

## Standardised testing



- Standardised tests are unreliable for use with learners with EAL as they are standardised on a monolingual population and may also be culturally biased.
- Results should be interpreted with caution when considering possible SEND.
- A much better indication of whether a learner has an underlying SEND or not can be ascertained by following the process outlined below.

## Collect information



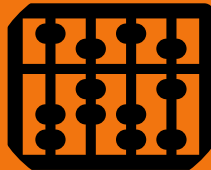
- Collect as much background information on the learner as possible using an interpreter to help communicate with parents if needed. Include:
  - whether the learner was born in the UK or their date of arrival if born overseas
  - a chronological record of countries they have lived in
  - family details including language/s spoken at home and any other languages to which they have been exposed
  - any relevant medical information/details of SEND already identified in pupil's country of origin
  - their educational history including nursery/pre-school, formal schooling, any education at home and any gaps in their education

## Collect evidence



- Use an EAL-specific tool such as the Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework to assess and track progress with skills in English
- Assess the learner's skills in their first language. Use EMTAS Bilingual Assistants to help you do this if required
- Assess proficiency in any other languages to which they have been exposed
- Gather information on learner's progress over time in all curriculum areas
- Collect samples of learner's work
- Speak to all staff who teach or support the learner to ascertain their views

## Consider other factors or explanations



- Does the pupil have a record of poor attendance and/or lateness and/or extended absence from school?
- Has the pupil experienced bullying, racism, culture shock, family separation, bereavement, problems at home or trauma related to experiences such as war?
- Is the pupil going through the 'silent period'?
- Is the pupil a more advanced learner of EAL who needs more time to reach equivalence with their monolingual peers?
- Are there any problems with eyesight or hearing that have previously gone unnoticed?

## Consider EAL practice



- Consider the steps that have already been taken to meet the needs of the pupil, including the use of EAL good practice strategies for teaching and learning. Are these appropriate?
- Has EAL support been withdrawn too soon?
- Have interventions designed for learners with SEND been used inappropriately?
- Is there a supportive, inclusive learning environment in place?
- Are the language demands of tasks analysed and scaffolded according to the needs of the learner?

## Decide on needs and provision



Analyse all the information and evidence gathered and make a decision about the pupil's needs and what provision is appropriate. You may have one of three possible outcomes:

- Learner assessed as having EAL needs only – put EAL support in place
- No firm decision – investigate further, set new targets, monitor carefully, review and evaluate action taken. Consider asking for advice from EMTAS.
- Learner identified as having SEND – requires SEND intervention. Continued EAL support may also be necessary.

Remember to consider the need to involve and support parents, especially where you identify an underlying SEND or where you plan to make an EHCP application.

Relevant case studies can be found in the EAL or SEND? e-learning unit.

## For more support



- Access training on EAL best practice for staff – available through EMTAS.
- If still unsure if the pupil has an underlying SEND or if it is likely that an EHCP application may be required, contact EMTAS for further advice and support.
- Referrals to other agencies may also be appropriate eg GP, Speech and Language Therapy Services, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Primary Behaviour Support Service etc.

## Links and Resources



- [Standardised testing](#) – EMTAS Position Statement
- [L1 assessment E-learning](#)
- [SEND:EAL E-learning](#)
- [Information - SEND or EAL?](#)
- [Bilingual Conferencing E-learning](#)
- [BELL EAL Assessment Framework](#)

- [EAL MESHGuide](#)
- [Supporting the achievement of deaf children who use EAL](#)