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## Top tips: Working in partnership with EAL families

**Effective communication and collaboration with parents of your children who have English as an additional language (EAL) not only supports a child's well-being but their learning and future educational success too.**

When parents feel valued as active partners in their child's education, they are more likely to collaborate and share important information with you about their child.

Here are some tips and strategies to help you foster open communication and positive relationships with the families of your EAL children:



1. **Promote a welcoming environment:** Ensure your setting's environment is inclusive and welcoming to all families. Display multilingual posters and celebrate a variety of festivals and events, reflecting the cultures of your families
2. **Cultural sensitivity and respect:** Be aware of the different cultures and languages you have in your setting. Respect and appreciate cultural differences and avoid making assumptions based on stereotypes. Learn a few words or key phrases in the family's language
3. **Clear and concise:** When communicating with parents who have limited English, use clear and simple language, avoiding jargon or complex terminology
4. **Bilingual support:** Where possible, use interpreters or invite staff members or other parents who share the same language as the family, to meetings. This may result in a more in-depth and comprehensive sharing of information about the child, its background, and the child's abilities
5. **Visual aids and translations:** Use visual aids such as pictures or videos to explain the daily routines of the setting, timetables and any other important information. Offer translations of documents in the preferred language of the parents
6. **Cultural exchange and celebrations:** Organise events where parents can share aspects of their culture and celebrate festivals to promote an inclusive environment
7. **Workshops:** If you have the staff availability and time, hold workshops on areas of school life parents

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may be unfamiliar with, such as the EYFS, language acquisition, learning through play etc. to meet the needs of your EAL parents

8. Patience and empathy: Parents may be dealing with their own feelings about living in a new country with a different culture and language. They may have experienced a traumatic event such as a war or political instability, therefore, empathy and understanding will be appreciated
9. See [Department for Education advice](#).

## NDNA products to support you with these tips

- Factsheet – [Positive relationships with parents](#)
- Blog – [Developing positive relationships with parents](#).

And more resources at [www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna)