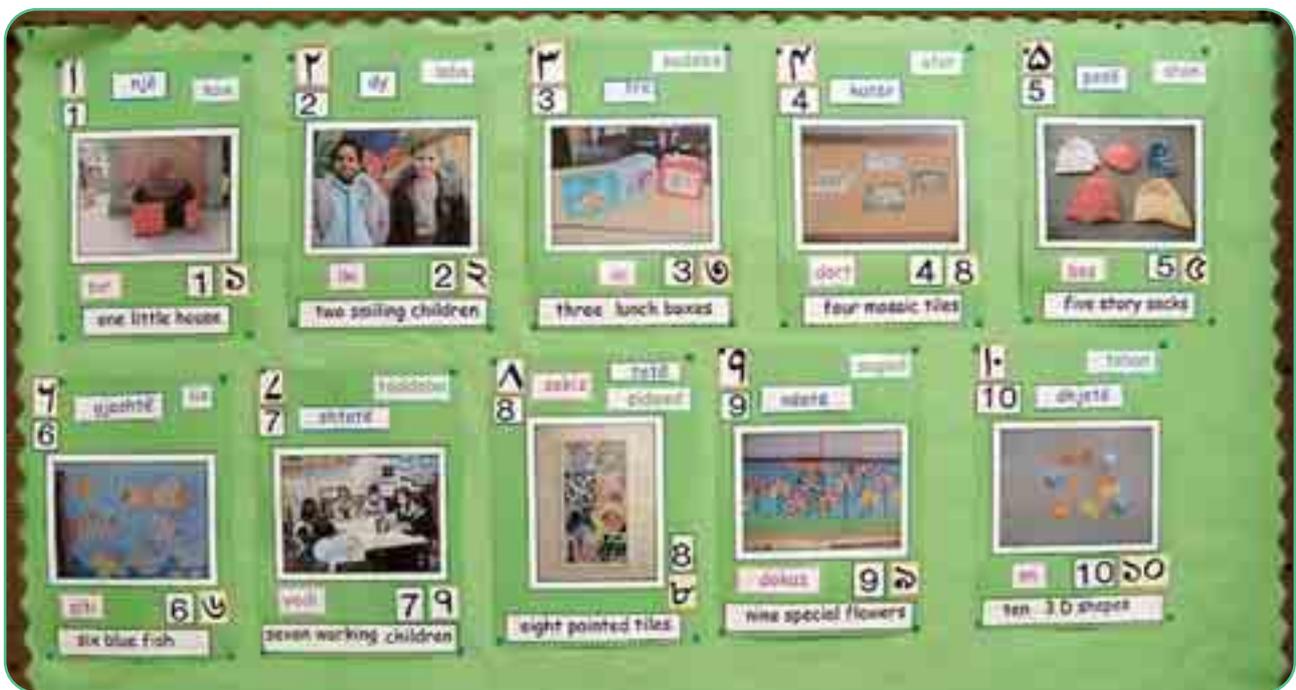




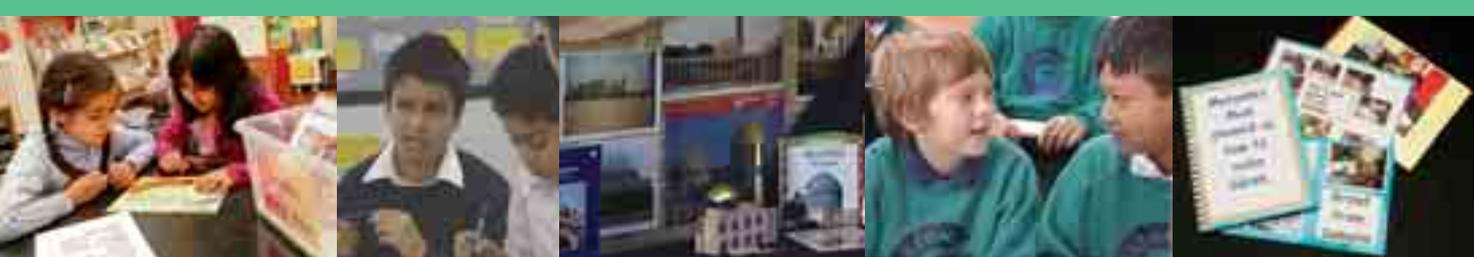
Write numbers in different languages including all those spoken by the children and make comparisons. Encourage children to notice similarities between languages which are part of the Indo-European language family, which includes English, German, French and Spanish and also Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati and Hindi.



Teachers and practitioners in the role of language learners

When teachers attempt to learn a few words and learn about the first language of their pupils, children will inevitably engage in talk about language. In order to do this they will need to learn metalanguage such as *word, phrase, sound, pronounce*.

Developing metalanguage is particularly useful for children learning EAL as it facilitates reflection on language learning. It is valuable for children to see their teacher in the role of a learner, taking risks and making mistakes. It also conveys a powerful message about the value of their first language if the teacher thinks it is worth learning. It helps children to develop confidence in using their first language in school.



The Cox Report (1989), whose recommendations informed the development of the English National Curriculum for primary schools, had this to say about the presence of large numbers of bilingual learners in schools in this country:

‘[They] should be seen as an enormous resource which ought to become more not less important to the British economy in the next few years [when] language demands will almost certainly be greater than in the past ...

This will affect English teaching since it will exist in a still richer linguistic and cultural context. All of this is likely to have implications for children’s knowledge about language.

The evidence shows that [bilingual] children will make greater progress in English if they know their knowledge of their mother tongue is valued, if it is recognised that their experience of language is likely to be greater than that of their monolingual peers and indeed, if their knowledge and experience can be put to good use in the classroom to the benefit of all pupils to provide examples of the structure and syntax of different languages, to provide a focus for discussion about language forms and for contrast and comparison with the structure of the English language. We endorse the view of the Kingman Committee: “ It should be the duty of all teachers to instil in their pupils a civilised respect for other languages and an understanding of the relations between other languages and English. It should be made clear to English-speaking pupils that classmates whose first language is Bengali or Cantonese, or any other of the scores of languages spoken by the school population ... have languages quite as systematic and rule governed as their own.” ’

The report went on to say that it hoped bilingual children ‘... would leave school having acquired as far as possible a firmly based but flexible and developing, linguistic and cultural identity.’

The Cox Report (DES 1989)



This theme is taken up again by Ofsted (2005) in its evaluation of progress in ten Pathfinder LEAs, *Implementing language entitlement at primary school*.

The report recommends that primary schools should: 'Use bilingual pupils' knowledge and experience effectively to support their own and other pupils' learning.'

Ofsted considers it good practice to encourage all children to make comparisons between languages. It was noticed that bilingual children made particularly good progress in lessons where their languages were being used and they were able to take a leading role. Higher-attaining pupils responded well to opportunities to adapt language in a creative way or investigate language patterns.

Some children reported positively on personal advantages when they had been learning the heritage language and culture of friends in the school through the National Languages Strategy.

A minority of schools celebrated language diversity well, clearly benefiting bilingual and monolingual learners. Very few schools, however, had considered how to build effectively on bilingual pupils' language experience.

Ofsted, 2005

Section 3 A culturally inclusive curriculum

Building on previous experience

One of the important ways in which teachers teach is by supporting children to relate new learning to something they already know. Teachers find it easier to do this when they know something about children's previous experiences. Prior educational experiences are often easier to find out about than other previous experiences beyond the confines of the school. In the case of children learning EAL it is important for teachers to know something about the child's previous language learning experience but they also need to know something about the social experiences children are likely to have had during the course of their everyday family life.

The importance of giving children the opportunity to make connections with their previous experience was explored in Unit 2 pages 9–13.

It is good practice to try to learn as much as possible about the home background of individual children: their family; first language, cultural and religious traditions, history, and the social, economic and political factors that impact on their lives (see page 14 in this unit).



Parents, carers, older children and members of the local community will also prove useful sources of support.

When bilingual staff, and staff who share a culture with children, are involved in designing opportunities for learning they may be able to suggest:

- culturally familiar starting points;
- contexts for activities which EAL learners are likely to find particularly motivating or relevant;
- ways in which new learning can build on children's existing language skills (first language as well as English);
- insights into the way a community language has continued to develop within the context of a different language/culture.

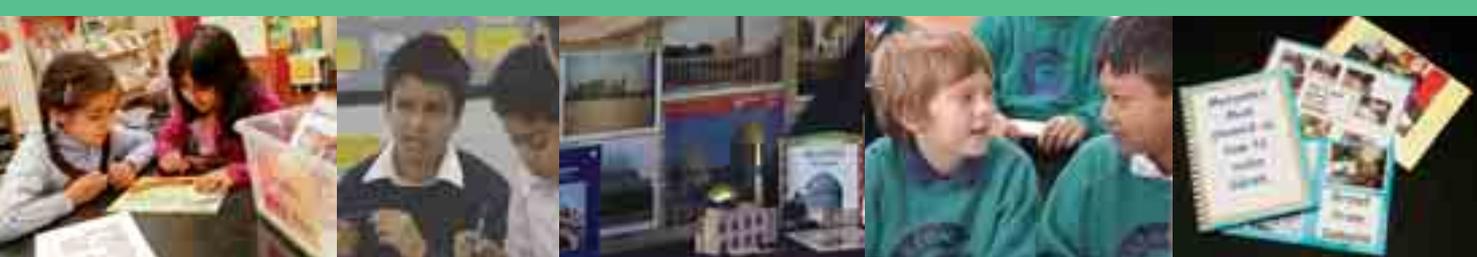
Most teachers suggest analogies or provide examples as a way of supporting children to relate new learning to something they already know.



In science, when investigating the manner in which some everyday materials alter when heated, the teacher may demonstrate the process occurring by making toast and provide chapattis as a further example likely to be very familiar to Pakistani and Indian heritage children in the class.

However, staff in school cannot always know what is familiar or likely to be within the experience of every child. They may provide examples or analogies based on assumptions about previous experience which turn out to be wrong. They may make references which are far too general or that appear tokenistic or stereotypical. One way to avoid this is to give children the opportunity to come up with examples and analogies of their own. Working collaboratively with a partner or in a small group facilitates this, particularly when children who share a first language and culture work together.

Collaborative talk accelerates the process children need to go through to discover what they already know and make the necessary connections for new learning to take place.



Culturally familiar contexts for learning

Access to the curriculum at an appropriately challenging level can be facilitated for children learning EAL by making learning contexts as supportive as possible. Unit 2 of these materials describes a whole range of ways in which children learning EAL can be supported to access the curriculum by making learning contexts more supportive.

Strategies include activating prior knowledge, using bilingual strategies, scaffolding learning in a range of ways including providing opportunities for children to work collaboratively with their peers, and making contexts for learning culturally familiar.

Most people have experienced the difficulty of following the story-line in a novel when the cultural context is outside their experience: the characters' names are unfamiliar and difficult to pronounce, locations and activities alien and hard to visualise.

In classrooms culturally unfamiliar contexts can be a barrier to learning. Contexts can be made more supportive for children learning EAL by including familiar things and familiar experiences at the design stage.

Things to consider may include:

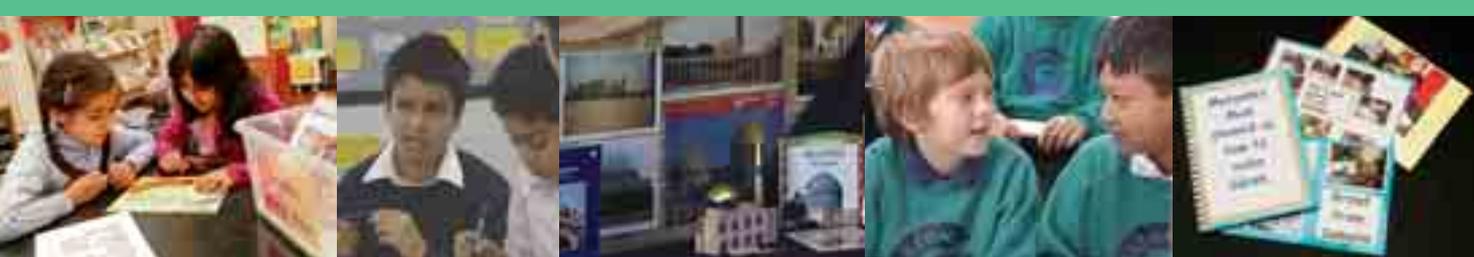
- names;
 - Unfamiliar names can pose a particular challenge. Include familiar names whenever possible;
- locations;
 - Are the kinds of housing that children live in reflected in activities, e.g. high-rise flats and terraced houses?
 - Are there references to the places where different communities worship, e.g. Gurudwaras, temples and mosques as well as churches? Mosques play a very important role in the life of Muslim communities and references to mosques should not be restricted to RE. Are opportunities found to include references to them in appropriate contexts? For example, clockfaces displayed in the mosque to show the five daily prayer times could provide a context for mathematics;





- leisure activities;
 - Recreational activities will vary across cultures. For some children the concept of a day at the seaside will be completely outside their experience. A meal in a country pub may be part of a pleasant day out for some children whereas for other children the idea of someone drinking alcohol will conjure up an image of frightening or prohibited behaviour. For many children learning EAL a trip to the airport to meet visitors arriving from overseas will be a familiar experience;
 - Some children will have first-hand experience of countries overseas but it is important not to assume that all children from minority ethnic groups will be familiar with their family's country of origin or heritage country. Some children will enjoy being the 'expert' on another country they know well. Some may feel uncomfortable, sometimes due to recent painful memories, e.g. refugee children;
 - Social mixing between the sexes is discouraged in some cultures.
Note: Attitudes to keeping pets varies across cultures. For many children keeping a dog in the house will seem strange and the idea of being licked by a dog abhorrent. Dogs, as well as pigs, are considered unclean by Muslims;
- special occasions;
 - Find out which festivals are celebrated by different children in the school and how, so they can be celebrated authentically in learning contexts across the curriculum;
- food, cooking utensils, etc;
 - Mangoes and limes will be as familiar as strawberries or plums to some children; bitter gourds, okra and spinach may be more familiar than brussels sprouts or broccoli;
 - Spices used in children's homes can be used in school to learn about taste and smell in science and technology lessons;
 - Dietary restrictions must be understood and respected. If for example children were making jelly in order to learn about dissolving in science or technology lessons, Muslim and Jewish children should not be expected to taste the jelly unless it has been made with a product that does not contain animal gelatine. This is because Muslim and Jewish families usually only eat products from animals which have been slaughtered according





to the religious requirements of their faith (of course, vegetarian or vegan children should not be expected to taste a product containing animal gelatine);

- The tava (a flat circular griddle used for making chapattis) or a wok may be more familiar than a frying pan. Knives and forks are not used in all cultures.



Reflecting elements of shared popular children's culture in classroom activities can provide motivating and supportive contexts for children's learning. Teachers and practitioners can find out what is relevant from children's television and best-selling books and by listening to the children themselves. Current music, games, toys, TV characters and so on can provide highly motivating and supportive contexts.

Schools need to consider the choice of topics and opportunities for experiential learning, the way these are resourced, and the way activities are designed.

It is useful to review unit plans and contexts for investigations and problem solving across the curriculum, including contexts for word problems in mathematics, to look at resources for creative activities and to maximise opportunities across the curriculum to positively reflect and build on children's social, cultural and religious experiences.



Creating a sense of belonging

The curriculum, the resources and the contexts for learning all play a vital role in the extent to which bilingual children and children from minority ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds feel included and accepted in school.

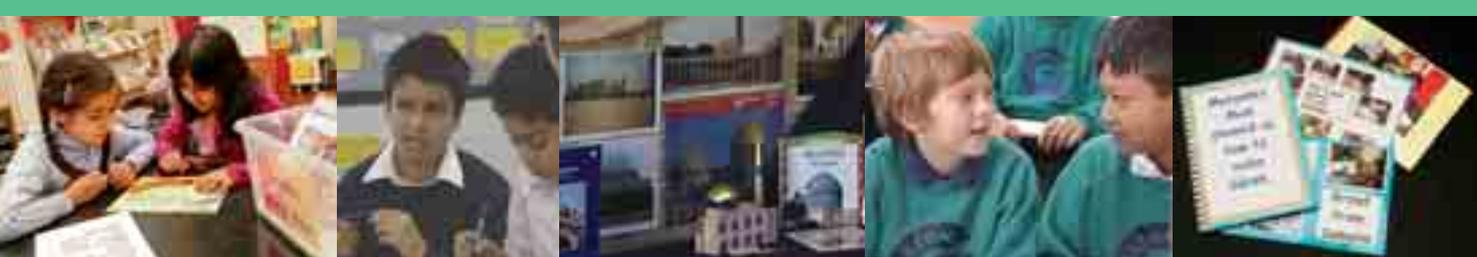
It is important to ensure that children from diverse backgrounds have opportunities to see images of children like themselves and families like their families reflected in the curriculum. This is particularly important for children from minority backgrounds, not to correct a perceived poor self-image, but because all children need to feel valued in order to promote a sense of belonging. Without explicitly attending to this, the default position of the curriculum, as with the physical environment, will be Eurocentric; very little is culturally neutral.

Underachievement is a likely outcome of the omission of anything relevant to children's own background and culture. Children will feel invisible, undervalued or ignored.

Equally, a tokenistic approach may make individual pupils feel conspicuous – 'exotica' tacked onto a Eurocentric norm. Stereotypical images of particular groups perpetuate racist attitudes and could limit the aspirations of children from those groups. Omission together with tokenism and stereotyping are all pernicious forms of bias.

Reflecting the everyday realities of people from diverse backgrounds across the curriculum in more than a tokenistic or stereotypical way involves recognising the impact of power relations, both past and present. The curriculum must take account of the racism that pervades society. Children will meet this in their neighbourhood and perhaps in school as well. It continues to influence events in the wider world.

All children learn best when they feel good about themselves (as evidenced by Jane Elliott's study described on page 13). Ethnicity, language, culture and religion are all key elements in identity. To ignore any element may result in the person feeling devalued. Reflecting these elements of children's culture and identity across the curriculum will promote a sense of belonging and support the achievement of children learning EAL.



Opportunities afforded by the National Curriculum programmes of study

There are plenty of opportunities within the programmes of study across the curriculum to value children's diverse identities, experiences and traditions, and to provide experiences which will interest and engage children from minority ethnic groups. Taking full advantage of these opportunities may involve revisiting schemes of work.

Meeting their statutory duty under the amended Race Relations Act requires schools to regularly review curriculum policies to assess their impact on race equality.

- Is the curriculum delivered in a way that is appropriate to the needs of all children?
- Does the curriculum draw on areas of interest to children from all ethnic groups?
- Does it draw on the cultural backgrounds and experiences of all children?

The Act also requires schools to select curriculum content which promotes race equality.

- Does the choice of content actively contribute to children's understanding of equality and diversity?
- Does the curriculum help equip children to identify and challenge bias, prejudice, racism and stereotyping?

This is not something schools need to do all at once. Data analysis may identify one particular curriculum area where all children learning EAL or children learning EAL from a particular ethnic group, or just the girls or the boys from one ethnic group, are underachieving. Data analysis of this kind will help school leadership teams to prioritise. EAL coordinators, and other specialists such as bilingual teaching assistants, should be involved.



One possible starting place for schools could be the choice of texts which are used during the **literacy hour**. Children will benefit from the opportunity to study quality texts by writers from different ethnic, cultural and religious groups including their own communities, and texts which feature characters and reflect the experiences of their communities.

The range of **fiction** in a multilingual, multi-ethnic school should include:

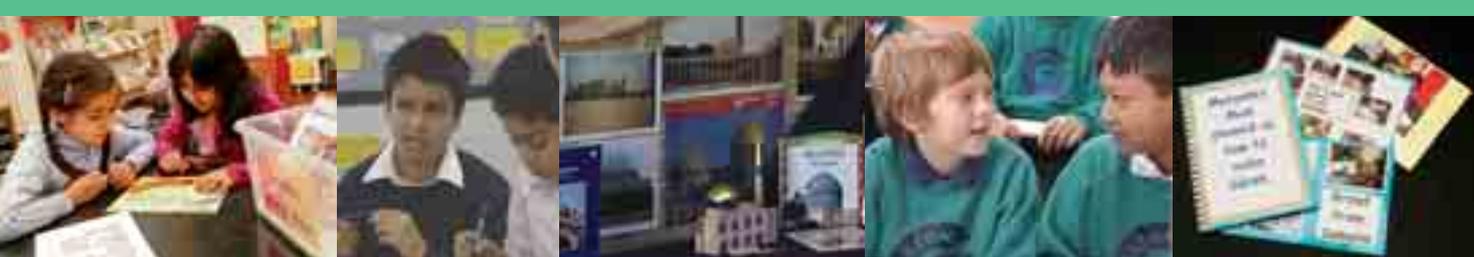
- everyday stories featuring British-born characters from various ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- stories set in children's heritage countries;
- traditional stories from their cultures;
- biographies of people from diverse backgrounds who have made outstanding contributions of various kinds;
- dual-language books;
- poetry and drama from a range of cultures;
- stories which explore or provide a stimulus to explore discrimination, racism, feelings of isolation, justice and equality, change, loss, friendships across cultures, living within two cultures, etc.

Look out for **non-fiction** texts which:

- explore global development issues past and present, political, social and economic, including migration and displacement, etc.;
- teach about bias, stereotyping, racism, sectarianism, discrimination, human rights;
- emphasise the contributions and achievements of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Fiction and non-fiction should highlight the similarities and differences within and between different ethnic and cultural groups.

Children also need to be explicitly taught how to critically approach texts used across the whole curriculum. They need to learn that language is never neutral or impartial.



One of the important ways in which children learn about the world around them is by making generalisations based on their experience. Activities such as matching objects, sorting them and putting them into sets will support very young children to begin to learn about diversity. Unhelpful stereotyping can be avoided by encouraging children to:

- recognise that they can classify in many different ways;
- look for shared attributes as well as differences;
- think in terms of spectrums and continuums as well as looking for variety in the ways they can classify;
- notice change and development.



In **geography** children learn about similarities and differences in the relationship between human beings and their physical environment. There should be an emphasis on the links between countries and their interdependence. Mutual influences include words which have entered English from other languages and vice versa as well as food, music, sport and leisure activities and so on.

Stereotypical and negative images of countries in the developing world should be avoided but this should not mean ignoring global inequality and poverty. It is not enough just to describe conditions in developing countries; children need to understand how countries are changing and the way global issues such as the legacy of colonialism continue to affect the development process.

Migration and settlement and the displacement of populations due to war, famine and so on should be highlighted as recurring themes across the world and the cultural diversity of modern societies should be stressed. Most children will be able to investigate migration or movement within their own families over two or three generations. Minority ethnic pupils may well have first-hand experience to contribute to, for example, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 geography 6b, the study of a contrasting locality (Key Stage 1) and a locality in a country that is less economically developed (Key Stage 2), and in Key Stages 1 and 2 topics, for example Transport, Journeys or Homes.

In **history** children study different accounts of the same events. They learn that the past is represented in different ways according to differing perspectives including national, cultural, socio-economic, and those of men or women. Children learn that Britain has developed over

centuries and is developing still. The history of this country is related to events in other countries. Children should learn about the history of ethnic and cultural diversity in this country, and about struggles for human rights and racial equality. The role of black and minority ethnic groups and individuals in resistance and campaigns for justice should be emphasised.



In Key Stage 2 children are expected to investigate the way in which an aspect of their locality has changed over a long period of time or the way in which their locality was affected by an important national or local event or the work of a notable individual.

Children from minority ethnic backgrounds will benefit particularly from a focus on the population change in their locality

and the reasons for settlement in the area of people from different cultures, including their own. This will support children's sense of belonging.

There are further opportunities within the history programme of study to investigate immigration to this country when studying the impact of social changes since the Second World War (Britain since 1930). Children should be taught about the contributions of significant individuals from minority ethnic groups.

As well as needing opportunities to use and apply **mathematics** in culturally familiar contexts, children learning EAL benefit from explicit recognition of:

- the contributions of diverse cultures to the development of mathematics over the centuries, e.g. the origins of number;
- the use of mathematics in all cultures;
- different methods of calculating and counting.

Mathematics can also teach about diversity, equality and justice. Facts and figures about local, national and global issues, e.g. average incomes, access to healthcare, literacy levels, access to clean water, rainfall in different countries and how this has changed over time are contexts which could be used for mathematical investigations.



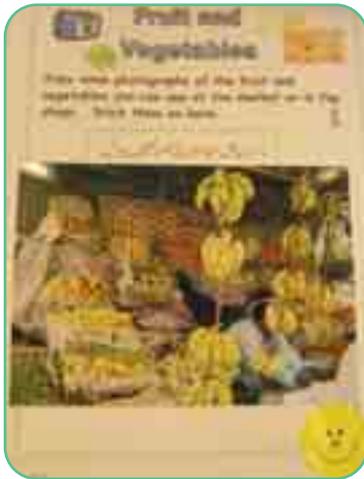
Geography, history, PSHE and citizenship and RE all provide opportunities to utilise and build on the first-hand knowledge and experience that children from minority ethnic backgrounds often have of other countries, lifestyles and religions.

Studying a locality in the developing world



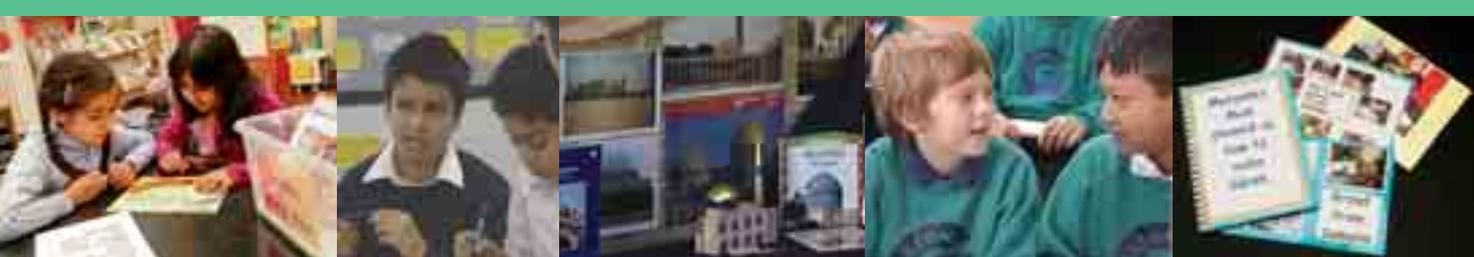
Where there are children and families with first-hand experience of a country in the developing world, a locality in that country should be the focus for comparative study.

LA Ethnic Minority Achievement Services and local Development Education Centres will be able to advise schools about how to resource their studies. Both the BBC and Channel 4 have in the past produced useful educational videos and associated publications about developing countries, including Pakistan. Material no longer in print may still be available on loan from local libraries or LA multicultural centres. Other sources of materials include the Internet, embassies, travel agencies and tourism bureaux.



Families who visit the locality could be asked to take photographs, compile diaries, obtain maps, collect brochures and bring back artefacts to supplement these materials. Disposable or cheap cameras could be supplied and families given a clear steer about the kind of photographs which would be useful, for example:

- transport;
- shops including stalls and markets;
- food (production including agriculture and husbandry, cooking, eating);
- leisure (visits to places of interest, games and sports, cinema, etc.);
- buildings including homes across the socio-economic spectrum, and inside and outside spaces;
- landscape;
- everyday life (schools, people at work, etc.);
- famous places;
- religious life (weddings, celebrations, places of worship, places of pilgrimage, etc.).



If parents and carers are asked to make a note of where the photographs were taken they will be more useful as resources to support work in geography.

Children should photograph similar things in their own locality in order to make comparisons.

Children's photographs and accounts of their visits could be made into books including multimedia and/or dual-language talking books to provide valuable and personalised curriculum resources.

The following principles should underpin a comparative study of a locality in the developing world if it is to value and affirm children's cultural identities.

- Images and text in resources should be up to date.
- Similarities as well as differences should be highlighted.
- Connections and mutual influence should be emphasised.
- The lives of wealthy people should be portrayed but poverty and inequality also acknowledged.
- The reasons for inequality should be explored – global development issues: social, political, historical and economic.
- Diversity within the locality should be recognised.
- Traditional and alternative technologies should be valued.
- The first-hand experience of children and their families should be utilised as a valuable resource and all opportunities taken to refer to the variety of lifestyles in the UK – for example, water buffalo are farmed in the southwest of England, children from UK rural communities are familiar with farming and tourism.
- Stereotypical portrayal should be avoided.



Development Education Centres support teachers and others to learn more about global issues such as fair trade, conflict resolution and sustainable development in order to bring a global dimension to their practice across the curriculum.
www.dea.org.uk/dec

*We drank
milk from
the buffalo*

*My uncle is
a farmer. I saw food
growing in
the fields*



Local history study

If it is to support the achievement of children from minority ethnic backgrounds, a local history study should:

- focus on population change;
- stress the way in which the locality has changed and developed over the years and is changing still;
- discuss reasons for migration and celebrate diversity;
- identify achievements and contributions of people from minority groups;
- emphasise that migration and settlement and displacement of people are recurring themes in human history;
- acknowledge racism and prejudice and include struggles for justice and equality;
- stress connections between the school's immediate locality and the wider world;
- teach children that everyone has their own personal history and that all their memories and experiences are part of the history of the time in which they live.

When some young Indian men came to live next door to me, I thought about my own son in the Army and how he, like them, was far away from home.

Primary sources which provide information about local residents include census details about individual households, local newspaper reports, trade directories and school log books. Names provide evidence of how local populations may have changed over the years. Parish records may provide evidence of an earlier minority ethnic presence in the locality. Other primary sources include the memories of local people, Ordnance Survey maps and old photographs. Mathematics can help children to represent the development of the locality over time. Population growth can be shown on a graph. Key events on a time line will show the pace of development and how events interrelate.



During a walk around the locality to look for evidence of the impact of population change one class noted the following:

Gurudwara

A mosque

Signs in Urdu, Gujarati and Punjabi

A halaal butcher

A 'Take Away' selling curry, kebabs and samosas

A newsagent selling the Daily Jang newspaper, 'Asian Image' free newspaper, and Eid cards and incense sticks, advertising for yoga classes

People from various ethnic backgrounds

Dual-heritage families

Indian music on car radios (bhangra)

Indian film posters in shop windows



Summary

An inclusive curriculum supports achievement and promotes a sense of 'belonging' for children learning EAL. It is characterised by:

- choices made from programmes of study that are culturally inclusive and sensitive to the ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds of all learners;
- attention to human rights as well as global developments affected by political, social, historical and economic factors;
- schemes of work, texts used in English as well as subjects across the curriculum and contexts for mathematics which take account of children's ethnic, cultural and religious heritage, prior experiences, interests and linguistic needs and abilities;
- opportunities to explore similarities and differences within and across different ethnic groups;
- a critical approach to texts so that children understand that language is never neutral or impartial;
- quality texts written by members of different ethnic and cultural groups;
- contexts which affirm children's personal and cultural identities;
- opportunities across the curriculum to emphasise the contributions and achievements of people from diverse ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds;
- opportunities across the curriculum to teach children to recognise and resist bias, racism and stereotyping.

The following are some useful publications and websites:

Curriculum guidelines for cultural diversity and race equality, Hertfordshire County Council (www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/mecss/policies/curriculum)

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, DfES 0623-2003 G

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, professional development materials, DfES 0518-2004 G

Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning, DfES 0110-2005 G; *The importance of emotions in the classroom*, DfES 0640-2004

EAL induction training for school support staff:
www.dfes.gov.uk

'Inclusion' website:
<http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk/>

'Respect for all' website:
www.qca.org.uk/301.html

Section 4 Partnerships with parents, carers, families and communities

'Parents are a child's first and most enduring educators. A successful partnership needs a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise' (Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, QCA 2000)

Research from the DfES on the impact of parental involvement shows that parental interest and involvement contributes significantly to children's achievement and outweighs family background, social class and level of parental education.

Research into the education of bilingual children has consistently identified the importance of partnerships with parents and communities. Cummins (1996) cites the 'extent to which minority communities feel empowered to participate in their children's education as a key factor schools must address if young bilingual learners are to reach their full potential'.

Note: The term 'parents' is used here to include carers and members of the extended family.

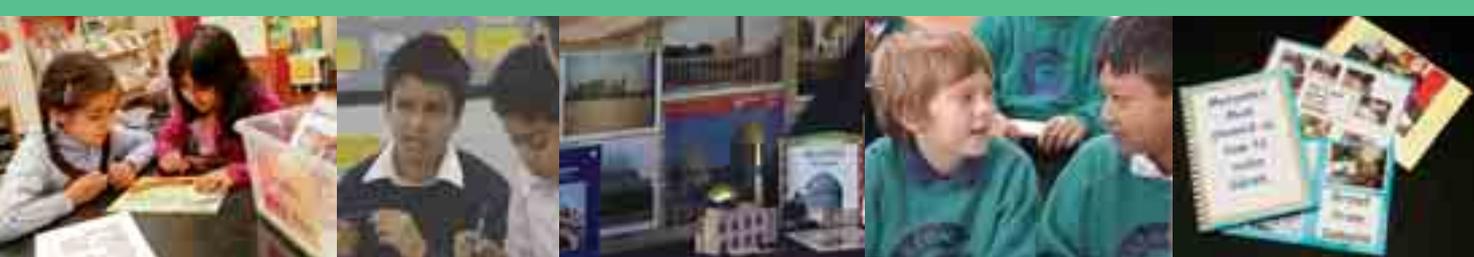


Learning within the school

Parents from minority ethnic groups often feel they have little to contribute because their school experiences were different or because they do not have English as their first language. If their linguistic, cultural and religious traditions are not acknowledged and respected explicitly, they may feel discouraged from playing an active role in their children's learning at school.

Developing partnerships with bilingual families and communities has to be a process of learning to listen, share information and concerns, consult, negotiate and trust each other. The way in which a school responds to diversity will determine to a large degree how far partnerships with bilingual families and communities become a reality.





Developing effective partnerships

- Parents are their child's first educators and remain their key educators throughout their school career.
- Most parents want to be involved in their children's education. In a recent study 72% of parents said they wanted more involvement (DfES Research report 332).
- Parental involvement in a child's schooling for a child between the ages of 7 and 16 is a more powerful force than family background, size of family and level of parental education.
- Families and communities have a vital role in developing a confident sense of identity and self-esteem which is crucial for educational success.
- Parents understand their own children best.
- It is important to listen to parents about their concerns and to recognise children's achievements beyond school work. Although the focus in this unit is on developing partnerships with parents, carers, families and communities of minority ethnic heritage, this work should contribute to other ongoing work to develop partnerships with all families and communities.

In order to develop effective partnerships with parents from minority linguistic and cultural communities, schools need to:

- develop a shared understanding across the school of potential barriers to effective partnerships with minority ethnic families and communities as well as strategies to address the barriers;
- ensure that parents and the wider community understand that their children's languages are valued and that the first language has an important and continuing role in learning at school;
- share children's progress and achievements, their targets and strategies for achieving them;
- ensure that parents know how to support their children's learning at home.

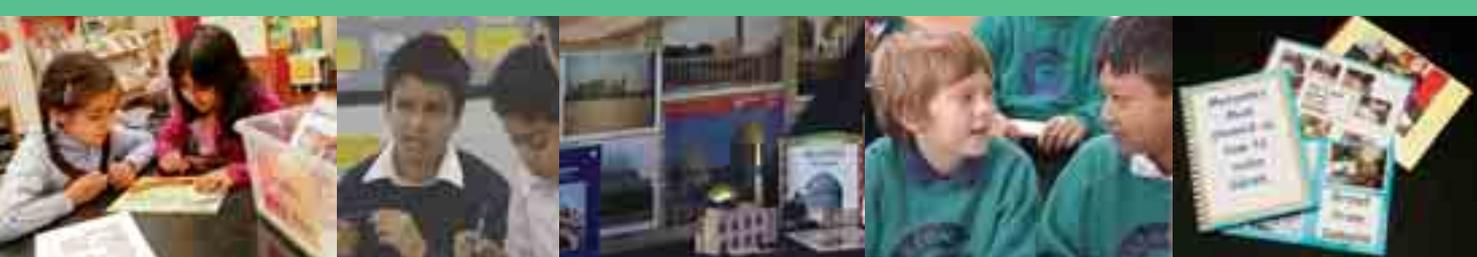


Ensuring a welcome for all



- Create a friendly, welcoming atmosphere for families in the whole school environment and ensure that they feel safe and valued.
- Make information about the structure and organisation of the school, roles, rules, routines, expectations, behaviour and so on easily available and accessible, e.g. use photographs, dual-language captions, CD-ROMs.
- Devise and implement strategies to address potential barriers to effective partnerships in children's learning. Potential barriers may include language, culture, ethnicity and religion; experiences in the wider society; perceived negative attitudes of staff or other parents; and their own very different or negative school experiences.
- Reassure parents that limited or no English language, limited or no literacy skills in English or in their first language, or lack of formal education do not mean they cannot play a useful and key role in their child's education.
- Address fears some parents may have about coming into school and meeting teachers.
- Recognise and celebrate the communities' cultural and religious events.





Developing two-way communication



- Listen to and consult with parents.
- Gather information about their views.
- Recognise that concerns are normal and respond quickly, sympathetically and effectively.
- Establish a culture of informal contacts, at the beginning and end of the day, in first language, using bilingual staff where possible; and in English, by phone and by informal notes.
- Share good news about children's achievements.
- Collect information about parents' languages and literacies sensitively and professionally.
- Provide interpreting and translation as appropriate, having first found out about families' preferred language of written communication.
- Inform parents of key dates and times in the school calendar and provide guidance for extended leave which takes account of this.
- Anticipate and respond proactively to concerns about transition.





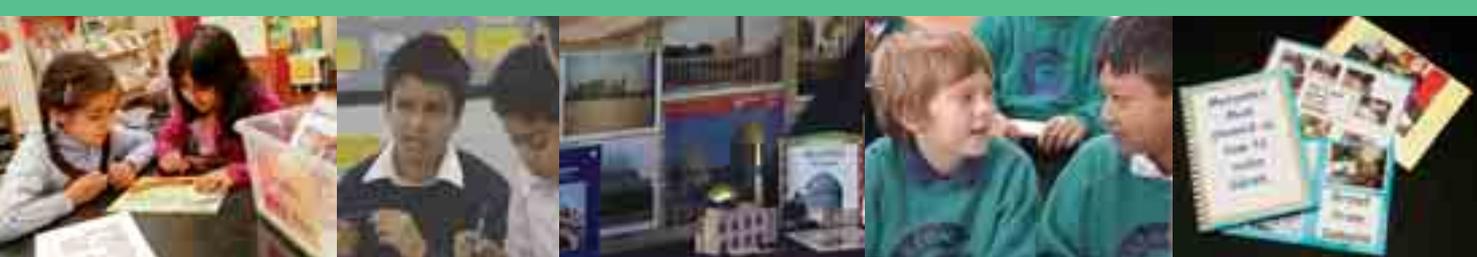
Developing the learning partnership



- Facilitate understanding and knowledge of the school's teaching and learning approaches, and the curriculum in the school.
- Share research findings relevant to the education of bilingual children. Emphasise the important and continuing role of children's first language in their learning and the value of talk at home.
- Discuss differences in practices and purposes between home and school, acknowledging the strengths of both.
- Share information about the school's overall performance against schools nationally and against similar schools, including value added by the school.
- Share information about the attainment and achievement of their child compared to national norms.
- Share information about children's targets and strategies to achieve them.
- Develop a role for parents in assessing their child's progress, using trained bilingual practitioners as intermediaries or transcribers if necessary.
- Offer guidance and support to enable families and carers to facilitate children's learning at home, including 'workshops' in literacy, mathematics and the wider curriculum.
- Find out about and celebrate achievements beyond the school, e.g. community language schools, supplementary schools, madrasahs, to contribute to richer pupil profiles and the identification of transferable skills.
- Work together to develop distance learning materials for extended visits overseas, which are linked to and contribute to the curriculum, e.g. a study of a locality in the developing world.

Schools which were successful in developing parental support for reading focused on specific initiatives that involved parents actively in reading with their children. The ineffective schools were also keen to involve parents but encouraged their general involvement rather than specific engagement in reading.

Reading for purpose and pleasure: an evaluation of the teaching and reading in primary schools, Ofsted (2004)



Better Reading Partners, developed by Bradford LEA in 1996, is an initiative originally designed to involve parents which has been positively evaluated by NFER (1998) and others. It is designed to be delivered to children as an intervention over a ten-week period and is based on Reading Recovery. 'Partners' are trained to support children to read new and familiar texts using a range of cueing systems. Partners learn to introduce books to children. They also learn to keep running records and use them to analyse children's reading strengths and areas for development. For more information visit Education Bradford's website at www.educationbradford.co.uk.

A school in Blackburn where 70% of children speak English as an additional language has been training parents to be Better Reading Partners for some years:

'When children have been supported by Better Reading Partners they develop a much more positive attitude towards reading. Their reading ages go up on average 6–8 months, and in some cases much more.'

'The parents we train don't always want to support children in school but they all really appreciate the training because they learn how to support their children at home. Some of the parents we've trained didn't read English very fluently themselves. They feel more confident when they know they can introduce new books to the children using their stronger language. We encourage this. We also have a good supply of dual-language books with parallel texts and books where the text is extremely well supported by pictures. Parents often tell us their own reading in English has developed a lot as a result of the programme. Often parents who have done the Better Reading training end up applying for teaching assistant jobs in school and some have gone on to train as teachers. The reception class staff say that children from families where parents have undertaken Better Reading training in the past seem to know more about reading when they arrive in school. Maybe it's because their parents have talked to them more about books.'



Learning beyond the school

Partnerships with the wider community: getting started

'As well as working closely with parents, primary schools must be closely linked to their local community'

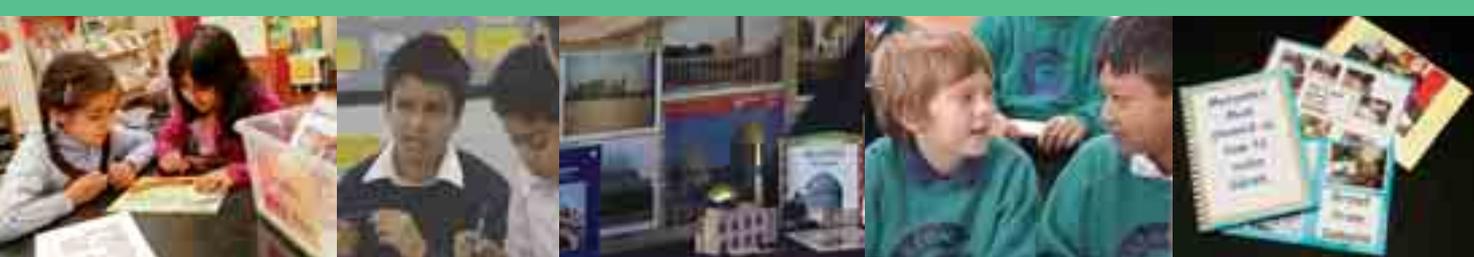
Excellence and Enjoyment: A strategy for primary schools, 2003



Schools can:

- develop links with community language classes, supplementary schools, madrasahs and so on;
- establish community language classes which involve a range of learners (parents, children and school staff) learning together;
- ask parents to suggest people within the community with particular skills and expertise who may be able to support school activities and curriculum;
- develop learning links with local businesses, community organisations and faith groups;
- visit local shops to gather resources and artefacts to support the curriculum;
- make school facilities available for community groups.

Many schools have found that one of the additional benefits of developing partnerships with local minority ethnic communities has been to encourage more representative school governance.



Supplementary and religious education

Many minority ethnic communities make provision for supplementary education for their children. The purposes vary but may include:

- extra tuition to support school work;
- coaching for entrance to selective or independent schools;
- support for homework;
- teaching the first language and culture;
- religious education.

Some supplementary education is provided in schools which operate every evening for a couple of hours after school, some on Saturdays or Saturday mornings. Some supplementary education is provided by tutors, often from the child's own community. In many cases the learning and teaching style is very different from the style the child encounters in the mainstream school. For example, most Muslim children attend classes in their local mosque where the primary purpose is to provide religious education although they may receive extra tuition to support school work as well. The age at which most Muslim children start to attend the local mosque school or madrasah varies but is usually at about five years of age. Most continue to attend until they are 14. Religious education usually begins before this at home however, when mothers teach their children to do things in a particular way, e.g. to always say 'bismillah' before embarking on a task ('I begin in the name of God'), to remember God in the way they greet people and so on.

In the madrasah children learn the Arabic alphabet so they can recite and remember verses from the Qu'ran. At this stage there is no emphasis on understanding. At a later stage children study the Hadith. These are the sayings and the way of life of the Prophet Mohammed. Although originally written in Arabic, translation will be available in the language or languages of the local community. These sayings are also often read at home where they guide the way Muslims lead their daily lives. Examples of Hadith include: *Seek knowledge even though you have to go to [as far as] China; Education/knowledge is incumbent upon both males and females.*

Madrasahs in this country often teach Urdu as well and in some cases other community languages such as Bengali. The pedagogic style is typically different from that which children meet in school because of the emphasis on rote learning. Syllabuses, learning and teaching approaches and behaviour management strategies vary



widely from one madrasah to another depending on the level of available resources and the educational experiences of the teachers. In addition to religious and community language education, some madrasahs also offer children support with homework. Teachers are unpaid volunteers for the most part, and although many are very traditional in their approach others, often younger teachers, employ a range of strategies and are keen to learn more.

It is good practice for schools to develop links and establish a dialogue with teachers in community language classes, supplementary schools and madrasahs, or popular local tutors, in order to:

- learn about their children in a different context;
- learn more about the local community;
- share perspectives on the children as learners;
- build on educational experiences including transferable skills;
- understand potentially conflicting demands which may be placed on children;
- learn about families' aspirations for their children;
- celebrate and recognise children's achievements beyond the school;
- learn from each other.

For more information about supplementary schools, visit www.supplementarieschools.org.uk.





Extended visits

Strategies to ensure continuity of learning when children make extended visits during term time to heritage countries

- Provide learning and teaching curriculum materials on a CD-ROM.
- Provide parents with appropriate website addresses to support their children's learning across the curriculum, e.g. the DfES website for parents (www.parentcentre.gov.uk).
- Establish e-mail links with the child and the family.
- Devise strategies to exploit the educational opportunities of the visit.

Ensure that parents are aware of:

- the educational potential of the visit;
- the impact of a lengthy absence on the continuity and progression of their child's schooling.



Exploiting the educational potential of the visit

Things to do before the child goes

- Locate the destination and plot the journey on a map.
- Activate children's prior knowledge of the destination by using a **KWL** grid (see Unit 2, page 12).
- Research journey times including time zones.
- Investigate the climate: What temperatures can the child expect? Will it rain? What impact will this have on packing?
- Ask parents to choose from a selection of distance learning materials. Ideally these materials should be linked to the curriculum and relevant to the child's experience, e.g. materials to support the study of the locality. Providing translated versions of some of this material enables the extended family in the overseas location to participate (see pages 44–45 in this unit).
- Provide a cheap or disposable camera.
- **Share objectives clearly with children and their family.**





During the trip ask the child to:



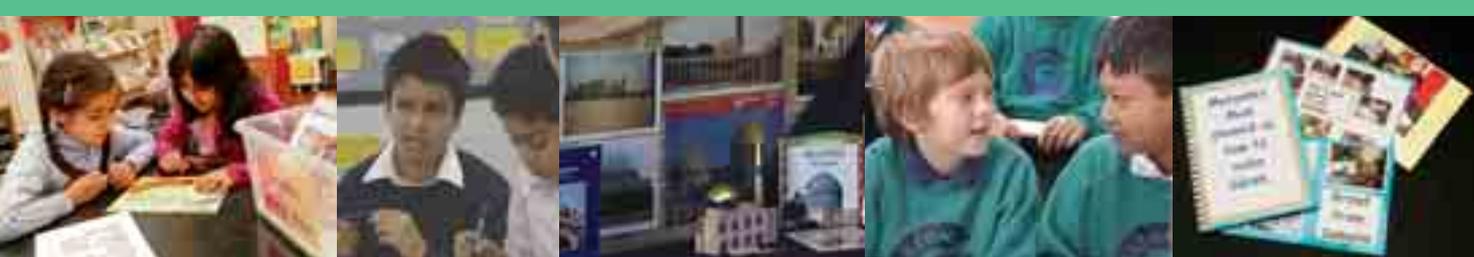
- take photographs to use as curriculum resources (see page 45 in this unit);
- keep a diary;
- communicate with school by e-mail or by post;
- make collections of tickets, receipts, brochures, fliers and so on;
- use the distance learning material;
- involve the whole family.

On the child's return make sure he or she has opportunities to:

- talk about the experience;
- make links between the experience and the curriculum;
- act as the 'expert' to support the completion of the **KWL** grid – What have we learned?;
- support the teacher to identify and discuss misconceptions recorded on the **KWL** grid.

Parents may be able to help the school to establish ongoing e-mail links with a school in the overseas locality.





Useful materials and websites for parents

Mathematics: Targets for pupils: Parents' booklets (2001), available from www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/mathematics/12792

The Learning Journeys: curriculum guide, available at www.parentscentre.gov.uk

Help your children to learn. Leaflets for parents by parents (ref: HYCL, e.g. *A guide to supporting reading for parents of primary school children* HYCL/7), available at www.parentscentre.gov.uk

Taking an active interest in your child's learning, DfES 1023-2004 (Year 2), DfES 1024-2004 (Year 6) www.parentsonline.gov.uk

Basic Skills Agency materials: www.basic-skills.co.uk

Partnerships with parents

Parental involvement in multi-ethnic schools: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/parentalinvolvement/pics/pics_multiethnic_menu/

Parents: partners in learning, DfES 0747-2004 G (video: 0412-2004; leaflets for parents: 0414-2004)

Helping parents help their children, DfES 0126-2004

Involving parents, raising achievement, booklet (ref. PICE/IPRA); training pack and video (ref. PICE/IPRA/TP), available at www.teachernet.gov.uk

Sure Start: For Everyone: Inclusion Pilot Projects Summary Report (2004) (ref. IPPSUMMARY), available from dfes@prolog.uk.com

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Curriculum guidelines for cultural diversity and race equality, Hertfordshire County Council (www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/mecss/policies/curriculum)



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(DfES 0110-2005 G)

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Ofsted (2005) *Implementing language entitlement at primary school: an evaluation of progress in 10 Pathfinder LEAs*, Ofsted

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