Coventry Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS)

Strategies to support /Multilingual/Bilingual/EAL learners in the Early years

Early Years Foundation Stage



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| **A** |
| **PSED Strategies** |
| * *Encourage other children in the setting to act as translators for the newly arrived EAL pupil particularly in times of stress (but recognise that very young children may not be able to do this).*
* *Set up home-school communication links so that activities in the school day can be discussed in first language at home with parents. Photographs are a great way of sharing experiences and explaining routines (following your setting’s guidelines of taking photos of children).*
* *Hold activities such as open mornings, language cafes and parent workshops to provide discussion about differing teaching and learning approaches.*
* *Signpost parents to* *translated information* *about the English school system and how they can support their children.*
* *Set up activities which involve turn-taking in a small group e.g., simple board games, flash card games, Racing to English, Collaborative Learning and Orchard Toys.*
* *Observe children who share the same first language in play. Can they work collaboratively?*
* *Work closely with parents to find out pre-school experience. Consider gradually integrating pupils with no prior pre-schooling through an initial reduced timetable.*
* *Recognise different understanding of independence with toileting, eating dressing etc. and share expectations of the setting with parents/carers in an accessible way.*
* *Ensure that a child knows of an activity they can do if they want quiet time e.g., listening area where they can listen to stories in home language.*
* *Use clear, visual behaviour management systems such as red, amber, green to represent warnings or stickers for praise. But be aware that children won’t understand the rules/sanctions/rewards necessarily.*
* *Find out about school starting ages in pupils’ home country, be mindful of the Early Years provision in this country and the impact this may have on the child being ‘school ready’.*
* *Be aware of differing cultural celebrations observed by pupils.*
* *Be aware of cultural differences when eating and explore how other cultures eat within the setting so that staff and children are all aware of and comfortable with each others’ preferences.*
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| **Listening and Attention** |
| * *Place child where they can see your face as you talk.*
* *Consider the position of the EAL learner in the setting. Ensure they are able to hear clearly.*
* *Use active listening tasks with new vocabulary, ‘where is the pencil? Give me the blue crayon’ accepting a non-verbal response.*
* *Use listening games to identify familiar environmental sounds-support with visuals and props e.g., sound story, odd sound out, sound bingo/lotto.*
* *Set up a listening station with audio materials in a range of languages, e.g.,* *Mama Lisa* *,* *Storybooks* *UK.*
* *Watch for facial recognition, gestures, and eye contact prior to spoken English.*
* *Consider placement of EAL learner during whole-class carpet sessions. Place next to a sympathetic buddy and in clear view of the teacher. Use visuals and symbols such as Communicate in Print to encourage engagement. Ensure any symbols are shared with parents so that they can be discussed in home language.*
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| **Understanding** |
| * *Use Communication fans to encourage EAL learners to indicate immediate needs (learn key words in home language e.g. toilet, mum, dad, home).*
* *Speak clearly and slowly avoiding idiomatic language e.g. ‘put’ not ‘pop’ your coat on your peg.*
* *Use and model the same language structures for frequent instructions and routines to reinforce understanding e.g. tidy up, line up, wash hands, go outside, come and sit down, It’s snack/lunch time.*
* *Use repeated simple language structures in your communication e.g. this is your pencil, this is your bag, this is your coat, this is your peg.*
* *Use visual support (visual timetables, visual word mats, visual instructions for PE, choice boards) so understanding of routines and behaviours are clear.*
* *Model and repeat daily social exchanges with other children, ‘Good Morning, how are you?’*
* *Teach new vocabulary and phrases in advance in a small group or send home words and visuals for parents to translate into home language.*
* *Name items they play with, pictures on the puzzle or in the book in descriptive commentary, ‘butterfly, balls, cat, bricks’.*
* *Walk around setting with ‘Welcome’ book and point out and name key items in pictures. Share with parents and encourage them to translate items into L1.*
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| **Speaking** |
| * *Ensure that role play areas and toys reflect children’s family life, culture and community.*
* *Be mindful of the ~~experiences~~, attitudes and value given by some cultures to some types of play such as roleplay and make-belief.*
* *Provide opportunities for children to converse in home language by consciously organising small activity groups e.g., cooking, constructing.*
* *Provide non-verbal ways for children to make choices e.g., pointing or showing a picture to choose fruit at snack time, choosing a rhyme to sing at group time. Remember to model the language and respond positively to an appropriate non-verbal response.*
* *Use questions requiring a ‘yes/no’ response. Or give verbal choice of two so child can say a single word in response.*
* *Model ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ in appropriate contexts as ‘politeness’ is expressed in different ways in different languages and in some languages the same word is used.*
* *Use some general greetings in home languages to encourage communication and show that other languages are valued and respected.*
* *Talk about routines; explain what is happening/has happened ‘You are doing a puzzle’.*
* *Be mindful that sounding aloud words, e.g., c-a-t, in order to model blending in reading, may confuse some pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English.*
* *Model spoken English with clear pronunciation by drilling target language (asking the child to repeat after you). Incorporate drills into planned and unplanned exchanges when opportunities for new language to be learned arises.*
* *Use backwards drills (modelling language built up in reverse chunks e.g. potato as ‘to’, then ‘tato’, and finally, ‘potato’,) to help pupils practice tricky spoken language.*
* *Use equipment such as maths concrete resources (cubes, Numicon, ten frames etc) to attach language to and clearly model mathematical concepts.*
* *Use games and books with repetitive language/refrains that model language and then allow the child to practice it?*
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| **Reading** |
| * *Use a range of musical instruments reflecting different cultural backgrounds for developing awareness of sounds.*
* *Share the English phonics system with parents so they are familiar with learning approaches. Hold language cafes and parent workshops which target parents of EAL learners.*
* *Be aware that some English sounds do not exist in other languages and that pupils and parents may struggle to produce certain sounds i.e., ‘th’ in Polish and ‘p and b’ confusion in Arabic.*
* *Support all phonics work with key visuals so the EAL learner has understanding of the words which contain the key sounds.*
* *Use bilingual texts/Storybooks UK to share texts in English and other languages pointing out key words in both languages.*
* *Record, display and enable pupils to listen to stories told in first language.*
* *Use stories with patterned responses (e.g. Dear Zoo, Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Handa’s Surprise) to encourage children to join in with repetitions. ‘Brown Bear, Brown bear, what do you see? This helps children to internalise language patterns in context. Support with props and visuals.*
* *Use audio books and/or Talking Pen technology so children can listen to the story whilst they turn pages and see words and pictures.*
* *Use visual resources/ realia/ story props to encourage participation in class stories helping children make associations between story characters and their sounds/actions.*
* *Use* *bilingual texts* *or* *online bilingual texts* *to share texts in English and other languages pointing out key words in both languages.*
* *Use pre- reading activities e.g., matching games using key vocabulary, picture walks.*
* *Be mindful of stories that may be culturally sensitive i.e. ‘The Three Little Pigs’ for Muslim pupils and families.*
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| **Writing** |
| * *Provide writing examples of different languages and include a range of scripted languages.*
* *Create simple first word bilingual books with visuals e.g. Book Creator for iPad.*
* *Recognise the challenge of writing in an additional language and ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to label pictures or items that they are already familiar with in English.*
* *Some children may benefit from opportunities to practise left-to-right pattern making?*
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| **B** |
| **PSED Strategies** |
| * *Routinely provide opportunities between peers through adult guided hands-on activities, games and songs.*
* *During a familiar activity, support and encourage the child to speak in turn. Allow others to take first turns to model responses. Recap frequently and praise any attempt to copy language.*
* *Support children to join in activities modelling key words and phrases to take part e.g. thanks, my go. Interpret minimal non-verbal actions as turns.*
* *Give child responsibilities that don’t necessarily require language like giving out fruit. This promotes the sense of purpose and belonging.*
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| **Listening and Attention** |
| * *Encourage the smallest responses to show that the EAL learner has listened carefully. Gently encourage any responses, either verbal/non-verbal, through praise.*
* *Play small group vocabulary games which involve listening discrimination e.g. barrier games.*
* *Encouraging listening for key language through using props/key visuals when recounting a story, singing a song, reciting a nursery rhyme.*
* *Include opportunities to share familiar nursery rhymes, songs in other languages with the whole class.*
* *Keep instructions clear and short. Use child’s name and encourage them to be looking before giving instructions.*
* *Keep whole-class carpet sessions short for the EAL learner and accompany with clear visuals.*
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| **Understanding** |
| * *Use closed questions with either/or yes/no option responses to check understanding.*
* *Keep instructions clear and short. Continue to support instructions with body language/actions and repeat not rephrase. Allow extra time for response.*
* *Plan language structures and vocabulary that can be developed during informal talking moments (on arrival, discussing the weather) What’s the weather like today?* ***It is*** *cold/hot/raining. Provide alternatives/negatives as a prompt, ‘Is it sunny or snowy? Is it snowy…no it is…’*
* *Identify target vocabulary and ensure staff use it in various contexts. e.g. positional vocabulary ‘Look, the ball is behind the sandpit.’*
* *Use collaborative activities such as barrier games to encourage the EAL learner to listen and understand key language.*
* *Repeat daily social exchanges and allow extra time for a response. Use question words, ‘Who, What, Where… with visual contextual support. Encourage non-verbal/verbal responses.*
* *Use physical play/activities to model language verbs (****eat*** *an apple,* ***throw*** *a ball,* ***get*** *a pencil) to encourage building up of sentences. Play pairs, Kim’s game, Simple Simon Says to extend and reinforce vocabulary in context.*
* *Provide a commentary describing their actions (parallel talk); Child: I play Lego You: Yes I am playing with the Lego too.*
* *In home-school communication book share activities with parents so that they can continue with concept development in home language. e.g. send a copy of class book or story sack home.*
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| **Speaking** |
| * *Encourage children to bring in items/photos from home in ‘show and tell’ activities. Encourage naming of items in home language.*
* *Provide opportunities for learners to speak and respond (e.g. join in with songs and rhymes) Encourage parents to look at nursery rhymes covering the same language (Five little Monkeys/1,2,3,4,5 up the mountain to fight tigers (Chinese)so concepts are learnt in both languages. Refer to online resources such as* *Mama Lisa**.*
* *Ask questions in context that can be responded in single words. Offer forced alternatives and use gestures to show what you are referring to E.g. Does the Hungry caterpillar eat* ***one*** *or* ***two*** *apples on Monday?* ***What*** *is Goldilocks eating?* ***Where****…?* ***Who****…?*
* *Model appropriate voice levels through small group activities of ‘big voices’ and ‘little voices’.*
* *Group with good language role models in small group and role-play activities.*
* *Record language samples to assess how to support emerging expressive language.*
* *Rephrase language used by the pupil to draw attention to errors and correct their spoken English sensitively.*
* *Select EAL pupils to give contributions in class after other pupils have modelled responses.*
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| **Reading** |
| * *Invite all parents for ‘stay and play’ sessions where nursery rhymes, songs, rhyming activities are shared.*
* *Be aware of vocabulary the child knows and build on the initial sounds. Say the name of the item before exaggerating the initial sound. Consult parents for sounds which transfer across languages e.g.* ***m****ilk/****m****leko (Polish).*
* *Highlight similarities in first language and English e.g., cognates, shared phonemes.*
* *Place name in key places so learner becomes familiar with the written word (above child’s peg, on spot on the carpet).*
* *Play games of pairs with words and key visuals for print in the environment (water, toilet, books, pencils).*
* *Create ‘chatter boxes/story-telling boxes’ with a book and objects from the story and encourage children to take this home so stories can be told in first language and English. This will help make connections between spoken and written texts.*
* *Encourage shared reading at home in home language using multilingual books e.g.* *World Stories**,* *Mantra Lingua**,* *International Children’s Digital Library**.*
* *Use repetitive activities to model short stories and songs. Encourage the EAL learner to join in with refrains together with the rest of the group. Reinforce activities with story sacks, visuals and sequencing cards.*
* *Invite parents to story time/rhyme time to share how to support their bilingual child with reading at home.*
* *Use pictures taken from whole class texts to ask ‘where/who/what…?’ questions.*
* *Create own simple first word/sentence graphic books (can be bilingual with support from parents) e.g Book Creator or Clicker Docs, Use repeated structures with key words when co-creating books e.g. I can see a… I like…*
* *Use stories such as ‘Where’s Spot?’ and ‘Rosie’s Walk’ to reinforce use and understanding of positional vocabulary.*
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| **Writing** |
| * *Use shared writing sessions to co-create books using repeated language structures e.g. This is a…, I like…, I can…,*
* *Use Talk for Writing Strategies such as story mapping when modelling the planning and writing of stories so that learners have visual representation of the story and are chorally rehearsing the story through oral repetition before writing.*
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| **C** |
| **PSED Strategies** |
| * *Help children understand the feelings of others by labelling emotions.*
* *Give opportunities to talk about content of key visuals or stories before a focussed, whole-class activity. This helps introduce key language prior to whole-class activity (pre-teaching).*
* *Encourage asking for help/to join in by modelling sentence starters, ‘Can I…, Shall we…?’*
* *Provide opportunities for children to talk in small groups about what they have done/are interested in (Talking Partners activities).*
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| **Listening and Attention** |
| * *Repeat any peer talk/answers so that EAL learners can hear the language again. Set up games where language is repeated e.g. whispering games.*
* *Ensure that delivery is clear and avoid colloquialisms. Use complete short sentences and encourage any copying that the EAL learner attempts by praising and recasting.*
* *Play small group games with a range of different speakers to further develop listening to instructions. Encourage the EAL learner to take turns and give instructions.*
* *Use choral activities in small groups to recite short stories, rhymes stopping in key places to see if the EAL learner can complete the missing sections. Choose the missing words with care (plan for language development) e.g. ‘The Wheels on the…go… and …’*
* *Continue to support instructions with body language/actions/key visuals and repeat not rephrase.*
* *Continue to use visuals during whole-class and small-group presentations. Clearly point to relevant parts of visual when introducing new language.*
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| **Understanding** |
| * *Be aware of different background experiences.*
* *Introduce two-step instructions for routine activities e.g put your coat on your peg and sit on the carpet. Emphasise key words/ use visual for support.*
* *Continue to reinforce language structures and vocabulary. Ensure that EAL learner is placed in the middle of turn-taking activities to give them time to understand new language/contexts and hear modelled replies.*
* *Provide opportunities for the EAL learner to* ***use*** *new vocabulary in lots of different situations. Practise using positional language, ‘in, on, next to, behind, in front’ in small group activities such as barrier games.*
* *Continue to practise daily social interchanges in different contexts. Encourage full responses.*
* *Use sorting/matching activities to extend and develop maths vocabulary.*
* *Be aware that new vocabulary/sentence structures will have to be modelled in context.*
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| **Speaking** |
| * *Encourage parents to come into the setting during ‘Language of the Month’ celebrations to help the whole class learn a song or a nursery rhyme in another language.*
* *Play games with the feely bag to develop and extend descriptive language. Scaffold language by modelling sentences and place in the middle of turn-taking activities.*
* *Ask direct questions and encourage full sentences in response. Prompt with the sentence starter, ‘The hungry caterpillar…*
* *Use new vocabulary and encourage learners to use it in context. EAL learners need to hear and use language repeatedly in context in order to retain it.*
* *Extend language by modelling use of positional language or adjectives, ‘I like your tower; that is a tall tower’ ‘That’s a big…*
* *Encourage narrative language by providing sentence starters, ‘First…Next…After that…’. Recast initial attempts to use the past tense. E.g ‘I builded the tower…-Yes you* ***built*** *a really tall tower’*
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| **Reading** |
| * *Use word buckets with key cvc words relating to class texts. Can you find the word ‘h-e-n’ in the word bucket?*
* *During phonics activities, ensure that the meaning of words is explored at the same time.*
* *Highlight relationship between spoken and written text by pointing to key words. E.g. ...Re-visit text and ask chn to ‘find the word’.*
* *Introduce key vocabulary related to books, ‘front cover, back cover, title’ encourage parents to translate key words into home language.*
* *Use repetitive activities to model short stories and songs. Encourage the EAL learner to join in with storytelling by prompting with sentence starters. Reinforce activities with story sacks, visuals and sequencing cards.*
* *Use picture sequences as prompts to encourage story telling practising verbs and tenses.*
* *Used shared reading activities to make Big Books from familiar nursery rhymes/. This offers the opportunity for repetition of key language in a meaningful context.*
* *Co-create non-fiction books on the local area using photographs to help increase their understanding of the locality and services.*
* *Encourage shared reading at home in home language using multilingual books e.g.* *World Stories**,* *Mantra Lingua**,* *International Children’s Digital Library**.*
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| **Writing** |
| * *Use simple substitution tables with key visuals to support sentence level writing.*
* *Use shared writing sessions to make familiar nursery rhymes into Big Books emphasising the sounds in the rhyming words.*
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| **D** |
| **PSED Strategies** |
| * *Provide opportunities for children to talk in small groups about what they have done/are interested in (Talking Partners activities).*
* *Continue to encourage asking for help/to join in/express opinions by modelling more complex sentence starters, ‘Could I…, Shall we… I think she/he should…?’*
* *Continue to highlight plurilingualism as a skill and encourage parents to use the home language for learning literacy and new concepts in the curriculum.*
* *Continue liaising with parents to understand the family’s values and culture which may impact on the child’s interactions, choices and behaviours.*
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| **Listening and Attention** |
| * *Emphasise key words in instructions.*
* *Play games where tone of voice relates to whether someone is happy/sad/angry/happy. Use key visuals.*
* *Exaggerate intonation in sentences (falling intonation with ‘wh’ questions, statements, rising intonation with yes/no questions).*
* *Use open-ended questions with pupils and encourage them to ask each other interesting questions.*
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| **Understanding** |
| * *Provide more complex instructions to activities. e.g., First take the pencils away and then go and wash your hands. Check for understanding of longer instructions by asking direct questions.*
* *Continue to identify key language structures and vocabulary used in different topic areas.*
* *Model language structures and vocabulary in a range of different situations. e.g., news telling, circle games. Use open questions to check full understanding and encourage longer, more detailed answers.*
* *Vary social interchanges and ask more open questions to encourage a more detailed response. ‘What did you do at the weekend, Ahmed?*
* *Continue to extend vocabulary and share with parents so they can do the same in first language. e.g., Robin, Owl, Woodpecker rather than ‘bird’. Continue to model the vocabulary in the context of a sentence.*
* *Ensure that there is exposure to a wider range of vocabulary e.g. shirt - sleeve, collar, buttons, cuffs.*
* *Explicitly plan to use idioms and provide a context for children to understand their meaning e.g., get your skates on.*
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| **Speaking** |
| * *Encourage pupils to bring in photos from home to recount their news/holidays so they have prompts to recall past experiences.*
* *Model descriptions by talking about a picture, object from a class topic. Encourage EAL learner to follow and describe the item or picture.*
* *Plan activities to develop talk for a wide range of purposes e.g., describing, recounting, giving instructions, negotiating, disagreeing politely, justifying opinions. e.g., delivering messages, playing language games, describing real objects/people, giving directions, explaining rules.*
* *Plan collaborative activities such as role-play, hot seating, construction, cooking to support the use of language in context. Group with good language role models.*
* *Encourage explanations by prompting them to extend sentences, ‘So you like dogs* ***because****…*
* *Plan for modelling and practising more complex language during circle time activities e.g.* ***If I had a*** *banana* ***I would****…*
* *Encourage children to develop narratives in their play using words such as: first, next, last and recall past experiences.*
* *Offer activities encouraging asking questions, e.g., what/where/when/who/why board games; use puppets in role play or hot-seating activities and model asking questions in context.*
* *Compare different ways of saying things for different purposes.*
* *Continue to provide a range of culturally familiar materials for role-play activities.*
* *Play barrier games where two children/groups of children have the same sets of objects and give instructions to one another to create the same structure.*
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| **Reading** |
| * *Encourage prediction of what will happen next through pausing and asking key questions. Prompt with sentence starters.*
* *Use visuals from familiar stories to play barrier games and encourage questions or comments. Is Handa happy? Where’s the wolf?*
* *Encourage shared reading at home in home language using multilingual books e.g.* *World Stories**,* *Mantra Lingua**,* *International Children’s Digital Library**.*
* *Use picture sequences, story maps to encourage longer story recounts. Prompt with time connectives.*
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| **Writing** |
| * *Provide support in context by using sentence starters e.g., Abdul likes… Spot likes… In the park I can… In school I can…*
* *Continue to use substitution tables (sentence builders) particularly for more complex sentence structures. e.g., If I had…I would…*
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