

From mountain to sea

English as an Additional Language

Guidelines to support bilingual learners

March 2023



Contents

1	Background	3
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Referral to the EAL Service	3
3.	The Role of the School	4
4.	Role of the EAL Service	5

	Version	Status	Reason
2010	1.0	Guidelines	New draft
December 2017	2.0	Guidelines	Refresh
March 2023	2.1	Guidelines	Updated links for interpreting and translation

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1. Background

These guidelines were originally drawn up following consultation through an EAL Steering Group comprising representatives of Aberdeenshire English as an Additional Language Service (EAL), primary and secondary Head Teachers and the teaching unions. They have been advised by national legislation, Aberdeenshire Race Equality Policy and Guidelines, Aberdeenshire Accessibility Strategy and How Good Is Our School Quality Indicators (HGIOS QIs). They have also taken account of feedback from a questionnaire sent to all schools. These Guidelines were reviewed by the EAL Service in 2017.

2. Introduction

- Aberdeenshire is home to an increasing number of families for whom English is not their first language. The number of bilingual children in schools and other educational establishments is growing with more than 60 different languages spoken.
- People who speak more than one language are described as bilingual. English is acknowledged as their second or additional language. However, the term bilingual does not imply an equal proficiency in two or more languages.
- Monitoring of ethnicity and race, which includes bilingual pupils, is undertaken through the Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services Admissions procedures and Quality Assurance processes.
- The acquisition of English as an Additional Language is best achieved through the normal activities of the classroom. All pupils should be placed at the appropriate age and stage. Levels of English language competency are assessed and then monitored annually through information gathering for ScotXed. ([ScotXed information](#) , [EAL Guidelines](#))
- Supporting all learners, including bilingual learners, is the responsibility of all staff as part of the Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services approach to inclusive education. ([ASN Support Manual](#)) The Aberdeenshire EAL Service can assist schools to support their bilingual learners.
- The EAL Service works with Aberdeenshire Community Learning and Development Service (CLD) who provide English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) courses and general support for family members and adults who live and work in Scotland. ([CLD Link](#))

3. Referral to the EAL Service

- All bilingual learners should be referred to the EAL Service, regardless of perceived level of English, by completing a [Referral form](#) and sending it to
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eal.service@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. Ensure that the form has been signed by the parent/guardian and that all parts of the form have been completed. Please refer to “[Enrolling a Bilingual Learner](#)” included in these Guidelines.

Refer also to the [EAL Enrolment Flowchart](#)

- Referral procedures for this service are underpinned by:
 - [Additional Support Needs legislation](#)
 - [Aberdeenshire Accessibility Strategy](#)
 - [HGIOS 4 Quality Indicators for Schools](#)
 - [HGIOS Part 4 Evaluating Educational Provision for Bilingual Learners](#)
 - [Aberdeenshire School Admissions Procedures](#)
 - [Aberdeenshire Equality Policy and Guidelines](#)

4. The Role of the School

In supporting bilingual pupils and their families, schools are expected to:

- adopt a whole school approach:
 - School EAL policy and practice should be informed by the authority staged procedures as outlined in Pathways to Policy and by HGIOS QIs.
 - Create an integrated approach to support strategies through the Community School Network (CSN) linking with other Aberdeenshire Services and agencies as appropriate.
 - Include the development of pastoral support.
 - In the case of very young children, links should be made with pre-school partners and other Early Years providers within the network.
 - welcome parents and their children by providing the school's information in an appropriate format or engage an interpreter. This is advised for all bilingual pupils. School handbooks are available on Aberdeenshire Council's website. Some translated information for parents can be requested from the EAL service.
 - ensure parents are aware of the importance of maintaining their first language at home. [Be Bilingual](#) is an information leaflet for parents about learning English as an Additional Language.
 - make use of interpreters for enrolment and parent meetings where required. Guidance on accessing interpreting and translation can be found on [asn-aberdeenshire](#). The EAL Service can also advise on making best use of interpreting and translation services.
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- identify a member of the school staff as the EAL link to liaise with the EAL Service. The EAL link should have an overview of the enrolment, induction, support and monitoring of bilingual pupil progress. In the nursery/primary school, this will usually be the Head Teacher or member of the management team with a remit for pupil support. In the secondary school this is likely to be the DHT/PT ASL.
- follow the advice in [“Enrolling a Bilingual Learner”](#) included in these guidelines. This will ensure that bilingual learners, parents and school staff are supported appropriately. Liaise with the EAL Service as part of a joint planned approach.
- ensure that all pupils admitted to school from another country have previous medical reports and immunisation records shared with the school nurse. Follow the advice in [“Enrolling a Bilingual Learner”](#).
- contact the EAL Service to facilitate the receipt and translation of previous school reports and access information specific to the pupil and family.
- ensure that an age appropriate placement is made in line with Aberdeenshire Authority’s procedures.
- ensure equity and equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for bilingual pupils. (HGIOS)
- fully involve bilingual pupils in all classroom activities from the start.
- recognise the prior achievement of all children and their families and their contribution to school life and ethos.
- ensure that any deemed prejudice or discrimination incidents are reported using the prejudice and discrimination [Report form](#).
- all staff should be familiar with these guidelines. Address staff development in EAL through CPD programmes, events and training on [ALDO](#).

5. Role of the EAL Service

Once bilingual learners are referred to the EAL Service, the EAL Team can:

- assist schools in developing a planned approach to induction and targeted pupil support.
 - support schools to create their own EAL Policy ([SEALCC Evidence of Good Practice in Supporting Bilingual Learners](#)).
 - advise schools on pupil placement, transition, assessment, curriculum support, teaching strategies and resources.
 - provide training and awareness raising sessions to school staff and other
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agencies through Aberdeenshire's CLPL Events programme on ALDO.

- provide support and advice to schools to develop their capacity to manage and sustain continued progress and achievement of bilingual learners.
- work with schools to ensure equality of opportunity for bilingual learners to access the curriculum, for example, English language support to pupils where appropriate, with reference to HGIOS Part 4 Quality Indicators for bilingual pupils and [strategies booklets](#).
- provide team teaching support where appropriate.
- advise schools on global citizenship and celebrating diversity.
- provide advice to schools about [SQA Assessment Arrangements](#). Where necessary, support schools to deliver SQA ESOL/IELTs, which may be required for entrance to further education/university courses.
- work with schools to develop intervention support programmes for bilingual learners (See ASN, Disability, EAL and Assessing Support Level Guidance Manual under [ScotXed](#)). Where there are Additional Support Needs, other than language, it is good practice for the EAL Service to be part of the Multi Agency Action Plan (MAAP) process.
- work in partnership with other agencies to develop wider support for bilingual pupils and families within their local communities e.g. pre-school partner providers, schools, Community School Networks, CLD, Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) and Educational Psychology (EP).
- assess, monitor, review, and advise the English Language Competency levels for annual ScotXed returns (ASN, Disability, EAL and Assessing Support Level Guidance Manual). The EAL Service, as part of this review process, may require sampling of pupils' English language competency across a range of curricular areas to create the pupils' language profile. This can be used:
 - as part of the evidence for the SQA Assessment Arrangements
 - to identify strategies that will support pupils to access the curriculum.
- advise on and facilitate the use of interpreting and translation services.

The EAL Service may be contacted at: **Aberdeenshire EAL Service**

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