

NORTHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Supporting your Child

A booklet for families of children
who speak English as an Additional Language

Our Multi-Lingual Community

The pupils, families and staff of Northgate Primary School speak a wide range of languages. We aim to help your child to achieve as well as they possibly can. We will do this better if school and home work together.

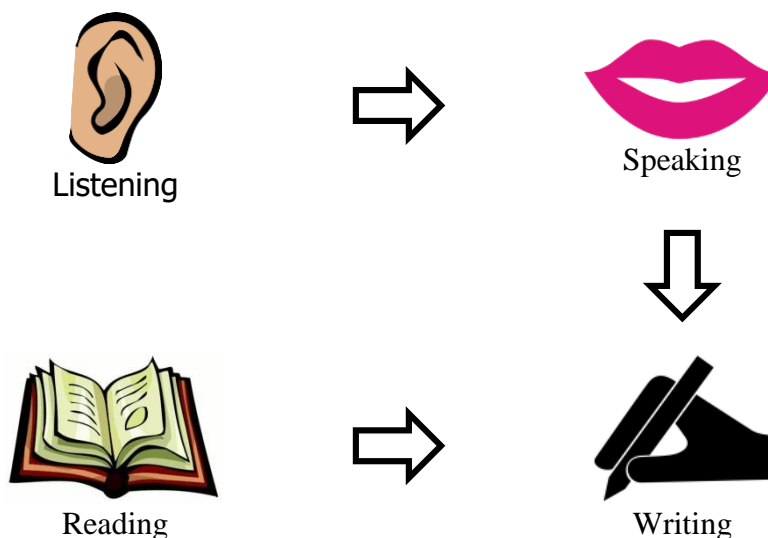
At school, we believe that children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) learn English best in their classroom with their classmates. They usually learn basic everyday English very quickly by playing and working with their friends. Teachers are trained to help children by providing lots of support through pictures and objects and by planning activities which will develop all the children's language. We try to give extra support using our additional staff and/or volunteer helpers when the children first join us. Occasionally, children may do some learning in a small group outside the classroom for a specific purpose.

We monitor their progress carefully as they move through the school and do our best to make sure that they are able to achieve and show what they know and can do, even if their English is not yet fluent.

Being Bilingual

Being able to speak two or more languages is a positive benefit. It helps children to think about the world and to express their thoughts in different ways. The children at Northgate Primary School are taught to feel proud of the languages they speak and not to feel embarrassed about using languages other than English.

The way that we usually learn a second language is as follows:



It is normal for children new to English not to want to speak for the first little while. As long as we know that they are learning through listening, this is not a problem.

It can be a long time before children are able to write English. If they can already read and write in their first language, we encourage them to do so. It is easier to learn about written English if you can already read or write in another language!

When they begin to write in English, we make sure that they have opportunities to learn the sort of language they need to show what they understand and can do across the curriculum.

You can best help your child by:

- Continuing to use your strongest language at home. If your child stops using their first language, they will find it more difficult to learn English. They do not need to speak English at home in order to learn it better!
- Make sure you know what your child will be learning at school and talk about it at home beforehand, again in your first language. If they know something about the topic in their first language, it will be easier for them to understand the lessons in English.
- Look at books and talk about them at home. You could teach your child some of the words in English if you are able to.
- Talk to staff at school about the languages your child speaks and about their experience of school. If they come from a school in another country, their experiences may have been very different and it is helpful if we know about them.
- Use the dual language books we have in our library. Our librarian will help you find them. Read stories in both languages.

- Use non-fiction books for older children. Choose simple books about things they are interested in or that they are going to be learning about at school and talk about the content in your home language. Use the pictures to introduce some English vocabulary if you can.
- Gradually, you can use these simple books to help your child learn how to track and point to words to support their reading.
- If you write English, you could make up some simple sentences together for your child to copy to support their writing.
- Ask the staff at school for help and advice. We are always available after school and/or by appointment.

