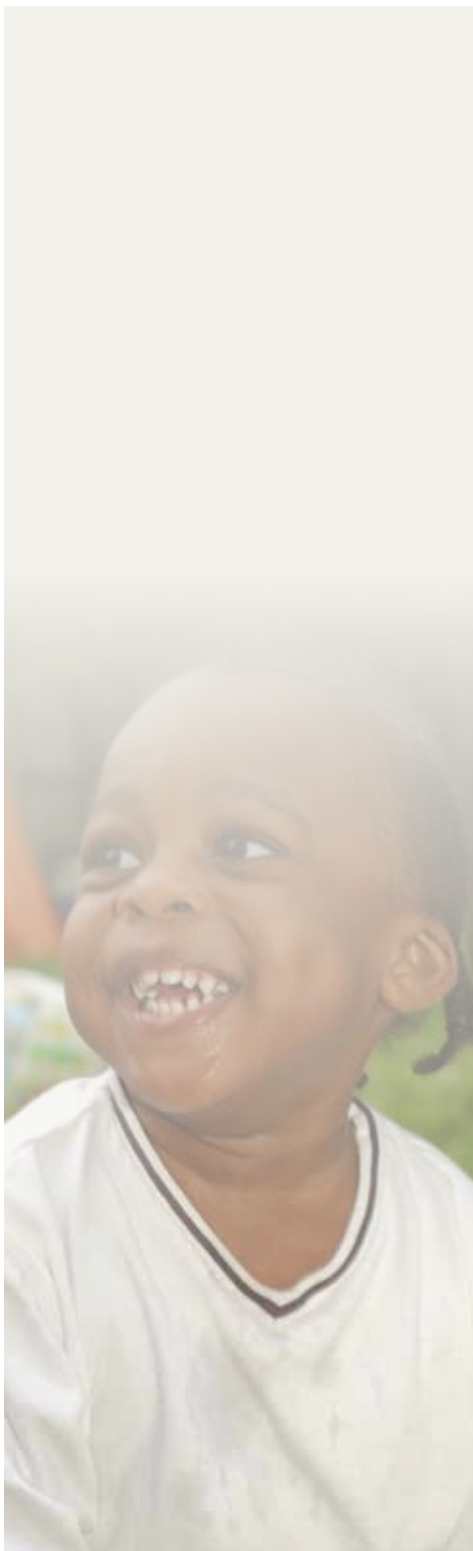
Section 3:

Supporting BME parents with their child's learning

Key points

- Provide nursery information in a clear and easy to understand format; spoken and written.
- Inform and update parents on the activities that are introduced in the setting.
- Invite parents to participate in activities at the setting and bring their own cultural references e.g. through food, story telling, clothes, festivals and musical skills.
- Provide information about the range of community resources available locally e.g. library services for story tapes, bilingual books, health and leisure facilities.
- Provide early literacy resources for sharing at home which reflect a wide range of cultures and faiths.
- Encourage parents to maintain their home language, reassure parents that talking to their child in the language they are most comfortable in is beneficial as concepts learnt in any language are transferable.
- Explain the importance of continuing to develop home language and show that the setting values all language skills.
- Wherever possible translate information into languages spoken by parents or use parents who share a first language to talk through setting information with new parents.
- Signpost opportunities for adults to learn English e.g. adult education centre or college.





Section 4:

Suggestions for activities and use of resources

Key points

- Role play e.g. dressing up, home corner (reflect on the resources at the setting, purchase culturally relevant materials and resources).
- Match play resources to cultural/linguistic identity (bilingual books, posters, picture dictionaries, food packets, utensils, clothing, menus etc).
- Use mime, puppets and visuals.
- Provide visual time lines and timetables (can also be shared with parents).
- Use 'fans' with bilingual keywords (fans downloadable from the EMAS website).
- Encourage friendships between children (awareness of isolated pupils).
- Allocate 'buddies' for a child new to setting; could be another child speaking same language if one is available.
- Encourage use of home language within setting between children sharing same language.
- Capitalise on outdoor play – children are 5 times likely to talk outside than indoors.
- Include games like feely bags, story sacks, mind maps, listening games, songs, nursery rhymes, talking tables.
- Introductions of new children can be included in circle time; opportunity to teach how to greet in many languages and learn other pupils' names.



Section 5:

Useful resources, references and websites

Department of Education information:

Supporting Children learning English as an Additional Language: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ref: 00683-2007BKT-EN
www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk

Building Futures: Believing in Children, Black Children in Early Years Foundation Stage. Ref: 00008-2009BKT-EN

Every Child a Talker: Guidance for Early Language Lead Practitioner
www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk

The Early Years Foundation Stage, Every Child Matters. Change for Children. Ref: 00261-2008PCK-EN

Research on Bilingualism.
www.eslfs.edu/teachers/support/cummin.htm

Useful websites:

www.emas4success.org/NewToEnglish/AdviceandGuidance/index.htm

www.emas4success.org/NewToEnglish/TeachingMaterials/index.htm

www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth/index.html

www.littlelearner.eu/

www.mamalisa.com/?t=eh

www.matralingua.com.uk

www.emas4success.org/acrobat/WholeSchoolPlanning/AdviceforSchools/

Note these website addresses are current at 13 June 2011

Useful resources:

'Growing up Global' Early Year's global education handbook:
www.risc.org.uk

www.kidslikeme.co.uk
Catalogue with a large range of culturally diverse resources

Useful contacts:

EMAS (Ethnic Minority Achievement Service)
www.emas4success.org
Details of contacts in Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire are given under Service Information.

Early Years Advisory Team – advice on inclusion and racial equality

Bristol Translating and Interpreting Service
www.bristol.gov.uk/tis

Section 6:

Key to abbreviations used

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
EMAS	Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
EAL	English as an Additional Language
SEN	Special Educational Needs
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Linguistic Proficiency



This information can be made available in other languages, in large print, Braille or on audio tape. Please phone 01454 868008. If you need any of these or any other help to access Council services.

