

Ten Top Tips for supporting children with EAL

1. Don't worry if the child does not talk for some months. Involve him/her in all activities, continue to talk and use smiles, gestures and eye contact. Give opportunities for speaking but no pressure.
2. Help the child to understand simple classroom phrases... "Can I have..?", "Wash your hands," "Sit on the carpet," "Hang up your coat," "Put on an apron."
3. Involve the child in a variety of hands-on activities with other children so he/she can learn the new language in context.
4. Use visual aids to support stories, songs and talk, e.g pictures, objects, photographs and puppets.
5. Use every activity as a basis for your communication with the child in meaningful contexts.
6. Talk through what you are doing so the child can hear plenty of structured language in context with visual support.
7. Keep language direct, simple and consistent. Try to avoid idioms and sayings, e.g. "It's raining cats and dogs!"
8. Make sure resources show positive images of the child's home culture, e.g. books, dolls, toys, games, role-play. Use dual language texts and signs.
9. Provide taped stories and songs in English, and in the home language, if possible.
10. Help all the children to learn a few simple words in the home languages represented in your setting, e.g. hello, thank you, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (if possible, use the parents/carers help for this).