**General advice**

What to expect

* Social and emotional support is a possible requirement at the beginning of the school journey **for the family** as well as the child. The family may have many concerns about their child separating from them for the first time. Be prepared to give lots of reassurance. Show pictures of the child playing and joining in and smiling! Some parents may worry that their child is not making friends.
* Parents of children with younger siblings ready for Nursery or Reception may need support with **school admission**, including local authority procedures. They may believe admission and movement from Nursery to Reception will be automatic.
* Do not worry, in the early stages, if the pupil appears not to be making the same rate of progress as others. Most children new to English will have developed their home language to an age appropriate level, but their English reflect the language used by a much young English-speaking child. For monolingual peers this might be an indicator of additional needs. In the case of an early stage learner at the beginning of learning an additional language, a snapshot of what s/he can do from [an EAL] **assessment** will show a more accurate picture of **language skills**. It is less appropriate to describe their early language in terms of the language development of the very young English-speaking child.
* Within the Early Learning Profile, some skills can be **assessed** **in other languages**. If this can be done in your setting, it will give a much fuller picture of the child’s abilities, and it will inform teaching decisions for staff working with that child.
* In KS1 where children are new to school, some **short respite periods** within continuous provision may be helpful to relieve pressure on the stamina required to get through the whole day. It can provide activities to extend the child’s experience of play, motor skill development and much needed relaxation.

Strategies to try

* Encourage and facilitate use of other languages as learning tools. **Dual language materials** and audio files are readily available. Audio devices can help parents to record a reassuring message for the child.
* Be aware that there may be **cultural** conventions about making **eye contact**. Children may be more willing to make eye contact with another child or with a puppet than with an adult.
* Provide opportunities for the child to link to **prior knowledge**. Linking to familiar toys and stories and experiences will support the child from a more personalised stating point. Find out as much as you can about each child.
* Provide **contextual support** for meaning. Images, artefacts and concrete experiences will support in all groupings, from large group carpet sessions to small group activities.
* In focus sessions, provide explicit **models** of language, with **planned talk** opportunities for learners to hear, repeat and produce language. Think in advance about any simple questions you can ask the child.
* Model the language you are expecting to hear as an explicit example for the child to follow, and prompt then recast if needed. This will offer a further model for the whole group.
* Make use of frequent opportunities to engage the child in **incidental unplanned talk**. Prompt and start conversations with *‘Tell me about this’* and *‘Show me …’*
* The range of **groupings** found in EYFS settings will support the child to make contact with a range of speakers. Try to group him/her with **good role models** of spoken English, and children who readily talk as they play, or carry out tasks. This will provide additional opportunities to hear language modelled.
* Continuous snack time in the setting does not always provide sustained opportunity to hear others talking. The social activity of having a **short group snack time** enables the group to be selected that offers the best models of language, as well as fostering friendships. Adult intervention for this short time in invaluable to model language and simple commentary about the snacks and about what it is going on socially.
* **Vocabulary** development remains a priority for bilingual learners in both early and later stages, even when they are achieving or exceeding expectations. It will continue to be a priority throughout the school journey.
* Focus on building all vocabulary **in context**, through familiar play settings and high-quality visuals, props and artefacts.
* Give lots of **thinking time**, learners may be translating in their heads or processing in their own way. Sometimes an encouraging noise or gesture will help.
* Remember that many experiences, stories, rhymes and objects may be **culturally unfamiliar**. Audit materials and stories to **plan for introduction** to the vocabulary and be prepared to give extra input before a focussed session to support the child’s learning.
* Flexible grouping in KS1 can support bilingual learners to benefit from contact with **able learners**, as well as **good models** of behaviour and language. Any **withdrawal** should be **short term** and focussed on language connected to classroom **learning contexts**.
* All learners will need age appropriate ICT and wordbooks/dictionaries.