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# Integrating English Additional Language Learners



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**DFID** Department for  
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## EAL Learners: Every school benefits

**I am a part-time Design and Technology NQT in Devon, recently qualified from the University of Exeter PGCE Programme.**

For the last year I have been lucky enough to be part of the GLEAN NQT 'Global Journey Project'. As well as developing an interest in my own subject and the possibilities for embedding global learning, I have also been working as an EAL specialist in Devon schools.

I have come to realise that EAL learners are crucial to global and development education.

They provide schools with an awareness of other languages and are an accurate and real source of information into their country's culture, customs, traditions and religious beliefs.

EAL learners are an asset to the school they are in, not a 'resource drain'. Schools, and teachers within schools, must become even more positive towards, welcoming and supportive of EAL learners and their families, and develop and share best-practice models of how to support EAL learners to thrive.

This is particularly crucial in the south-west, where many EAL learners are in schools where the pupil cohort is overwhelmingly mono-cultural, and who are at risk not just of being linguistically isolated, but also of being educationally, socially and culturally isolated.

### **Manar Husain**

GLEAN 'Global Journey Project' NQT  
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### **Why GLEAN?**

*Global Learning Network South West* is a membership network to support, share and inspire more and better global learning across the south-west of England.

### **What do we mean by 'global learning'?**

Learning that gets to the heart of education: creative and inspiring, fair and just, respectful of difference and optimistic about the future.

It places learning firmly in a global context and equips learners to participate confidently in our changing world as active global citizens who can change things for the better.

GLEAN can provide support for 'student voice', NQTs, ITE practitioners and trainees, Heads, teachers and other school staff.

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# Integrating English Additional Language Learners

## The benefits that EAL learners bring to a school

### Some key points which highlight the benefits that EAL learners bring to a school setting:

*Enable pupils to share another global perspective in the classroom*

*Raise awareness and answer questions from a highly personalised perspective*

*Bring an interesting dimension to learning*

*Celebrate diversity*

*Neutral understanding of difference*

*Change dimension and dynamics of class*

*Involve family members in school learning creating a community atmosphere*

*Deal with and challenge ignorance, stereotypes, prejudices and racism*

*Share personal educational experiences, opening schools, classrooms, teachers and pupils to other ways of learning in other countries*

*Allow schools to set up links to other schools in other parts of the world and use EAL learners as the advocates for this learning experience*

*Change the way a teacher may teach a lesson which could benefit other pupils as well as EAL learners, e.g. use of visuals/ PowerPoint/ simpler worksheets*

## Do's and Don'ts with EAL students

### Do...

**Buddy up EAL learners with other pupils** as soon as they join the school. This is crucial as pupils who are left to find their own way around or spend their time in the EAL room

*often end up alone with no one to talk to. By buddying up with home pupils, they are able to integrate into school life much more quickly, as well as benefitting from listening to and speaking English. Pupils gain more confidence which all helps with their learning*

**Make parents and EAL learners aware of the school routine**, attendance, behaviour policies etc. and respect that these may well be very different to the educational routines that they have been used to

**Make EAL learners and parents aware of after school clubs and activities.** Maybe use this as a means of helping EAL learners to make friends and express their strengths and interests in various activities

**Be aware of what language your EAL learner speaks** and what country they are from. Within time constraints, find out a bit about that country, and create opportunities to introduce their mother tongue to whole class teaching – e.g. through songs, poems etc.

**Take some time to get to know your EAL learner** and make early contact with their parents

**Encourage newly arrived EAL learners to work with other pupils** in class and ask them to contribute during whole class learning. Try to be inclusive in this way from the earliest possible stage, even if the input you are asking for is very simple

**Allocate time to educate the rest of the class about EAL learners.** Maybe a 10 minute presentation or a whole lesson. Ask pupils to 'show and tell' about other countries - foods eaten, cultural highlights etc. This not only educates the class about the EAL learner, it also provides global learning and gives the pupil a sense of pride and confidence in their language and culture

**Include EAL learners in day-to-day class activities** alongside providing differentiation in materials

**Use visuals as much as possible** when teaching

**Give EAL learners responsibilities** at a very early stage

**Link with other teachers working with EAL learners**, particularly if you are working with isolated EAL learners. Through this networking, remain open to the possibility of learning new skills and techniques for EAL teaching

**Recognise that EAL learners might not just be linguistically isolated, but also educationally, socially and culturally isolated.** If this is the case – develop a meaningful response

*important connection to their cultural heritage through their mother tongue*



### Don't...

**Overlook any social difficulties EAL learners have.** Get specialist advice if appropriate

**Assume that if EAL learners are shy and quiet** and nod that they understand what is being said

**Ignore EAL learners**

**Embarrass EAL learners if they struggle to answer a question.** Manage this well and encourage other pupils to chip in if necessary

**Blatantly show differentiation.** A teacher's job is to seamlessly address issues of differentiation in all their teaching. Differentiating to the needs of EAL learners is just another form of differentiation

**Ignore any racism** that exists in the classroom or in the more informal parts of the school environment. EAL learners have the right to be safeguarded from racially motivated bullying or racist comments and acts. Schools have a responsibility for making sure that this safeguarding happens successfully

**Ignore the EAL learner's mother tongue.** They will need to practice and perfect their English language speaking skills, but they also have an