

## General principles



*An EAL assessment and evaluation framework should support an evidence-based approach to assessing progress and to promote learning, where evidence comes from multiple sources, including formal and informal assessment. Evans, Jones, Leung & Liu (2015) - [EAL Assessment and Evaluation Framework](#)*

## Background information



- It is important to collect as much background information as possible for new pupils, especially those arriving mid-phase. This information is often held by parents/carers, contained within records passed on by previous schools and medical information from public/private bodies, whether UK based or not.
- Be aware that interpreters may be needed for parent conferencing to ensure that all the appropriate information is gathered. There will be confidentiality issues, so it is important to use an independent adult to interpret where possible. See [Bilingual Conferencing](#).

## Standardised testing



- Most learners of EAL do not perform to their true academic potential in standardised tests due to the linguistic and cultural challenges bound up within them. EMTAS recommends that outcomes from these types of test DO NOT inform decisions about grouping, setting and intervention.
- Formal screening programmes are unlikely to provide a reliable picture either, potentially indicating a SEND where there is none; consequential interventions are therefore likely to be inappropriate.
- See our [Position Statement](#) to read more about standardised testing.

## First Language Assessment



Schools need an efficient system for establishing and disseminating the proficiency in first and other languages of their learners of EAL. The EMTAS [Position Statement](#) about first language explains why this is important and how teaching staff can capitalise on these proficiencies. Proficiency in first and other languages can vary enormously between children. Schools can utilise age-appropriate or better proficiency in these languages as a tool for learning across the curriculum. For more information visit our [guidance library](#).

Profiling of newly arrived pupils by an EMTAS Bilingual Assistant includes an assessment of first and other languages. If the assessments have already been conducted in another setting then the information should be passed on during transition, ready for dissemination to appropriate staff. Where a same language speaker is unavailable, it can be more difficult to gather this information. EMTAS [E Learning](#) is available to help staff understand how to conduct an assessment where they don't share the language with the child.

## Proficiency in English (PiE)



- All teaching staff should know the DfE PiE band for each of their learners
- Schools should implement a recognised assessment framework to track the ongoing progress in EAL for their learners across the curriculum – EMTAS recommends the [BELL Foundation EAL Assessment Framework](#)
- Be aware that learners of EAL often have spikey profiles of achievement across the curriculum.
- Rates of progress will depend on a range of factors including: age of entry into the UK education system, whole school provision and quality of teaching and learning, a pupil's general aptitude for learning and their proficiency in first language, the amount of support available from within the home situation and whether or not a pupil has any additional SEND.

## SEND:EAL Assessment



Sometimes learners of EAL don't make expected rates of progress and this may raise concerns about possible underlying SEND. There can be many reasons causing a child to struggle and it is therefore important to collect a range of evidence over time before drawing any firm conclusions.

- Talk with parents about the child's early development and find out if there has been any involvement from outside agencies, in the UK or abroad.
- Rates of progress in English acquisition will vary between individuals and it can take up to ten years for some learners of EAL to catch up with their peers
- Find out if the child's proficiency in first language is age-appropriate
- Assess PiE within the full range of curriculum subjects over time
- Check there are no external factors such as unstable housing or racism in the community that may be impacting performance at school.

## Transition



Requesting records about pupils from a previous school and passing on meaningful information to a receiving school or college is critical to ensure the most effective practice and provision is put in place for every learner of EAL. Timely transfer of information will help staff think beyond what children can currently do, encouraging a more aspirational view in which the potential of their learners in the longer term is recognised.

## Links and Resources



- [L1 Assessment Blog](#)
- [L1 assessment E-learning](#)
- [SEND:EAL E-learning](#)
- [Information - SEND or EAL?](#)
- [Bilingual Conferencing E-learning](#)
- [BELL Foundation EAL Assessment Framework](#)
- [EAL MESHGuide](#)

- [Supporting the achievement of deaf children who use EAL](#)
- [Assessing the learning of EAL pupils during and after school closures \(webinar\)](#)