

HINTS FOR THE CLASSROOM – NEW ARRIVAL AND BEGINNER IN ENGLISH - SECONDARY



- Pupils should be included fully within the life of the school from the start.
- All bilingual pupils achieve most successfully when placed in mainstream classes and taught within their peer group.
- Bilingualism is an asset and the use of first language should be supported. Pupils should be encouraged to speak with those who share the same home language, whenever possible, as its development will aid proficiency with English and there may not be a suitable model for English at home
- It may be appropriate to arrange for an interpreter for enrolment and parents' meetings. Also, the translation of the school prospectus or newsletters may be required.
- The meeting for enrolment provides an ideal opportunity to find out about the cultural implications for the school. Information about dietary requirements, dress code, or religious observances can be gathered. It may be helpful to have the EAL teacher present.
- Try to determine whether the pupil possesses any former school reports. These can be translated, if necessary. Textbooks or jotters from an earlier school can help determine the level and nature of work covered.
- It is useful to know whether the pupil has a familiarity with English. Did he study English at school? Was the teacher a native speaker? Is he in the habit of listening to music or watching TV / films in English?
- Ask about the pupils strengths and interests. The school can only benefit from these.

- It is helpful to match a course of study to knowledge and concepts already gained. A discussion around subjects taught previously can help match a programme of study to the curriculum available within the school.
- A buddy system can greatly help ease the pupil into the new environment. Paired reading with a senior pupil can help develop a proficiency with English language.
- If literate in the first language, it is useful to develop the practice of using a dual language dictionary in all classes.
- Teachers can help by highlighting key vocabulary for each subject. A personal dual language jotter can be kept and essential words easily accessed.
- Teachers should speak clearly and naturally to the pupil, using vocabulary suitable for his stage. Rephrasing often aids understanding.
- Bilingual pupils can greatly benefit from working within a group of proficient speakers of English, who will set a good example for behaviour, the work ethic and presentation of completed tasks.
- The use of concrete materials and demonstration within a lesson can greatly help clarify meaning. It is also often useful to show and discuss a model for the completed work.
- The oral proficiency of the bilingual pupil may not match his abilities to understand the teacher or to process text.
- It will take a bilingual pupil longer to read through and respond to text.
- It is very difficult for bilingual pupils to take dictated notes and it will take longer to copy notes from the blackboard.
- There is no need to differentiate for the content of lessons but it can be helpful to lower the expectation for the output, especially at the initial stages.
- The use of materials which involve tick sheets, cloze passages, matching sentences, sequencing events, chapter summaries, bullet points, flow charts, spider diagrams and substitution tables can all help bilingual pupils access information more easily.
- There are specific SQA exam arrangements for bilingual pupils and application should be made at the appropriate time. Ten minutes extra time is allowed for each hour, as long as an approved bilingual dictionary is used. This provision applies to every subject apart from English. The environment for assessments in class should reflect this arrangement.
- It may also be possible to sit an SQA exam or GCSE in the pupil's first language.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.freetranslation.com

Gives a rough translation of text. Literal translation of words can sometimes affect meaning. Care should be taken and should not be used for sensitive situations.

www.manythings.org

Offers a variety of practice exercises for the development of English.

www.blssportsmouth.sch.uk

A very useful site. Covers many aspects of EAL Support and bilingual issues.

www.dgteaz.org.uk

Translation of standard school letters for many languages.

Dual Language Suppliers

www.festivalshop.co.uk

Multifaith, Multicultural and Citizenship Resources
Excellent range of colourful posters, books and CDs.

www.mantralingua.com

Audio CDs, big books, CD roms, e-books, fun tales, folk tales, friezes, games, language learning packs, posters, story props, toys, and videos.

www.rds.com

Good selection of SQA approved dictionaries.

Race Equality

www.antiracistoolkit.org.uk

Gives wide-ranging advice on creating an antiracist ethos in schools.

www.education.ed.uk/ceres

Excellent advice and information about good practice and whole-school policy from the Centre for Education for Race Equality in Scotland.