Together towards inclusion

PRE-SCHOOL TOOLKIT FOR DIVERSITY

inclusion
& diversity
service

Published by:

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Antrim

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Foreword

In both parts of Ireland education faces the challenge and opportunity of integrating increasing numbers of pupils whose mother tongue is neither English nor Irish. The two jurisdictions have adopted different approaches to the development of such pupils' proficiency in English as the language of education. The whole island faces the challenge of creating an inclusive school culture: one that not only welcomes children whose language is not English, and whose culture and ethnicity are not Irish, but turns linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity to the educational advantage of all. This **Pre-school Toolkit for Diversity** has been adapted in recognition of a specific need to provide guidance and support in pre-school education. A consultative group was established to adapt the **Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School**. This group of early years practitioners acknowledged its relevance to the nursery context but in its adaptation wished to address the specific needs of the integration of newcomer children specifically in the pre-school setting.

The book has four sections. The first, *Getting ready,* addresses the preliminary issues that any school must deal with if it is to be genuinely welcoming and inclusive. The second section, *Early days*, is concerned with the first steps towards the integration of pupils from other countries, cultures and ethnicities; inevitably the focus is very much on language and the need to develop classroom communication and a classroom environment capable of responding to new linguistic and cultural challenges. The third and fourth sections, *Moving on* and *What next?*, respond to the fact that inclusiveness is a never-ending process.

Throughout its development the book has been informed by regular consultation with teachers. Every effort has been made to ensure that the book takes account of the variety of challenges faced by education depending on the location of schools (urban or rural) and the number of pupils from migrant backgrounds they are dealing with. The book draws together a body of experience accumulated throughout Ireland. It is also informed by up-to-date research and reflects what has come to be recognized as best international practice. Perhaps the most important thing to emphasise in this regard is that the activities in the book will benefit all pupils equally, whatever their origin.

Mary Yarr, Regional Adviser, Inclusion and Diversity Service

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Grainne Murray (IDS) for co-ordinating the consultative group; to Emma Sheppard St Joseph's Crumlin, Michelle Hughes, Bronagh Hamill St. Patrick's Primary School Dungannon, Fiona Hampsey, Holy Trinity Primary School Cookstown for identifying and drawing together their extensive experience reflected in the toolkit; to Lorna Gardner (NEELB) for helpful feedback.

Beacons at Bealtaine

Phoenix Park, May Day 2004

Uisce: water. And *fionn*: the water's clear.
But dip and find this Gaelic water Greek:
A phoenix flames upon *fionn uisce* here.

Strangers were barbaroi to the Greek ear.
Now let the heirs of all who could not speak
The language, whose ba-babbling was unclear,

Come with their gift of tongues past each frontier
And find the answering voices that they seek
As *fionn* and *uisce* answer phoenix here.

The May Day hills were burning, far and near,
When our land's first footers beached boats in the creek
In *uisce*, *fionn*, strange words that soon grew clear;

So on a day when newcomers appear
Let it be a homecoming and let us speak
The unstrange word, as it behoves us here,

Move lips, move minds and make new meanings flare
Like ancient beacons signalling, peak to peak,
From middle sea to north sea, shining clear
As phoenix flame upon *fionn uisce* here.

In the Celtic calendar that once regulated the seasons in many parts of Europe, May Day, known in Irish as *Bealtaine*, was the feast of bright fire, the first of summer, one of the four great quarter days of the year. The early Irish *Leabhar Gabhála* (The Book of Invasions), tells us that the first magical inhabitants of the country, the *Tuatha Dé Danaan*, arrived on the feast of *Bealtaine*, and a ninth-century text indicates that on the same day the druids drove flocks out to pasture between two bonfires. So there is something auspicious about the fact that a new flocking together of the old European nations happens on this day of mythic arrival in Ireland; and it is even more auspicious that we celebrate it in a park named after the mythic bird that represents the possibility of ongoing renewal. But there are those who say that the name Phoenix Park is derived from the Irish words, *fionn uisce*, meaning 'clear water', and that coincidence of language gave me the idea for this poem. It's what the poet Horace might have called a *carmen saeculare*, a poem to salute and celebrate a historic turn in the *saeculum*, the age.

Seamus Heaney, 1 May 2004

The publishers wish to thank Seamus Heaney for his permission to reproduce this poem and commentary.

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Organisation

The toolkit is organised chronologically from *Getting ready* through *Early days* and *Moving on* ending with *What next?*. It is recommended, however, that teachers/leaders familiarise themselves with the entire book as many activities are revisited and developed at different stages.

Each section is colour coded.

Terminology used

Home language is used throughout to refer to the mother tongue or first language of the child. It is the case that many children will already know more than one language.

Pre-school Education refers to educational provision for children prior to primary school. In some instances some children may have an additional year in pre-school education.

Newcomer is used to refer to those parents and children whose mother tongue is not English. It is acknowledged that, increasingly, non-English speaking children entering school may have been born in Ireland. Nonetheless, the term newcomer reflects the challenge facing parents and children from different language and cultural backgrounds in accessing and entering pre-school education in a new country.

Interpreter refers to the use of a third party to provide oral interpretation in an interview or meeting.

Translator refers to the use of a native speaker or person who is fluent in the language in question to translate written documents, letters, notices and so on.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is a tool for describing language use and language learning. It is built on descriptions of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Photocopying

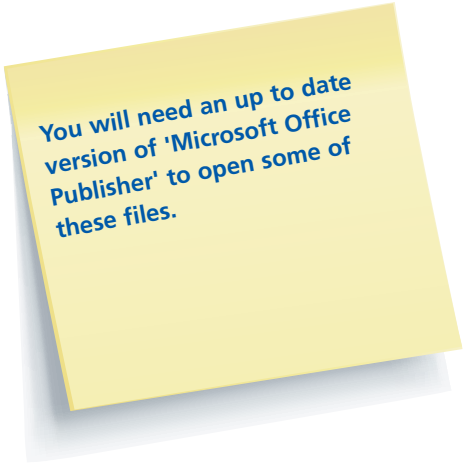
Principals and teachers in schools throughout Ireland may photocopy pages from this toolkit as necessary. Other users must seek the publisher's permission to reproduce any part of the book.

CD

The accompanying CD contains many templates and illustrations that appear in the toolkit.
A list of the contents of the CD is on page 8.

Contents of CD

Getting ready	Pre-school environment	All about me booklets Welcome book template
	Staff involvement	Staff involvement checklist
	Admissions	Appointment card Data capture form Start card Checklist for admissions
	Pictures	Help symbols
Early days	Observations	Checklist for observing progress during the silent period
	Games	Template for snakes and ladders
	Communication with home	Sample newsletters Visual letters
	Pictures	Classroom instructions
Moving on	Language skills	Ideas for developing oracy
	Ongoing observations	Templates for monitoring progress
	Celebrating diversity	Template for recording intercultural experiences
What next?	Planning for inclusion templates	
Useful phrases in various languages		



GETTING READY

Introduction

What do we mean by an 'inclusive' school for newcomer children?

An inclusive pre-school setting:

- has a **welcoming** ethos for parents and children
- identifies **staff** roles and responsibilities to ensure effective communication of children's backgrounds and needs
- has a clear and supportive **admissions** procedure
- ensures that staff have access to professional development
- prepares **peers** for the arrival of new children
- employs methods of **monitoring** and **assessment** that allow children to demonstrate their knowledge and skills
- allocates time and money to purchase and produce **suitable resources** that support access to the curriculum.

Contents of this section

Providing a welcoming environment
- Welcome display
- Induction booklet
- Welcome book
- Signs, labels and displays

Staff involvement
- Who can be involved
- Staff involvement in the induction process

Admissions
- First contact
- Appointment card
- Interpreters
- Initial meeting with parents

The Welcoming pre-school setting
- Welcome posters and displays
- Ideas for an intercultural pre-school setting

Routines
- Visual cues
- Weather teddy
- Pre-school areas

Resources

Providing a welcoming environment

Welcome display

A welcome display is inviting. It sends out a clear signal that the pre-school setting invites and respects all languages and cultures. A suitable display makes visitors aware of the pre-school ethos and respect for diversity.

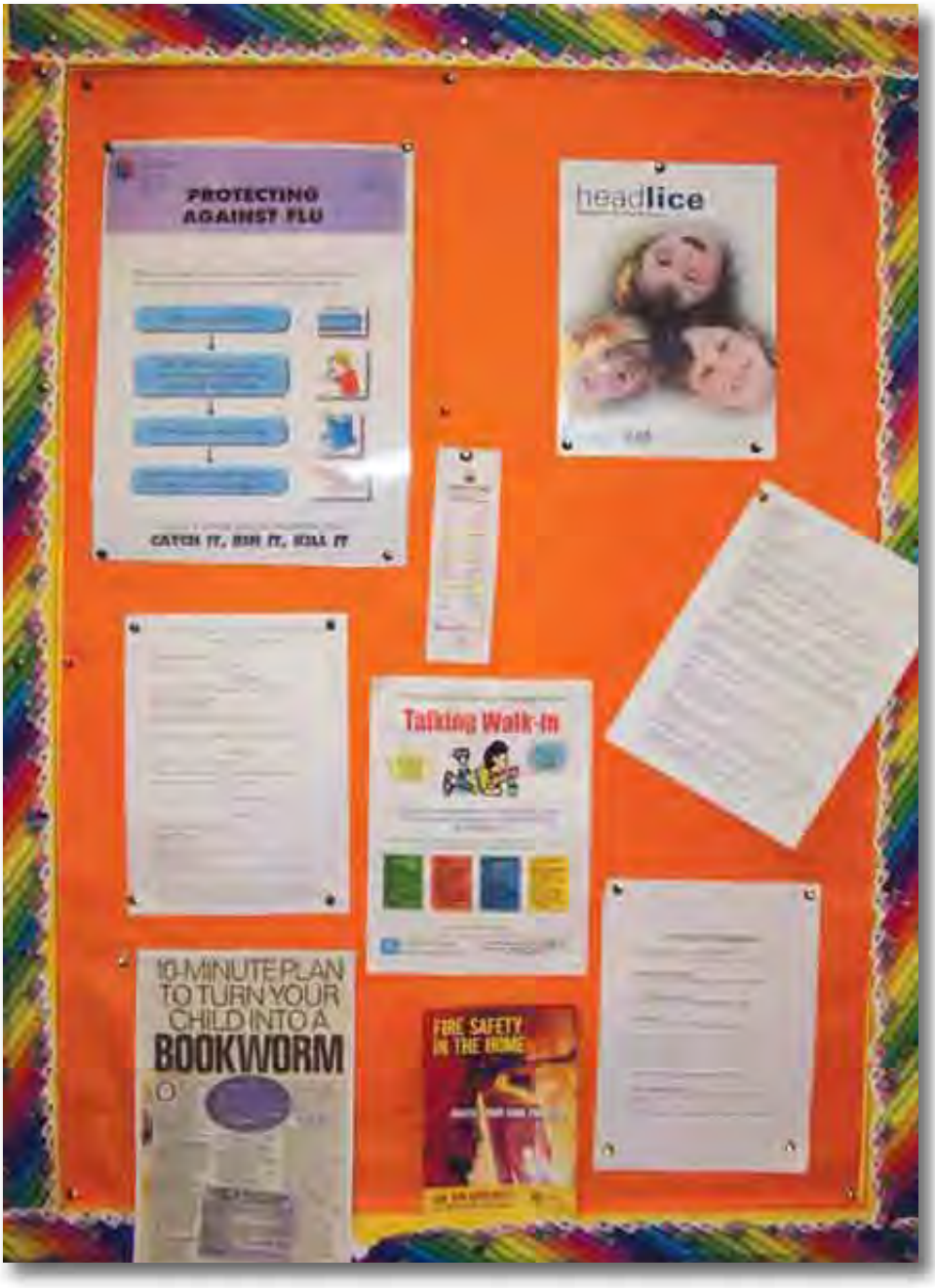
Suggestions for displays:

- People you will meet
- Photos of various children
- Welcome captions in different languages
- Parent notice board

Parent notice board

It is a good idea to have a parent notice board with relevant information about the pre-school setting and the local community

- Newsletters
- Holiday list and forthcoming events
- Churches
- Health centre
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Library
- Community centre
- Information from local schools
- General parenting advice
- Local community groups
- Information about ESOL classes*



* ESOL: English for speakers of other languages

Induction booklet

An induction booklet such as the one below may be useful in finding out about the new child.

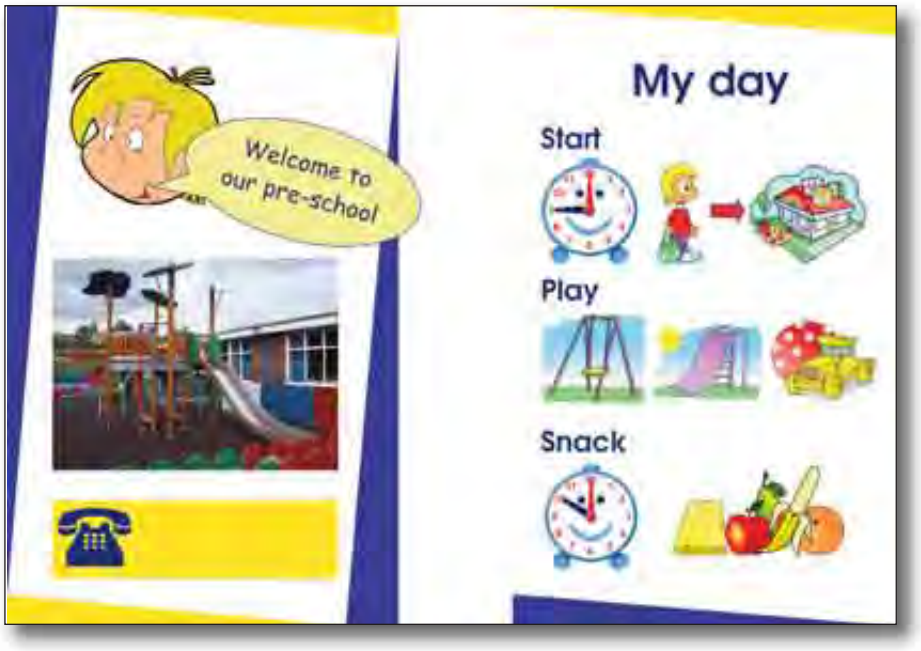
You may wish to use an interpreter to explain the booklet during the initial meeting with parents.
See pages 20-21.

Welcome book

A Welcome Book provides a highly visual means of communicating pre-school information with a minimum of educational jargon. A Welcome Book is a visual version of the pre-school prospectus, providing parents with a pictorial overview of the pre-school, including

- Pre-school day (times)
- People and places in the pre-school
- What is needed for pre-school
- Snack/dinner routines
- Caring for each other

Information on the educational systems may be found on the websites of the Education (N.I) and the department of Education and Science (RoI) and reference to either of these may be included in the Welcome Book.



Website/Power Point Welcome

A useful alternative to a welcome book is a PowerPoint presentation. The contents are similar. A PowerPoint is easy to create and has the capacity to include short video sequences to support explanations.

If copied onto a CD Rom, it can be taken home to view, sent to families abroad, transferred to a school website, or used for parent meetings.

Another possibility is a welcome video.

Signs, labels and displays

Multilingual signs and displays speak volumes to a new family, particularly when they can identify their own language. A welcome sign on the front door is particularly inviting.

You may wish to ask parents to help provide translations of some signs.

It is not advisable to use on-line translation websites as they often give inaccurate translations. Using the wrong word can create serious difficulties (and embarrassment!).

The above labels are available at www.schoolslinks.co.uk

Staff involvement

To ensure that all staff are fully prepared for the arrival of new children, the following supporting actions should be carried out within the pre-school.

- Deciding on first point of contact for parents/carers
- Preparing pre-school helpers
- Interviewing parents/carers
- Managing and disseminating information about new children
- Organising suitable resources
- Contributing to a welcoming environment
- Monitoring induction

Who can be involved?

Although duties and responsibilities vary in every pre-school context, it is important that roles should be clearly defined and understood by all. All staff should be fully equipped to meet the needs of newcomer children. Expertise and examples of good practice should be shared where possible. The list below reflects the broad range of personnel who can support the overall process.

- Principal/group leader
- Senior management team where appropriate
- Coordinator
- Teaching staff/assistants/pre-school leaders
- Classroom Assistant
- Helpers
- Home-school liaison teacher
- Secretary
- Board of Management/Board of Governors
- Caretaker/janitor
- Volunteer helper

It is important to recognise that children new to English have language difficulties that should be temporary and therefore require different approaches to those employed for SEN.

Staff involvement and the induction process

You may find this form useful for organising the induction process.

	What to do	Who	Review date
Prior to interview	Confirm an interview appointment		
	Gather basic information		
	Identify possible interpreter		
	Prepare interview		
Admission interview	Lead parent interview and gather detailed information		
After interview	Communicate interview information to key staff		
	Prepare children for new arrival		
	Set up a meeting to support class teacher/leader (with language and cultural information and resources)		
	Prepare suitable resources (labels, visual timetables, etc.)		
	Set up and maintain welcome display		
	Make Welcome Book/video/CD		
	Connect newly-arrived families with the existing community where possible		

* Remind all children how it feels to be new and discuss how they can help. Practise saying 'hello' in a new language.

Admissions

Starting pre-school can be a daunting prospect for any child. The impact is particularly significant for children facing induction into a new country, a new culture and a new language. Welcoming and inducting a child into pre-school should be considered in the wider context of the setting's provision. Procedures to ensure effective communication with families are essential.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that children and their parents are welcomed, informed and supported. It is important that everyone is clear about his/her role.

The key is not to rush the admissions process. Take time to ensure that staff are prepared and information is communicated effectively.

Don't rush the admissions process; you may need twice as much time as usual for the initial parent meeting.

First contact

At first contact, effective welcoming procedures include:

1. Setting a **date for interview** and informing parents (appointment card or invitation card)
2. Determining whether parents require the assistance of an **interpreter**
3. Gathering basic **details** on child (name, address and age) to pass on to principal and class teacher.
4. Offering a **Welcome Book** or prospectus
5. Supporting the procedure with a **checklist for admissions.**

It is better to conduct the initial parent meeting at a later stage, when staff have had more time to prepare.

Appointment

An **Appointment Card** or invitation card is an effective way to prepare the parents for the admissions interview. See the following page.

Things to consider:

- Do the parents/carers have/need access to somebody who will interpret for them?
- Do you need to contact an interpreting service to check availability of a professional interpreter? (Make the call while parents/carers are there.)
- Do you have a regular time in the week to conduct parent/carer interviews?

Sample Invitation Card

Pre-School Name
Address
Telephone Number
Logo

Meeting with _____

Date _____

Time

Please bring:

Birth Certificate/passport

Name of your doctor _____

Your telephone number _____

Interpreters

If there is a language barrier, an interpreter may be essential in order to gather vital information about the prospective child.

It is true that basic information can be communicated to parents without interpretation. However, for a pre-school to fully support its children, more detailed background information is required. Use of an interpreter can help avoid potential misunderstandings between nursery and home, and also serves to reassure parents that the nursery cares about their child. Interpreters may be available from different sources:

- The community (inexpensive and available quickly)
- Through local workplaces
- A contracted interpreter (more expensive but more reliable, accurate and professional). Remember to include the cost of travel time in your calculations of cost.

Contact the ***Inclusion and Diversity Service*** for interpreter guidance.

Interpreting friends or relatives understand and are able to communicate the parents' specific needs. However, for confidential matters and accuracy, it may be preferable to use a professional interpreter.

Using children as interpreters is not to be encouraged as it places them under pressure and may involve them in dealing with personal, sensitive or confidential matters.

Initial meeting with parents

What is the purpose of the initial meeting for newcomer families?

A detailed meeting with parents, prior to their child starting pre-school, is essential because:

- The parents often have little or no knowledge about the education system and require more information.
- Parents' expectations of education will be based on their own school experiences and may vary considerably.
- Differences in food, the classroom environment and general school routines are particular examples of where misunderstandings may occur.

What information do parents/carers require from school?

Nothing can be taken for granted. The majority of newcomer parents/carers will not understand our education system fully, including the routines and procedures in our pre-schools. So, what do they need to know?

- The education system
- Details about pre-school:
  - The daily routine
  - Key people
  - What children need
  - Rules and procedures
  - Expectations of the pre-school setting
  - The pre-school curriculum
  - Book club/library
  - How the pre-school will communicate with them
  - Positive parenting
  - Holidays and special events

  (Talk through the Welcome Book)
- Information about local community groups and interpreters

Sensitivity is essential when gathering information from parents. It is important to emphasise that all information will be treated confidentially and is required to cater for the child's needs more effectively.

What information is required from parents?

Background information on family, home circumstances in the country of origin and languages is needed in order to cater properly for a child's emotional well-being.

It is best to get this information early, rather than to discover it piecemeal (which, in turn, can contribute to staff anxiety).

Suggestions for the initial meeting

The following questions/suggestions are to guide staff through the initial meeting.
The pre-school may wish to adapt the standard school data capture form to include additional information.
For a more detailed data capture form see the CD.

Name of child		(phonetic spelling)
Parents' / carers' names		
Country of origin:	Father	Mother
What name do you use for your child?		
Where was your child born?		
How long has your family lived in this country?		
What languages do you speak with your child?		
Do you speak any other languages in your family?		
What languages does your child speak with other people?		
Does your child like books?		
Who, besides you, does your child spend time with?		❑ Brothers and sisters ❑ Other children ❑ Other family members ❑ Other
Do you belong to a particular religious group?		
Is there food that your child is not allowed to eat?		
Does your child have any of the following health problems?		❑ allergies ❑ asthma ❑ epilepsy ❑ anaemia ❑ can't hear well ❑ can't see well ❑ can't speak well ❑ can't sleep well ❑ other
Does your child take any medicine regularly?		

In your family, is going to school very important, important, not important?	
What do you hope for your child?	

Other suggestions:

- **Take parents on a tour of the pre-school and introduce key people**
- **Allow parents/carers to observe part of the session (if possible and time permits)**
- **Explain how the pre-school communicates with parents. Show the visual letters and explain their purpose.**

Some parents/carers are reluctant to attend meetings with staff because they feel that they do not have enough fluency in English. Such meetings may not have been a typical feature of education in their home country. It is important to explain the purpose of these meetings and to indicate if interpreters may be available.

Another possibility is to make a small card (credit card size) with the following details:

- Name of pre-school
- Pre-school address
- Pre-school telephone number
- Principal's name

Parents can keep this card for quick reference.

Pre-school calendar

A calendar indicating holidays and other closures at a glance can be very useful. This could be attached to the back of the welcome book. It is important to talk through the yearly cycle.

january 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

february 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

march 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

april 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

may 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

june 20**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

= holiday Calendars may be downloaded easily from the Internet and altered as required.

Start date

The final part of the parent interview is to confirm the date when the child should begin attending pre-school. A start card such as the one below is useful.

Pre-School name and address

Starting date

Teacher

Insert photo of classroom

Checklist for admissions

You may find the following checklist useful.

Checklist for admissions	
	Completed and initialled
Admission interview • Pre-school admissions and other necessary forms completed • Preferred name underlined • Phonetic spelling written down • Pre-school procedures explained (through welcome book) • The pre-school education system • Details about: The daily routine Key people What the child needs for pre-school setting Pre-school rules and procedures Expectations of the pre-school The pre-school curriculum How the setting will communicate with parents Holidays and special events • Information about local community groups and interpreters • Calendar of the year • Tour of pre-school • Visual timetable provided • Start card completed and explained	

The welcoming pre-school setting

A welcoming atmosphere reflects a sense of belonging. Children feel safe and secure with each other. The environment stimulates learning and reflects diversity. Children are prepared to welcome new arrivals. Staff encourage children's participation and interaction.

Welcome posters and displays

Bem-vindo
Sveikas atvykęs
Benvenuto
Ласкаво просимо
مرحاً ب
Fáilte
歡迎
Dobrodešel
Witaj
Laipni lūgta

A 'Welcome' or 'Hello' poster in different languages gives a clear message to parents that other languages and cultures are valued in this pre-school setting.

The children can practise saying the words, and new arrivals can teach their friends how to greet in their own languages.

If the new children's language is not represented, it should be added by writing it on the poster or using a sticker.

Welcome posters and displays (see CD for some useful translations of words and phrases)

CD

Displays about the children in the class are a quick and fun way of introducing the class to new arrivals.

When new arrivals feel more confident, they should be encouraged to add to the display.

As the year progresses, additions may be made by pupils. This is an excellent way of recording the events of the year and creating a sense of community and belonging.

The intercultural pre-school setting: ideas

1. Use posters and visual aids reflecting children from different cultures.
2. Include books showing people and places from all around the world as well as folktales from other countries and books in other languages.
3. Have skin tone crayons and markers available.
4. Put skin tone paints at the easel.
5. In the dramatic play area have dolls with different skin tones and multicultural clothes for both the dolls and the children.
6. In the dramatic play area include cooking utensils and different food types and packages.
7. At the jigsaw table have puzzles reflecting different cultures.
8. Different ethnic family dolls which can also be used at the block area.
9. Use borders reflecting different cultures.
10. Use musical instruments from around the world.
11. Display objects of interest e.g. pieces of pottery, animals or fabric from other countries.
12. Celebrate festivals from other countries.
13. Introduce food from around the world at the snack table.
14. Display a welcome sign in a variety of languages in the hallway.
15. Make collages to stimulate multicultural awareness.
16. Display samples of different types of writing in different languages.
17. At story time invite a newcomer parent to read to the children or talk to the children about the country that they come from.
18. Allow opportunities to listen to music from around the world and stories in the children's home language.
19. At circle time use puppets reflecting cultural diversity.
20. Invite newcomer parents/carers/other to get involved in family member projects.

Becoming familier with routines

Visual cues

Visual cues are a helpful way of making routines and activities clear to all pupils and parents. They may be used with newcomer children to make them understand choices.

Weather teddy bear

A weather teddy bear can be used regularly to model language relating to days of the week, weather and clothes. Change the bear's clothes as the weather changes.

Pre-school areas

Labels

Labels help children new to English in navigating their way around the classroom. For children in this stage of development you may wish to use real objects or photographs of the objects.

Quiet area

All pre-school settings will have a quiet room or a quiet area. A new child may find it useful to take a short break from classroom activities. Suitable quiet areas may include: the library/book corner, computer or play area. This will depend on the available classroom resources.

Time on the computer should be limited and should not be used as a substitute for interaction.

Newcomer children may find time on the computer calming.

Resources

Handy references

Help symbols

You may wish to prepare an emergency set of symbols for the new child to use in the first weeks of arriving into the class. Children can use these cards to indicate their basic needs without having to express them in English.

Toilet

I feel sick

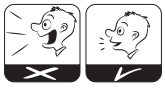
I feel unhappy

CD

A green circle to say 'I understand' and, on the back, a red circle to say 'I don't understand'.

Instruction words

Newcomer children find it easier to understand instructions if they are supported with pictures and gestures. It is a good idea to display pictures on the wall and refer to these when you give instructions to the newcomer child.

	Listen
	Look
	Sit down
	**Talk quietly**

CD

If reinforcement is required, send this sheet home or make a mini-book with individual A5 instruction cards. Parents can talk about these in the home language and maybe translate.

Multicultural and multilingual resources

Resources from other cultures and languages help all children to develop their own knowledge of the world. Their display in the pre-school setting reinforces the message that diversity is valued.

Bem-vindo

Sveikas atvykęs

Benvenuto

Ласкаво просимо

بً ايحرم

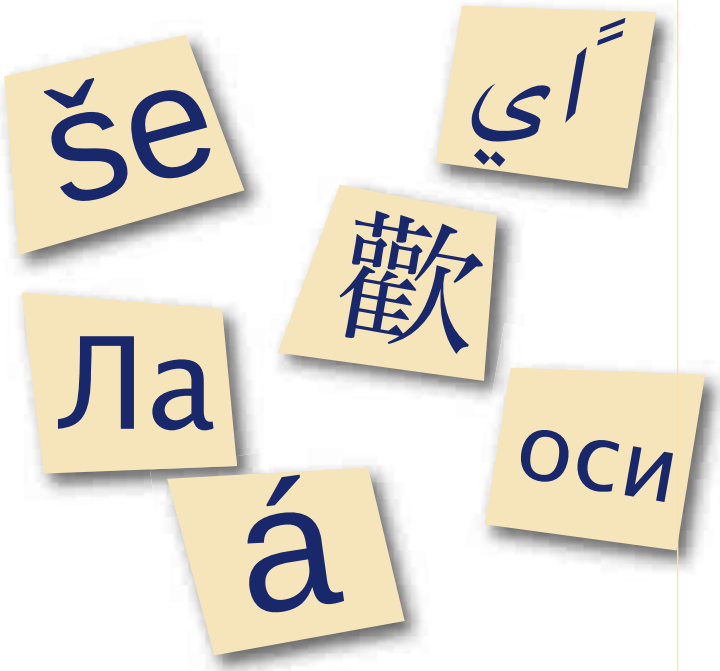
Fáilte

歡迎

Dobrodešel

Witaj

Laipni lūgta



Make a chart with the word 'Welcome' in different languages, and if a new child arrives whose home language is not represented, add this immediately.

You may wish to add pictures of children from different cultural backgrounds. See the list of websites on page 87 for suppliers of multi-cultural resources.

Dual language storybooks are an excellent way to celebrate other languages and involve newcomer parents in their child's education. Suppliers for dual language resources are listed on page 87.

EARLY DAYS

Introduction

The supportive and inclusive pre-school setting.

The environment should be inviting, safe and comfortable so that children feel confident to make friends and develop all their capabilities.

"It is important that young children are helped to understand that we see the world in many different ways depending on our culture, social and religious viewpoints. Staff in a setting should acknowledge and respect the culture, beliefs and lifestyles of the families of all the children. When planning, include activities and resources that encourage respect for diversity, including diversity within our own society."[1]

"Children should have opportunities to explore situations, express feelings in a way that is not gender specific and challenge stereotypes."[1]

[1] Curricular Guidance for Pre-school Education, CCEA, 1997

Contents of this section

Some dos and don'ts
Managing behaviour
Intercultural awareness
A sense of belonging
- Group activities
- Story area
- Songs
- Storytelling
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Language games

Demonstrating understanding

Communication with home
- Explaining routines
- Visual letters

Initial observations
- The silent period

Dos and don'ts

Do

- **Do –** Find out the name of their home/first language and learn how to **pronounce** the child's first names correctly
- **Do –** Face the child and speak **clearly**
- **Do –** Use **repetitive** phrases
- **Do –** Use as many gestures and **key visuals** as possible
- **Do –** Allow child to stand back and watch at first as **receptive** language skills develop before productive skills
- **Do –** Remove the pressure to speak – accept nods, gestures, pointing and facial expression for some time
- **Do –** Treat children **equally**
- **Do –** Encourage **first language** use
- **Do –** Encourage **culture sharing** and comparing in class
- **Do –** Provide opportunities for peer interactions and **friendships** during the pre-school day; children make excellent teachers and helpers
- **Do –** Use songs and action rhymes at every opportunity
- **Do –** Encourage and praise all attempts at communication, regardless of accuracy
- **Do –** Give the children time to settle and observe what they can do
- **Do –** Make sure children understand what is expected: use the same rewards and sanctions for all

Don't

- **Don't –** Panic! Many children remain silent for six months or more. Listening comes first.
- **Don't –** Insist on parents using English at home. Supporting their child's first language development will help with learning English
- **Don't –** Confuse language difficulties with **learning difficulties**. Place the children with good language role models.
- **Don't –** Put the child on the **computer** for long periods of time

Managing behaviour

Rules and routines

Rules and routines provide clarity and security in pre-school. However, they need to be explained, modelled, constantly rehearsed and encouraged. It is important that children and parents understand:

- What happens each day and when
- How to access books, toys, materials, computers and other resources
- Where to hang up coats, retrieve lunch boxes and so on
- How to behave during specific activities such as snack time or story time
- How to gain an adult's attention if appropriate, on arrival, during play and other routines of the day

Classroom visuals

Classroom labels can help children to access resources quickly. These should be pointed out to newly arrived children during a classroom tour.

Pictorial cues, or photographs of children carrying out everyday activities as instructed, are very useful in reinforcing classroom and school rules. These may be placed on the wall or made into a book and sent home for discussion in the home language.
Refer regularly to the classroom visuals to reinforce routines.
Celebrate good behaviour in the classroom and around the pre-school.

A volume control symbol may be useful to indicate acceptable noise levels at different working times during the day!

Intercultural awareness: social conventions

It is important to be aware of differences in values, attitudes and beliefs so that misunderstandings may be avoided.

Greetings

In some cultures people commonly greet each other with kisses. However, in other cultures people almost never touch each other and may find even a pat of approval unusual and upsetting. However, a warm, friendly yet relatively formal greeting from teachers, other staff and children can make a world of difference to newcomer pupils and parents.

Gestures

Non-verbal communication through use of the eyes, the hands and the body differs between cultures. Pointing at people is not acceptable in some cultures. The thumbs up sign may mean nothing or appear rude. Using the thumb and the forefinger to form a circle expressing OK is a very rude gesture in some Middle Eastern countries.

It is important to be aware of body language and the signals it may give out.

Dress code

There are noticeable cultural differences in levels of formality, dress for boys and girls, use of cosmetics and so on. For example:

- Parents and children arriving from Asian countries may be used to more formal dress codes in pre-school settings
- Children from other cultures may find the idea of school uniform very strange
- Uniforms may cause difficulty for children for whom culture or faith require particular dress codes.

It is important to be aware of sensitivities in issues of dress.

Social interaction

Modes of social interaction can differ significantly across cultures. Members of some cultures may seem loud or boisterous to those of quieter cultures. It is customary in some cultures to wait for a pause in the conversation before speaking. Therefore, some children may appear unwilling to participate because they have not recognised an opportunity to speak.

Some newcomer children may not be used to group work and it is important to provide a safe environment for this.

In some cultures it is customary to offer an answer to a question only when asked by the teacher. Therefore, children may not volunteer answers even if they know the correct answer. Other children may not volunteer an answer unless they are certain that it is correct.

In many cultures, children must show great respect to older people, teachers and other adults. That respect may be demonstrated by avoiding eye contact with staff members which may seem disrespectful to us.

Rewards, punishment and expectations

Individual achievement, in some cultures, is less important than group success. Members of these cultures may respond poorly to individual incentives but may be motivated by group work and group goals.

In some educational systems corporal punishment is the norm.

Be aware that parental expectations may be based on different experiences and it is, therefore, most important that parents understand fully the expectations of the pre-school setting.

Punctuality and attendance

Attitudes to punctuality and attendance may vary greatly from one culture to another. We may have different rules about time, depending on the occasion. It is important to explain daily routines and times and the need for punctuality.

It is also advisable to explain the need to attend pre-school for the children to make progress and become fully involved.

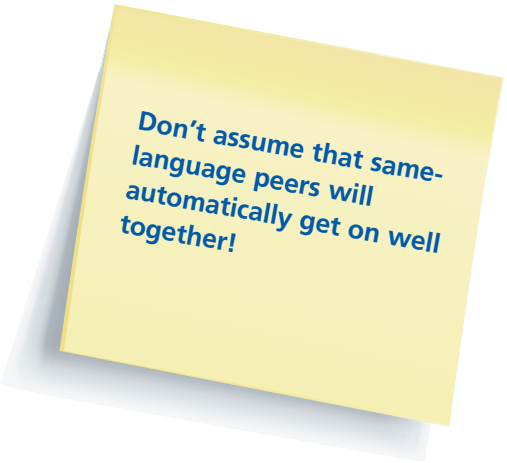
A sense of belonging

A sense of belonging for newcomer parents/carers is important. Encourage the pre-school staff to be open, adaptable and flexible. Newcomer parents/carers should be encouraged to visit the pre-school setting. Show parents / carers and children where to hang coats, leave bags, where the notice board is and so on.

Newcomer children may take longer to settle in. Here are some points to bear in mind:

- Organise activities in a way that is inviting, engaging and simple
- Allow children time to adapt to routines of the classroom by modelling and fostering respect for others, staff, environment
- Use simple play activities, lots of basic sensory experiences for children
- Focus on simple routines
- Work on children's individual needs
- Use the early days to get to know the children through close observation
- During circle games encourage the children to hold hands to make connections with new children

The following pages provide some ideas on how to create a sense of belonging.



Group activities

Circle time starters
My name is …
I feel …
I like to play …
At home I …
I am proud of …
A friend is …

Chinese Whispers

Simon Says

Pass the Parcel

Who's Who?
Children in turn introduce the children to their left or right, or both.
They may also say something positive about the other(s).

People hunt:
Find someone who is: taller; the same age; has the same favourite colour etc.

Soft Ball:
Discussion/question-and-answer session using a soft ball. See 'Games'.

Clapping game:
1 clap means sit down, 2 claps mean walk on the spot, 3 claps mean walk around the inside of the circle

Memory game: Teacher starts: 'I went to town and I bought …'. Children in turn repeat the phrase and add their own items. Phrases may be changed, for example, 'I'm making a cake and I will put in …'.

Fruit Salad: Children are given pictures from specific categories: for example, fruit, animals, colours. They must change seats when their category is called.

Suggested rules for group activities:

- One person speaks at a time
- Listen to others
- You may pass
- It's OK to make mistakes
- Encourage one another

Things to consider:

- It is a good idea to introduce the topics with a picture or object.
- Allow newcomer children to listen to other responses before it is their turn
- Encourage children to use actions with their answers
- Although a newcomer child may not want to speak, he/she may be able to participate non-verbally

Story area

The story area is a place where children come to look at books. They can access this area at any time of day. It is important to have a variety of story resources, topic related books, factual, fictional, magazines, listening centre, cds, big books, books from around the world, posters from around the world, map of the world, globe.

The story area needs to be quiet and comfortable with soft seating. It can be used as a settling or calming area.

Resources for the story area

- Books which reflect cultural diversity
- Paper
- Audio, computer or recording equipment
- Recording of familiar class songs, poems, prayers and favourite music
- Monolingual, bilingual and picture/photo dictionaries
- Samples of children's finished work
- Post-its and labels
- Multilingual resources
- Magazines and catalogues to cut up
- Weather chart
- Birthday chart
- Puppets

Songs

Songs introduce children naturally to accent, intonation and the rhythm of language. They may also be used to introduce vocabulary and structures.

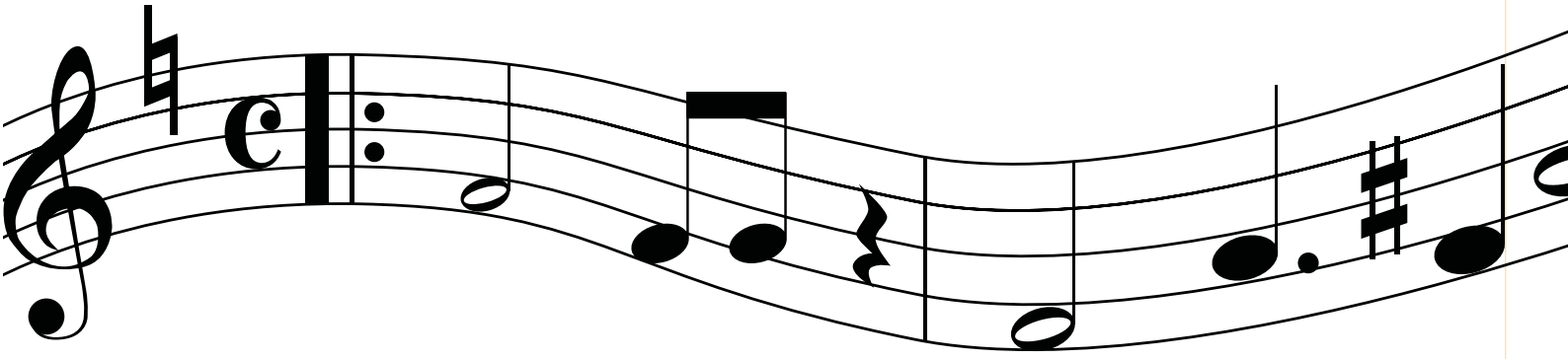
Songs help children to remember words and structures because they are usually repetitive. Children generally enjoy participating and performing songs, and can accompany songs with actions.

It is important to draw children's attention to the cultural context of songs. Many songs are based on a historical event, or what children typically did in the past, or the experiences of children in everyday life.

It can be useful to use pictures or flashcards to illustrate meaning.

Some ideas for using songs include the following :

- The adult distributes flashcards. When the word associated with the picture occurs in the song, the child holding that card must show it
- Children listen and add/change a word or verse
- Children listen and accompany by miming or clapping
- Children listen to a verse of a song and draw a picture to illustrate it
- The adult uses a well-known tune and makes up a song to teach particular vocabulary
- Many children (and staff) prefer to chant. Use chant to practise key words and structures, particularly if you are not musically gifted!
- Children may substitute a word or phrase in a song and create their own song
- Children simply listen for pleasure



Storytelling

Children of all ages enjoy a good story. Storytelling is an important aid to language development. For newcomer children, hearing a story read aloud provides experience of a good model of pronunciation and intonation. Children should be encouraged to listen actively and to participate in the story, for example to chorus key words or phrases. They may mime the actions or dramatise the story.

Stories that work:

- Traditional and familiar stories, e.g. Little Red Riding Hood
- Stories linked with a theme, e.g. Dear Zoo
- Simple, repetitive stories created or adapted by the staff
- Variety of book styles, lift and flap, picture dictionaries, big books and flannel board stories.

Telling the story:

The adult is a very important medium in making the story accessible to all through use of gesture, facial expression, and voice changes which encourage children's involvement.

The adult may choose

- To enter straight into the story using gestures and pictures to convey meaning, then consolidate the key language in follow up activities, games, art, drama, music
- Lead into the story by pre-teaching key language using picture cards and games

Before telling the story, the adult should:

- Identify the key language to be delivered through the story
- Identify a range of activities based on using the key language areas which will prepare children to understand the story
- Identify a range of activities leading on from the story when the children are familiar with it
- Identify any additional materials required for the activity

Activities for extending stories

Hunt the thimble
One child leaves the room and the adult hides an object or picture of a character/animal from a story shared or read. The child returns and searches for the object/picture. When he/she approaches the hidden object/picture the children shout the key word(s). When he/she moves away from the hidden picture the class whisper the key word(s).

Simon says
This game can be used to reinforce vocabulary or pronunciation and intonation, e.g. Simon says 'pig' and the pupils make pig sounds.

Card games
Using either the images provided or their own drawings, children make cards which may be used to play games.

Gradual reveal
Using picture cards, the adult gradually reveals the picture on the card.
Children guess who/what is in the picture.

Kim's Game
The adult displays a number of pictures or objects related to the story.
The children close their eyes. The adult removes or covers one of them. The children guess what has been hidden. The teacher removes a second picture or object.

Stepping stones
The adult puts pictures of, for example, characters/animals on the floor to form stepping stones on an imaginary river. In teams, children have to move across the river by naming each character/animal correctly.

Hungry wolf (a version of 'Musical chairs')
The adult chooses one child as wolf and puts a mask on him/her.
He/she leaves the room. The class says 'Here comes the wolf'.
The wolf enters the room saying, 'I'm hungry, I'm hungry', and runs towards an empty chair. The child with no chair becomes the wolf.
(Possible variations – Hungry witch/Hungry giant/Hungry fox)

Story box/feely bag
Objects relating to the story are placed in a bag/box. The child puts their hands in bag, chooses something and talks about it before they take it out.

Sequencing
The adult distributes a different picture to each child. The children listen to the audio recording or the teacher narrating the story and, using the pictures, sequence themselves according to the storyline.

Dance
Children adopt the roles of animals/characters and respond to the story to accompany the adult as it is narrated.

Masks
Children make masks of the animals/characters by drawing their faces on paper plates using a range of art and collage materials. The adult narrates and children act out the story.

Puppets
The children use a puppet of an animal/character to introduce and act as narrator for the story or the children use puppets to retell the story.

Art and Design
Children make a wall display based on a scene or charcters from a story.

Language games

Learning language through games

Games provide the opportunity for meaningful interaction. Children should be encouraged to ask and answer questions, agree and disagree and practise a range of vocabulary.

Games can also be used across the curriculum to practise basic survival vocabulary and to familiarise pupils with rules and routines.

In addition games

- encourage the participation of all children
- create a non-threatening context for less confident children
- develop co-operative skills
- allow repetition without monotony
- encourage the use of language for an authentic purpose
- create a relaxed and 'fun' atmosphere

Points to remember:
- **Make sure that children know the key vocabulary before they start**
- **Make sure the instructions are clear**
- **Demonstrate the game first**
- **Stop the game at the appropriate time**
- **Have a good follow-up activity**

On the following pages there are suggestions for different types of games. While this section is included under *Early Days*, these games can obviously be used at any time.

The games fall into the following categories:
- Language skills
- Matching and sequencing
- Sorting activities
- Memory
- Routines

Games for developing language skills

Soft ball

The children sit in a circle. The adult throws a soft ball to a child and starts the conversation by saying a phrase or asking a question. The child repeats the phrase or answers the question and throws the ball back to the adult. Alternatively, the child could say another phrase or ask another question and throw the ball to another child. This activity can be used to get all children involved, to introduce a new child, to review recently learnt material, and so on.

Matching and sequencing activities

Pairs

Make pairs of picture relating to specific vocabulary.

Turn the cards face down on the table. Children take turns, to turn over two cards to try to find a matching pair.

Snap

Use the same cards as for pairs but play the game of 'Snap'. Players can count the number of cards they have at the end. This may be done in English, or children from other countries could teach English-speaking children to count in their languages.

Memory trainer

Children match associated pictures of objects e.g. umbrella and wellington boots go together.

Information gap

Gradual reveal

Put a picture or object related to a specific topic in a folder or bag. Reveal a little at a time. The children have to guess what it is. They can make predictions when they think they have some idea.

Hunt the thimble

One child leaves the room, possibly accompanied by an adult. The other children decide where to hide a picture or an object relating to a specific topic. The child and adult return to the room to look for the picture or object. The other children say the word for the picture or object in a very low voice if they are far from it and more loudly as they get nearer.

This game is excellent for oral language practice as the word is said repeatedly.

Sorting activities

When introducing sorting activities use concrete non-verbal cues. Children can sort a variety of objects by a common criterion e.g. colour, size or shape. Sorting activities take place throughout the day in all areas of the pre-school routine classroom. eg. tidy up time. Other activities include compare bears, spot the difference.

Memory activities

Kim's game

Put a number of pictures on the board or objects on a desk. Make sure that you name each object or picture for children with less English. Give the childen 10 seconds to memorise them. Ask them to cover their eyes and then remove one. They have to guess what's missing. You can cover more than one picture.

What's in the bag? What's in the folder?

Put a number of objects in a bag or pictures in a folder, one by one. Remember to name them as you put them in. Then ask children if they can remember what you put in.

Chain games

Chain games are good for practising verbs, constructions, prepositions and word families. The teacher starts with a statement, children in turn repeat the statement and add one more item. Some suggestions:
I went to town and I bought ……..
I'm making a cake and I'm putting in …….
Last night I saw a …… in the garden

Matching pairs

Cards showing matching symbols or pictures: children find the matching pair by turning over cards.

Reinforcing routines

Simon says

This is a good game to practise rules and routines. Children new to English will hear the instruction and observe the other children following it.

Follow the leader

The adult or another child leads the line and the children must follow copying the actions. It is important to say the instruction as you do the action so that children new to English can learn to associate the instruction and the action. This is particularly appropriate in the outdoor environment.

Kim's game, Hunt the thimble, Pairs, Snap

Pictures relating to rules and routines can be used for Kim's game, Hunt the thimble, Pairs and Snap. These help familiarise children with rules and routines.

Demonstrating understanding

In their early days in pre-school, children with little English will have limited capacity to communicate orally, but they may well understand some of the interaction. It is important to find ways to allow them to demonstrate their understanding, other than by speaking. This can be observed by watching or engaging with children as they play. The activities below suggest how this might be done.

Gesture/non-verbal

By matching:

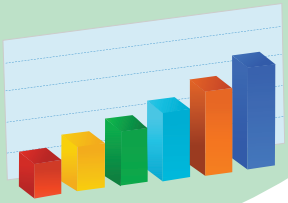
- Picture to picture

By drawing:

- A character, a place
- Favourite part of a story

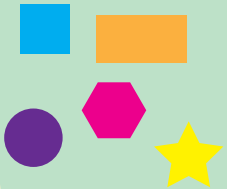
By making charts, using pictures:

- Flow chart
- Simple storyboard - picture provided
- Simple mind maps
- Simple graphs



By sorting pictures or objects:

- Size, colour, shape
- Plants and animals
- Clothes appropriate for certain weather/seasons



By making a poster:

- My favourite things
- My favourite character
- Seasons
- Healthy food, unhealthy food

Working alone may be intimidating for a new child. Working with a partner allows opportunities to use specific language and to check understanding.

Communication with home

Maintaining good communication with home is vital, but this may be difficult when there is a language barrier. The following suggestions can make communication a little easier.

Explaining routines

Some routines are culture-specific and may be misunderstood. It is important to explain these by:

- Talking through the rules and expectations. You may prefer to present this as a mini-book, using photographs of children working in typical ways.

- Showing parents/carers how they can help their child by using their home language
- Walking the parents/carers around the pre-school, showing them how you manage rewards and behaviour, celebrate childrens' successes, use notice boards, organise routines
- Explaining trips and educational visits by showing visual letters and the calendar for the year

Visual letters

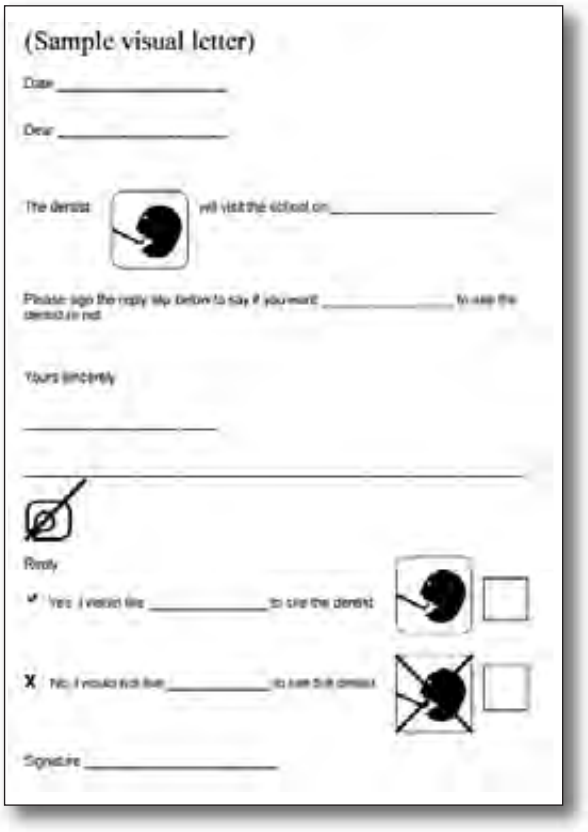
You may find it helpful to use visual letters when communicating with newcomer parents/carers. It is important that these should not be seen as patronising; they are intended to meet a very critical need on the part of the parents/carers as well as the school. Therefore, it should be explained to parents that these letters are used to help everybody, before one is sent home for the first time.

The best way of sending a visual letter is to photocopy it onto the back of the original letter so that the parent receives both versions.

When visual letters have been prepared for different purposes, it is a good idea to put a master copy into a shared folder, or keep a file centrally at the school office. Then the letters will be readily available for different purposes throughout the school year.

Typical information includes:

Book fair
Nurse
Sports day
Optician / Eye test
School trips
Dentist
Holidays and closures
Parent meeting with an interpreter
Concert
Permission for photo
Religious service


(Sample visual letter)

Date _____

Dear _____

The dentist will visit the school on _____

Please sign the reply slip below to say if you want _____ to see the dentist or not

Yours sincerely

_____

_____

Reply

✓ Yes, I would like _____ to see the dentist

X No, I would not like _____ to see the dentist

Signature _____

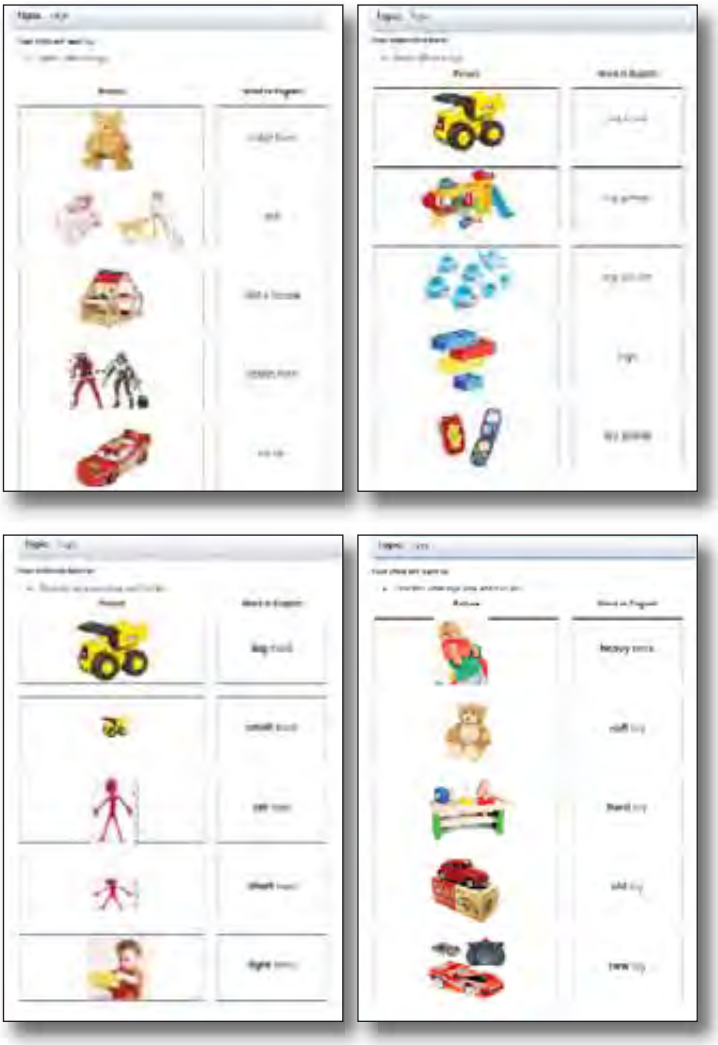
Translated letters are available on the Inclusion and Diversity website: www.education-support.org.uk/ids

Newsletters

The newsletter is an important means of communication for all parents. It may be necessary to adapt newsletters to ensure that they are clear for newcomer parents. Consider the following:

- Reduce the amount of information on the page
- Use clear and simple English
- Include visuals where possible
- Avoid jargon

You may wish to consider sending home some information on key language. It is important to explain to parents how to use this information.



Samples and templates may be found on the CD.

Initial observations

The silent (non-verbal) period.

For some children, immersion in a new language causes them to become 'silent'. This well-researched response may last for a relatively short time but may also persist for many months. Research suggests that the younger the child, the longer the silent period may endure. A non-verbal response does not signal that a child has special learning needs. When the child begins to speak the teacher will be able to identify learning that has taken place weeks, or even months, previously.

This checklist allows the teacher to monitor a child's responses in the absence of spoken communication. If the child is demonstrating some of these responses and actions, even if they are only occasionally apparent, it is important not to intervene but to allow the child to emerge from the silent period when he/she is ready.

Checklist for observing progress during the silent period

Name of child: _____ **Age:** _____

(Write the date of observation in the relevant column)

	NOT AT ALL	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY
Using his/her mother tongue with teacher/peers despite their inability to understand			
Making eye contact with the teacher			
Watching other children closely			
Imitating other childrens' actions			
Using facial expressions to communicate feelings			
Bringing particular objects, books, etc. to teacher			
Responding to communication through gesture/mime by teacher or other children			
Attention-seeking by interacting with other children or teacher (e.g. handing them objects)			
Requesting help by making signs, pointing, etc.			
Indicating dislike of an object or activity			
Protesting by making sounds or appearing aggressive			
Imitating non-verbal behaviour of other children			
Experimenting with sounds of English			
Repeating and rehearsing words or phrases			
Following verbal instructions			

MOVING ON

Moving On

Introduction

When newly arrived children feel safe and secure in their new environment, it is time to consider support for language development and curriculum access.

What does effective support include?

- A knowledge of the skills involved in language learning and how to develop these
- An awareness of the stages of language development
- Planning for inclusion: curriculum access for all

Contents of this section

Language skills
- Developing literacy skills
- Listening
- Speaking

Planning for language learning in pre-school

First stages of second language development: benchmarks

Monitoring and assesing progress
- Observation
- Progress in learning
- Communication with parents / carers

Celebrating diversity

Language skills

Oracy precedes reading and writing

The four skills of language learning are:

- listening
- talking
- reading
- writing

The language skills are all inter-related and cannot be developed in isolation. It is likely, however, that they will not all develop at the same rate. Staff need to consider each language skill and how it may be developed. In the pre-school context the emphasis is on oracy.

Points to think about

Listening

Children in the early stages will understand much more than they can say, so non-verbal responses are very important. The more opportunities provided to hear the language, the better. Each opportunity that a child has to hear English spoken in the classroom is also an opportunity to acquire new language and absorb the sounds and patterns used.

Speaking

In order to use language effectively and in meaningful interaction, newcomer children will use staff, other children and adults as models for their own oracy development. Planned oral activities in the classroom are of particular importance.

If a child has not heard certain sounds within the first few years of learning to speak, he/she may find it extremely difficult to hear or reproduce these sounds when taught at a later stage. In fact, he/she may never be able to reproduce these sounds accurately.

Early Reading

An important part of language development is a love of stories and books. Children should be helped to understand that books can be a source of fun and enjoyment and also provide information and help answer questions. Opportunities should be provided for children to listen to a range of interesting and exciting stories and rhymes, and to have access to a great variety of books and print within their learning environment which enables them to view books as a natural part of play. With adult support children can become aware that the printed word has meaning and that pictures can help us to understand that meaning.

Early Writing

Children need to be encouraged to use a variety of writing tools so that they can share ideas and thoughts through drawing, mark making and early forms of writing.
Opportunities need to be available for children to observe adults writing and to enjoy experimenting with their own mark-making or emergent writing.

Developing the literacy skills of newcomer children

Developing world knowledge

- Make use of nursery rhyme and fairy tale books, audio recordings and software
- Provide opportunity for children to tell their personal or family news. Encourage children to bring a prop (book, toy, photo) to support speaking

Developing basic vocabulary

- Plan authentic opportunities for language development; make, do, cook, visit and so on
- Use rhyme and repetition in games, songs and poems to help memory development
- Retell stories with puppets or masks
- Link words, actions and stories to the home language when possible

Listening for individual sounds

- Demonstrate how to pronounce a difficult sound
- Play 'hunt the thimble' to focus on specific sound
- Sing and say rhymes and songs every day

Developing early reading

Model how to read, use tone, intonation

- Start with words in context: environmental print, e.g. class labels, displays
- Act as a scribe to describe child's picture or painting
- Set the scene by providing information about the context/subject, e.g. using pictures, non-fiction texts
- Children may sequence picture cues
- Encourage child to observe as you label work
- Give newcomer child their own symbol e.g. to identify coat hook
- Picture walking
- Encourage child to developing an interest, understanding and respect for books
- Ensure a variety of reading material
- Use visual media

Extending home language early literacy skills

- Provide dual language books
- Encourage parents to continue literacy development in the home language e.g. storytelling and using the library
- Send home picture books
- Encourage to use the a book club/lending library

Text orientation

- Model text orientation
- Book handling skills
- Display different texts, e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Russian

Developing early writing

- Have a variety of writing material e.g. crayons, pencils, wipe board, chalk boards, paint brushes
- Develop, balance, gross, fine motor skills e.g, using tweezer/tongs, play dough activities, peg boards, threading, painting, finger painting and outdoor play
- Encourage writing in the dramatic play area eg. clipboards in the hospital, taking orders in the restaurant, appointment book in the hairdressers, writing letters in the post office

Sound recognition

- Identify environmental sounds through listening lotto
- Clap syllables of your name
- Discuss rhyme and offer opportunities to explore rhyme

Developing cultural knowledge

- Discuss local life
- Be aware of cultural references and idiomatic language
- Encourage children to make contributions from their own cultural experience to enrich classroom activities and projects

Home language maintenance

- Allow child to speak in his or her own language. You may not be able to understand it but it gives children the opportunity to express and demonstrate their identities
- Encourage parents to read to their children in the home language

Listening

Difficulties encountered when listening and suggested activities to help.

Difficulties	Suggestions
Distinguishing sounds	• Animal sound games, Old McDonald • Musical instrument games • Recording and age appropriate software • Sound bingo for rhyming, practising vocabulary • Sorting objects or pictures according to sound • Listen and identify the correct picture • Identify the odd one out
Following instructions	• Use musical cues for classroom transitions • Support instructions with gestures or pictures • Traffic light games, stop and go signs • Give one instruction at a time • Ask another child to clarify • Simon says
Short concentration span Difficulty following unfamiliar topics or stories	• Give child a picture of a character or object in the story. Each time they hear or see the character or object, they hold up the picture • Give children colour cards. When they hear or see something that colour, they raise the card; ask them to explain • Keep child involved by inviting, at intervals, someone to show something, 'Show me the …' • Involve children in repetition, accompanied by actions • Listen to a story and add actions

Children find it difficult to hear sounds that do not exist in their first language and will need extra practice and time with these.

It is a good idea to record some stories, rhymes, songs and listening activities, so that the children can practise independently.

Talking

Difficulties encountered when speaking and suggested activities to help

Difficulties	Suggestions
Rhythm and intonation	• Use familiar songs, rhymes and chants • Encourage groups to perform and dramatise whole or parts of familiar rhymes and chants • Encourage groups to make up their own rhymes and chants and present to class • Encourage children to clap or click in rhythm, for example to practise syllable stress • Provide recordings with familiar songs, rhymes • Choral speaking
Pronunciation	• Provide opportunities for activities such as sound lotto, sorting games, hunt the thimble, Chinese whispers, to give pupils time to try out and play with new sounds • Show children how to articulate difficult sounds • Praise all attempts at new sounds • Correct pronunciation by repeating the correct sound and asking the children to do so, from time to time. However, over-correcting and interrupting can discourage children • Play games such as 'I hear with my little ear'.
Sentence structure and grammatical mistakes	• Provide opportunities for children to hear sentences modelled correctly • Correct mistakes by repeating the correct structure, sometimes asking the children to repeat, for example: 'Me go toilet?', 'Oh, you would like to go to the toilet?' Be careful not to over correct.
Adjusting speech to appropriate register: formal/informal, adults/peers	• Provide opportunities to hear speech modelled for specific purposes: the teacher, other children, recordings • Demonstrate correct speech by repeating phrases using correct tone and volume • Provide frameworks to scaffold talk • Model how to greet visitors to the nursery • Model basic social communication

It can be very difficult to produce sounds that do not exist in the home language, for example 'th' or the glottal stop.

Talking (continued)

Reluctance to speak/keeping only to familiar topics	• Ask an adult to practise key words and phrases with the newcomer children in advance of new topics by: – talking about a picture or picture book – practising a specific set of words or phrases – helping with illustration or translation of new words • Encourage repetition • Circle time/circle games • Accept and praise all attempts to speak • Provide puppets or masks • Provide opportunities to hear phrases modelled many times before asking the child to contribute. For example, ask the same question of a number of children before asking those with less English • Provide opportunities for children to work in small groups and pairs. They may feel more confident in this setting and have more opportunity to talk and question • Provide opportunities for language games • Allow time for children to talk about topics of interest: favourite group, sport, toy … • Use mini-books as a stimulus for talk with the teacher, another adult or peer • Record own mini-books, news or stories • Provide sentence starters to scaffold talk
Sequencing thoughts	• Chain games: 'I went to town and I bought …' 'On my way to school I saw …' • Use storyboards, slide-shows and flowcharts to help children recall or sequence ideas

It is not unusual for newcomer children not to speak for some time. This period could last for one to three terms and is known as the 'Silent Period'. If the child does not wish to speak, that is OK. They will still listen and absorb a lot of English and speak when they are ready.

Sample frameworks for modelling talk

You may wish to use frameworks such as these to model language structures.

Tell us what you made

What is it called?

What does it look like?

How do you use it?

What do you like best about it?

Anything else?

Tell us what you made

We made a .....

It is .....
(big, small, round, long, colour etc.)

To use it you have to .....

The thing I like best about it is .....

One other thing about it is .....

My family

This is my granny .....

She is old .....

She lives in.....

I like my granny because .....

My favourite person

My favourite person is .....

He/she is from .....

He/she is .....

He/she has .....

Some interesting things about this person .....

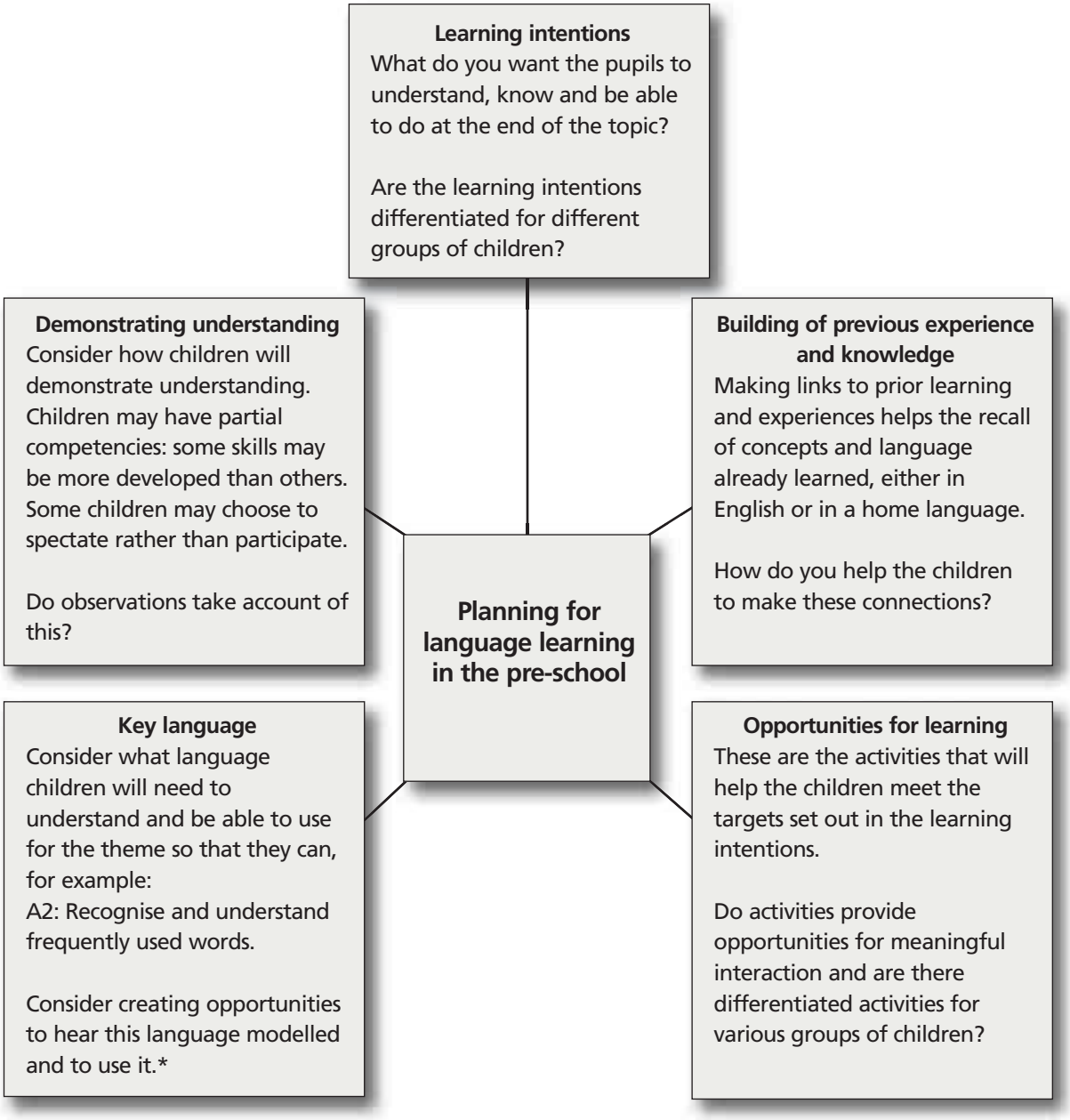
I like ..... because .....

Planning for language learning in pre-school

This section is designed to help you adapt your planning to make the pre-school curriculum accessible to all children.

Communication, dialogue and social interaction are the principal tools for language development in a pre-school setting. The conversations between adult and child are as important as the planned play activities. We must create opportunities for children to work in small groups and independently and provide environments which are cognitively and linguistically stimulating. Encourage children to ask questions, recall and reformulate information.

The diagram below illustrates points to bear in mind when planning for all children, including those with limited English to including newcomer children.



*Why not use the template referred to on page 53 to communicate key language to parents?

Stages of Second language develpment: benchmarks for listening & speaking

The Common European Framework of Reference

The Common European Framework of Reference is a set of global benchmarks for language proficiency. It distinguishes five cummunicative skills: listening, reading, spoken interaction and writing. There are six levels of proficiency within each skill ranging from A1 level (breakthrough) to C2 level (mastery)

The benchmarks below describe the first two levels of proficiency for listening and speaking. These are widely used in primary school. However, you may also find these useful when planning for and monitoring language learning.

		A1 BREAKTHROUGH	A2 WAYSTAGE
UNDERSTANDING	Listening	• Can recognize and understand basic words and phrases concerning him/herself, family and school. • Can understand simple questions and instructions when teachers and other pupils speak very slowly and clearly.	• Can recognize and understand frequently used words relating to him/herself and family, classroom activities and routines, school instructions and procedures, friends and play. • Can understand a routine instruction given outside school (e.g. by a traffic warden). • Can understand what is said in a familiar context such as buying something in a shop (e.g. price). • Can follow at a general level topics covered in the mainstream class provided key concepts and vocabulary have been studied in advance and there is appropriate visual support. • Can follow and understand a story if it is read slowly and clearly with visual support such as facial expression, gesture and pictures.
PRODUCTION	Spoken Interaction	• Can greet, say 'Please' and 'Thank you', and ask for directions to another place in the school. • Can respond non-verbally to basic directions to a place in the school when the other person supplements speech with signs or gestures. • Can give simple answers to basic questions when given time to reply and the other person is prepared to help. • Can make basic requests in the classroom or playground (e.g. for the loan of a pencil) and respond appropriately to the basic requests of others.	• Can ask for attention in class. • Can greet, take leave, request and thank appropriately. • Can respond with confidence to familiar questions clearly expressed about family, friends, school work, hobbies, holidays, etc., but is not always able to keep the conversation going. • Can generally sustain a conversational exchange with a peer in the classroom when carrying out a collaborative learning activity (making or drawing something, preparing a role-play, presenting a puppet show, etc.). • Can express personal feelings in a simple way.
	Spoken Production	• Can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where he/she lives and people he/she knows, especially family members.	• Can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms his/her family, daily routines and activities, and plans for the immediate or more distant future (e.g. out-of-school activities, holiday plans).

Monitoring and assessing progress

This section looks at ongoing assessment and considers how staff may assess children's progress and help them to assess their own learning. It also suggests ways of communicating progress to parents.

Accurate assessment of a child's proficiency is unlikely in the early days for the following reasons:

- The child may be suffering from 'shock' or trauma and may be unable to communicate
- The child may have been told by parents/carers not to give information
- A 'Silent Period' often occurs when children are immersed in a new language and does not necessarily indicate a learning difficulty. Emphasising the situation through assessment may worsen the situation. See page 54.

The abilities of newcomer children should be viewed in relation to the peer group. It is important to identify what skills, other than language proficiency, the child may need to learn, or, conversely, may have gained ahead of the peer group.

Observation

Pre-school staff may find the following observation samples useful in assessing a child's progress. The answers to the questions on these sheets will help identify on-going areas of priority for the children. This information would be useful at intervals throughout the year.

The forms are merely to provide guidance.

You may still find the observation sheet for the silent period useful.

Is the child	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
Using his/her mother tongue with staff/peers despite their inability to understand.			
Making eye contact with staff.			
Watching other children closely.			
Imitating other children's actions.			
Using facial expressions to communicate feelings.			
Bringing particular objects, books, etc. to staff.			
Responding to communication through gesture/mime by members of staff or other children.			
Seeking attention by interacting with other children or teacher (e.g. handing them objects).			
Requesting help by making signs, pointing, etc.			
Indicating dislike of an object or activity.			
Protesting by making sounds or appearing aggressive.			
Imitating non-verbal behaviour of other children.			
Experimenting with sounds of English.			
Repeating and rehearsing words or phrases.			
Following verbal instructions.			

Remember that requests by children for clarification or help may be non-verbal.

Observation

Observation sample

CHILD'S NAME _____ **DATE OF BIRTH** _____

ACTIVITIES	NOT CURRENTLY INTERESTED	PARTICIPATES	ENTHUSIASTIC
Sand			
Water			
Dough			
Art			
Drawing			
Construction			
Block corner			
Imaginative			
Role play			
Puzzles			
Computer			
Outdoor			
Stories			
Music			
Other			

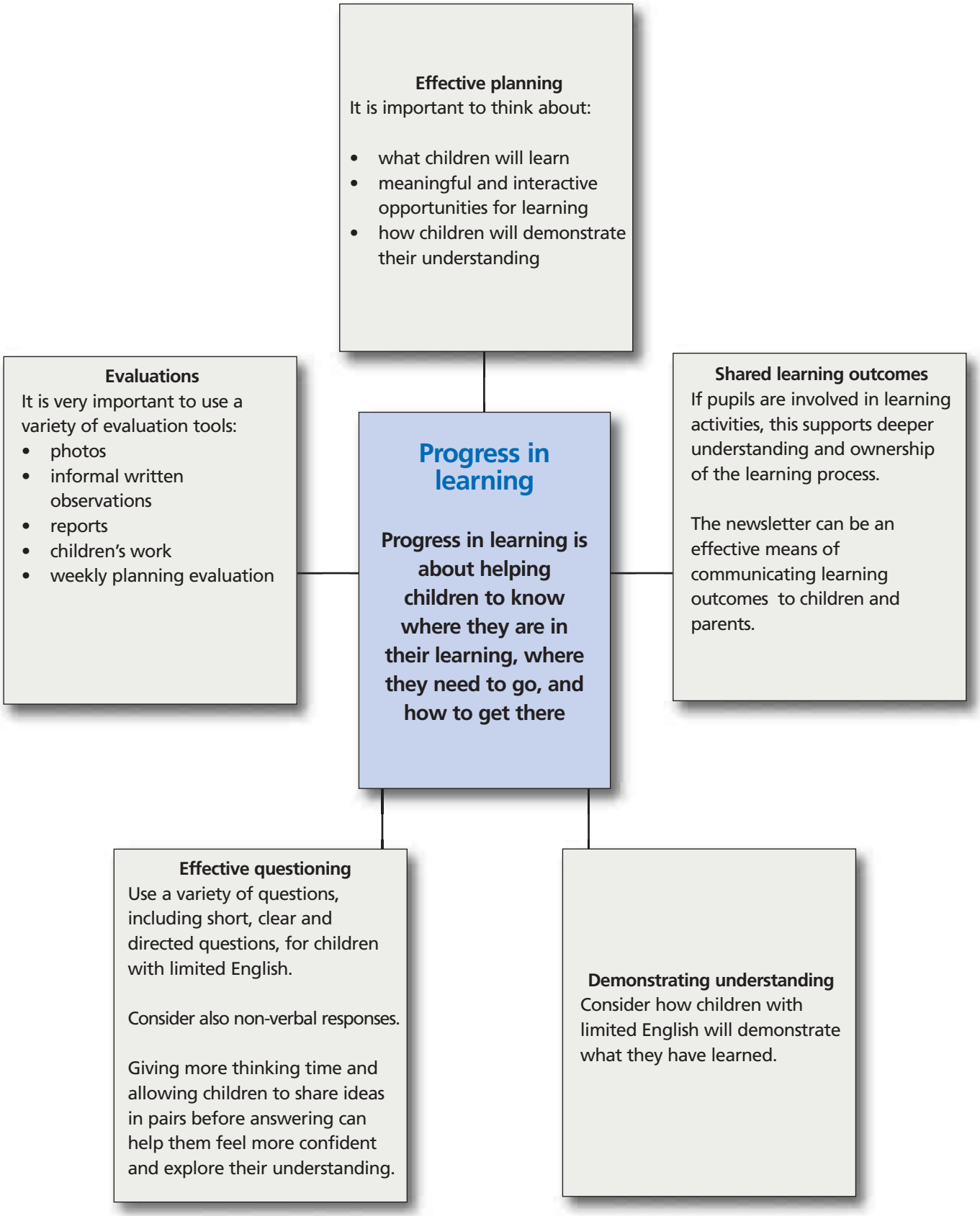
CD

A meeting with parents/carers, using an interpreter where necessary, would help clarify any queries arising from the use of these sheets. Observing interaction with same-language peers may also be informative.

Observation (continued)

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELPMENT	NEEDS MORE TIME	DEVELOPING	COMFORTABLE
Separation			
Transitions			
Independence			
Self control			
Toileting			
Snack			
Routines			
Direction / instruction			
Relationship to peers			
Relationship to adults			
Other			

SKILL DEVELOPMENT	NEEDS MORE PRACTICE	DEVELOPING	COMPETENT
Fine motor skills			
Gross motor skills			
Verbal expression			
Listening skills			
Visual discrimination			
Self help skills			
Hand / eye coordination			
Other			


Effective planning
It is important to think about:
• what children will learn
• meaningful and interactive opportunities for learning
• how children will demonstrate their understanding
Evaluations
It is very important to use a variety of evaluation tools:
• photos
• informal written observations
• reports
• children's work
• weekly planning evaluation
Progress in learning
Progress in learning is about helping children to know where they are in their learning, where they need to go, and how to get there
Shared learning outcomes
If pupils are involved in learning activities, this supports deeper understanding and ownership of the learning process.
The newsletter can be an effective means of communicating learning outcomes to children and parents.
Effective questioning
Use a variety of questions, including short, clear and directed questions, for children with limited English.
Consider also non-verbal responses.
Giving more thinking time and allowing children to share ideas in pairs before answering can help them feel more confident and explore their understanding.
Demonstrating understanding
Consider how children with limited English will demonstrate what they have learned.

Communication with parents/carers

- Arranging parent meetings
- Communicating progress

It is most important to achieve a means of communicating with newcomer parents/carers, as they may feel excluded from their child's education due to their own lack of proficiency in English.

Points to remember for parent-teacher meetings:

- Parent meetings may not be a feature of some education systems and parents may feel that something is wrong if they are invited to the pre-school. It is important to explain the purpose and importance of such meetings during the initial meeting with parents.
- It may be difficult for some parents to attend meetings due to working patterns. Is it possible to arrange alternative meeting times?
- Some parents do not feel that they could cope with a meeting. If it is possible to arrange for interpreters to be available, it is important to communicate this at the initial meeting with parents.
- Do not ask another child to interpret.
- Newcomer parents/carers may not be familiar with the routines of parent-teacher meetings, such as where to go, where to wait and so on. Make sure that there is a helper to smooth the way.
- Create a welcoming environment in the room and remember that the parent/carer will be depending on visual cues from the staff member.
- Set aside additional time for interpreting and extra explanations. Remember that newcomer parents are new to the education system and may not be aware of some of the most basic routines and procedures. Consider whether there is anything that you may need to explain.
- Have some examples of the child's work, such as photos of their play, painting, drawing or models they have made and books or resources that are used.

Encourage parents/carers to:

- use their home language with their children
- talk to their children about pre-school. In doing so, parents/carers can keep contact with what is happening in pre-school and understand what is important to their child
- contact the pre-school if there are any concerns
- talk to their children about what they are learning using the newsletter. In doing so parents/carers can keep contact with what is happening in pre-school and understand what is important to their child.

Celebrating diversity

Intercultural day

Preparation: Some suggestions

- Plan a day late in the year which will involve children, staff and parents.
- Notify parents/carers of this event well in advance (get brief notes translated, if possible) and request that they support children in identifying objects from home, assembling national costumes, creating foods etc., that are traditional or specific to different cultures (including Irish cultural /historical items).
- Use items children have created during play as contributions for the day: sing songs in different languages, create art work for exhibition, demonstrate how to put on a traditional garment or headgear, practise traditional dances.

On the day …

- Make it a whole day celebration.
- Ensure that the programme allows for everybody to circulate and experience all the events.
- Assign a parent/carer to help with appropriate activities.
- The objective is for each child to participate in as many activities as possible.

A template to record the child's participation in the day is included on the CD

Making little people

What you need:
A 'front' and 'back' picture of each child.
Empty rolls (e.g. from kitchen towels) or empty milk/juice cartons which have been well washed.
Glue

Method:

- Using a digital camera, take front and back photographs of each child.
- Children stick their own photos to the front and back of the tube/carton to make a 'little person'.
- Children put their 'little people' together.
- Teacher asks questions such as: 'How many children have dark/blonde hair?', 'How many children have straight/curly hair?', 'Can you see anything that we all have?' (2 eyes, 1 nose, 2 hands, 2 feet.)
- Teacher asks questions like 'What makes Tiago sad?', What makes Magda happy?' and children reply through their own 'little people.'
- 'Little people' can be used to explore feelings and worries or to explain something that has happened.

Travelling teddy bear

You may wish to introduce a travelling teddy bear or other character to your class. The children may take him home or on holidays, take photographs and talk about these when they return to pre-school. Adults within the pre-school setting may also wish to take the teddy bear on their travels!

The teddy bear's appearance in unfamiliar places and environments helps children relate to them. Seeing their own bear in the classroom and then seeing pictures of his adventures in faraway places helps children bridge the gap between the immediate, familiar environment and unfamiliar environments. It also encourages exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, thinking and discussion.

This website may provide some useful ideas: www.barnabybear.co.uk

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Celebrating different faiths and cultures

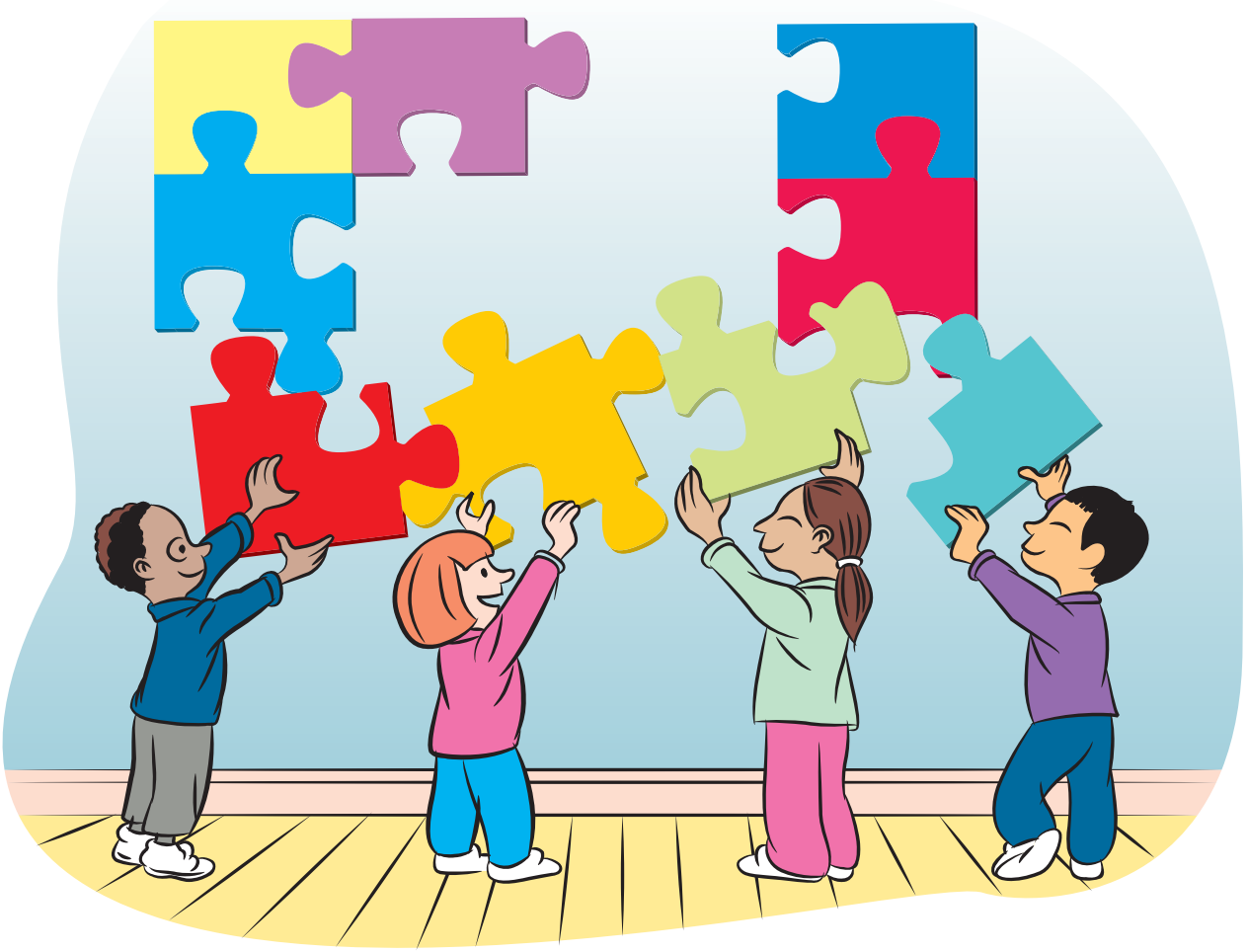
Sample Calendar
Create a calendar to display important dates for different faiths and cultures. Refer to the calendar when specific festivals come around. Choose festivals that are relevant to your setting.Suppliers for multicultural resources are listed on page 87.

January	February	March	April
New Year	Chinese New Year	17th St. Patrick's Day	Easter Passover
May	**June**	**July**	**August**
Buddha Purnima	Portugal Day	School holidays	School holidays
September	**October**	**November**	**December**
Ramadan	Confucius' birthday	Independence Day Poland	Hannukah 25th Christmas

Refer back to page 27 for more ideas.

WHAT NEXT?

What next?



Introduction

It is important to consider planning for inclusion of all children. This section aims to guide pre-schools through the planning process.

Planning for inclusion entails

- auditing current practice
- action planning for priority areas of development
- staff development

Contents of this section

Planning for inclusion

- steps in the process
- audit of current provision and practice
- priorities for action
- an action plan
- implementation and review
- what next: the evaluation process
- coordinating provision for newcomer children

All templates used in this section are available on the accompanying CD

Planning for inclusion

Steps in the process

Look at the school/pre-school development plan. Does it need an inclusion focus?

Where are we now? Consider an audit of provision and practice

Prioritise 1-2 areas for more immediate development

Draw up an action plan with clear and simple goals

Implement the action plan and keep an eye on progress

Evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan and consider the next steps

The inclusive pre-school: audit of current provision and practice

Name of pre-school _____ **Date** _____

Ethos	**Comments**
In what ways does the school/pre school ethos reflect the linguistic, religious and cultural diversity of its children and community?	
Is there a focus on inclusion in the school/pre-school development plan or in policies? e.g.: attendance admissions induction	
Teaching and learning	
What opportunities are there for celebrating diversity?	
How are home languages recognised in school/pre-school?	
How are strategies and resources adapted?	
Are appropriate resources selected? (e.g.texts and visuals)	
Are school/pre-school assessments adapted to suit the needs of all children? How is feedback communicated to children with limited English?	
Does assessment for learning take place?	
Home/school/community links	
Are induction procedures in place for newcomer children and parents? e.g.: welcome book welcome interview communicating information to staff	
What efforts are made to inform parents with limited English about: the curriculum? their child's progress? school activities and events?	
Professional development	
What are the training needs of the staff?	
How will training be disseminated to all staff?	

The inclusive pre-school: prioritising

	Priorities arising from the audit
Ethos	
The learning environment	
Links with parents/carers	
Pastoral care	
Learning and teaching	
Opportunities for celebrating diversity and home languages	
Teaching strategies	
Selection and adaptation of resources	
Assessment and feedback	
Home-school links	
Communicating with parents/carers	
Parental involvement	
Professional development	
Identifying staff training needs	
Disseminating information	

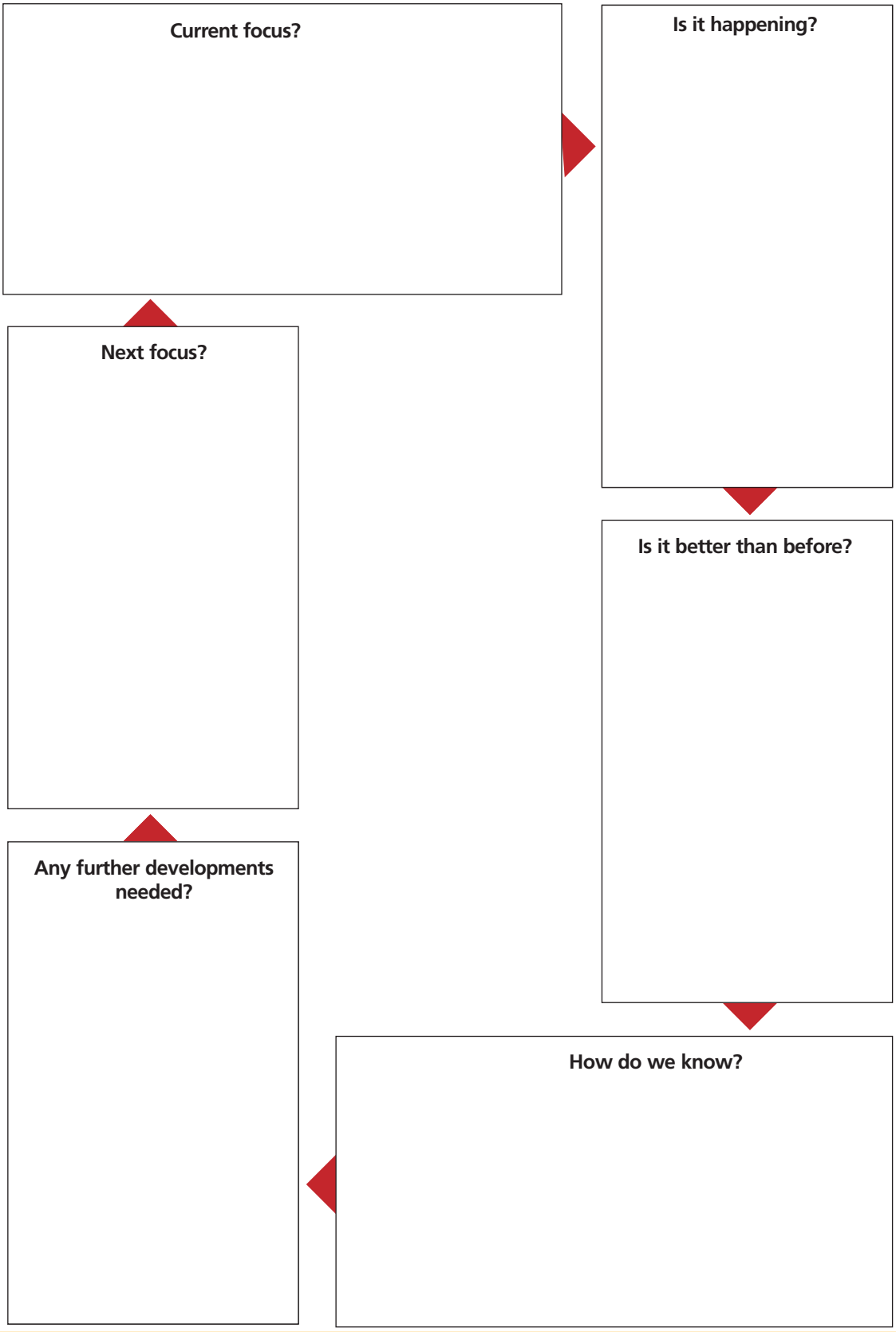
Consider one or two very clear and relevant areas of focus

The inclusive pre-school: Action plan

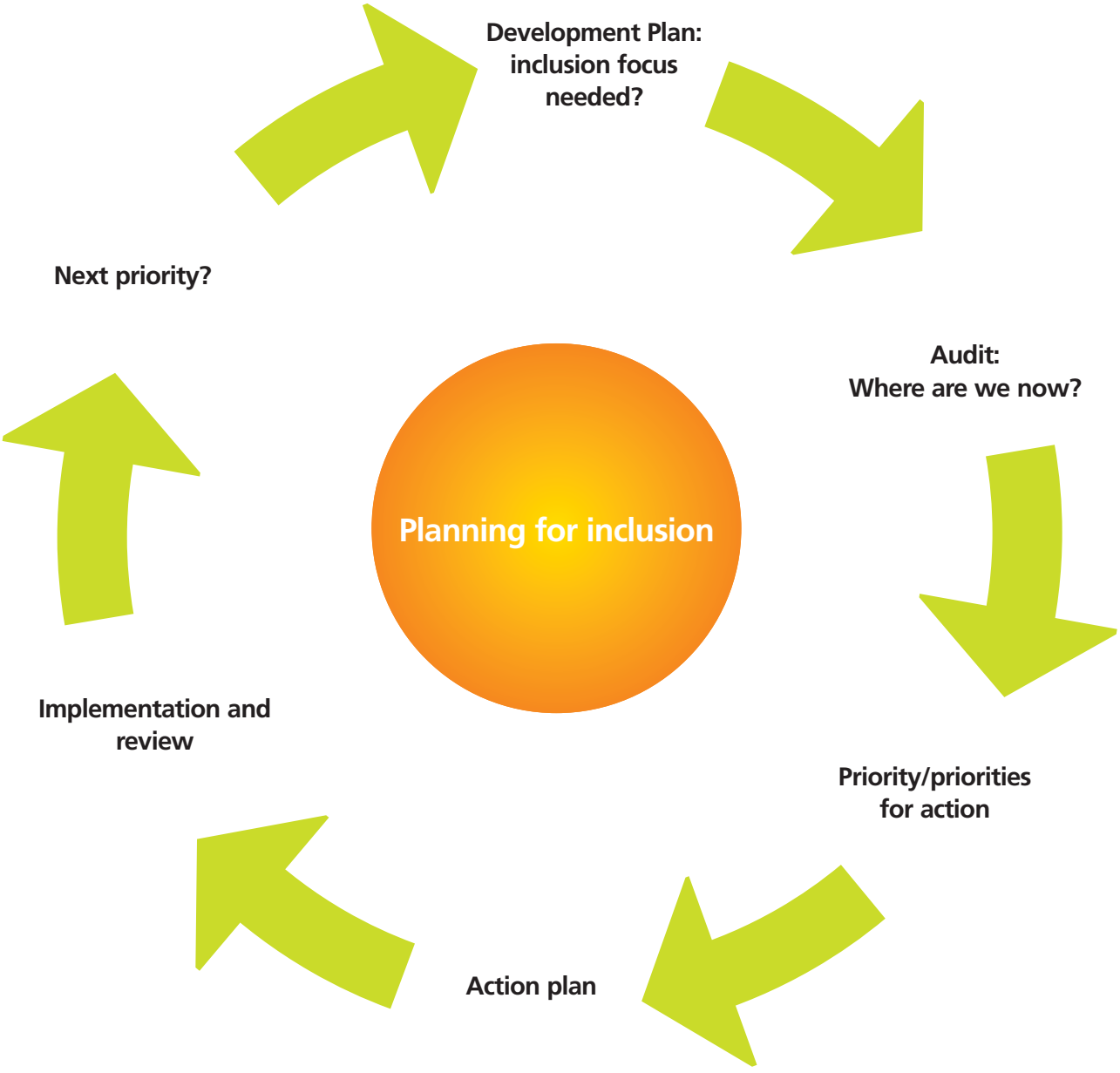
School:			Time scale:	
What is the focus?	**Who will be involved?**	**What will their roles be?**	**Resources?** e.g. time, staffing, materials, administration	**Monitoring and evaluation?** e.g. feedback, parent meetings, children's progress

You may like to choose one priority for action and focus on this issue in detail.

Implementation and review



The evaluation process



Coordinating provision

Your may find the following checklist useful in coordinating provision for newcomer children and parents/carers.

	Ethos	Who?	How?
Pastoral care issues	First contact with parents/carers Meeting with parents to collect and give essential information Communication with parents throughout the year Welcome of newcomer children: • Welcome displays/posters/signs/world map/assemblies • Informing classmates • Dealing with pastoral or behavioural issues		
Induction	Induction programme • Tour of pre-school • Labels and visuals in rooms		
Classroom interaction	• Observations of children's interaction • Observations of initial progress • Helping children to join in class activities		
Cross-curricular learning	• Strategies and resources adapted if necessary • Teaching key language		
Assessment arrangements	• Assessment/observations adapted if necessary • Communication of progress to parents		
Intercultural awareness	• Opportunities for children to share cultural experiences • Promotion and celebration of all languages spoken by the community • Opportunities to use home languages • Resources: bilingual books, picture dictionaries, posters, signs, interfaith posters or displays		

An electronic audit template is available in the 'What Next' folder.

NOTES

Terminology

There are many acronyms used to refer to the teaching of English in different contexts and for different purposes.

ESL	English as a Second Language	English is a second language when the English language replaces the first or home language for important or critical aspects of daily life, such as education or work. Learners are generally learning English in order to access daily communication needs in an English-speaking environment. This does not necessarily imply that the learner knows only one other language, it is the use to which the language is put that accords it the 'second' place.
EAL	English as an Additional Language	This term is used to refer to learners who may have more than one other language. English is therefore an additional language and may be a third, fourth etc. language. Typically learners begin with zero or little English.
EFL	English as a Foreign Language	This term refers to learners who are learning English as a foreign language, comparable with the foreign languages curricula in school. In general, learners of English as a foreign language return to their own country of origin and may continue to use English in that country for educational or work purposes.
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	This is a broad term, generally used to refer to classes for learners of English in an English-speaking country. It may include English as a Foreign Language and English as a Second Language. It is often used to describe classes held for adult learners.
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language	This term refers to teachers who are teaching English either in a country where English is not the first language or in language schools offering courses to children and adults.
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages	This term refers to teachers who are teaching English to speakers of other languages in an English speaking country. Learners may be either foreign language or second language learners.
IDS	Inclusion and Diversity Service	This term refers to the advisory and support services for schools (NI). The support focuses on the whole pupil and includes provision for pastoral, language and curriculum needs.

Some useful websites

www.wikipedia.com
The Wikipedia website can provide some brief background information about newcomer pupils' countries, cultures and education systems. Follow the link for geography, choose a continent and then a country.

www.eurydice.org
This website provides good information about education systems across Europe.

www.milet.com and www.mantralingua.com
These websites contain information about dual language and multicultural resources. A catalogue may be ordered on-line or you may wish to order by phone. Contact details are listed on the websites.

www.eslkidstuff.com
This is an American website for young learners of English. It provides flashcards for many topics as well as activity sheets to practise vocabulary. There is a small yearly subscription.

www.schoolslinks.co.uk
This website provides some useful pictorial and dual language signs that you may find useful in the pre-school setting.

www.dltk-kids.com
This site is for young learners and has pictures, puppets and activities for many common stories: Hungry Caterpillar, Brown Bear, Three Little Pigs and so on.
You can also make your own custom-made bingo cards with pictures available on many topics.

www.kizclub.com
This website has pictures and activities for young learners, including stories and general language development. There are also some talking books for different age groups on topics such as myself, my school, my neighbourhood. A printable version of each book is also available.

www.primaryresources.co.uk/letters
Useful website for some translated letters. This is a temporary address and may change.

www.enchantedlearning.com
This site has many activities for various curriculum areas starting at a very basic level.

This list is by no means exhaustive. There are many websites containing ideas and resources for teachers/leaders of newcomer children.