

# Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service

**Equality, Excellence, Diversity**

**Developing a Rights Respecting Service  
that advocates for the Rights of the Child**

Guidance on good practice relating to the  
admission, induction, support and provision for  
EAL, BME and GRT children in Foundation Stage  
(Year R)

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## Foreword

This guidance was produced by Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) to support schools receiving children into Foundation Stage (Year R)

- who are from a black or minority ethnic (BME) background
- who speak a language other than English at home (EAL learners)
- who are of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller (GRT) heritage.

We recognise that, by the end of the Foundation Stage, all children are entitled to full-time education. Through integration into mainstream provision, every child should receive an education appropriate to their developmental level, aptitudes, interests, ambitions and cultural identities.

This guidance focuses on good practice. Its aim is to support schools to offer excellent provision to BME, EAL and GRT children who are admitted into the Foundation Stage (Year R), making use of the full range of best practice strategies and drawing on the knowledge and experience of EMTAS staff and Hampshire schools in meeting the needs of children in this particular year group. Using this guidance to inform practice and provision, schools will be able to appropriately tailor their offer to young BME, EAL and GRT learners, giving them access to a broad range of educational opportunities so that they may achieve good rates of progress through the Foundation Stage, establishing a strong foundation to take them into Key Stage 1 and beyond.

This guidance addresses ways of identifying and meeting the support needs of these groups of Year R children – and their families - from induction through to transition into Year 1. It acknowledges that parents of many BME, EAL and GRT children joining a school in the UK in Year R may not be aware of the options available to them or particular aspects of provision in the Foundation Stage.

The premise of this guidance is that schools can support young children's access to quality provision in the Foundation Stage, paired with the fundamental principles of care and inclusion. This guidance will start by identifying those children who are from a black or minority ethnic group and/or may be described as having English as an Additional Language and/or are of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller heritage. It will then focus on elements of an induction process for these children and their families that acknowledge the possible impact of joining a new school in an often unfamiliar education system. It goes on to consider possible on-going support strategies for children through Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1 as well as exploring ways of developing good home-school liaison with their parents/carers.

It is hoped that this guidance will help to improve participation of BME, EAL and GRT children and their families in the Foundation Stage curriculum, addressing any gaps between these children and their peers and thereby improving outcomes as children end the Foundation Stage, ensuring they are prepared for the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

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**January 2018**

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## Acronyms used in this guidance

Acronym	In full
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EMTAS	Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service
GRT	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TA	Teaching Assistant
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

## Aims of this guidance

The aim of this pack is to be a source of information and guidance for Foundation Stage Practitioners, supporting them to ensure provision in the Foundation Stage and any support offered to their BME, EAL and GRT children is appropriate to their needs and enables them to achieve good rates of progress prior to their transition to Key Stage 1 in Year 1.

It was written for school-based practitioners to enable them to achieve two things:

- 1) to offer the best support possible to BME, EAL and GRT children in Foundation Stage (Year R) as they settle into school life

and

- 2) to establish appropriate, productive home-school links with the parents/carers of these children.

The pack includes Appendix H: Information about schools in Hampshire for parents who may be new to both English and the education system in England. This information can be found in Appendix H: Information about schools in Hampshire for parents.

Information contained in the pack collates contributions from many of the EMTAS team as well as from Hampshire County Council Early Years Advisory Team and draws on their experience and expertise. Thanks go to these people for making this a collaboratively-produced resource:

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# Legal requirements relating to the admission of children in Year R

## The School Admissions Code

[The School Admissions Code](#) (DfE, 2014) states that 'admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group' (section 1.8).

### Children from overseas

In addition to the above, section 2.19 of the School Admissions Code states that 'admission authorities must treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with European Union law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals.'

Therefore, in most cases parents/carers of children arriving from overseas can apply for places in state-funded schools in England. A child should not be refused entry purely because they speak little or no English or because they are from a particular ethnic group.

However, the following children are **not** entitled to a state education:

- children from non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries who are here as short term visitors: these are children who live abroad but have come to the UK for a short visit, for example as tourists or to visit relatives.
- children from non-EEA countries who have the UK Border Agency's permission to study in the UK: these children are allowed to study in England on the basis that they attend an independent, fee-paying school.

## The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the duties placed upon public authorities, including schools, to prevent discrimination and harassment. These include:

- promoting equality of opportunity
- promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups
- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination.

The Act covers anyone in schools who has one or more of the following 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Act:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

A person can experience direct discrimination because of a protected characteristic, even if the person does not have the characteristic himself/herself:

- Discrimination because of **perception** takes place where someone is treated worse than others because they have been perceived to have a characteristic.
- Discrimination because of **association** takes place when a person is treated worse than another person because they associate with a person with a protected characteristic.

Part 6 of the Act states that the responsible body of a school must not discriminate against a pupil:

- (a) in the way it provides education for the pupil;
- (b) in the way it affords the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- (c) by not providing education for the pupil;
- (d) by not affording the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;
- (e) by excluding the pupil from the school;
- (f) by subjecting the pupil to any other detriment.

According to the Equality Act, a school's duties go beyond formal class-based education and include all school activities including extra-curricular and leisure activities.

In terms of a school's admissions policy, a school must not:

- discriminate in the arrangements that it makes for deciding who is offered a place;
- place any terms on a person's admission which are discriminatory;
- refuse a place for discriminatory reasons;
- harass a person who has applied for a place at their school;
- victimise a person in relation to admission to school.

The exceptions to this are as follows:

- admission to single sex schools;
- faith schools – this does not allow discrimination on any of the other prohibited grounds such as sex, race or sexual orientation;
- selective schools which are using permitted forms of selection on the basis of academic ability or aptitude are not discriminating by applying these forms of selection to disabled children who apply.

Therefore, the main duties of the school relating to admission practice and provision for BME, EAL and GRT children are:

- to ensure that the operation and impact of the admissions policy is non-discriminatory. For example, it would be discriminatory to attempt to refuse a prospective student a place in school solely on the grounds that they spoke very little English or had little/no prior experience of education;
- to identify and address any disparities relating to the achievement and progress of children of different ethnic origins;
- to provide an appropriate and relevant curriculum for all children;
- to provide a pastoral support programme that takes into account ethnic, religious and linguistic differences and recognises the particular experiences and needs of children from all vulnerable groups and their families, including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.

## The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

The UNCRC consists of 54 articles that set out children's rights and how governments should work together to make them available to all children.

Since it was adopted by the United Nations in November 1989, 194 countries have signed up to the UNCRC, with only two countries in the world still to ratify. All countries that sign up to the UNCRC are bound by international law to ensure it is implemented. This is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Key Articles in the UNCRC that relate to educational provision state:

**Article 29** (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

**Article 30** (children from minority or indigenous groups)

Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

**Article 31** (leisure, play and culture)

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

The full Convention with all 54 Articles can be found on the [Unicef website](#).

The guidance in this booklet offers strategies through which these rights can be addressed. Furthermore, this guidance seeks to address the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

## Admission into Year R

### Deferred and Decelerated Entry into Year R

School admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of **all** children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age. Parents have the opportunity to:

- start their child in September on a full-time basis from their first day of attendance or;
- allow their child to attend on a part-time basis until the start of the term after the child's fifth birthday or;
- defer their child's entry to school until later in the school year. This must not be beyond the start of the term after their fifth birthday or beyond the start of the final term of the school year.

Parents should discuss with the school how they would like their child to start school.

Parents of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) can also:

- request to delay their child's entry to school until the September after they turn five. This is called '**Decelerated Admission**' and is an option only available to parents of summer-born children.

### Deceleration

Decisions regarding in which year group to place a child are very important. As a general rule, it is recommended that children are placed and educated in the chronological year group which reflects their age and are supported to engage with the learning within that placement. However, there are some exceptional circumstances where variations to this might be suitable for an individual child for example a child in Year 1 might benefit from short-term, part-time access to elements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In this case, the child would remain in the correct chronological year group but would attend some input with children in a different year group. Schools should carefully plan for such a child to be fully reintegrated into their chronological year group for all provision before any key transition points.

All decisions around deceleration should be made with great care and with all concerned parties knowing that:

- a) at key transition points, eg KS1 to KS2 or KS2 to KS3, the receiving school may not honour the deceleration, forcing the child to 'jump' a year later on;
- b) in the long term, deceleration can affect a child's funding, particularly as they enter KS5 (college).

See the EMTAS website for comprehensive [information about deceleration](#) and the various implications schools should consider when making decisions that involve educating a child outside of their chronological year group.

## Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage with regard to Children in Year R

The [Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook](#), which is updated annually, is very clear on the requirement of settings to promote the inclusion of all pupils, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and children for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). In addition, it is important for settings to ensure that all children are prepared for Year 1, putting much emphasis on carefully tailoring provision so it includes appropriate, positive learning experiences to meet the needs and developmental stage of each individual.

In relation to children whose home language is not English, The [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) says

*For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS: ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay. (Paragraph 1.7)*

Appropriate teaching and learning strategies are identified later in this guidance. Further support and training is available from Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service.



## Who are our BME, EAL and GRT learners?

End of Foundation Stage data show that ethnicity and EAL status can both have an impact on children's progress and attainment. Schools should be aware of discrepancies at national, county and school level in order that they can ensure measures are put in place to address any identified underachievement or inequality of access to all aspects of provision.

From 2017, the census return for Early Years settings includes data on young children's ethnic group (known as 'ascription') and the language(s) they speak at home. These data, if routinely collected and accurately recorded, can be a useful starting point when identifying young BME, EAL and GRT learners as they join the Foundation Stage.

### Young Children from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups

The term 'BME' is often used very broadly to denote 'non white-British' communities. Within Hampshire's BME population, there is tremendous variation in terms of ethnicity, culture and language and the changing demographic of the sub-groups within Hampshire's BME population can present a challenge to schools and settings.

The ascription process in schools whereby at admission parents are asked to which ethnic group they consider their child to belong is the first point at which a child's ethnicity is made explicit and is recorded. It is important that schools support parents with ascription in order to ensure these data are as accurate as possible. The leaflet '[First Language, Home Language and Ascription](#)' on the EMTAS website can help with conversations about why these things are important and what schools will do with the information provided.

In Hampshire, the largest BME groups after White British (WBRI) are 'Asian Other' (AOTH) and 'White Other' (WOTH) but diversity within these broad categorisations is significant and schools therefore need to ensure they collect and record information about each child's first/home language(s), country of origin and religion as well, so that provision includes and more accurately reflects the communities the school serves.

Many of Hampshire's young BME children are learning English as an additional language as well as being part of a BME community. Refer to the section below 'Young EAL Learners in the Foundation Stage' for more information about children for whom English is an additional language. Other children for example our Black British children, may have only ever been exposed to English; their needs may relate more to their ethnic and cultural identities.

Children from Roma communities may have both GRT and EAL needs and are particularly hard to identify as they may be very keen to hide their Roma identities and may ascribe as White Other (WOTH) rather than as White Roma (WROM). In Hampshire, numbers of Roma children in schools may be higher than official records show for this reason.

## Young EAL Learners in the Foundation Stage

The linguistic backgrounds and contexts of young EAL learners may vary considerably from one family or individual child to another. Some commonly found patterns include:

- **Young EAL learners from monolingual families**

These children usually acquire their first language at home from their parents and relatives and they acquire English from people outside the home, eg at school.

- **Growing up in a bilingual family**

These are children whose parents have different first languages. In these families, parents may choose different strategies for bringing their children up bilingually for example the 'one-parent-one-language' model in which each parent speaks their own first language to the child. The establishment of bilingualism within the family is not usually problematic providing that the parents are consistent in their language use. The degree of success in terms of growing up bilingually also depends on the child's need and motivation to use both languages.

- **Children from linguistic minorities**

These children have parents who belong to a linguistic minority within the country of origin. They may hear one language at home and another outside. They usually acquire the official language of their country when they enter a nursery or a pre-school setting. In this case, it is quite likely the child has acquired early concepts relating to academic learning not in their home language but in the language spoken by the majority population of the country in which they grew up. Careful consideration of the acquisition of both languages and previous education should be taken into account in order to provide the most suitable provision for these children. It is difficult to respond appropriately to these children's language needs if the parents haven't provided the relevant detail when declaring their first language.

- **Young EAL children whose families have transitioned to and from the UK during their child's early years**

This happens when parents have had to frequently change their country of residence during their child's early years which does not allow the child to be immersed as fully as would be desirable into the cultural and linguistic atmosphere of the country of residence. It can have a considerable impact on the child's proficiency in both languages as well as on their cultural and social functioning. These children might experience early difficulties in both languages especially in the early stages of bilingualism when the child spends too little/interrupted time functioning in the two (or more) languages to which they have had exposure.

- **Young EAL children whose parents have chosen to communicate with them mainly in English when it is not the parents' first language**

This is sometimes the case with young EAL children who were born in the UK. In these families if the first language is rarely used when communicating with the child with the intention of helping the child's English language acquisition, the resulting imbalance of exposure to the first language hinders its development, with the child coming to rely mainly on the English language to communicate. This is often particularly evident once the child begins attending a pre-school setting and is exposed to English with increasing frequency. The lack of initial input in first language at home might yield slower progress in language acquisition through the Early Years as well as making it more difficult for the child to engage fully within their own home language speaking community and/or with relatives who do not speak English.

Whatever their background, children will need to know that their cultures and languages are valued in their new setting as this helps them to feel settled and secure, factors which contribute to their being able to develop skills in a new language.

### Young Children from GRT Heritages

'Traveller' is umbrella term and it is important that staff know which group(s) are attending their school. The main groups are as follows:

- **Gypsies:** a recognised ethnic minority with an identifiable culture and language which is unique to the UK.
- **Roma:** a relatively new group in Hampshire, who have migrated to the UK from across Europe. Unlike UK Gypsies, Roma do not usually seek accommodation in caravans or on sites but prefer to live in housing.
- **Irish Travellers:** have a unique culture and language distinct from Gypsies and other Travellers but are often confused with Gypsies because both groups can be seen travelling around the county in caravans. Irish Travellers are hard working and closely guard their family values.
- **Showmen:** some families travel with fun fairs from place to place from early spring until late autumn. Showman families are long established in Hampshire and there are showmen yards in many locations across the county.
- **Circus:** none that reside in Hampshire that we know of though we do have families that travel through. Some speaking another language, children access school at primary phase and families carry a range of sweatshirts for the various schools their children may attend.
- **New Travellers:** the newest group of Travellers, comprising a group of people who have elected to leave the aspects of society they disdain in order to live a freer, simpler life travelling.

- **Bargees:** live on canals and can only stop at a mooring for a short period before having to move on. There are none that we know of in Hampshire, however there are families living in the Newbury area.

## Induction programmes

The aim of 'induction' is:

- to support the family in understanding the UK education system and the options available to them in the Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1.
- to provide appropriate pastoral, linguistic and curriculum support in order for children to participate effectively in their mainstream setting as soon as possible.

Flexibility and open-mindedness in responding to children from BME, EAL and GRT backgrounds is a precursor to implementing best practice in the Foundation Stage. In order to respond appropriately to each child's individual needs, it is important to gather relevant background information from parents.

### What information should be collected at the initial assessment?

As a recap, the following points indicate the range of information that is useful to obtain in order to make the most accurate assessment of each BME/GRT/EAL child:

- family information, including siblings and extended family
- child's first language
- languages in use in the home
- parent's preferred method(s) of communication
- whether or not parents need an interpreter eg for parents' evenings
- information about the child's preferences and dislikes
- relevant medical history including hearing and eyesight checks, immunisations etc.
- style of teaching and learning in country of origin (useful as a way of establishing parents' expectations)
- previously identified learning difficulties or disabilities, eg Aspergers Syndrome, hearing impairment or general developmental concerns.

It is also helpful to establish whether or not the child has been registered with a GP and a dentist. Parents may not know about the range of services they can access for free for their children as in country of origin, these may be paid for.

Collecting a range of background information as detailed above can be done using the pro forma in Appendix F: Sample Profiling Report for a Year R child.

### *The Induction Process in School*

To ensure that parents/carers from BME, EAL and GRT backgrounds have a clear understanding of the UK education system, it is recommended that an initial meeting is organised with parents/carers, key staff in school and the support of an EMTAS Specialist Teacher, Education

Advisor, Traveller Teaching Assistant or Bilingual Assistant. Every effort should be made to ensure parents fully understand how provision is organised in the Foundation Stage and what role they should play as parents. With support from an EMTAS practitioner, parents will be given the opportunity and confidence to ask any questions they may have. Where parents do not speak much English, the benefits of using an interpreter to support an induction meeting should be carefully considered. For more information on how to make best use of an interpreter at an induction meeting, see the section in this pack called *Guidance on Working Effectively with Interpreters*. For information on how to access this sort of support for a family with a child going into Year R, see the [EMTAS website](#).

For some settings, it may be appropriate to organise a coffee morning for ethnic minority parents rather than separate, individual meetings. These events, facilitated by EMTAS staff, can help parents gain a better understanding of their child's school and the UK education system, and can provide an informal setting for parents to ask questions and raise any concerns pertaining to their child's education. More information about these events can be found on the EMTAS website [here](#).

After the induction meeting, key background information should be shared with staff so that they are aware of the child's first/home language skills, cultural/religious needs and interests. Staff should also be given information or training on appropriate teaching and learning strategies to use to help the new arrival settle in and begin to access the Foundation Stage curriculum.

An induction booklet or checklist can help clarify for parents/carers key aspects of their child's new school environment. This could include information about the school day such as timings, uniform expectations, any after-school clubs available and procedures to follow if their child is ill and will miss school. Where possible, information provided in the family's first language can help with communication but it is always best to check the preferred language and format for communication with parents first, noting that for parents who are less confident users of English, communication by telephone can be very challenging whilst literacy levels may present a barrier to some English-speaking parents.

To support a newly-arrived EAL learner to settle into their new school environment, schools could consider implementing the Young Interpreter Scheme® and using peers to help with routines, including lunch times. With materials available to train children in Key Stage 1 to become Young Interpreters, this scheme can be a great way of enabling older peers to support newly arrived children in the Foundation Stage and also of demonstrating the value placed by school on the cultural and linguistic diversity of its community. See [Appendix B](#) for more information on the Young Interpreter Scheme®.

Where there is difficulty communicating with parents/carers due to a language barrier, EMTAS has available phone lines for various languages to help with communication. For example, if a school has an important message to relay to parents such as a school closure (INSET) day, the appropriate language phone line could be used to communicate this to parents/carers. Further information on the language phone lines currently available can be found on the [EMTAS website](#).

## *Supporting transition into the Foundation Stage*

Entering a Foundation Stage classroom for the first time can be a particularly traumatic experience for some children and practitioners may notice responses ranging from a “Silent Phase” to crying/distress to behaving aggressively towards others. For children who find the transition particularly difficult and challenging, it may help to offer a phased approach, building up the child’s attendance over a week or two. This should be done in close liaison with the parents/carers, and with consideration to their circumstances eg work commitments and any issues relating to transportation to and from school.

Other things that may help ease transition for a child include:

- allowing parent(s) to come in with the child to get them settled in the morning
- making sure you pronounce names correctly
- using first language eg to greet the child
- using praise, smiling
- supporting the newly-arrived EAL learner with older, trained Young Interpreter peers.

Where the child joins the Foundation Stage in-year rather than at the start of Year R in September, schools should remember that not only will the child have missed the settling-in period their peers accessed at the beginning but also that parents will have missed any input on the Foundation Stage curriculum and any routine support with transition from pre-school. It is recommended that schools invest some time in going over key aspects with parents, in particular how parents can support their child at home. There is information for parents and for settings on the [EMTAS website](#) which can be used to help with such conversations.

# Children for whom English is an Additional Language



## Young children acquiring English as an Additional Language (EAL) in the Foundation Stage: some considerations

Acquiring a new language isn't easy and, contrary to popular belief, it can take a young EAL learner longer to catch up with their monolingual peers than an older EAL learner. This is because young children's first languages are still developing whereas older children often have secure speaking and listening skills, literacy skills in their first languages and more experience of how to learn. These factors place older EAL learners at an advantage when it comes to learning English as an additional language.

By the age of five, most children can express their ideas and needs clearly using a broad working vocabulary and well-structured utterances that demonstrate their developing grammatical knowledge. Research tells us that those children who have well-developed first language skills usually become more fluent users of English as an additional language given enough time and access to the new language. There are clear advantages to continuing to develop first language skills whilst learning English and this is one reason why it is recommended that parents/carers continue to use their first language at home with their children. This should be clearly communicated to parents/carers and there is a leaflet '[Bringing up your child bilingually](#)' available in translation on the EMTAS website to support schools to do this. A second reason why this is important is that parents are likely to be stronger language role models for their child if they continue to use their first language. Thirdly, there may be members of the extended family or friends back in country of origin who cannot speak English so the best way of ensuring a child can sustain meaningful relationships with these people is to continue to support the child's first language development. Lastly, speaking more than one language can provide career opportunities later in life, another reason why young children should be supported and encouraged to continue to develop their first language skills.

## Settling In and Welfare Issues

There are some simple, practical things schools can do to help children for whom English is an additional language settle into their Foundation Stage setting and get off to a good start with their education.

### Introducing the child

- Staff need to be sure about the naming system the family uses and make sure those names are pronounced correctly. This is an important part of acknowledging identity. Ensure that the child's preferred names are used for official purposes. Note that some children may have been given an English name which they are not used to being called and to which they may not respond. This is sometimes done by parents to help schools in the UK with pronunciation issues. It is worth asking parents if their child has ever been known by another name so clarify if this is the case.
- Brief all staff and other children positively about the new child, e.g. 'X speaks two languages' rather than 'X doesn't speak English'. The use of [Persona Dolls](#) by appropriately-trained staff can be a good way of doing this with young children.
- Try and plan in opportunities to celebrate and share the child's culture, language and religion for example by answering the register in other languages or tasting foods from the child's country of origin (remember that the use of knives and forks is by no means universal) or telling a story from their culture. Again, the use of [Persona Dolls](#) by appropriately-trained staff can be a good way of exploring these issues with young children in a way that doesn't shine the spotlight on any one child.

Many children settle in well and have few difficulties in their new environment but for some more support is needed. Here are some problems commonly encountered in schools together with some suggestions for dealing with them.

### Developing links with parents

Parents may have very little knowledge of the UK education system and this is particularly relevant for the first child going through school. Lacking experience, parents can be hesitant to get involved or to communicate their concerns to schools or to ask questions, especially where their English is less well-developed. Examples of things that have caused an issue for some families include the home visit: parents might be suspicious about why school staff want to come to their home. Giving a clear explanation, supported by an interpreter where necessary, can help alleviate concerns.

Parents might not be clear about school routines and activities. They may be willing to help their child but they may not know how or what the expectations of them are. Again, being clear about these things can be helpful. It can also help to spend time showing parents how to support the development of their child's early numeracy and literacy skills in ways that are consistent with how

these are taught at school. Note that even parents who can speak English may not be aware of how phonics are taught and may not know the letter sounds. This can be overcome through the use of online materials eg CBeebies Alphablocks or apps eg “RWBCK” which is based on the Oxford Reading Tree materials.

Let parents know what key learning is coming up so they can reinforce/practise at home.

Reinforce that parents should continue to use their own language(s) with their child and not switch to English. Raising the profile of and valuing the languages spoken in the school community can help build parents’ confidence to continue to use their first languages, which can rub off on the children too.

Speak to parents about what is allowed in terms of snacks brought in from home and, where relevant, what the child should have in their lunch box.

Let parents know that in Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to develop independence with things such as putting on their coat, doing up their shoes, getting changed for PE etc. If parents know these things are expected, they can support at home.

Tell parents about positive behaviour management strategies and how children are rewarded for displaying target behaviours with praise and positive reinforcement. Sharing these strategies with parents can enable them to adopt similar strategies at home. Available in English and a range of other languages, there are some guides for parents on positive behaviour strategies on the EMTAS website [here](#).

## Concerns about behaviour

### 1. **The child seems very tired**, especially in the afternoons, and may fall asleep

Remember it is tiring to operate in a new language and the effort involved can result in young children falling asleep in the afternoons.

In some cultures, it is considered normal for even very young children to stay up much later than is typical for the indigenous population. Staff should be aware of this in any conversations about bed times with parents.

Try providing a place where children can relax and sleep if needed.

### 2. Relating to **lack of boundaries** in the previous learning setting or in the home and/or different approaches to behaviour management.

The school should communicate with parents to let them know what the expectations are at school and how they can reinforce by using similar strategies at home with the child. It is also helpful if good role models can be used to model good behaviours in school. The use of praise to reinforce target behaviours can work wonders.

Contact EMTAS for support with communicating with parents and sharing with them a range of positive behaviour management strategies they can use at home. There is a range of booklets about this on the [EMTAS website](#) which have been translated into various languages.

**3. Some children might not give eye contact** due to cultural reasons. In some cultures, one shows respect by not giving eye contact to one's seniors.

If this is the reason, the child will need to be supported to match the school's expectations and staff should allow time for this adjustment to become routine.

**4. The child might not want to talk to teachers** because they are not confident to do so. They might have a contribution to make but don't want to communicate.

Alternative ways to answer should be accepted eg showing by using signs or actions. Sometimes modelling by other children, especially in turn-taking activities, can help. Practitioners should not insist that the child must give a verbal response or put pressure on the child to respond as this is often counter-productive.

**5. The child might be hesitant to join in** with activities.

Observer play where a child just watches their peers play is a natural stage and can be viewed as a positive step. Showing the child some pictures of the activities on offer can help them make choices about what they'd like to do. Adult support to promote and encourage joining in can be helpful too. It is also useful to find out about the child's interests first, so these can be reflected in the range of activities on offer in the Foundation Stage classroom.

**6. The child is looked after by grandparents** or a nanny and lacks independence in basic skills and/or constantly seeks attention from adults because the adult who cares for them at home does it all for them and is always on hand to give them their full attention. This can lead to the child not being able to perform basic self-care tasks such as getting changed for PE, doing up their own coat or feeding themselves at lunch times.

In this situation it is helpful to speak to parents/other adult carers and explain the skills needed in the classroom setting. Parents/other adults who care for the child can then encourage the child to practise the skills at home by himself/herself.

Practitioners should be consistent in terms of giving attention whilst understanding that the child may need an incremental approach, gradually withdrawing the amount of attention until it is at a more manageable level.

**7. Different prior experience/lack of experience of schooling**

Communicate with parents and make setting requirements and expectations clear. Discuss how parents can support at home eg with early reading development, possibly using dual language materials and with early number skills.

Phonics teaching in the UK is a common source of difficulties for parents with different experiences of schooling in country of origin and an informal session to demonstrate how phonics are taught here can be helpful. Note that parents who have no grounding in English phonics or whose English is not well-developed may feel very unsure about helping their child at home. In these cases, recommend apps and online resources they can use instead.

Talk is central to children's language development and parents should be encouraged to continue talking to children in their first/preferred language. This will help the child to develop their early language skills, giving them a good head start in their learning journey.

**8. The child is experiencing confusion and frustration** with their change of country, school and/or language. They might behave aggressively or become withdrawn, crying or going through a 'silent period' (please see our website for Silent Period strategies).

For children who are crying and withdrawing for these reasons, comfort given by an empathic and patient adult can be very reassuring.

For children showing aggression, often some support through first language can help. Staff should maintain their general behavioural expectations and use the same behaviour management strategies as for other children eg noticing and rewarding positive behaviours and naming negative behaviours and putting the child's name on the sad face/cloud/orange spot (or whatever) if they display these behaviours.

Some children find it difficult to interact with their peers for activities involving sharing or turn-taking. Bear in mind that the activity may be unfamiliar and more support may be needed to help the child engage more positively.

## **9. Developmental issues/underlying SEND**

As within the monolingual population, these can be issues for an EAL child too. Schools should refer on to the relevant services for assessment and guidance.

SEND can be problematic for parents who may not accept there could be a difficulty with their child's development and/or may not understand processes and procedures in the UK for identifying and supporting children with additional needs. Seek support for parents should this be the case.

Remember that difficulties relating solely to under-developed skills in English are not SEND.

# Parental Engagement

## What schools can do to encourage parental engagement for parents who speak other languages at home

- Create a welcoming ethos by displaying posters and pictures which convey positive messages about different cultures and languages. This will communicate a sense of inclusion and belonging to parents as soon as they enter the school building. First impressions are very important.
- Reception staff in school should be well-trained to be approachable and have the skills to go the extra mile to welcome parents who may not speak much English.
- Use a personal approach to invite parents to key events. Eg approach them personally when they come to pick up or drop their children off. Consider making home visits before the child starts school where possible, including where the child is an in-year admission and the main round of home visits has been missed.
- Use translated letters or leaflets as appropriate. Be aware that online tools such as Google Translate do not always convey the correct message and can yield misleading or even meaningless results. EMTAS language phone lines may be very useful here, and have the added benefit of allowing parents to ask whatever questions they may have.
- Keep in mind cultural sensitivities when approaching parents, remembering that body language varies from culture to culture and as a result some parents might not like shaking hands or giving direct eye contact etc.
- Explore cultural or religious background information as soon as the child is registered in order to avoid any misunderstandings that might crop up. Eg boys in some cultures are pampered more than girls and may demonstrate a lack of independence eg in putting on a coat, feeding themselves with a knife and fork or getting changed for PE because these things may have been done for them by parents. In some cultures, parents and other adults may still be using baby talk with young children, which can result in less well developed speech sounds, vocabulary or syntax.
- Organise coffee events specifically for EAL parents where they feel comfortable to ask questions and understand school's expectations eg teaching the child to be independent in terms of eating and dressing themselves, attendance and punctuality, how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Whilst remembering that parental engagement is the responsibility of the whole staff, not just a child's key worker, it can be helpful to have parent-helpers and other ancillary staff who can engage with parents regularly and in less formal ways. This can build relationships over time and support parents to communicate with school in productive ways.
- Use different strategies to encourage parental participation: don't give up if first attempts don't succeed.
- Show genuine interest; this helps encourage parents to be more involved.

- Allow additional time for EAL parents to spend in the classroom to give them the opportunity to have first-hand experience of Year R teaching and learning.
- Find out parental expectations and plan strategies to support accordingly. Remember that parents from some countries are used to getting detailed, regular feedback about their child's learning and behaviour in school and areas for improvement, which they can then support at home. Make effective use of the home-school diary/reading record for regular communication with parents, whether or not they speak English, and ensure there is clear guidance about how parents might support their child at home with their language skills and learning. Use the EMTAS Language Phone Lines to support this where parents would benefit from the use of first language.

Note that many parents may be unaware of how to use the reading record/home-school diary. More information to clarify this and perhaps a model to follow can be helpful approaches.

- Have literacy/phonics and numeracy workshops specifically planned for EAL parents so they understand what is taught in schools and which teaching methods and resources are being used.
- An approach that has worked successfully in some settings is to employ on a voluntary basis parent helpers who can work with children in class. Schools have invited those EAL parents with well-developed skills in English to volunteer too, a good way of getting key messages about what is going on in school into the community.
- Signpost parents to local services and family learning classes.
- Advise parents/carers to continue to use their first languages at home as this will be the best way they can be the best language role models. Strong first language skills are known to promote better progress with acquisition of English.

# Guidance on Working Effectively with Interpreters

## For School-Based Staff

### When considering using an interpreter

- First check with parents/carers if they are happy to work with an interpreter and share with them the name of the interpreter if possible. Reiterate that any information they provide will remain confidential.

### Immediately before the meeting

- Brief the interpreter about the nature of the meeting and any particular concerns you want to discuss. This will enable the interpreter to make any adjustments and raise any cultural concerns that may be pertinent. Encourage the interpreter to alert you to potential cultural misunderstandings that may come up.
- Be aware that many concepts you will want to express might not have any linguistic or conceptual equivalent in other languages, so it may take longer to explain these things fully to parents. Allow additional time for meetings supported by an interpreter as it normally takes longer than expected.
- Make sure that the room is appropriate to allow privacy.
- Check how the interpreter would like to be introduced and introduce yourself to the interpreter.

### During the meeting

- Acknowledge and show respect to the interpreter as a professional in communication.
- Speak directly to the parent/carer, not to the interpreter. Be aware of your own body language and eye contact (in some cultures it is disrespectful to give direct eye contact).
- Speak slowly and at even pace. Pause so the interpreter can interpret and allow the interpreter time to restructure information in his/her mind.
- Restate or rephrase the question to get the correct message across or ask the interpreter to help in eliciting the information in a more appropriate way.
- Avoid generalisation or making assumptions.
- At the end of the meeting, go through the key points with parents/carers to ensure mutual understanding.
- If needed, consider allowing 10-15 minutes for informal chat with parents/carers.

### After the meeting

- Debrief the interpreter and identify any actions that need to be taken.
- If the interpreter is needed again, book dates for the next meeting and request the same interpreter if this seems appropriate both to you and to the parents/carers.

## **For Interpreters**

### **Preparation before the meeting**

You should disclose any conflict of interest and/or previous relationship with the parents/carers.

Remember you should not personal advantage, financial or otherwise, of information obtained in the course of your work as an interpreter.

Make sure you have checked and confirmed the following information:

- date, time and location of meeting (when, where and how long?)
- who will be at the meeting
- who will lead the meeting
- the topics to be covered, information to be gathered (inform the client of any cultural barriers/sensitivities related to the matter)
- if the family needs to bring anything with them, e.g. passport, school reports etc.
- any technical language that may be involved
- seating arrangements: if possible, you should sit next to the parent/carer, perhaps on a round table, so that interpreting can be carried out inconspicuously.

### **During the meeting**

- Introduce yourself to all present.
- Explain that you will interpret everything at the meeting.
- Reassure the parents/carers of confidentiality and inform them of any possible exceptions to confidentiality (e.g. where there are safeguarding concerns) before providing services.
- Make sure the parent/family member is aware of the agenda.
- Keep it a two-way conversation. Don't add your own thoughts/opinions and interpret everything into the first person (avoid 'he said', 'she said').
- Explain culturally unfamiliar items,
- Respect the cultural sensitivities of both parties and alert the parties to any possible misunderstanding due to cultural differences or any specific terms which can cause confusion.
- Feel free to intervene to seek clarification to avoid any misunderstanding.
- At the end of the meeting, ask both parties if they want to discuss anything else informally or ask any further questions.

### **After the meeting**

- Debrief with the client (the school)
- Arrange a further meeting if required and if needed leave them your work email/tel no. ensuring your attendance is acceptable to both the school/client and the parent/carer.

## Helping a child to learn English: Successful strategies

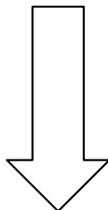
The following suggestions may help beginners settle into class and to start to develop both confidence in their new surroundings and English language skills.

- Make sure you pronounce the child's name properly and greet them every day.
- Make sure the child and parents know your name: introduce yourself and write down your name for them.
- Sit a new-to-English EAL child with sympathetic members of the class, if possible with those who speak the same language and can translate or be a talking partner to interpret routines.
- Try to encourage children to contribute to class activities by using their home language eg by recording a response in first language on a talking tin.
- Do not worry if beginners say very little at first as plenty of listening time is important when starting to learn a new language. It is quite common for new-to-English EAL learners to go through a silent phase during which they are 'tuning in' to new language.
- Encourage new children to help give out equipment or (with another child) take a message to the school office so they make contact with other children and familiarise themselves with the layout of the school.
- Where possible, provide short word lists or topic areas in advance so that children can discuss at home in first language with family members.
- The use of oral recording devices such as TalkingPENS, tins and photo albums can enable practitioners to incorporate an audio component into displays and activities. Involving parents or older EAL children can be a way of creating multilingual talking displays.
- Focused Persona Doll work can help other children in Foundation Stage become more skilled at supporting a new-to-English learner. Persona Dolls can be borrowed from [EMTAS](#).
- Dual-language story-telling can be a valuable way of giving a child new to English a shared experience of story. Parents may be willing/able to support Practitioners do this but if not, TalkingPen enabled texts can be used. EMTAS has a range of [dual language stories](#) suitable for use with children in Foundation Stage, many of which come with a TalkingPen.
- Try learning a few words of the child's first language to show you are willing to learn as well as expecting them to do so in English. Transliterations of key phrases such as "Well done" can be a helpful way of making first language use by staff in the setting achievable, especially where the child's first language uses a different script from English.

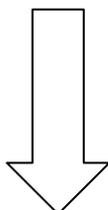
## Developing Speaking and Listening skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Observations

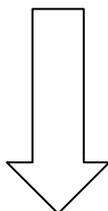
- Appears to speak no English
- Appears to understand no English
- Speaks in home language to adults and peers
- Watches others



- Understanding more English than able to use
- Communicating by gesture and facial expression
- Responding to instructions accompanied with gestures
- Joins in with repeated phrases in songs and action rhymes



- Using single words or phrases to communicate e.g. "Toilet" or "drink"
- Using gesture to extend talk
- Echoing words/phrases "tidy up time" "sit down"



- Generating own words and short phrases
- EAL "transfer errors" such as word order, prepositions, pronouns and/or mixing languages still very common.

### Strategies to try

- Self talk and parallel talk
- Visual timetables, picture books
- Teach the names of staff
- Play games with repetitive language
- Action rhymes, songs, poems and stories
- Practical activities
- Use visuals, gestures and modelling

- Continue to involve the child in activities and use the above strategies
- Use real objects and pictures to provide extra visual support
- Lotto games, bingo games
- model the target language for the child

- Extend the child's speech. "Cars." "Would you like to play with the cars? I've got a yellow car. I'm driving it down the road."
- Stories with repetitive language and clear pictures.

- Continue to extend child's speech and model correct grammatical structures "I goed outside." "You went outside? What did you play with outside?"
- Encourage child to respond by asking closed questions, either/or questions and one word answer questions.

Remember children learn language by hearing and using it in meaningful contexts. The Early Years Foundation stage environment provides opportunities for planning good quality speaking and listening activities while hands-on activities provide contexts for learning English as an additional language.

Be aware that it can be very tiring functioning in another language and remember it takes up to two years to learn the social English needed for everyday conversation and several years longer again to develop proficiency in academic English across the curriculum.

*(From Cumbria County Council, adapted)*

## Withdrawal work

Young children rarely benefit from withdrawal work and are in the vast majority of cases better off in the language-rich environment of the mainstream classroom. Practitioners may find a new arrival is very tired and may fall asleep in the afternoon because of how mentally draining it can be to spend all day working in a new language. Other children may experience a 'Silent Phase'. Silent Phase for more information about this

It is **not** considered good EAL practice to withdraw children to teach them English and this should be avoided. Neither is it good practice to include a child learning EAL in adult-supported groups aimed at children with SEN, unless the child has an identified SEN themselves.

Withdrawal interventions for children learning EAL that may be suitable are those that focus on pre-teaching and practising saying a few words of key vocabulary for input that is coming up, preferably in small groups with other children who can act as good language and learning role models. As such, these interventions should be for short bursts of time, linked to learning going on in the mainstream classroom and should not mean children are missing vital input.

## Issues around communication

### *Young children living in more than one language*

Where young children are exposed to many languages in early childhood, they sometimes take longer to become verbal as they develop their vocabularies and grammatical knowledge and work out with which people to use each language. It is usual for a young child to understand more than they can say in each of their languages, just as it is for a monolingual child.

Recent research into the working vocabularies of young bilingual learners found that the number of words a child knew across all their languages combined was roughly equal to the number of words known by a monolingual, English-only child.

Research shows that children who continue to develop their first languages usually make better progress in the long term than those who do not. Parents should be encouraged to continue to use the home language as this will be the one in which they can be the best language role models for their child.

Parents often report that their child demonstrates a preference for English, responding in English when spoken to in another language. This is particularly common amongst younger EAL learners. Parents should be encouraged to continue to use their first language with their child. Schools should continue to find ways of raising the profile of the languages spoken in their communities and of celebrating bilingualism as a special achievement.

School staff sometimes find out that parents have told their child not to speak in their home language at school. This should be addressed with parents, who may need to be reassured that continued development of the first language helps the child to learn English rather than hindering the process.

## ***Makaton***

It is important to differentiate between EAL and SEN issues and for all staff to remember that EAL is not an SEN. Support aimed at learners who do have identified SEND is not appropriate for EAL learners who do not have SEN needs; these children's needs are best catered for in the mainstream classroom alongside their peers; placing them to work with groups of SEN children is contrary to EAL good practice and should be avoided.

Makaton was devised for adults and children who had communication and/or learning difficulties. This is not the case for many EAL learners who have well developed communication skills.

Some studies on the use of Makaton with EAL learners conclude that although communicative factors could be enhanced by the use of Makaton, there was no obvious increased development of speech.

However, there were concerns expressed that the use of signing could prohibit the development of speech.

Makaton may benefit younger EAL learners to familiarise them with class routines in the initial stages in the same way as other gestures and facial expressions may be used to support children's understanding of spoken language. Visual support helps us all interact and learn a new language, but unfamiliar Makaton gestures could be confusing or distracting.

It is important not to single out one or two children in the class, as this would then isolate the children from the rest of the class and be detrimental to their peer interaction activities. If Makaton is in routine use in the Foundation Stage classroom, then EAL children will have some access to it as will other children but it should not be introduced and used solely with EAL children.

## ***Silent Phase***

Many children whose first language is not English go through a 'silent period' when they first start school in this country. This 'silent period' may last for several months. It is not a passive time: all the while children are in their silent period, they are taking in everything that is going on around them, including the new language, and eventually these children do begin to speak at school.

Supporting them to develop confidence and encouraging them to join in with games and activities whether or not they are ready and able to speak in school can help. Priscilla Clarke's strategies listed below offer advice on ways to help children through the silent period:

- continue talking even when children do not respond
- persistent inclusion in small groups with other children
- use of varied questions
- inclusion of other children as the focus in the conversation (pair the learner with a buddy and ask questions of both children)
- use the first language
- accept non-verbal responses
- praise even minimal efforts
- continue to expect that the child will respond
- structure lessons to encourage child-to-child interaction
- provide activities which reinforce language practice through role play



## Assessment and SEND concerns

The assessment process for EAL learners is multi-faceted and there are not any standardised tests available in languages other than English. Assessment should not be based on what a child can do in English but should look beyond a child's ability to use English to express their understanding.

Early assessment of a child's language skills will enable appropriate learning targets to be identified as soon as possible and for appropriate groupings within the classroom to be identified. In any case, giving children access to good language, learning and behaviour role models will aid progress.

If schools refer a child in Foundation Stage for whom English is an additional language to EMTAS, a Profile Report can be produced. This will include information about the child, their family background, any prior experience of education they may have had and an informal assessment of their first language skills.

The results of screening tools such as Speechlinks, routinely used with children in many Foundation Stage classes, should be interpreted with caution for EAL learners. These tools, which are norm-referenced on a monolingual population, do not tell practitioners the same things about an EAL child as they might for a monolingual, English-only one. Where schools use the results of screening tools to plan interventions for groups of children, there is a danger of an EAL child ending up with an inappropriate intervention for this reason. More information about [screening and standardised testing with EAL learners](#) can be found on the EMTAS website.

Where an EAL child has had time to settle into their new classroom but where there are still concerns about engagement and progress, schools can access further assessment from EMTAS to explore whether the difficulties are due to the child's EAL developmental stage or are attributable in part to an underlying SEN.

# Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Heritages



# Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children

## GRT communities and access to education

*“The theme of A Unique Child gives practitioners an opportunity to embed positive change for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and their families in all Early Years settings. The commitment (1.2) to inclusive practice under this theme is that ‘The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against.’ This commitment is a golden thread throughout all of the EYFS themes and principles and requirements.”*

The National Strategies | Early Years Building Futures: Developing trust – A focus on provision for children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2009

Like most parents, GRT parents will be anxious about leaving their child at an Early Years setting for the first time. Children are central to the GRT community, and often pre-school or Year R will be the first time the child has been in the care of someone other than a family or community member. Families will be concerned about the safety of their child whilst in the care of strangers but also worried about the attitudes and prejudices of other parents.

GRT families can sometimes be reticent about accepting help. This can include applying for the early years entitlement grant and free school meals. Some parents will not have had any experience of early years education themselves and therefore settings should allow extra time to explain the systems and routines to them and offer any assistance required.

Most Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children speak English as their home language, the exceptions to this being European Roma who may record their home language as Polish, Slovak or another European language. However, many English and Irish Gypsy and Traveller families will use Romani or Gaelic languages among themselves, usually interspersed with English and with varying degrees of fluency.

Some families are reluctant to reveal their ethnicity or cultural heritage as Gypsy, Roma or Traveller because of the perceived risk of persecution. For other families it may be that because they are no longer travelling, they do not consider themselves to be ‘Travellers’. There may be some misunderstanding about ethnicity, culture and lifestyle and about the importance of ascription. Showman families will often ascribe as ‘White British’ or ‘White Other’.

Children of GRT heritage often have a lot of freedom to explore their outside environment and so may have well developed gross motor skills. However, their fine motor skills could take a little longer to develop due to lack of experience with things like scissors, pencils, felt tips etc. and they may initially struggle to settle within the confines of a classroom. In all aspects of their home life, GRT children are part of a family group; even at a young age they can be forward in their approach, inquisitive and direct. This can sometimes cause conflict with staff in school who may not have experienced this before. At home, older siblings often take on a lot of the responsibility for looking after the younger family members. These children will want to continue this role at

school, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings. Settings should take time to reassure older siblings that their brother or sister is happy and being well looked after.

GRT families have strict rules around dressing. Girls and boys are not allowed to dress or undress in the presence of the opposite sex. Whilst this is not always problematic in Year R, as children move up through the school it can become an issue that needs to be addressed. Due to under-developed fine motor skills, children may struggle with buttons. GRT children may be confused by PE lessons and may need extra support and encouragement in order to understand the concept.

Due to the nature of the work conducted by GRT families, children may not start school at the beginning of the academic year as the travelling season usually runs from April to October. Families may also need to travel in November and December for Christmas activities. As a result of these work-related trends, children will often miss out on vital home visits, settling in sessions, transition and other key events. Schools are advised to consider how best to induct any child starting as an in-year admission – and how they can support parents as well.

## **Cultural differences and how these might shape parental expectations**

### **GRT Families**

Although GRT parents are pro-education and keen for their children to learn, there are various barriers that may restrict the likelihood of GRT children achieving their potential whilst at school. Many parents will have left education at a young age and therefore may be less able to support their child's learning. Many children have pre-defined roles within the family and parents are often keen for their children to learn skills that will help them fulfil these roles as they grow towards adulthood within the community. This may conflict with schools' expectations regarding certain subject areas. Note that this is unlikely to have much of an impact in year R.

GRT families have strict rules around imparting knowledge about reproduction in any form including for some plant and animal reproduction. Schools need to deal sensitively with this issue. We would recommend schools speak to the parents about the best way to approach the subject, or request support from an EMTAS Education Advisor who can attend a meeting with the parents to facilitate discussions around this issue.

When planning the curriculum, it is important that schools include GRT communities within all areas of the curriculum. GRT families will be more open to their children learning about other cultures and religions if their culture is also sensitively included in provision. EMTAS Specialist teachers can provide ideas to support the development of an inclusive curriculum. Children will appreciate resources that relate to their culture and this will help them feel settled and included. EMTAS has a range of GRT-specific resources which can be borrowed by schools to support this.

Children from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families do not always start school in the reception year and may at admission have very limited or no pre-school educational experience. Note that this is a generalisation and does not as such apply to every GRT family nor are these issues unique to Gypsy, Roma or Traveller groups. Where it does apply, possible reasons for this include:

### **Area**

The area may be unknown to the family; parents may have no local knowledge of services and may arrive without a support network or confident sense of belonging within the community.

### **Geographical isolation**

Many families experience rural isolation. Also, families are often visiting, living or residing on sites that have been situated on the periphery of communities with limited access to safe footpaths. This may result in difficulties accessing a safe walking route to school.

### **Mobility and travel patterns**

Unplanned travel patterns, lack of permanent accommodation or regular evictions may make it impractical to access services. Those Travelling (for economic purposes) or residing on unauthorised sites are unlikely to have official addresses. Without a correct postal address it is difficult to ascertain the correct catchment school, to receive correspondence, apply for transport - and this can all have an impact on accessing school.

### **Transport**

The family vehicle may also double as a work vehicle, leaving mothers and children isolated on sites during the working day. Others may not have any transport or may be reliant on extended family for this support. This may result in children arriving late or missing whole days. Schools need to have a full understanding of each family's circumstances and be willing to be flexible. EMTAS staff are happy to attend meetings with GRT parents to discuss attendance, lateness and the law regarding the issuing of fines for poor attendance.

### **Familiarity**

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents may not have experienced early years services themselves and may not be familiar with the curriculum or systems.

### **Safety**

Gypsy and Traveller parents have concerns about the safety of their children and the possibility of prejudice, racism and bullying. They may be concerned about the attitudes of other parents, school staff and the particular vulnerability of their child, being of such a young age. These concerns are intensified if the parents have unhappy memories of their own schooling or have experienced racism or prejudice themselves. It would be beneficial for schools to discuss with parents their memories of school, their aspirations for their children and what the school can do to support them. EMTAS Education Advisors are available to attend such a meeting and this can help build positive relationships between home and school.

## Security

Gypsy and Traveller parents are often cautious about the security of the buildings and the safety of staff, especially male staff members including caretakers. Schools need to acknowledge the real fears that some GRT parents have around school security. It is important that schools explain in simple terms the measures that are in place in order to ensure all children are kept safe at school. EMTAS Education Advisors would be happy to assist with this matter.

## Communication barriers

As well as language barriers experienced by Roma families, some Gypsy, Traveller and Irish Traveller families find that culturally specific words or phrases are often misunderstood or ignored. Some parents have low literacy levels, making correspondence related to services difficult. Schools should ask parents the best way of communicating important messages and notices and where literacy presents a barrier, consider talking through key points in any written communication as parents come to collect their children at the end of the school day. This would help to ensure parents understand letters or other written information that is being sent out and therefore they won't miss out on key dates, events, activities etc.

## Parental Engagement

### GRT: What schools can do to encourage parental engagement

*“Practitioners should enter into genuine partnerships by creating a space for dialogue – listening to the voices of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and their parents.”*

The National Strategies | Early Years Building Futures: Developing trust – A focus on provision for children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2009

- Make sure you have parent-friendly reception areas with information and literature easily available and accessible and welcoming reception staff. Literature could include copies of the Travellers' Times, available from EMTAS.
- Have GRT books in the school library and resources in the classroom. These can be borrowed from the EMTAS Resource Library.
- Talk with parents on the playground, giving specific information, responding to queries, sharing good news, pre-warning about topic areas, themed work, school trips etc.
- Hold informal workshops, learning or games activities eg telling stories, leading craft activities, sharing experiences, contributing to assemblies alongside their children, attending sports days, and fundraising events. GRT parents would like to be invited to such events within the school, an approach that will help make them feel they are valued members of the school community. This could in turn lead to better communication and attendance.
- Holding thoughtfully arranged and targeted parents' evenings. GRT parents may struggle to attend a parents' evening for many reasons. We would recommend the class teacher have a discussion with individual parents in order to arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss their child's progress.

- Parent advocates (eg key parents, friends of the school and other interest groups): many GRT parents are keen to support their children's education, but would be fearful of joining a recognised PTA group. This can be overcome by inviting GRT parents to voice their ideas in a less formal manner eg at coffee events or other social gatherings organised at school.
- Provide homework activities such as investigations into family history, which engage the whole family.
- GRT parents are cautious about their child using public transport and as a result may not allow their child to attend school trips. Schools could consider inviting parents to accompany their children on any educational visits, thereby enabling all children to access off-site activities.

## Safeguarding

Children from BME, EAL and GRT backgrounds need to be safeguarded by school-based staff in similar ways to other children. There are reasons why there may be increased vulnerability to various safeguarding issues, including the social isolation of the child and their family, cultural differences and language barriers.

There are some Child Protection issues that are specific to children from BME groups, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence (HBV). More information about these safeguarding issues as well as information on online safety for parents in other languages/further signposting can be found on the [EMTAS website](#).



## Resources

Resources used successfully by schools include:

- Talking bilingual dictionaries and/or word/phrase books
- Talking dual-language stories using the MantraLingua PenPal
- Talking photo albums – allow audio recording in any language
- Talking Pens (PenPal) to make interactive displays. Parents/Young Interpreters can be a good way of providing accessible audio content for this sort of thing
- Persona Dolls to explore similarities and differences. EMTAS has a range of Persona Dolls available for loan, including some with GRT personas.
- pictures, artefacts, demonstrations, videos etc.
- culturally-relevant stories for sharing with groups of children/whole class
- other pupils - use them to demonstrate the activity/task

Resources can be borrowed from:

### **Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service**

North Hampshire Hub  
Dame Mary Fagan House  
Chineham Court  
Lutyens Close  
Basingstoke  
RG24 8AG

Tel 01256 330195

[www.hants.gov.uk/emtas](http://www.hants.gov.uk/emtas)

## Appendix A: Resources from other organisations

In addition to resources available from Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service, resources can be obtained from:

### **Grant & Cutler Ltd**

55-57 Great Marlborough Street  
London  
W1V 2AY

Telephone: 020 7734 2012/9272

E-mail: [postmaster@grant-c.demon.co.uk](mailto:postmaster@grant-c.demon.co.uk)

Website: [www.grant-c.demon.co.uk](http://www.grant-c.demon.co.uk)

Grant and Cutler stock a wide range of bilingual dictionaries in a variety of languages.

### **MantraLingua**

Global House  
303 Ballards Lane  
London N12 8NP

Telephone: 020 8445 5123

Website: <http://uk.mantralingua.com/>

MantraLingua stock a range of beautifully-produced dual language stories, posters and PenPal-enabled materials. Really good range for younger EAL learners and to promote reading at home.

### **School Library Service**

Telephone: 01962 826660

Website: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sls.htm>

Schools can borrow dual language books from the School Library Service through their SLA.

### **Bookstart**

Website: [www.bookstart.org.uk/](http://www.bookstart.org.uk/)

for information about bookstart books in other languages <http://www.bookstart.org.uk/bookstart-packs/additional-needs/dual-languages/>

For information about reading with your child in other languages

<http://www.bookstart.org.uk/about/packs/dual-languages/>

Bookstart offers free dual language books to under-5s and guidance on sharing a book with your child in a range of languages.

**BookTrust**

G8 Battersea Studios  
80 Silverthorne Road  
Battersea  
London  
SW8 3HE

Telephone: 020 7801 8800

E-mail: [query@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:query@booktrust.org.uk)

Website: [www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)

For free information in other languages about reading with your child see <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/> (use the search facility to find resources in the right language).

**National Association of Teachers of Travellers and Professionals (NATT)**

Website: [www.natt.org.uk](http://www.natt.org.uk)

Books for younger learners can be found in the resources catalogue of this website.

**Education Support for Northern Ireland : Inclusion and Diversity Service**

Website: <http://www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/translated-letters-for-schools/>

Translated form letters and information in other languages for parents.

**South East Grid for Learning (SEGfL)**

Website: <http://newarrivals.segfl.org.uk/>

Free online tool to gather essential background information about a child from their parents. Available in other languages including Arabic, Romanian, Lithuanian, Bengali and Nepali. Some languages are supported by an audio component.

**EAL Highland**

Website: <http://ealhighland.org.uk/>

Information and resources. Some useful things for parents to promote continuing use of the home language to support their child's learning and development.

**Mama Lisa's World**

Website: <http://www.mamalisa.com/>

Songs and nursery rhymes in many languages.

## Appendix B: Young Interpreter Scheme®



### What is the scheme?

The Young Interpreter Scheme® provides additional support to pupils who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL), to their families and to schools. It recognises the huge potential that exists within each school community for pupils of all ages to use their skills and knowledge to support new learners of English so that they feel safe settled and valued from the start.

Young Interpreters undergo specific training to prepare for this role and are selected on the basis of different personal qualities they may have. The support they can offer to a newly-arrived pupil can be very reassuring from a parent or carer's point of view at a time when their child may be adapting to substantial changes. It also supports school staff in a variety of ways at different points during the school day.

### How can I train Young Interpreters at my school?

Hampshire EMTAS has published *Young Interpreter Scheme Guidance*, available on Moodle, a VLE. The Primary resources include training materials to use with pupils at Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 while the Secondary resources can be used with pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4. The resources include all the materials you need to train your Young Interpreters together with half-termly newsletters, Twitter and Facebook Young Interpreter pages.

### Who is the scheme for?

Making the scheme available to both bilingual and monolingual learners can be very powerful in developing empathy amongst English speakers towards some of the challenges and difficulties that pupils new to English may be facing. Guidance to support Young Interpreter coordinators when inviting pupils to participate is included in the materials.

### Is this scheme right for my school?

The Young Interpreter Scheme® can be used in a variety of settings – either where a number of pupils share the same language, or where there are isolated EAL learners. Details of engaging activities to keep Young Interpreters motivated about their role in times when there are fewer new arrivals can be found in the *Young Interpreter Scheme Guidance*.

### What do Young Interpreters do?

Bilingual pupils use their language skills in a variety of ways to help new arrivals access English and feel part of the school. Alongside English-only speakers, they learn different strategies to clarify, explain and 'interpret' a whole range of school activities, systems and procedures to new entrants through the medium of pupil-friendly English where first language isn't shared by other pupils or adults.

Young Interpreters do not replace the need for professional adult interpreters. Exhaustive guidance on the role of Young Interpreters and situations where it is most appropriate to involve them can be found in the *Young Interpreter Scheme Guidance*. Young Interpreters are trained and guided by a designated member of the school staff who can ensure pupils' safeguarding.

### What do children and young people think about their role?

"We are extremely proud to be part of this excellent scheme!"

International Community School, Amman, Jordan

“I get a great sense of achievement when I see the students I have supported do well in their lessons.”

Jake, William Howard School, Cumbria

“I got picked because I have lots of different qualities: I like to help people and I work quite hard in all my lessons.”

Chloe, Fairfields Primary School, Hampshire.

### **What does Ofsted say?**

“Those pupils who act as 'Young Interpreters' make an outstanding contribution to enabling those pupils speaking little English and their parents or carers, take a full part in all school activities.”

Ofsted, November 2010, King’s Furlong Infant School and Nursery, Hampshire

“Inspectors saw some excellent examples of student leadership, including the Young Interpreter group, who give very good support to those students who are learning English as an additional language.”

Ofsted, March 2013, Aldworth School, Hampshire.

As well as using trained Young Interpreters to support a child coming into Foundation Stage to settle into school, a Year R child could later on become a Young Interpreter themselves. This can be a good way of helping young EAL learners feel part of the school community from a very early stage and to be proud of their other languages.

Further information about the Young Interpreter Scheme can be found on our website:

[www.hants.gov.uk/emtas](http://www.hants.gov.uk/emtas)

## Appendix C: Hampshire EMTAS Phone Lines

### Language Phone Lines

The purpose of the Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service Language Phone Lines is to provide an interpreting and information service for schools and for parents with questions relating to the education system or other educational matters.

The Phone Lines can be used if:

- you would like a bilingual assistant to relay a message to a parent/carer with limited English;
- you would like to arrange a translation to be made, bearing in mind that translations require a great deal of specialist skill and are therefore time-consuming. (Letters/information which are standardised across a cluster/group of schools, or short, urgent notes or letters can often be translated free of charge.)
- you would like information on the countries of origin of your Year R children, their customs, cultures or language.

Parents are able to use the phone lines, for example, to clarify questions about the school system or receive help with translating communications from school.

[Language Phone Line](#) details (term-time only): see the EMTAS website

### Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Phone Line

The purpose of the Hampshire Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Phone Line is to provide an information service for schools and parents and to field questions about the education system or other educational matters in relation to our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

The Phone Lines can be used if:

- you would like advice from a specialist Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Education Advisor
- you would like to be signposted to information to other services who support the GRT community
- you would like to request cultural awareness training or training on absence, including the appropriate coding of Traveller absence from school.

Parents are able to use the phone line too, for example to clarify questions about the school system or receive help with translating communications from school.

[Gypsy, Roma and Traveller phone line](#) details (term-time only): see the EMTAS website

## **EAL/SEND PHONE LINE**

---

Do you have pupils with EAL that you are concerned about?

Not sure whether their needs are just related to EAL or whether they may also have SEND?

Don't think that a full EAL/SEND referral is necessary, but would like some advice?

Hampshire Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) offers a telephone advice service for schools to answer questions relating to EAL/SEND and to discuss individual pupils causing concern.

To speak with one of our EMTAS Specialist Teacher Advisers please call **(01256) 330195** and ask for the EAL/SEND phone line any Tuesday during term time from 12.00 – 16.00pm

**TUESDAYS 12.00 – 16.00pm**

**(TERM TIME ONLY)**

**Additional guidance can be found on our website:**

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/emtas/assessmentandsen.htm>

## Appendix E: Assessment in the Foundation Stage (EAL)

All children in the Foundation Stage are assessed in English using the Foundation Stage Profile (FSP). For young EAL learners, especially those who have not previously been in an English-speaking environment, this can result in a picture of a child's skills that is skewed downwards and is not a true representation of what the child knows and can do.

For this reason, it is considered best practice when working with young EAL learners to assess the child's first language skills as well as their skills in English. This ensures that practitioners have a better understanding of the child's true developmental level, in particular their receptive and expressive language skills in their first, and often strongest, language. It is also a good way of identifying early on concerns about a child's language development.

Practitioners should know that it takes between 7 and 10 years for younger EAL learners to catch up with their monolingual peers in terms of their use of English across the curriculum. This is a longer timescale than for older learners who come with better-developed first language skills.

Practitioners should also note that a child with well-developed first language skills is likely to develop English language skills more rapidly than a child whose first language skills are less well developed. If there are problems with the child's first language development, then it is likely that there will be similar problems with the child's English language development.

For more information about assessment in the Foundation Stage, see the [EMTAS website](#).

For a link to 'Development Matters' with EAL annotations, click [here](#) and scroll down to Section 2 (for settings).

## **Appendix F: Sample Profiling Report for a Year R child**

On the following pages is a pro forma that can be used to support schools to gather relevant background information for children entering the Foundation Stage.

Where schools refer a child in the Foundation Stage, EMTAS practitioners use this form to profile the child.

# **Confidential**

## **Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service**

**Developing a Rights Respecting Service that advocates for the Rights of the Child**

### **Profile Report for children in Foundation Stage (Year R)**

**Please ensure this report is shared with all staff working with this child**

#### **Data Protection Statement**

The information contained within this report is used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

EMTAS will compile statistics, or assist other organisations to do so, provided that no statistical information that would identify the pupil as an individual will be published. The information will be held securely, and in accordance with the retention schedule for documents including sensitive personal information.

This report collates information that has been provided by the pupil, parents/carers and school staff. It includes observations of the pupil made by EMTAS staff and recommendations for support strategies that match the needs identified at the time of writing.

## Context

Name of EMTAS staff [Click here to enter text](#) [Click here to enter text](#)  
 Email [Click here to enter text](#) [Click here to enter text](#)  
 Date of visit(s) [Click here to enter date](#) [Click here to enter date](#)  
 Parents/Carer meeting at school  phone call  coffee event   
 Name of School School DfE number DfE no  
 Staff consulted [Click here to name and position of staff](#)

## Family Background

### Child

Date of arrival in the UK/UK born [Click here to enter a date](#) Asylum seeker   
 Date of admission [Click here to enter a date](#) Refugee

List countries child has lived in ( <i>most recent first</i> )	From	To

### Parents/Carer living with child

Name of parent/carer	Relationship to child	Country of Origin/L1	English spoken
			<b>Click for drop down</b>
			<b>Click for drop down</b>

### Siblings

Brother/Sister	Age	School/Pre-school/Other

Any additional comments

## Previous Education

No previous education <input type="checkbox"/>				
Comment				
Country	School/Nursery/ Pre-school	Age from/to	Languages used	Preferred subjects/activities

Did the child learn English before coming to the current school?

Yes  No  (If yes, please give details below)

Were there any concerns raised by the previous school? Yes  No

(If Yes, please give details and state whether these have been resolved or need further action)

Does the current school have any concerns? Yes  No

(If Yes, please give details)

Additional comments

Please click to add additional information, eg school starting age in country of origin

## Languages used

(including English if appropriate)

Languages (Strongest first)	Understanding	Speaking	Reading/ Writing	Used with whom/in what context/any other comments
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any comments on child's first/strongest language skills				

## Additional Information

		Details
Child's religion declared?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any religious or cultural practices the pupil will be taking part in which may affect his/her learning? (eg fasting)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Eligible for free school meals? (ie in receipt of certain benefits, see <a href="#">free school meals</a> )	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any health or dietary needs? Any allergies?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are parents aware about internet safety?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any concerns by parents/carers, or any issues the school should be made aware of (eg worries, fears the child may have or any recent changes in the child's behaviour)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the child happy at their new school?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Yes most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Starting to settle in <input type="checkbox"/> Still finds it very challenging <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Click here to enter who said this</i>
Child's interests, hobbies, skills; anything the child enjoys at home or at school		
Any additional comments		

## Recommendations

- Consider [EMTAS training](#) opportunities for teachers, teaching assistants and other school-based staff. Much of our training is free and can be adapted to your needs.
- Check EMTAS Moodle for [e-learning](#).
- Use the [Young Interpreter Scheme](#) to provide peer support. This scheme is suitable for children in Key Stages 1 and 2 and schools can train older children to support new arrivals into Foundation Stage (Year R).
- [Contact EMTAS](#) to borrow dual language books and other resources, including Persona Dolls.
- Use our [language helplines](#) to support home-school communication.
- Use our [EAL/SEN advice](#) phone line or call EMTAS if you have specific queries or concerns.
- Encourage parents/carers to continue to [use the first language at home](#) as research shows that the continued development of first language skills has a positive impact on English language acquisition.
- See the [Early Years/Year R section](#) of the EMTAS website for resources available for free download.
- Follow this link to advise parents on [internet safety](#)
- To encourage greater parental [engagement](#) with school/child's learning, contact EMTAS office for a range of workshops for EAL parents, e.g. coffee events.
- Allow time for the child to settle in and remember a '[Silent Phase](#)' is a normal and relatively common phase for children new to English.

**If none of the above recommendations addresses your concerns, please contact EMTAS for further advice.**

**Please note:**

**In-class support from a Bilingual Assistant is *not* generally recommended for children in Foundation Stage.**

**The EMTAS office will contact you approximately 3 months after the original visit to check on the child's progress.**

## **Appendix G: Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework for pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL): Year 1 onwards**

The [Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework](#), published in December 2016, is a non-statutory tool that enables schools to establish a baseline and to track progress in acquisition of English right up to the point at which an EAL pupil can operate across the curriculum and in various social situations on a par with their monolingual, English-only peers. There are other EAL assessment tools available but Hampshire EMTAS recommends this one because it aligns with the [DfE Proficiency Scale](#) Bands and its use therefore supports schools in making their census return in the Spring, when a band is required for all EAL pupils on roll.

Although not designed for use with children in Year R, the EAL Assessment Framework is referenced in this document to give practitioners an understanding of progression in listening, speaking, reading & viewing and writing for EAL learners.

# Appendix H: Information about schools in Hampshire for parents

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## Schools in Hampshire

In Hampshire, there are several different types of school:

Type of school	Age of child	Key Stage and Year Groups
<b>Infant</b>	4-7 years	<b>Key Stage 1:</b> Year R Year 1 Year 2
<b>Junior</b>	7-11 years	<b>Key Stage 2:</b> Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6
<b>Primary</b>	5-11 years	<b>Key Stages 1 and 2:</b> Year R Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6
<b>Secondary</b>	11-16 years	<b>Key Stages 3 and 4:</b> Year 7 Year 8 Year 9 Year 10 Year 11
<b>Academy:</b> can be any type of school but in Hampshire most Academies are Secondary Schools	Can be any age	Can be any Key Stage

The school year is divided into **three terms** autumn, spring and summer. Term dates are set annually. To see the current term dates, including school holidays, for Hampshire Maintained Schools, visit the [Hantsweb pages](#).

By law, parents have to send their children to school from the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Parents can be prosecuted for not sending their child(ren) to school or where their child(ren)'s attendance is poor. For more information about this, see the [guidance for Parents/Carers](#) on the Hantsweb 'Learning, Behaviour and Attendance' webpages.

Children have to remain in education until they are 18 years old. This could be full time college or part time, as part of an apprenticeship or special arrangement with an employer.

## INSET Days

In addition to the school holidays shown on the [Hampshire term date calendar](#), schools have an additional 5 days when they are not open to pupils. These closure days are for staff training purposes and are called **INSET days**. Parents should not send their child(ren) to school when there is an INSET day.

Schools choose their own dates for their INSET days.

Check your child's school website to find out when their INSET days are.

## School Admissions

Hampshire County Council operates **two types** of admission:

- **In Year** admissions for children new to the area who need an immediate school place
- September admissions - known as the **Main Round**.

## Finding a school for your child(ren)

You can search for schools in Hampshire [here](#) by school name, school type or schools status (maintained, academy, C of E controlled, Catholic etc.)

### School Catchment Areas

Schools have predetermined catchment areas. A school's catchment area is the area around the school where people live. If you live in a school's catchment area, this will give you priority when applying for a school place. You do not have to apply for a place at your catchment school.

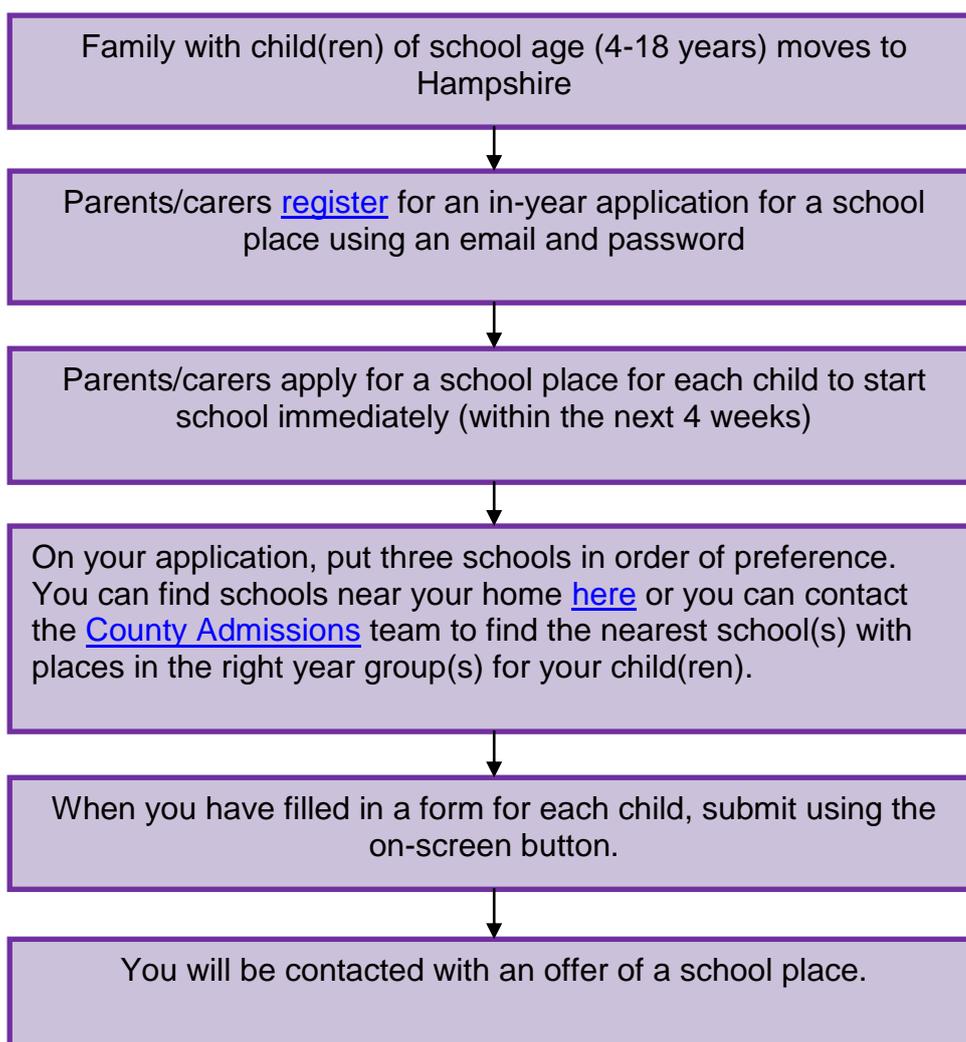
You can search for your catchment school [here](#). First, click on the link and then drag and drop the blue pin on the map to set your location. Next, choose the age range of your child(ren) and click on the relevant list(s) of catchment schools on the left hand side.

## Admissions: In-year applications

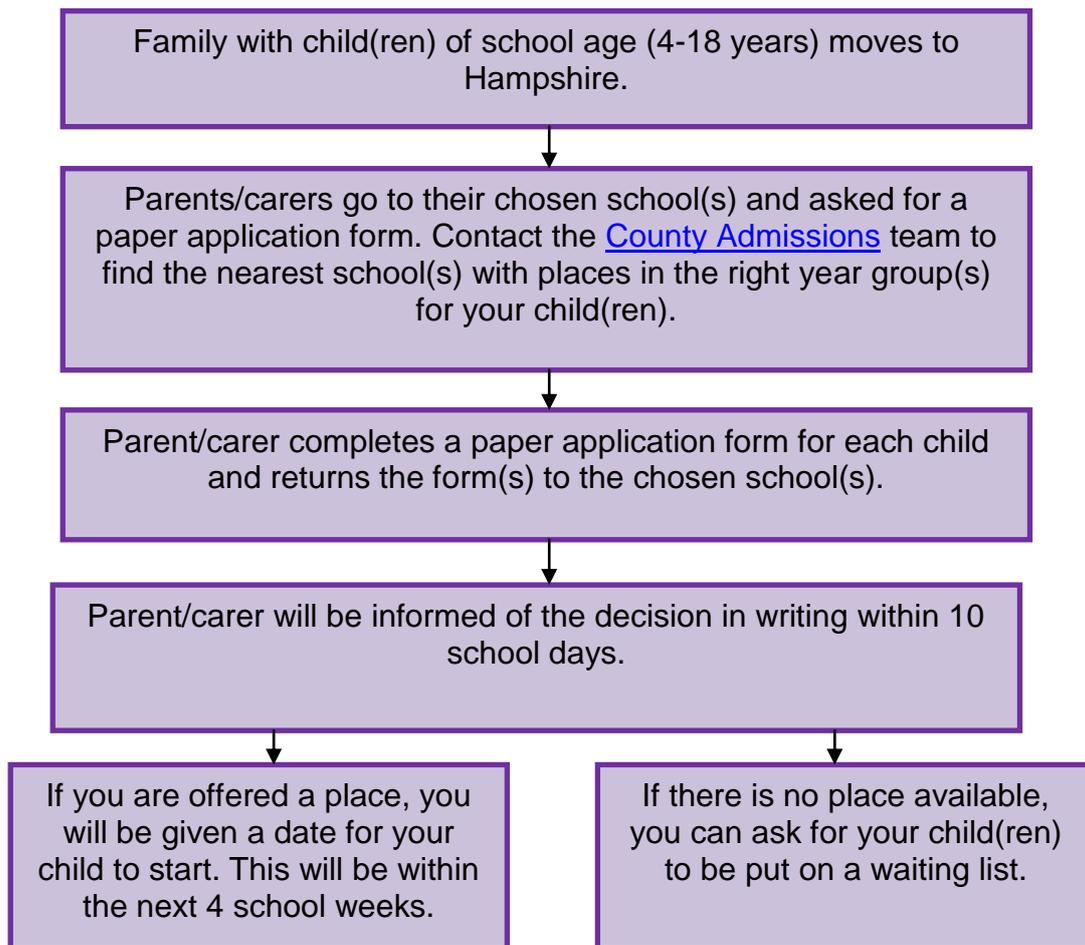
If you have recently moved to Hampshire from abroad or from elsewhere in the UK, or if you have moved area within Hampshire, you should make an [in-year application](#) for an immediate school place for each of your children.

### Applying Online

You will need to **register** first and provide an **email address** so you can be contacted directly.



## Applying using paper-based application form



## Admissions: Main round applications

The **main round** application system closes:

in October for Year 7 (September) applications

in January for Year R and Year 3 (September) applications.

Below is an example of the key dates for children starting or transferring schools in the academic year 2018-19. It is important to know that the dates are not the same every year.

### Key dates for admission in September 2018 (example)

	<b>Application round opens</b>	<b>Closing date for applications</b>	<b>Notification date for on-time applicants</b>
Starting School (Year R)	01 November 2017	15 January 2018	16 April 2018
Transfer to Junior school (Year 3)	01 November 2017	15 January 2018	16 April 2018
Transfer to secondary school (Year 7)	18 September 2017	31 October 2017	01 March 2018
Applying for a place in another year group	Parents to submit applications before 11 June 2018	11 June 2018	Schools will consider applications from 11 June 2018

Follow the link for more information about the [admissions process](#) and to apply online for a school place for your child(ren)

## Decelerated Entry into Year R (summer born children only)

Hampshire's Admissions Policy allows for decelerated admission to Year R for summer born children where the parent/carer has provided reasons that demonstrate they believe it is in their child's best interests.

### *When will my child reach statutory school age?*

Children **must be** receiving full-time education by the start of the term following their fifth birthday.

- For children born between 1 September and 31 December, they reach compulsory school age on 31 December and must be receiving full-time education at the start of the Spring term (i.e. after the Christmas holidays, in January).
- For children born between 1 January and 31 March, they reach compulsory school age on 31 March and must be receiving full-time education by the start of the Summer term (i.e. after the Easter holidays, in March or April).
- For children born between 1 April and 31 August, they reach compulsory school age on 31 August and must be receiving full-time education at the start of the new school year (i.e. after the summer holidays, in September).

### *Deferred and Decelerated admission: what options do I have available?*

In Hampshire, we provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents of non-compulsory school age children (four year olds) may request a pattern of part-time attendance or deferment if that best suits the needs of their child. Parents will be offered the opportunity for their child to:

- start Year R in September on a full-time basis from their first day of attendance or on a part-time basis up to the point of reaching compulsory school age;
- defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the offer of the school place was made.

And for summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) only:

- delay their child's entry to school until they reach compulsory school age and be admitted to Year R rather than Year 1 with their chronological peers. This means that a summer born child would not start school at all during the academic year after their fourth birthday. This is called **decelerated admission** and must be arranged through liaison with the school and with the approval of the admission authority of the school.

### *How do I organise my child's deceleration?*

Before deciding to decelerate your child's admission, you should first contact the school(s) you are interested in applying for. They will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in Year R, how it is tailored to meet the needs of summer born children and how those needs will continue to be met as the children move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns that you may have about your child's readiness for school.

If you still wish to decelerate your child's admission to school, you must seek approval from the admission authority of each school you wish to apply for. There is a form to complete to do this.

See [Hampshire County Council Children's Services webpage](#) for more information about decelerated admissions into Year R and for the link to the application form to request deceleration to Year R for your child.

## Transport to school

A child will qualify for free transport from their home to and from school if:

- they attend the nearest catchment school or one that is nearer to your home
- and
- the distance (measured by the shortest available walking route) is: more than two miles for children up to and including Year 3 or more than three miles for children from age 8 (Year 4) to Year 11.

Where parents name the designated catchment school as one of their 3 preferences and a place is not available, assistance may be offered to the next closest school, using the distances in the previous paragraph.

- Children entitled to free school meals or whose parents (with whom they live) are in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit have enhanced entitlement.

Applications are completed online at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool/sch-transport/stforms.htm>.

## Universal Infant Free School Meals

All government-funded schools must offer free school meals to every pupil in:

- Reception
- Year 1
- Year 2

In order to demonstrate that your child is eligible for free school meals and therefore that you qualify for help with Transport to School, you must apply for free school meals.

[Check to see if you are eligible and apply online](#) for free school meals.

## Free School Meals

### Children from Year 3 to Year 11

Your child will be entitled to Free School Meals if you receive **one** of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (**not** Contribution Based)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are **not** also entitled to Working Tax Credit, and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 (parents who are made redundant or who start working fewer than 16 hours per week may find their children are entitled to free meals for a limited period).
- Working Tax Credit Run-On (paid for 4 weeks after you stop receiving Working Tax Credit)

#### You will need to provide the following information:

- Name, home address and an email address
- National Insurance Number or National Asylum Support Service (NASS) Reference Number
- Child's name, date of birth and school they are attending

[Check to see if you are eligible and apply online](#) for free school meals.

For more information about free school meals, see the [EMTAS website parents' pages](#).

To see the current school menu in English and other languages, see the [HC3S Website](#).

## EMTAS Language phone lines (for parents/carers)

Please ring us on [our help lines](#) for information, or if you have any questions relating to your child's education or well-being.

All our assistants speak good English so, if you can use even a little English, you can call at **any of the times** listed on our website.

If you need an interpreter for any other language, ring EMTAS on 01256 330195 or email [emtas@hants.gov.uk](mailto:emtas@hants.gov.uk) with your contact details and the language you speak and we will do our best to help you.

# Appendix I: Information for PVI's on deceleration for pre-school and nursery managers/staff

## Guidance for pre-school and nursery managers/staff when discussing deceleration with parents of children due to start Yr R.

Parents of summer born children have a right to request that their child is decelerated and start school in Year R the following year, effectively a year later than their chronological age would indicate. For a small number of children this may be (and has always been) the appropriate decision to meet the specific needs of that individual child.

It is important that parents who are considering such a request, reach their decision with accurate, consistent and complete information at their disposal so that they make a fully informed decision.

Where the local authority is the admission authority for the school, they must take into account the views of the parent and also the Headteacher of the school where an application will be made.

It is highly likely that these parents will know you and your setting extremely well, but may not have any or only limited knowledge of the school they are considering applying to, especially if it is their first child going into school. Therefore helping the parent with what to ask of the school and liaising with the school about the parent and child would be very beneficial. The following guidance should be used when discussing deceleration with parents.

### 1. Factual checks

- Check DOB
- Establish when child will reach compulsory school age.

### 2. Deceleration or deferment?

Clarify that the parent understands the difference between 'deceleration' and 'deferment'

- *Deceleration* – only available for 'summer born children'. This means that the child starts school one whole school year later than would be the norm for their chronological age.
- *Deferment* – the child starts school in the normal year for their chronological age, but not in September. For most this may be January or April, but can be anytime within the school year.

### 3. Background information

- Establish the parent's concerns surrounding their child's readiness for school.
  - Communication and language reasons
  - Personal, social and emotional reasons
  - Physical reasons

Share the assessments made by your pre-school/nursery about the child's ability/development in these areas with the parent. Is the child within the normal range of development for their age?

#### 4. What can the school offer?

Support parents in being prepared to ask the correct questions when they visit the school, such as:

- How does the school currently meet the needs of younger children.
  - Visit to Yr R classes in action.
  - Testimonials from parents of summer born children?
  - Outcomes for children in Yr R for the school.
  - Ofsted view of Early Years in the school.
- Ask what other attendance options are available.
  - Full time attendance
  - Part-time attendance
  - Deferred entry until later in the school year – probably January or April.
  - Delayed admission to Year R until the following September (summer born children only).

#### 5. Technical information

For parents of summer born children seeking to delay entry until the following year:

- They should continue with an application for normal age group in case their application for deceleration is unsuccessful. If they do not do this the child may then have no school place or the parent may have to accept a school place in a school that they would not have chosen.
- They must make a formal request to the admission authority of each school they wish to apply for.

Type of School	Who is the Admission Authority for the School?
Academy	Academy Trust
Community	Local Authority
Foundation	Governing Body
Voluntary Aided	Governing Body
Voluntary Controlled	Local Authority

- For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools there is a standard form to be completed.

### [Request for decelerated admission to Yr R form](#)

- Final decision is made by the admission authority for the school **but** taking into account headteacher view.
- Parents must be clear that any agreement to decelerate a child's admission to Year R does not guarantee a place at the preferred school, nor does it provide any additional priority for a place. Their application to the school will be considered alongside all other applications in accordance with the school's published admission criteria.

### **6. Additional implications of deceleration for children as they progress through the school system.**

- If deceleration is agreed, they must still seek permission to decelerate their child's admission at other transfer stages (infant to junior and secondary transfer) if applying to an aided, foundation school or Academy. No guarantee that the admission authorities for these types of school will agree to continued deceleration. For example, a child applying at secondary transfer stage may only be offered a place in Year 8. If applying to a community school, deceleration is automatic at transfer if deceleration has previously been agreed for entry into Yr R.
- Whilst children now have to stay in some form of education or training until age 18, they could technically leave school when they reach age 16 and move to another form of education etc. For a decelerated child this would be when they are in Year 10 before they have taken their GCSE exams.
- For a child who has been decelerated and remains, for example, in a pre-school or nursery, the majority of their peers/friendship group will leave them as they start school. The child may then feel isolated etc. The importance of friendship groups on children's well being and development needs to be carefully considered.

### **7. Additional information/advice.**

- Parents do not have a right to appeal to an independent appeal if they are have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like.
- For some parents there maybe a degree of anxiety attached in meeting a Headteacher whom they may not know. There are good examples of positive outcomes (ie reaching a decision in the child's best interest) around deceleration, as a result of Headteachers and nursery/pre-school staff (who the parent will know) meeting jointly with the parent to discuss the issues.

### **8. Final suggestions.**

- Always recommend that a parent, considering deceleration, contacts Hampshire Admissions authority for further advice or guidance, either directly or through accessing information on the website.

- Recommend that they make an appointment to visit the school(s) that they are considering applying to, to discuss their concerns and to consider alternative arrangements that may be available to meet the needs of their child.
- Do not provide any additional advice or guidance that is not included within this guidance note.
- Contact the school(s) that the parent is considering applying to, to alert the Headteacher(s) and provide relevant contextual information about the child. Share with the Headteacher(s) the advice and support you have given to the parent.
- If you are able to, offer to have a joint meeting with the school and the parent, if all feel that this would be beneficial.

### **9. Where to gain further support and advice.**

Louise Crolla or Roz Capey  
Principal Admissions Officers  
Admissions Team, Hampshire County Council,  
Children's Services Dept, Elizabeth II Court North,  
The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UG  
Tel: 01962 826902

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/admissions/ad-guidance/ad-summerborn.htm>

### **Information produced jointly by:**

Louise Crolla (Principal Admissions Officer) and Simon Francis (Senior Advisor for Early Years)

## Appendix J: Information for schools on requests for deceleration

### Guidance for Headteachers discussing requests for deceleration with parents of children due to start Yr R

#### 1. Factual checks

- Check DOB
- Establish when child will reach compulsory school age

#### 2. Background information

- Ask parent about child's pre-school experience.
- Are there any older or younger siblings? How have/are they achieving/
- Establish the parent's concerns surrounding their child's readiness for school.
  - Communication and language reasons
  - Personal, social and emotional reasons
  - Physical reasons

#### 3. What the school can offer

- Describe how the school currently meets the needs of younger children.
  - Visit to Yr R classes in action
  - Testimonials from parents of summer born children?
  - Outcomes for children in Yr R for the school.
  - Ofsted view of Early Years in the school.
- Explain options available:
  - Full time attendance
  - Part-time attendance
  - Deferred entry until later in the school year – probably January or April.
  - Delayed admission to Year R until the following September (summer born children only).

#### 4. Technical information

For parents of summer born children seeking to delay entry until the following year:

- They should continue with an application for normal age group in case their application for deceleration is unsuccessful. If they do not do this the child may then have no school place or the parent may have to accept a school place in a school that they would not have chosen.
- They must make a formal request to the admission authority of each school they wish to apply for.

Type of School	Who is the Admission Authority for the School?
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- For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools there is a standard form to be completed: [Request for decelerated admission to Yr R form](#)
- Final decision is made by the admission authority for the school **but** taking into account headteacher view.
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Admissions Team, Hampshire County Council,  
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The Castle, Winchester, SO23 8UG  
Tel: 01962 826902

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/admissions/ad-guidance/ad-summerborn.htm>

### **Information produced jointly by:**

Louise Crolla (Principal Admissions Officer) and Simon Francis (Senior Advisor for Early Years)

# Contact Us

Please get in touch with us if you would like to know more about our range of services or to discuss how **EMTAS** can work with your school to achieve improved outcomes for your **BME, EAL** and **GRT** pupils.

**Tel:** 01256 330195

**Email:** [emtas@hants.gov.uk](mailto:emtas@hants.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.hants.gov.uk/emtas](http://www.hants.gov.uk/emtas)

**Twitter:** @HampshireEMTAS