

REPORT

APRIL 2014

School approaches to the education of EAL students

Language development, social integration and achievement

REPORT AUTHORS

Madeleine Arnot, Claudia Schneider, Michael Evans,
Yongcan Liu, Oakleigh Welply and Deb Davies-Tutt

With the assistance of Karen Forbes and Diana Sutton



Acknowledgements

The Bell Foundation started in 2012 and is working to overcome exclusion through language education in the UK. The Foundation is focusing on two thematic areas: children with English as an additional language and offenders whose first language is not English. The Bell Foundation has developed a five-year programme working with partners aiming to improve the educational outcomes for children with English as an additional language.

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Glossary

A8	Eight Accession countries which joined the EU in 2004: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
APP	Assessing Pupils' Progress
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
DFE	Department for Education
EAL	English as Additional Language
ELL	English Language Learners
ILP	Individual Learning Plans
LA	Local Authority
NALDIC	National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PEE	Points, Evidence and Explain
PISA	The Programme for International Student Assessment
TA	Teaching Assistants

Foreword

In the UK today, there are over 1 million children with English as an additional language who speak in excess of 360 languages between them, in addition to English. These children may belong to well established ethnic minority communities, or be children of refugees and asylum seekers, or children of migrants whose parents have come to the UK to work, they may live in large cities or in more isolated rural areas. Some of these children may be “invisible”, outside formal education, or not yet allocated school places and so will not appear in school statistics at all. Some children may have been well-educated in their country of origin, while others may have had little, or disrupted schooling. What evidence that is available suggests that these children do not achieve to their full potential.

This report presents the interim findings of a three year study, commissioned from Cambridge University and Anglia Ruskin University and funded by The Bell Foundation. It develops the link between language development, social integration and educational achievement. As the project continues into its final two years, it will research the progress of EAL learners through secondary school, the role of the assessment of these learners and their academic progress, and the involvement of parents in EAL students’ schooling. The Bell Foundation commissioned this report in the context of rapidly changing financial support for EAL learners and teachers, at a time when the numbers of EAL learners are on a steady upward trend and when major changes are happening to education in the UK. It looks at an under researched group of EAL learners – the Eastern European child in the English school system.

One of the most striking findings of the report is that it revealed as much about what the school system does not know as what schools do know and provide for. All children have clear rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child to an education which develops their potential and enables them to achieve. This report is an important start to informing much needed work by academics, teacher training institutes and practitioners to address the rights and needs of a growing group of children for whom English is not their mother tongue.

Diana Sutton
Director - The Bell Foundation

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This report describes a 12-month research project conducted by a research team jointly led by members of the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge and the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education at Anglia Ruskin, Cambridge.

The project was commissioned by The Bell Foundation as part of their new programme on Children with English as an additional language (EAL). The report is the first publication of a three-year research programme. In this first stage, the aims were:

- (a) to identify the contribution that primary and secondary schools make to addressing the language development, social integration and academic achievement of EAL students.**
- (b) to understand school practice regarding the social integration, language development and educational achievement of EAL students in primary and secondary schools from the perspective of school management, teachers, children and parents and thus, highlighting the potential of such practice to address the diversity of school populations in a constructive way.**

The project aimed to extend the understanding of the pedagogic and social issues relating to language development, social integration and educational achievement of EAL students. It explored how schools conceptualised and addressed the linguistic, academic and social needs of such youth.

The research design involved a review of relevant research and the findings of two case study schools which were contextualised in the wider context of empirical research conducted into EAL support and provision in primary and secondary schools in the East of England. The case studies took place in a state funded primary school within an urban setting and a state funded comprehensive secondary school in a semi-rural area. The research was, therefore, set in a geographical context with far less experience of linguistic and cultural diversity than cosmopolitan inner-city areas such as London, Birmingham or Manchester. Our case studies focused mainly on EAL pupils from the new Eastern European countries which joined the EU in 2004 and here especially pupils from Latvia, Lithuania and Poland (although other national groups are also mentioned). Interviews were conducted with local authority and school-based EAL specialists, headteachers, school governors, teachers, parents and children.

SECTION 2:

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PATTERNS OF EAL PROVISION

2.1 Definitions

This section describes the national and local context¹ which frames the experience of school-aged learners who are officially identified as children whose first language is other than English, known as English as an additional language (EAL) children. It aims to provide an insight into some of the research in this area which has been conducted in Anglophone countries throughout the world². For the sake of consistency, the term 'EAL' is used throughout this literature review to refer to all pupils whose first language is not English, but who are living and attending school in England. Other terms are used in different parts of the world, such as the equivalent term of English Language Learner (ELL) in the US, along with English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)³.

One of the challenges in conducting research and public policy work on the educational attainment of children with English as an additional language is the limitation of the categorisation "EAL" in the UK context. In official documentation and for the purpose of the collection of statistical data on schools in England, the category of EAL student is characterised as a "pupil whose first language is known or believed to be other than English". The Department for Education (DfE) defines 'first language' as "the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community" (DfE, 2013b, p.7).

In addition to ambiguities arising from the choice of label, categorisation issues arise from the fact that children with English as an additional language in the UK fall into a number of different groups and will have very different needs. These groups include, children belonging to well established ethnic minority communities in the UK, children of refugees and asylum seekers, and children of migrants whose parents have come to the UK to work. This research looks principally at the latter group.

It is also likely that some children with English as an additional language will be "invisible" and will not appear in school statistics. These may include children, those who are outside formal education, those in immigration detention, those who have not yet been allocated school places by local authorities, others whose parents may migrate to different regions of the UK or globally, and children who are trafficked into the UK.

The needs of children from refugee communities will differ from the needs of children of labour migrants and from those who arrive as unaccompanied asylum seekers. Some children may have been well-educated in their country of origin, while others may have had little, or disrupted, schooling. Some children who come from war-torn countries need psychological help. At school level, all these factors bring with them specific costs and a need for a particular expertise amongst school and local authority staff.

There are additional challenges for schools when pupils arrive into the latter stages of secondary school, especially when they arrive with little or no English, as this stage of education is examination-orientated and a high level of English proficiency is required. This may result in pupils pursuing a course of study not suited to their academic ability. For example, in a report for the British Refugee Council (2011), Sarah Walker noted:

Evidence from SMILE has shown that in some instances, local authorities are choosing to send young people, and particularly those in Years 10 and 11, to alternative educational provision, outside mainstream schooling. The reasoning for such decisions were generally because of the young person's limited English language skills or lack of knowledge of the UK educational system, or in some cases due to no prior education' (p.42).

1. We would like to thank Diana Sutton at the Bell Foundation for allowing us to quote from her research on the national picture in relation to EAL.
2. The focus is restricted to the Anglophone world as opposed to other bilingual contexts as this mirrors the focus of our own study in the English context.
3. These terms are largely interchangeable and refer to the teaching and learning of English to immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and others whose first language is other than English. These terms are to be distinguished from English as a foreign language (EFL) which refers to the context of learning and using English as a foreign language in countries with a different dominant language. The usefulness of the term EAL over ESL is that often English will be a third or fourth language for these speakers. Similarly the term avoids suggestions of a hierarchy of competence in the different languages a speaker has access to.

2.2 The national context

In official documentation and for the purposes of collecting statistical data on schools in England, the category of EAL student is characterised as a 'pupil whose first language is known or believed to be other than English'. The Department for Education (DfE) defines 'first language' as 'the language to which a child was initially exposed during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community' (DfE, 2013b, p.7).

In 2013, there were over 1 million school-age students between 5 and 16 years old in English schools whose first language was known or believed to be other than English, out of a total student population of 8.2 million (DfE, 2013b⁴). 18.1 % of primary school students and 13.6 % of secondary school students in England speak a language other than English as a first language. In 2012, the figures were 17.5 % and 12.9 % respectively in primary and secondary schools. The table below shows that the number of children with English as an additional language in England has doubled since 1997.

**Table 1: MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS:
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS BY FIRST LANGUAGE**

YEAR	PRIMARY		SECONDARY		TOTAL
	Number of primary pupils whose first language is other than English	Percentage of primary pupils whose first language is other than English	Number of secondary pupils whose first language is other than English	Percentage of secondary pupils whose first language is other than English	
1997	276,200	7.8	222,800	7.3	499,000
1998	303,635	8.5	238,532	7.8	542,167
1999	301,800	8.4	244,684	7.8	546,484
2000	311,512	8.7	255,256	8.0	566,768
2001	331,512	9.3	258,893	8.0	590,405
2002	350,483	10.0	282,235	8.6	632,718
2003	362,690	10.4	291,110	8.8	653,800
2004	376,600	11.0	292,890	8.8	669,490
2005	395,270	11.6	299,200	9.0	694,470
2006	419,600	12.5	314,950	9.5	734,550
2007	447,650	13.5	342,140	10.5	789,790
2008	470,080	14.4	354,300	10.8	824,380
2009	491,340	15.2	362,600	11.1	853,940
2010	518,020	16.0	378,210	11.6	896,230
2011	547,030	16.8	399,550	12.3	946,580
2012	577,555	17.5	417,765	12.9	995,320
2013	612,160	18.1	436,150	13.6	1,048,310

Source: <http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics>

These figures, however, should not be taken to reflect a uniform lack of proficiency in English. The guidance on language coding provided by the DfE to schools for completion of census data states that where a child is 'exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early development the language other than English should be recorded irrespective of the child's proficiency in English' (DfE, 2013a, p.30). Similarly, the census figures do not distinguish between foreign born children whose first language is not English and second generation children born in the UK who are either bilingual or whose first language is not English (see also Strand & Demie, 2006 and 2007).

4. The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (Naldic) reports that in 2014, there are an estimated 1,048,310 children in English primary and secondary schools, and if special schools and referral units are included, the figure rises to 1,061,010. Currently there are also 26,131 bilingual learners in this age group in Scotland, 8674 'newcomer' pupils in Northern Ireland and 30,756 EAL learners in Wales. These children speak in excess of 360 languages in addition to English. See <http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics>

2.3 Current UK government policy regarding EAL provision

In its *Brief summary of government policy for EAL learners* (DfE 2012a) the current UK government stipulates that local authorities have a legal duty to ensure that education is available for all children of compulsory school age... irrespective of a child's immigration status, country of origin or rights of residence in a particular area' (ibid., p.1). It also states that 'the Government's policy for children learning English as an additional language is to promote rapid language acquisition and to include them within mainstream education as soon as possible', and that class teachers 'have responsibility for ensuring that pupils can participate in lessons' (ibid., p.1). Bill Bolloten (2012) recently highlighted the failing of schools with regard to the implementation of their equalities duties. The policy states that schools have a statutory duty to promote community cohesion while, however, also stating that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) will no longer be required to comment on schools' contribution to community cohesion in their school inspection reports; while acknowledging that 'bilingualism confers intellectual advantages', the policy nevertheless states that the 'main responsibility for maintaining mother tongue rests with the ethnic minority community themselves' (ibid., p. 5).

The 2009 PISA (The Programme for International Student Assessment) results suggest that, as with most European countries, the share of low achieving 15 year olds in reading, mathematics and science is higher for foreign born students than for the total student population. For the UK, the scores in reading were 25 % (foreign born) compared with 18 % of the share for the total population. The results for mathematics were 29 % of the share of low achievement (foreign born) and 20 % (total). For science the share was 21 % (foreign born) and 15 % (total) (European Commission, 2011, p. 142 – 149). The recently published 2012 PISA reported that "the performance disadvantage of immigrant students as compared to students without an immigrant background but with similar socio-economic status shrink by 11 score points [between 2003 and 2012]" (OECD, 2013, p.12).

The most significant change to resourcing support for EAL learners specifically is the loss of ring-fencing for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). The EMAG was a ring-fenced grant which allowed local authorities to retain a central Ethnic Minority Achievement service using centrally-employed teachers. It was set up in 1999 to narrow achievement gaps for pupils from those minority ethnic groups who are at risk of underachieving and to help meet the particular needs of bilingual pupils. It replaced Home Office 'Section 11' funding and was distributed to local authorities on a formula basis relating to the number of EAL learners and the number of pupils from 'underachieving' minority ethnic groups in local authorities, combined with a free school meals indicator.

In 2011, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant was mainstreamed into the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) and schools were allowed complete freedom over its use however Local Authorities may retain a portion of the funding to continue running centralised Ethnic Minority Achievement services for schools.

In their guidance to schools NALDIC⁵ points out that:

From April 2013, an 'EAL' factor can be included in local funding formulae for schools but this factor is limited to bilingual pupils who have been enrolled in English schools for a maximum of three years. Local schools associations can decide:

- **whether to include an EAL factor in their formula;**
- **whether this factor will 'count' bilingual pupils who have been enrolled in a school in England for one, two or three years;**
- **the cash value of this factor for primary aged pupils and for secondary aged pupils.**

2.4 EU models of integration of newly arrived migrant students

If we look further afield than the UK we can see that interest in integration is a key feature of policy-making. In a report on educational support for newly arrived migrant children, the European Commission identified four types of support policies that facilitate the integration of newly arrived migrant students in their education systems: *linguistic support*; *academic support*; *outreach and co-operation*; and *intercultural education* (European Commission, 2013, p.10). Linguistic support was seen to consist of assessment of linguistic competence, host language support within or after class, the training of teachers instructing the host language as a second language, and valuing and provision of mother tongue instruction. Academic support was identified as appropriate reception and initial academic assessment, appropriate class placement, effective tracking and diagnosis of progress, recruitment of suitably qualified teachers for working in a multilingual school environment, and prevention of early school leaving. Parental and community involvement was seen to consist of parental participation in the school process through home school tutoring and partnerships, and, provision of detailed information about the school systems.

The European Commission report identifies five types of educational support models, exemplified in different European countries (ibid., pp.7 –8). *The comprehensive support model*, seen in Denmark and Sweden, provides well developed systems that facilitate the four types of support policies referred to above. *The non-systematic support model*, seen in Italy, Cyprus and Greece, consists of random provision with no clearly articulated national policy. *The compensatory support model*, exemplified in Belgium and Austria, tends to adopt the aim of correcting 'the "differences" between immigrant and native students, rather than tackling the initial disadvantage' (p. 8). *The integration model*, in evidence in Ireland, prioritises social integration through liaison with parents and communities, withdrawing teaching of the host language as a second language after the introductory years and provides no mother tongue teaching. Finally, *the centralised entry support model*, seen in France and Luxembourg, provides centralised reception of migrant children and provision of academic support 'as the main driver of educational inclusion' (p. 8). While the Commission report does not indicate which model best represents the policy adopted in England, one can argue that the English system has typically been associated with the 'integration model'.

5. NALDIC <http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics>

Although the existing data documents the numbers of children with English as an additional language, there are a number of limitations both with the categorisation itself and with its relationship to educational attainment data.

2.5 Linguistic diversity and educational attainment

Although the existing data documents the numbers of children with English as an additional language, there are a number of limitations both with the categorisation itself and with its relationship to educational attainment data. A detailed discussion of this is outside the scope of this report but shortcomings have been noted by a number of commentators. In research published by the Arvon Foundation, Hollingworth and Mansaray (2012) note:

‘Given the growing “super-diversity” of England and the rest of the UK, crude ethnic categories (of Black, White, Asian) in published DfE data mask a great deal of ethnic, national, linguistic, religious and social diversity which may be getting in the way of how we ‘make sense’ of minority communities’ relative achievement, and how we understand who is at a disadvantage. If we are to get any closer to understanding the role of language / bilingualism and multilingualism in children’s relative attainment we need better data and more fine grained analysis’ (2012, p. 4).

Hollingworth and Mansaray go on to conclude:

What is clear from this research is that there is a real dearth of information on which specific linguistic groups are attaining less well at school, and where they are located in the country. Indeed, this data is generally not systematically collected, and where it is collected, attainment is often not analysed by linguistic group, only ethnicity (ibid., p.22).

Similarly Demie (2013b, p. 9) in *Language Diversity and Attainment in Schools* notes:

We would argue that inequality in access in education will not end without detailed disaggregated ethnic and language data and a carefully designed targeted national programme. Detailed disaggregated data by language and ethnic background provides evidence that can be used to design interventions that tackle the root cause of underachievement of different groups in schools. The recommendations from our findings are that if any country is serious about tackling pupil underachievement in schools, they need to recognise first the importance of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. In addition they must collect disaggregated ethnic data and language spoken at home to benefit all groups attending schools. Such data is fundamental in identifying which ethnic and linguistic groups are most at risk of underachievement and to design specific interventions that will be effective in raising achievement, whatever their background⁶.

The broad approach adopted in the UK government policy towards EAL students’ achievement and EAL provision generally is that ‘there is no single “silver bullet” intervention’ that can be provided on a national scale but that schools are freed up ‘to develop local solutions to local issues’ (Overington, 2012). The ‘freedom’ which schools are currently given will only succeed if schools are able to deploy their budgets and to plan the use of human and other external resources for supporting

6. With grateful thanks to the author for permission to quote from his report.

their EAL children wisely and effectively. As stated earlier, in terms of funding, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) which was set up in 1999 'to help narrow the achievement gaps for Black and minority ethnic pupils and cover some of the costs of additional support for bilingual learners' (DfE 2012a, p. 17) was mainstreamed into the Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2011, 'giving schools greater freedom over how the grant is spent' (ibid., p. 1). In its report on funding arrangements for 2013-2014, the DfE announced that additional support will be provided for EAL learners for the first three years of their entry to schooling in England:

Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) often require additional support. We have considered the evidence on how much support is needed and, [...] have decided that 3 years from the point at which a pupil enters compulsory education in England should be sufficient. With early intervention, pupils with EAL can achieve well, even earlier (DfE, 2012b, p. 8).

One of the local authority EAL coordinators interviewed in our project expressed concern that the new context of funded support for schools can result in disparities in the quality of the provision:

I do know anecdotally that some schools are using teachers of other subjects, but who happen to be from one of the countries that you know – so Polish teachers of different subjects teach English to groups of fairly new arrivals, which is like the worst possible practice. But that's anecdotal and so some have not brought us in; arguably some of the ones that really should, but we can't make them. Other schools where the heads are engaged with us and have particular priorities have said, "You tell me what I need and how much it'll cost and we'll do it" [...] it's really quite concerning that some of those pupils will lose out.

2.6 Summary

In recent years there has been a steady rise in the school population of children whose language is reported to be other than English. It is not clear, however, what proportion of these children are also proficient in English as the school census data on which the statistics are based do not distinguish between 'first language other than English' and 'non-speakers of English'. In the Eastern region of England, the profile of the school population has also been changing; section 3 covers this in more detail.

With the restructuring of educational provision in England leading to diminution of the role of local authorities and the growth of academies, there is a greater degree of autonomy for schools in the planning of the support they must provide for their EAL students. This autonomy will entail inevitably diversity of provision depending on the experience and commitment of staff at different institutions.

7. Quoted in <http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/240212a>

SECTION 3:

THE EAST OF ENGLAND PROJECT: CONCEPTUAL AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

The East of England is an interesting region to conduct research on EAL learners because of the relative high numbers of migrants coming to the region and, in particular, migrants from countries which have most recently joined the European Union (the so-called A8⁸ countries). Another characteristic of the area relates to the clusters of poverty and disadvantage within some of its rural areas where migrants have moved to and have been actively recruited to by employers. This rural context is relatively under-researched with the result that the link between migration and rural poverty and rural schools is not generally recognised. Below we outline in more detail the demography of the region and the migration characteristics.

The East of England is the second largest region in England and includes the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. There are 5.8 million people currently live in the East of England. It is characterised by a 'diverse urban and rural make-up with many scattered urban, town and fringe areas, and a predominantly rural area in northern Norfolk' (see Office for National Statistics, 2012, p.1).

Parts of the region are relatively wealthy although several areas are marked by deprivation in the North and East of the region (English Indices of Deprivation, 2010). Overall, with £16,400 per head in 2010, it has the third highest Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) of English regions and counties of the UK. The employment rate at 74.9% is above the UK average (70.5%). The number of residents over 65 years old at 17.5% is slightly above the average in England (16.5%) (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

The East of England has been one of the key destinations for European citizens from the eight Accession countries, i.e. the A8 countries which joined the European Union on the 1st of May 2004 (Vargas-Silva, 2013). From 2004 to 2011, European citizens from the new Accession countries had to apply with the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) before they could be employed. Applicants in the East of England moved, in particular, into the agriculture, building, care, food and hospitality sectors to fill labour shortages and support expansion in these sectors (Schneider & Holman, 2005; 2011).

In 2013, the East of England had 42,090 National Insurance Numbers (NINO) registrations from adult overseas nationals entering the UK. This represented the third highest number of registrations after London (225, 820) and the South East (63, 360); it was closely followed by the North West (37, 510), the West Midlands (37, 310) and Scotland (37, 170). The highest number of NINOs in the UK in 2012/13 were given to nationals from Poland (91, 360; 15%), followed by nationals from Spain (45, 530; 50%) and Italy (32, 800; 35%). NINO registrations from Lithuania and Latvia have fallen since 2011/12 (by 18% and 27% respectively) (Department for Work and Pensions, 2013).

In 2011, about 11% of the residents of the East of England (642,215) were born outside of the UK; of which 41.6% held a UK passport and 54.7 per cent had a non-UK passport only. The majority of non-UK born residents were born in Poland (62,100 residents) followed by residents born in India, Ireland, United States and Pakistan (see Krausova & Vargas-Silva, 2013).

The majority of A8 migrants who arrived in the East of England since 2004 can be described as relatively young, skilled and with high aspirations (see Schneider and Holman, 2011). Since 2004 several reports have highlighted the underemployment of A8 migrants who arrive with high or very high skills levels but are employed in low skilled employment positions in the UK (see Dustmann et al. 2010; Huber, Landesman, Robinson & Stehrer, 2010; Schneider & Holman, 2011).

8. A8 countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Following the enlargement of the EU in 2004, the majority of European citizens arriving from the A8 countries were single and arrived with few dependants (Schneider & Holman, 2009; Spencer et al. 2007). Migrants who had children often left their children in countries of origin with members of the (extended) family. By 2010 children of migrants who had been 'left behind' increasingly joined family members. Those who had migrated after 2004 in their early to mid-20s also increasingly formed relationships/ families and had children in the UK. In general, migrants with children wanted to stay longer term in the UK to offer children a settled upbringing (see Schneider & Holman, 2011).

3.1 EAL students in East of England state-funded schools

In 2013, in the East of England as a whole there were 44,870 primary school and 33,515 secondary school students whose first language was known or believed to be other than English. This represents 12.2 % and 8.9 % respectively of the total population of primary and secondary school students in the region.

The distribution of students in this category varies in different counties in the region. The following table, which is based on the school census data for January 2013 (DfE, 2013b), shows the percentage of pupils in this category in selected counties in the region.

Table 2: Percentage of pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English January 2013 (in percentages) ⁹

EASTERN REGION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPIL POPULATION
Bedford (Bedf.)	25.4	20.5
Central Bedfordshire	4.5	2.8
Cambridgeshire	10.6	7.6
Essex	5.7	4.1
Hertfordshire	13.5	9.8
Luton (Bedf.)	50.9	44.1
Norfolk	6.5	4.9
Peterborough (Camb.)	35.7	26.4
Southend-on-Sea (Essex)	12.3	11.4
Suffolk	6.7	4.6
Thurrock (Essex)	14.5	9.9

Source: https://www.gov.uk/Local_authority_and_regional_tables_-_SFR_21

3.2 Local authority support for EAL provision

Local authority support for EAL provision in schools has also been affected by the expansion of academies, the consequent reduction of local authority funding and the resulting loss of EAL specialist teams and the support they offered. Academy status entails greater autonomy for the school over governance and the school curriculum and control of the school budget. Nationally, three quarters of all academies are 'converter' academies; that is, schools judged 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted that have chosen to become academies. 'Sponsored academies' are schools which were deemed to be failing and then re-opened as academies under new leadership and with external sponsorship. There are currently 3,304

9. These data reflect the percentage of the number of pupils of compulsory school age and above. Towns listed in the table have not been included in the overall percentages of the different regions.

academies open in England, the majority of which are secondary schools. Primary academies represent only 5% of all primary schools in England. Before 2011, local authorities typically provided support to schools through the work of their ethnic minority achievement services. These services consisted of a raft of subsidised support services such as EAL advice, bilingual support for new arrivals, first language assessment for pupils whose progress is causing concern, staff professional development focusing on, for instance, raising ethnic minority achievement, working with Eastern European pupils, and developing a culturally inclusive curriculum. As a result of the structural and funding policy changes, as of April 2013 these services are either free only to state maintained primary schools and are chargeable to primary and secondary academies or in some local authority areas not available at all

Before the changes, a range of services were available to schools including EAL advice and guidance, bilingual support for new arrivals, First Language Assessment for pupils whose progress is causing concern (FLA) and staff development regarding:

- **Whole school strategies for narrowing the gap and raising ethnic minority achievement**
- **Working with Eastern European pupils**
- **Developing a culturally inclusive curriculum**
- **English as an additional language (EAL)**
- **Preventing and tackling racism, homophobia and prejudice-related bullying (including using Stonewall resources)**
- **Working effectively with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities**

3.3 Research aims

This report describes the research aims of the first stage of a three year research programme. In this first stage, the initial specific aims were to extend the understanding of the pedagogic and social issues relating to language development, social integration and educational achievement of EAL students. This focused on:

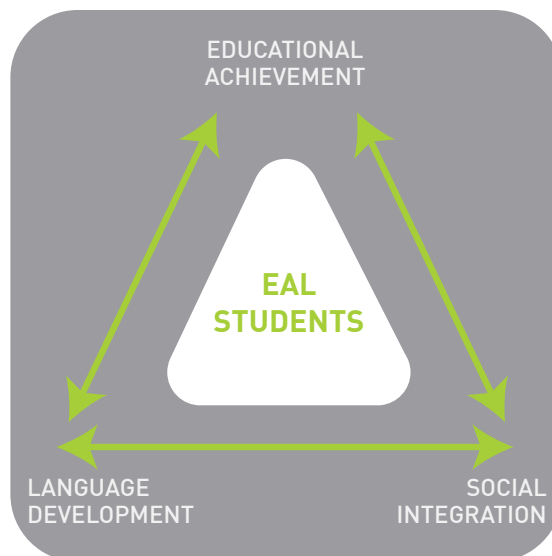
- a) **identifying the contribution that primary and secondary schools make to addressing the language development, social integration and academic achievement of EAL students; and,**
- b) **understanding school practice regarding the social integration, language development and educational achievement of EAL students in primary and secondary schools from the perspective of school management, teachers, children and parents and thus, highlighting the potential of such practice to address the diversity of school populations in a constructive way.**

3.4 Language development, social disadvantage and educational achievement: a conceptual framework

Given this aim and these two elements, the team constructed a conceptual framework for this project that focused on the interrelationships between three aspects of A8 children's educational experiences. The intention was to discover how primary and secondary schools relate the provision of English language education to the perceived educational and social needs of newly arrived migrant children, particularly but not only those disadvantaged socially and economically in the local community. A key element of the research design was the need to understand how social/cultural integration was built into the working life of the school - its procedures, teaching styles, classroom processes, homework, as well as the social-cultural ethos of the school and the integration of such students into pupil cultures and friendships.

The relationship between language education and overcoming social disadvantage within the school impacts on the levels of educational achievement of such children in primary and secondary schools, although it was unclear how such achievement from the initial assessment on arrival at the school, to the levels of student progress during their school career and their eventual performance in national tests or examinations is monitored, if at all. In that sense the first phase of the project is exploratory - seeking to define and describe the relationship between these three elements as perceived by school management, parental governors, EAL specialists working outside and within schools, classroom teachers and if possible the EAL and non-EAL students themselves and their parents. The project design was based on the following conceptual framework:

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



The above triangle is particularly useful when designing the interview schedules which explored from a variety of different angles the interconnections between educational achievement, language development and social integration. These three elements were defined in the following way:

Educational Achievement refers to the child's academic progress through their school career. This is measured by classroom participation, achievements in curriculum tests, exams and project work. At the primary level, schools have the evidence collected by national assessments at the ages 5,7,11¹⁰. At secondary level the national assessments are conducted at 14 and GCSE results are available for 16 year olds, A –levels at 18. At secondary level national assessments in England currently take the form of GCSE examinations. These are usually taken at the age of 16 but increasingly students are entered at an earlier age in some subjects.

Language Development: Our emphasis focuses on the development of the students' mastery of English *per se* and as a mediating tool for the learning of subject matter. Schools use a diversity of tools and approaches to measuring and recording progress in the students' acquisition of English. For some time the official advice has been to use the QCA 'step descriptors' (2000) for monitoring early stages of EAL students' language progression. Our framework also includes consideration of the role of the students' home language(s) as part of the process of language development.

Social Integration is defined as the academic and social participation in all school activities whether in the classroom, playground or sports fields, in assemblies, school events such as plays and outings etc. Levels of participation affect the child's sense of belonging and identity with the school community, their ability to make friends and work with their peers, but also their ability to work within the cultures, ethos and discipline of the school. The definition of social integration is a debated one. The UN department of economic and social affairs¹¹ defines social integration as 'a dynamic and principled process where all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations.' It emphasises collaboration and cohesion. As such, it starts in opposition to a forced or coerced integration. Social integration can be defined against exclusion, marginalisation, fragmentation, and polarisation.

In relation to schooling, social integration can be defined as full participation within school life, and builds on a sense of belonging and cohesion within school, around common values and positive and inclusive relationships with peers. In short, social integration can be viewed as forming social relationships within the school and being attached to the school (Langenkamp, 2009).

The interview schedules looked at the following six themes to explore the dimension of social integration, educational achievement and language development:

- **Knowledge about EAL children, their families and countries of origin**
- **Classroom practice; actions and strategies relating to EAL teaching, educational achievement and social integration**
- **Teachers' beliefs about role of students' first language (so-called L1) in teaching**
- **Social integration**
- **Communication structures regarding EAL**
- **Opportunities and barriers regarding EAL**

The project focused, in particular on EAL pupils from the A8 countries and especially Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

10. National assessments at the end of primary school (Year 6) as well as formative assessment at Key Stage 1 (phonics screening test in Year 1, age 5/6 tasks and tests during Year 2, age 6/7) and Key Stage 2 (national curriculum tests, NCTs).

11. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/peacedialogue/soc_integration.htm

3.5 The research design

The project gained an understanding of the national and local context for EAL provision through reference to relevant policy documents, conducting a review of academic literature and by interviewing three EAL coordinators. This background research indicated that there was insufficient investigation of how schools responded to the presence of particular groups of newly arrived (i.e. within the last five years) non-English speaking migrants. There was a lack of information about how within the current performance-driven culture, primary and secondary schools related English language education to the need to increase educational achievement and to address social disadvantage; and at the same time encouraging an integrative culture which supports all children in their academic and social development. While Ofsted is no longer required specifically to report on schools' contributions to community cohesion, the new inspection framework includes a stronger focus on teaching and learning and a continuing focus on provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This will enable inspectors to identify inappropriate practice, including the promotion of messages that undermine community cohesion (DfE, 2012a).

The 12 month project conducted case studies of two schools with a relatively high proportion of migrant children from the new EU Accession countries. The primary school and secondary school selected were willing for the research team to spend time in the schools exploring how teachers within the school and EAL and non EAL students experienced their policy of language education and social integration. Overall, interviews (whether individual or group) were conducted with 40 individuals. These included twelve EAL children, seven non-EAL children, eight teachers, and seven members of the senior management team and specialist staff (headteachers, deputy heads, EAL coordinators, and EAL lead teachers), three parent governors and parents as well as three local authority EAL advisors. All participants and the two schools have been anonymised. The primary school is referred to as Brenton Primary School and the secondary school is referred to as Windscott Academy.¹² The two schools had already made a considerable effort to address these issues but were keen to learn more about what could be achieved to improve their practice in relation to non-English speaking migrant children. The profiles of the two schools were not identical - each school had a mix of ethnic minority students into which were added European migrant children. In the case of the secondary school Windscott - the European migrant children were likely to be the children of agricultural labourers whilst those in the urban primary school were a combination of middle and working class migrant families. These two schools fit within the considerable demographic diversity of schools in the UK and were not selected as representative in terms of the characteristics of their student roll. What they had in common was a desire to learn more about what was required to achieve the integration and academic advancement of non-English speaking pupils.

Brenton State-Funded Primary School is a larger than average non-denominational primary community school located in a socially disadvantaged area in a medium size town in the East of England. The area ranked amongst the most socially deprived of the town with many of the students facing severe disadvantages. According to the Ofsted report on the school, the pupils are recruited locally mainly from social housing but some families owned their own homes.

The area had changed from being essentially white working-class to a more diverse composition, with the main minority ethnic group consisting of members of the Bangladeshi, Eastern European and Traveller communities. The majority of

12. The names of all interviewees have been anonymised.

pupils were White British and the second largest group being from the Traveller community (a fifth of the school).

The school was established relatively recently; it has 27 teachers and 37 teaching assistants. It has a nursery and welcomes children from age 3 to 11. The school is now located in a brand new building (with many multi-lingual displays and signs) and also accommodates a children's centre which facilitates community links. The governing body runs a term-time breakfast and after-school club. From a researcher's perspective as a visitor to the school, the overall impression of the school is that it is welcoming, convivial and friendly to all children irrespective of national/cultural origin. This is supported by a comment made by the headteacher:

[...] we aim to be a fully inclusive school for all our children to be safe, happy, achieving their potential, and also to offer a curriculum that embraces the diversity of this community and the world as well because the children need to learn about the world around them and we're very much of the view that the diversity you can offer within the curriculum is really important to help the curriculum with [...] the next stage of their education as well as when they become adults and, [...] go to work hopefully in what can continue to be a very diverse society.

The percentage of pupils for whom English is not the first language (over 20%) is higher than the national average in 2012 (17.5 %). The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (over 30%) is much higher than the national average in 2012 (19.3%); the number of pupils with statements for educational needs is also higher than average. A far higher proportion of pupils than is usual (over 15%), join or leave the school during the school year.

The school received a 'Good' overall rating in the 2010 Ofsted report for the school with outstanding elements, particularly its commitment to equal opportunities. When advertising itself, the aim has been to promote the view that every child is an individual, and integration amongst pupils is a valued element of this. The school aims to support all children according to their needs and different learning styles through extra language support or extension work. It is keen to highlight the importance of partnerships with carers and parents reflected in the fact that it organises parent workshops in subjects such as numeracy and literacy and encourages informal communication with teachers at pickup time. The school advertises its commitment to encouraging a love of learning, to raising motivation and independence and resilience amongst its pupils wherever they come from.

Table 3: Brenton Primary School (3-11) (2013)

Pupils on roll	below 500
EAL pupils	School: over 20% LA average: 9%
Free School Meals	School: over 30% LA average: 11.6% ¹³
SEN and school action plus	School: over 10% LA average: 17%
NCT results	School: slightly above LA
Percentage achieving Level 4 or above in both English and mathematics average	LA average: 79%

In terms of language development, the school website has a specific section for those 'new to English' offering links to other opportunities to learn English and other foreign languages. The school also runs a young interpreters scheme to help

6 [...] we aim to be a fully inclusive school for all our children to be safe, happy, achieving their potential, and also to offer a curriculum that embraces the diversity of this community and the world as well because the children need to learn about the world around them and we're very much of the view that the diversity you can offer within the curriculum is really important to help the curriculum with [...] the next stage of their education as well as when they become adults and, [...] go to work hopefully in what can continue to be a very diverse society. 9

(Mary Carrs, Head Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

13. All data for this table were derived from a relevant local authority document.

with supporting EAL children; the volunteers are trained and given a certificate for their work. The aim therefore is to involve non-EAL speakers in helping those who cannot easily speak English. The emphasis is upon helping new arrivals feel that their potential will be captured, that they will feel safe, valued, and comfortable at the school.

The school had an EAL team, which comprised the equalities and community cohesion coordinator, and an EAL specialist teaching assistant. The latter role was a recent development which had started nine months previously at the beginning of the school year. It was thus still being developed at the time of research. Prior to that, EAL provision was driven by the equalities and community cohesion coordinator and the headteacher. However, the view of the staff involved was that the creation of an EAL specialist teaching assistant role had allowed a more systematic approach to the inclusion and support of EAL pupils in school, both through a systematic 'new arrivals' procedure in which the headteacher gathered information about the students' linguistic background and previous school experience and through a support programme by the EAL specialist teaching assistant. The latter involved working with children in small groups, and focused particularly on literacy and reading.

Windscott, a state-funded Academy is located in a semi-rural environment and attracts students from the local farming community as well as from villages and local towns.

Table 4: Windscott Academy Profile (2013)

Pupils on roll	below 1000
EAL pupils	School: over 20% LA average (for state-funded secondary schools) ¹⁴ : 7.2%
Free School Meals (FSM)	School: over 20% LA average (for state-funded secondary schools): 9.5 %
SEN and school action plus ¹⁵	School: over 20% LA average (for state-funded secondary schools): 20.6%
GCSE results for 2013	School: over 55% achieved A-C grades LA average: not available

The catchment area is characterised by a high level of social disadvantage. The local town is geographically isolated. In 2011, 80% of students lived in wards in which fewer than one in ten adults had experience of higher education - about half of the national average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language exceeds the national average as do the proportions of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals (Ofsted, 2011). This is a multicultural area which has a high percentage of Eastern European families

The Academy aims to improve the life chances of the youth in the community putting students at the heart of the school, to encourage local families to choose the school not least because it hopes to remove barriers to learning, as well as creating a friendly and socially inclusive community that celebrates its diversity, and unites members of the school in their goal of improving their students life chances.

Windscott Academy has undergone some major restructuring; in particular, in the EAL and SEN departments which have both been incorporated in the inclusion area. The EAL team consists of an EAL Lead Teacher who is also a full-time class teacher. The person in charge of pastoral care is also dealing with EAL issues. In addition, the school provides two translators who offer support to the teaching staff, students and parents.

14. All data were derived from a relevant local authority document.

15. School Action Plus refers to 'extra help from an external specialist, e.g. a speech therapist' (<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/types-of-support>).

3.6 Researching EAL provision in primary and secondary schools

The processes involved in researching the experiences of newly arrived non-English speaking migrant children in schools are complex and affect the quality of the data which can be gained through school based research. There are considerable sensitivities involved not just those relating to the potential stigmatisation of migrant children but also the risk factors associated with a school's reputation for good practice. The current climate around immigration makes it difficult to separate out the educational issue of teaching English to non-English speaking students, and the political context in which such pedagogic challenges might be seen as diverting attention from the needs of other disadvantaged pupils. Teachers are aware of these sensitivities and consequently the nature of the data collected by the research team has been affected by their caution.

By definition, migrant pupils are not necessarily visible in the school not least because the group the research studied were European migrant children and therefore not classified as minority ethnic groups. Schools try to keep up to date records of such students but they can be transient, arriving at different times throughout the academic year. The initial assessment of such children needs to discover their ages, their previous academic record or their language competence. In section 4 below we report the ways in which schools construct this information before locating the child within the structure of the school.

In terms of research of European migrant children, the numbers involved are not statistically significant with many classes having only one or a few such children. Generalisations therefore are not possible. The numbers of EAL students in each year in Brenton primary school and Windscott Academy are listed in Appendix 1 and 2.

Access, sampling and conduct of the research

The findings of our project, reported here were affected by the nature of the access given to the research team to teachers, EAL specialist support, and students but also by the limited access to EAL students' parents. Below we describe the procedures we followed to set up the research but also some of the limitations which we encountered in accessing and understanding the range of school practices.

Access to Brenton primary school was granted after meeting with the headteacher. During that meeting members of the team presented the research that we intended to conduct in the school, and this was approved by the headteacher. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, a parent governor, the EAL coordinator and specialist EAL teaching assistant, a class teacher (Year 4) and a teaching assistant (Year 6).

The specialist EAL teaching assistant who coordinated the research meant that access to the EAL and non-EAL children was given priority. The team with her help identified children that matched the aims of the research ensuring that the sample represented the required socio-economic background, time spent in the UK and children had an intermediate language proficiency. The sample consisted of interviews with 10 EAL children (Polish (6), Lithuanian (1), Latvian (1) Bulgarian (1) and one Slovakian/Roma) and 5 non-EAL children in Year 3-6. Consent letters were sent out to all parents, and when these were not returned the letters were chased up by the school liaison. This strategy greatly assisted the research process.

However it later transpired from an informal discussion with the school liaison person¹⁶ that she had selected EAL children who had a fairly good attainment record, behaved well in class and were good communicators. This was done with the intention of helping us with the interviews, However, one of the boys who was considered, in the words of the school liaison 'more of a problem', and did not communicate much, was not included in the sample. This raised the broader question of which other children were excluded from the sample, and the bias this presented for the research, as the children selected participated in the sense of confirming a 'success story' on the attainment, language proficiency and social integration of EAL children in the school.

A similar issue arose with the selection of the non-EAL children. They were selected on the basis of being involved in the 'young interpreters' programme or because they were used to helping an EAL child in their class. Whilst the interviews provided interesting data on the involvement of non-EAL children in helping EAL children in class and in school, the selection of the participants by the school liaison also introduced an unfortunate bias in the sampling.

Interviewing children with early or intermediate English presented linguistic challenges that restricted our ability to assess the success of various pedagogic practices and the type and level of social integration. The EAL specialist teaching assistant considered that the children were proficient enough to speak in English without an interpreter, and the choice was thus made not to have an interpreter during interviews. This was also linked to the fact that all adults present during interviews would need to be DBS checked, there was limited availability of interpreters in the school, and the fact that a child would be likely to be more intimidated during interviews with two unknown adults present. However, for those children who had recently arrived, carrying out an interview in English meant that they were restricted in what they could talk about or express. Whilst this gave limited access to information, it also provided a good indication of their communication strategies and proficiency in English.

Linguistic issues were also present for interviews with parents. The only interview carried out with a Bulgarian parent was done with the help of an interpreter, but this made the conversation difficult during the interview, and made it harder to build rapport with the participant. The interpreter admitted to needing often to rephrase questions – it is always difficult in such situations to know how accurate are the questions and how well translated are the responses.

Another issue facing this sort of project was the limited availability of staff. The EAL coordinator interview was not able to cover all the interview questions because of her heavy work load. Space issues were a problem for interviews, as some interviews were interrupted by members of staff who needed to access the room in which the interviews were taking place. Other interviews were conducted in a common room which at times became quite noisy. The other difficulties related to the fact that a class teacher selected for us to interview was a newly qualified teacher with a very limited experience of teaching EAL children. Ideally we would have liked to conduct classroom observations as well as interviews in order to know the extent of language development and social integration.

Researching EAL provision within Windscott Academy was affected by a different set of factors. This school was exceptionally large, and had to address many different community and educational issues at the same time. The EAL department had undergone some major restructuring; it had increased in size and additional staff being appointed. It now shares facilities with the reduced inclusion department. However EAL provision in the school at the time of our research had been delegated to two EAL Coordinators covering periods of sick leave. This made gaining access and sampling of teachers and students particularly difficult. In the locality and as a secondary school there also seemed to be few opportunities to

16. The role 'school liaison' refers to the person who was in charge of coordinating our research in the school. In the primary school it was the EAL specialist teaching assistant. She organised the interviews with children and staff, followed up on parental consent, and was the point of contact for any queries we had for this research.

work with parents. Hence the difficulty of gaining consent from the parents of EAL and non EAL students for their children to be involved in the project.

In the event, with the support of the headteacher a sample of six teachers participating in the research were selected by the EAL lead teacher. She was notified of the subjects we wished to include - english, history, drama, french, science, and PE and with her help teachers in these subjects indicated their willingness to be involved in two interviews. This was a purposive sample based on a mixture of volunteering, or recruitment by the EAL lead teacher. Interviews were also conducted with the principal of the school, a school governor and the EAL coordinator. Time constraints affected these interviews.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to undertake research with a sample of EAL and non-EAL students as originally intended. Only three students were interviewed; two Latvian EAL students and one non-EAL student. The non-EAL students were quiet and nervous and appeared to have very little to do with the EAL community within the school. The two EAL students have been in the UK for a considerable length of time, which meant an interpreter was not needed and the interviews ran smoothly in English. However, this meant that we were not able to tap the views of 'newly arrived' EAL students. The first student claimed he spoke English more than his home language and refused to translate for new arrivals because he had forgotten a lot of the words. He claimed that he had been provoked by peers calling him 'a foreigner'. Underneath such interviews were tensions within the school that could not be tapped by this exploratory project.

When the possibility of parent interviews was first raised with the Academy, they expressed concerns regarding the poor attendance of parents at school events – as had been the case in the events they organised in the past. Although parental consent forms were translated and sent out twice to parents, none were returned. As a consequence, no parents could be interviewed at Windscott Academy.

3.7 Summary

Researching the experiences of schools in working with non-English speaking communities gave valuable insights into the issues that schools face in this area. Since our project encountered a number of difficulties, it was not able to tap at a deeper level the main pedagogical approaches used with EAL students, nor to assess the success of the approaches teachers described. Further we were only given restricted access to EAL secondary school students because of the failure to gain the consent of their parents to the research. We learnt from this experience that researchers are heavily dependent on the nature of partnerships between parents and schools. Even primary schools that encourage good relationships have difficulty in communicating with parents, whilst in the secondary school, there may be few pathways that researchers can follow to encourage parents to participate in projects. This theme is explored in more depth in Section 8 below. The second stage of our project will address this issue directly.

Secondly our experience indicated that the time and effort required of schools to support linguistic diversity in schools as well as differential achievement levels, familiarity with school processes, local peer cultures etc. make it difficult for the institution to work with researchers on site. The EAL coordinators have considerable responsibilities alongside their classroom teaching (unless separately employed for this role) in such linguistically and culturally diverse environments. Their experiences of supporting migrant children are essential part of the fabric of improving achievement and require a more focused approach to understanding the strategies they use and encourage in their schools.

Finally, the research design, like that of classroom teaching is affected by the constraints of language. Finding translators for the many home languages used by students (six in the case of our study) and who are able to come to schools at the required time creates almost insuperable difficulties. Schools themselves have to rely on volunteers from the community and these are not always forthcoming. The pressure to work with those students who can already speak English pushes research designs towards those who have already settled into speaking English rather than the newly arrived. At the same time, such students can give researchers a purchase on where problems with that transition occur.

Despite such hurdles, in the following sections of the report we demonstrate the importance of exploring language development in relation to social integration and educational achievement. These three elements come together in a range of different ways inside and outside the classroom. Teachers and students are aware of the challenge and also the need to ensure successful language development.

SECTION 4:

**SCHOOL ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE
HOME AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF
EAL STUDENTS**

Class teachers were aware of their EAL students' country of origin, their home language and aspects of family circumstances but there was very little knowledge of the students' prior educational experience and no formal record of this reaching either school in the study.

The particular circumstances which mark the arrival of EAL students to schools in the host country give rise to the following questions, amongst others, which confront teachers and administrators:

- **What categories of background knowledge are most useful for informing the education of the EAL student?**
- **How can this knowledge be obtained?**
- **Who needs to have this knowledge?**

The teachers in both schools revealed varying degrees of knowledge about EAL students' backgrounds. Class teachers were aware of their EAL students' country of origin, their home language and aspects of family circumstances but there was very little knowledge of the students' prior educational experience and no formal record of this reaching either school in the study. Familiarity with background information varied between the different categories of staff interviewed in the study, with senior and middle management and EAL specialist staff displaying more knowledge about the parents of EAL students and the home environment. There was general acknowledgement that more background knowledge coming in to the schools would be valuable, in particular in relation to prior academic attainment and educational experience.

Internal systems of information dissemination of available background information relating to the new EAL arrivals appeared to play an important role within the school. There was some variability between approaches adopted in the primary and secondary school settings. The former seemed to elicit a more rounded approach to gaining knowledge of the newly arrived EAL child on a personal basis.

4.1 Knowledge about the EAL students' parental backgrounds

Knowledge about parental background tended to be stronger with headteachers and pastoral or EAL teaching assistants than with the class teachers or non-EAL teaching staff. The headteacher at the primary school revealed an awareness, gained through dialogue with the parents on admission to the school, of the diversity of circumstances behind the arrival of EAL students' parents in England:

They've come to England to make a new life as a family and they get work of some description and they've left perhaps unemployment in their homeland or they've left a job to come to England for want of better prospects.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

At the secondary school the perception was that EAL students' parents were generally hard working and in employment (often as low paid agricultural labourers) and therefore their children did not qualify for free school meals. For the principal at this school the focus of attention was the child rather than the parent:

We could colloquially say "Hello, how are you? Where do you come from? What do you do?" if the opportunity arises but generally we're focusing so much on the children. We take into account how supportive the parent might be.

(Susan Austin, Principal, Westcott Academy)

4.2 Knowledge of prior schooling and performance

Knowledge about the EAL students' prior academic performance is seen as a 'top priority' at the secondary school. This is largely due to the pressing need to place individuals into appropriate classes. While little, if any, formal documentation relating to this is available from the previous school abroad, schools and teachers found alternative ways of eliciting this information both at the primary and secondary schools (these are described below). The Head of Pastoral Care at the secondary school admitted that transition from a primary school (if the EAL newcomer had previously attended a school in the UK) was significantly smoother than in the case of mid-year arrivals from abroad. During the academic year 2012-2013 there were 50 in-year EAL admissions (some had arrived from other secondary schools in the town because of experiencing bullying).

There was a common acceptance that, when the EAL children were not fully stretched because of insufficient staff assessment and knowledge of their prior learning and attainment, their motivation levels dropped and their behaviour in school could deteriorate. All the subject teachers interviewed except for the teacher of English believed prior education had an impact on the students' learning of the subject. At the primary school there was an awareness that the transition period for the newly arrived EAL child involved a period of adjustment to different routines and approaches to study from the ones they were used to in their country of origin. This was illustrated by comments from Petia, a Year 6 Bulgarian pupil, at interview who commented on difficulties she encountered in the different way of calculating percentages in maths in her new school. The TA in her class helped her to learn the 'difference between Bulgarian and English maths'. Similarly she pointed to differences in the approach taken in literacy lessons with more focus on speaking in England, which she found helpful.

A class teacher at the primary school described this initial disorienting experience for the newly arrived EAL pupil in the following terms:

Well, I think at first it's an obstacle because everything's done differently. So at first it's like "I don't know what's going on". But as soon as they've been here for a while and they start to work out, as soon as they start to make connections between like, "Well when they're doing that on the board it's the same as when I do this at home, or what I did back home".

(Rachel Knight, Class Teacher Year 4, Brenton Primary School)

The EAL teaching assistant at the primary school described the linguistic and socio-cultural challenge of the transition period for the children as: 'clawing their way back up to where they used to be in their home country'.

4.3 Sources of knowledge about new EAL students

Background information data gathering at both schools can be categorised under two main headings: formal, structured information collected on admission to the school; and informal, inferred knowledge gained through observation and dialogue as the child's attendance of school unfolds.

Formal collection of background information

Formal information is gathered from the parents on admission to the school and is conducted through interviews with the principal or the EAL coordinator. In the case of the secondary school relevant data (e.g. on family profile, home language, refugee status) are entered on the SIMS (School Information Management System) which can then be accessed by all class teachers in the school. In the primary

school, after an initial introduction to the school by the head teacher, the parents are interviewed by the EAL coordinator for formal interview:

Generally speaking they come with very little, apart from the information the parents will provide for you. So it's so important that one of our, you know, first systems is to make sure we have set out a series of questions that we ask the parents to try and give us as much information as possible about the child's experience of speaking their first language, learning in their first language and understanding if they've got any English [...] what sort of experience have they had at home, whether they had any learning difficulties when they went to school in their home country, you know, what language is spoken at home.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

Staff at both schools were conscious of the potential awkwardness of eliciting information from the parents of children with EAL needs. Aside from linguistic obstacles to communication in the case of some parents, there was also an awareness of the need to avoid seeming judgmental or intrusive in asking about the parents' social circumstances. At the secondary school information was sought on issues such as the parents' employment and 'previous experiences' as this helped staff see whether non-attendance at parents' evenings or other meetings was due to job or other commitments or lack of engagement in their child's schooling. The principal was conscious that sometimes the parents' apparent lack of proficiency in English masked a reluctance to communicate that was due to the perceived pressures of their situation:

Quite often the parents bringing them to the first meeting at [the school] speak very little English and the children very little English, or if they do speak more English than they're letting on in a first meeting [...] they don't know what to say in case they say something that upsets somebody.

(Susan Austin, Principal, Westcott Academy)

Informally gathered background information

Informal information gathering through observation or dialogue with the EAL pupil was referred to as a valuable source of background information which helped the school gain insights into prior and current learning issues. The primary school used an 'All About Me' leaflet as an explicit tool for constructing an individual personal profile of the EAL child:

I send them home with a leaflet called "All About Me" and they draw pictures and they write about what they might find worrying or what can help them, and just what their favourite food is, what they like to play. It's very much a kind of "Who I am leaflet", so I do ask them to fill that in.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

Examples were given at the primary school of revelations about prior schooling through the pupils in lessons. For instance, the class teacher reported that a Polish pupil brought letters from her former school friends in Poland to lessons and shared information about what they said 'their class was getting up to'. Another example given by the teacher was that of an Indian girl who, probably on the parents' initiative, came to class 'with all her books from her school in India and showed them to us'.

At Windscott Academy, there was some evidence of a reluctance by some EAL students to talk about their educational background in order to avoid being thought of as different from their non-EAL peers. One teacher commented:

I often find with EAL students they're very unwilling to talk about their background that they've had in other education because you almost get the sense they don't want to talk about what's happened before. And often you'll say "Have you learnt about history in your language?" and they'll kind of go "Well yeah, we did history" and that's all the information they'll give you, so whether they don't want to share that or they don't know I'm not really sure.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Proficiency in English would seem to play a role in the degree to which the students spoke about their prior learning. For instance, one teacher at the secondary school commented on how the students' inability to communicate in English prevented them from indicating to the teacher whether or not they were already familiar with the taught lesson content:

And sometimes obviously there are problems with accessing English but when you're teaching something, if they have done it before things will pop up and they just kind of switch off. It's like "I've done this before". And they can't really translate: "I've done this before" as easily. That can be quite difficult.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

A source of valuable informal information to the school regarding social issues as they affected the students in the community was identified by the headteacher as the 'Locality Team' consisting of youth workers, family workers, parent support officers and child protection officers linked to local charities and the police:

So we have this plethora of intelligence that we bring to bear and quite often after a few weeks of a student being here we might get wind of the fact through the localities that there are issues about this child. Generally they would present to us as parents not answering the phone, parents not turning up for meetings, children being late for school [...] There are many families in [Windscott] for whom we provide this service, which is why the EAL locality [team] is so very, very important. We'd be lost without them.

(Susan Austin, Principal, Windscott Academy)

However, the parent governor interviewed for the study revealed good knowledge of the school's activities regarding information about the school's EAL pupils and confirmed that the headteacher regularly provided anonymised reports to the governing body.

4.4 Dissemination of information within the schools

At the secondary school, dissemination of information regarding the EAL students was largely dependent on the school's use of the SIMS (School Information Management System) database. Teachers were able to access information about, for instance, the EAL students' length of residence in the UK, their reading levels, their home language and family background. It was clear that availability of information alone was not sufficient – more was needed to ensure that the information was disseminated effectively. The teachers themselves needed to be proactive in accessing the information. As one teacher remarked: 'if we ask the

questions, we can usually find out the information – but we have to ask’. The head of pastoral care (who was also EAL coordinator at the school) underlined that improving the procedures for information gathering and dissemination within the school was an ongoing high priority:

This isn’t just specifically for students with English as an Additional Language. This kind of information sharing is something that I’m working on massively so that parents aren’t having to say the same thing 95 times to seven different people in, you know, 15 areas. So that information we gather is used, stored and is accessible for ... so that when the next person says “I wonder about that?” they would know where to go to or at least who to ask.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

For one teacher interviewed, the timing of information dissemination was identified as a source of strain on the system:

If you have more than two or three students come in, which we do have at certain points during the year, it just takes time to get that information out and to get them kind of tested so that’s when it, kind of, can break down.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

There was some evidence at both schools of ‘bottom up’ as well as ‘top down’ dissemination of information. At the secondary school all teachers fill in a ‘six week pro forma’ on the EAL students they teach and forward this to the school EAL coordinator:

So once they’ve been here six weeks, the coordinator will send out a form and ask everyone to fill it in about all sorts of things: their social functioning with peers as well as adults, behaviour in class in general, confidence in their work, whether they’re punctual, their attendance, their work in general. So six weeks in we get a better picture, I believe, of actually how they’re doing.

(Samantha Benton, EAL Teacher, Windscott Academy)

At the primary school this process seemed to be less formal, more serendipitous and drew on the class teacher’s access to individual parents at the start and end of the school day, as reported by the specialist EAL teacher:

There is a bit of information [about the students’ home background] I usually find that out by chatting to the teachers because the teachers have been seeing the parents at the beginning and end of the day. Obviously, the older the children are the less the parents are going to be around, but the more they’re going to tell you about their lives and their home life, so the more information you get from them.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

However, the parent governor interviewed for the study revealed good knowledge of the school’s activities regarding information about the school’s EAL pupils and confirmed that the headteacher regularly provided anonymised reports to the governing body.

4.5 Initial assessment of EAL students shortly after admission

Brenton Primary School

In the absence of formal records or information about prior learning on admission to the school, the assessment of EAL learners within the first few weeks following admission to the school takes on added significance. At the primary school, substantial effort seemed to have been invested in developing appropriate systems of assessment albeit focusing primarily on English language competence. Prime responsibility for the assessment of new arrivals rests with the EAL coordinator and specialist teaching assistant. The QCA assessment tests¹⁷ are used to assess the pupils' level of English language proficiency. Again, the timing of the tests was seen to be an important factor:

It's certainly not conducted in the first two weeks here. We said, initially when I started this job, I've got a piece of paper that says we do it after two weeks, but [...] What are you doing it for anyway? In order to assess that child's needs. Well, their needs are shifting so fast in the first six weeks that you can waste your time assessing that, and then assess it three days later if you want, you're getting a snapshot that's just meaningless. If you assess it after six weeks, you may have a better idea of what their slightly longer term needs might be, in order to write the individual language plan after the classroom.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

Once the EAL pupils have progressed through the 4 levels that precede the mainstream national curriculum levels for English their performance in English and mathematics is measured using the Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) grid which is applied to all the pupils in the school. Competence in comprehension and other language skills is used to benchmark their reading and progression to the next level depends on the benchmarking score. A further test used in the school with EAL pupils is the Renfrew Vocabulary Test¹⁸. The pupils, like their non-EAL peers, are given 'Individual Learning Plans' (ILP) with targets and work set to meet the targets which are reviewed and re-set as the learning progresses. The class teacher commented on the key role of the interpreter, provided free to the school by the local authority on a weekly basis for the first eight or nine weeks following admission, in translating the content of the ILP for the pupil and their parents, a service which was seen to be considerably more effective than the online translation tool which was otherwise used:

We had access to a translator for a few weeks. We got her to do things like we'd send home individual educational plans for the EAL children, which would have their targets on and I got her to translate everything into Polish because I know that the translator hadn't. The computer translator wouldn't have done it to the standard that it needs to be.

(Rachel Knight, Class Teacher, Year 4, Brenton Primary School)

The only assessment in the first language at the primary school reported in the study was on admission to the school where the prime aim, as indicated by the principal, is to ascertain whether or not the new pupil was constrained by learning difficulties beyond those of command of the English language:

So somebody will come in and will assess the child in Polish to ascertain whether perhaps they've got a learning difficulty in Polish [...] Well, if you're trying to learn a second language and you've got a learning difficulty in your first language then clearly you are... there's lots of barriers there.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

17. The QCA(2000) *A Language in Common* provides a scale for assessing early progress in the four language skills and includes a description for attainment prior to level 1 of the National Curriculum. The document also provides guidance to schools on strategies for assessing EAL learners performance in English. The document continues to be recommended by the Department for Education on its website.
18. The Renfrew Word Finding Vocabulary Test assesses children's expressive vocabulary (compared, for instance, with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, which is a test of receptive vocabulary). It assesses the extent to which pictures of objects, arranged in order of difficulty, can be named correctly. Most of the objects illustrated have no alternative names, so the responses of children can be quickly measured. The assessment contains 50 line-drawn pictures and is suitable for children aged 3-9 years'. See S. Buckley, C. Underwood and N. Purdie 'Who Am I?' and Renfrew Word Finding Vocabulary Test : report on wave 2 data'. Accessed at http://research.acer.edu.au/indigenous_education/35/

This indicates that mother tongue assessment is only valued for establishing whether the child has a learning disability rather than for what it can tell schools about the academic abilities of the individual and suggests that there is a need for greater awareness of the scope of initial assessment in the first language.

Windscott Academy

At the time of data collection, Windscott Academy was in the middle of an ongoing revision of its EAL assessment and provision procedures and practices. Initial assessment of EAL arrivals at the school was through the use of the Raven's Progressive Matrices tests which take the form of nonverbal cognitive tests, supported in the past by translators to translate the test instructions into the L1 when necessary:

And that just gives us a little snippet into whether actually if somebody was struggling with English, but actually cognitively they can problem-solve, they can analyse things, if we don't have any prior data in terms of what they would have been able to achieve elsewhere. And plus some maths testing we're introducing as well, but trying to keep the verbal necessity fairly low. And they will be assessed on English as well.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

As the EAL coordinator intimated, the current system of placement in different sets for different subjects is in need of further improvement, and alternative tests (such as the Oxford Young Learners Placement Test) were being considered:

But there was a massive clustering in bottom sets in every subject and there was – because of mid-year moves or mid-year entry, there were lots of students in Art and P.E. because they were the last ones to fill or they were the ones that we felt, “Well Okay, if you can't speak English, you must be able to do that instead” [...] And the English and maths teachers have tried to look, when they've placed people, because it tends to dictate what bands they're in, based on academic ability rather than purely their English. So if maths is saying, “Honestly, they're really, really good” and making sure that they're not automatically put in the bottom set. And as I said, when we do testing or if they work with us intensively, we then say, based on what we think cognitively they should be in this set or that set.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

The need to avoid clustering of EAL students in bottom sets in different subjects in secondary schools was echoed by a Local Authority EAL advisor at interview for this study, who also pointed to the use of a diversity of strategies in schools in order to avoid this default practice which was still in evidence in some schools:

Sometimes, but we would always recommend that that doesn't happen. Not – you know not always actually and there are some schools that have got really good practice and are putting their children, you know, in with the higher ability and will move them around; I think that's the important thing is that you know, because also you wouldn't want them to be in a set that's too high. So it varies, the practice varies, but there are significant numbers of schools that wouldn't do that. They might put somebody who speaks the same language together so that they can support the newer arrival for a while, but it's important that the one who's been here longer doesn't feel kind of overly put-upon by having to be the interpreter all the time.

(Victoria King, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

4.6 Summary

Background knowledge is seen by schools to be important primarily so that they can plan the education of individual newly arrived EAL students appropriately. Different categories of knowledge serve different purposes and are equally valued. Schools receive very little formal information or record of prior attainment from the students' prior schools abroad. The data suggest that there is a need for formal systems of transfer of educational records and related data between institutions. This might be achievable within the EU. Knowledge of home background, social circumstances and residence status of the students provides schools with useful information in their work to support the social integration of the students within the school. The staff interviewed reported knowledge about the linguistic background of the students as well as an awareness that in some cases the students were proficient in more than one language other than English. Further knowledge about the languages spoken by EAL students and the differences with English would be useful to inform the teachers' understanding of the EAL children's learning progress.

The schools developed formal and informal strategies for eliciting background information from the parents and the students on admission and as their attendance at school progresses. Language plays an important role in mediating this process of knowledge gathering. There is a need for staff to share ideas on different effective strategies and to reflect on the usefulness of such knowledge in the planning of their teaching. Overall, though, neither school showed signs of having a fully embedded system for identifying key information regarding newly arrived EAL students at the school, nor of implementing effective systems of dissemination.

Schools receive very little formal information or record of prior attainment from the students' prior schools abroad. The data suggests that there is a need for formal systems of transfer of educational records and related data between institutions

SECTION 5: LANGUAGES, ATTITUDES AND PEDAGOGY

Language plays a very important role in EAL students' social integration and academic learning in the school. Teachers', parents' and students' attitudes towards languages, both English and home languages, can greatly influence how teachers teach and how students learn in the classroom. This section will seek to address these issues and focus on three themes:

- **Language use and language policy in the school**
- **Students', teachers' and parents' attitudes towards languages**
- **Pedagogical strategies in the multilingual classroom**

5.1 Language use and language policy

Both participant schools in the study have a diverse student population. In Brenton Primary School, over 20 percent of the students speak English as an additional language, while in Windscott Academy the proportion of EAL students is even higher and reaches nearly 50 percent. Along with English, a number of home languages are used both inside and outside the classroom. In Windscott Academy, the most highly represented languages are Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Portuguese while in Brenton Primary School there is a more even mix of East European languages (e.g. Polish, Bulgarian, Slovakian) and Asian languages (e.g. Bengali, Urdu and Chinese). The complexity of students' language backgrounds has resulted in various patterns of language use in the interaction and communication among teachers and students

In general, English remains the dominant language in use among students in both schools, featuring interaction among non-EAL students, interaction between EAL and non-EAL students, and English as a lingua franca (e.g. among EAL children who do not speak the same home language). The interactions between teachers and students and among teachers themselves are mainly conducted in English.

Home languages also have a strong presence in both schools, particularly in interactions involving newly arrived EAL students. In Windscott Academy, EAL students speaking the East European languages, particularly Lithuanian, tend to cling to each other and use their home languages in informal settings. In Brenton Primary School, home languages are also used among EAL students in informal settings, but students from all language backgrounds seem to mix quite well together. In the classroom context, home languages are used mainly to support the newly arrived EAL students who have very limited English.

Switching between multiple languages is common among EAL students. However, this phenomenon appears to be related to students' proficiency in different languages and the length of stay in the UK. The higher an EAL student's English proficiency is, the less likely she/he changes between languages. Similarly, the impression that we gained from our interviews with teachers and students is that the longer an EAL student has resided in the UK the less likely they would want to code-switch¹⁹.

Language policy

Both schools have shown strong features of a complex multilingual learning environment and a range of multilingual practices involving both English and home languages. However our research in the two schools suggests that there

19. Code-switching refers to a linguistic phenomenon where a bilingual or multilingual speaker switches between two or more languages or language varieties.

appears not to be a school-wide written language policy which would provide commonly agreed principles and clear guidance on which language (English and home languages) should be used, when and where.

Classroom teachers seemed to have their own policy about language use which was underpinned by their beliefs about languages. For example, some teachers believed that English and home languages were mutually enhancing and supported a classroom policy of 'free use' of any languages that suited the needs of the students:

I think it's just so helpful for them that they've got these two languages that they can sort of communicate in. I think the stronger they are in their home language really helps them with another language. They kind of go hand in hand really.

(Rachel Knight, Class Teacher, Year 4, Brenton Primary School)

Well, the better their home language, the more understanding they'll be able to relate to the English. Because if they don't know what, I don't know, 'disappointed' is in Lithuanian, they're not going to know what it is in English. So you're only going to have to teach them the whole thing. So the better their grasp of their home language, the easier they should, in theory, be able to grasp English.

(Samantha Benton, EAL Lead Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Some teachers, however, had concerns about the negative impact of home languages on the development of the EAL learners' English and recommended a classroom policy of 'restricted use' of home languages:

I think it [home language] should be used in the classroom but it should be restricted use in the classroom, because if you want the child to learn English if you have somebody in there that is constantly speaking their own language they're never going to learn, because they'll always revert back and ask all the questions and everything else in their own language.

(Lucy Thornton, Teaching Assistant, Year 6, Brenton Primary School)

Yeah. I think if you're going to come into a school that's predominantly English, even though it's fine to have all the culture and their background and everything totally for that, but I just don't think it does them any favours if they can't access what's been taught to them, they just end up sitting there. And we're told that, oh, if they sit there for long enough they'll take things in, but how long is long enough? How do you gauge that? How do you say, well yeah, they are learning English, is it a year? Is it two years? And that's all that time that they've missed out on that education.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

More maximalist views on the use of English were put forward by those teachers who argued that all students studying in an English school were expected to 'speak English clearly' and an 'English only' policy should be adopted in the classroom.

It's got to be basically English, if they're in an English school really.

(Lucy Thornton, Teaching Assistant, Year 6, Brenton Primary School)

I have unfortunately heard teachers say, (bangs on desk) "English please. Only in English please."

(Lynne Upton, French Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The principal of Windscott Academy admitted that she would love 'to hear the other side of the argument that says, "Right, you should have a policy that says, only English is to be spoken". In general, a school-wide language policy is welcomed, which could provide some general guidance for teachers to understand the language needs of the students. However, the variety of views seems to indicate that a one-size-fits-all approach might not be easy to implement given the complexity of individual classroom contexts:

No, we'd like to encourage it [student's home language] more but we're not quite sure exactly how! As opportunity arises! (laughs) I think the problem is that we don't have one huge community of one language. If we did, we could have clubs around that or all sorts of things, but we don't.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

We need to guide staff and it's something we need to make a decision on or at least have some – we're trying to draw up some [language policy] guidelines about, "How much is too much?" No one's expecting you to translate everything and actually it's not helpful. And similarly when we are employing language assistants, the idea isn't that they translate the lesson and then we do the lesson in Lithuanian, Polish and Russian; it's that we have that fine balance or when it's useful and when it's not.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

5.2 Attitudes towards languages

The interview data gathered from students, teachers and parents in both Brenton Primary School and Windscott Academy seem to reveal a similar pattern. In general, all three groups had a positive attitude towards the linguistic and cultural diversity in the school. Nevertheless, their attitudes towards the actual use of languages differed, with teachers' views varying considerably and parents mainly supporting the idea of 'English only' in the school. Teachers' and parents' views were interestingly contrasted with the indifferent attitudes of the students, many of whom according to their teachers seemed to be unwilling to talk about their background and home languages. This reluctance may be explained by their desire to learn English.

Students' attitudes towards languages

The majority of the EAL students we interviewed in both schools showed a strong interest in the English language and expressed a strong desire to acquire the language as quickly as possible. They cited various benefits of learning English such as 'help the family', 'think fast', 'get a good job', etc. Many students felt that they 'should' learn English, which can be illustrated by the following quote of a student from Brenton Primary School:

No I don't think I would like to learn Bulgarian. I would like to learn English because I am in England now and English language will go and help me.

(Petia, Bulgarian EAL Child, Brenton Primary School)

In general, the EAL students we interviewed seemed to have an indifferent attitude toward their home language, which was seen as 'useful', but not 'important'. Many students were aware of their cultural connection with their home language, but felt that learning and use English is a natural thing to do. This was particularly evident among those who had been in the UK for a relatively long period of time.

They tended to use English as the sole language in their thinking, learning, and interaction with peers and seemed to be experiencing language loss of their mother tongue:

Like it's hard for me to write in Latvian, because I've forgot, forget everything. Because like I'm probably not even going to go back to Latvia, so I don't really see no point speaking Latvian.

(Juris, Latvian student, Windscott Academy)

A student from Windscott Academy also noted that many EAL students did not want to use and talk about their home languages because they were afraid of being picked on by their peers who would 'put on an accent' and 'try and do their language'. The fear of being bullied is suspected to be quite common among EAL students. This seems to confirm the general impression conveyed in the interviews that the EAL students felt immensely proud of their competence in English, but were quite reluctant to talk about their home languages. The following two extracts, one from an interview with an EAL student at Brenton Primary School and another from Windscott Academy interestingly illustrate this impression. Here is an interview with Latvian student Juris:

Juris: *Yeah, sometimes teachers say like, write it in Latvian, then translate into English.*

Researcher: *Okay, so –*

Juris: *But I've never done that.*

Researcher: *You've never done that [using your home language], but you've heard them tell other people, or did they tell you?*

Juris: *They told me, if you want you can do it in Latvian, but I just didn't.*

Researcher: *You didn't, why didn't you want to do it in Latvian?*

Juris: *Because I learnt English really fast.*

Researcher: *Really, yeah, so because you speak it but I guess you don't write it. Okay. So it's actually... You find it easier to write in English then or?*

Juris: *Yeah.*

Researcher: *Okay, and what about when you think in your head? Do you ever think in Latvian, or do you think in English?*

Juris: *In English.*

Researcher: *In English. Okay. And what about when you do your homework?*

Juris: *I do it in English.*

Researcher: *English as well. Okay. And what about your mother, what does she think about using Latvian at school? Have you ever spoken about that with her?*

Juris: *No. She knows that I'm alright with English.*

Another example is provided by the interview with Adrejz, a Polish student at Brenton Primary School:

Researcher: *Now does it ever happen? Do you ever need to say a Polish word?*

Adrejz: *I don't have to say anymore Polish.*

Researcher: *Okay, do you think it would be good to use Polish ever in a classroom?*

Adrejz: *Pardon.*

Researcher: *Do you think it would ever help you to use a Polish word?*

Andrejz: *No, no.*

Researcher: *No, so it's not something that you think you would like to do.*

Andrejz: *Uhuh.*

Researcher: *Okay, and do the teachers ever talk about Polish or Poland to explain something in the classroom?*

Andrejz: *No.*

Researcher: *That's never happened?*

Andrejz: *I don't know, I'm really not sure.*

For newly arrived EAL children, however, the situation is different. At Brenton, they reported that they had received some bilingual support when they first arrived and thought it was 'helpful' and 'useful' to be able to draw upon their home languages in learning. Here Joanna, a Polish student from Brenton Primary School, explains:

Researcher: *Okay, so why do you think the teacher told you to write in Polish?*

Joanna: *To know how to say something, what that means. I can just look in a book and just page down and look at that thing to translate, and then I just know how to type.*

Researcher: *Okay, so it's helping you learn?*

Joanna: *Yeah. I just get it there, some sentence and write down, like in a hand there, I am just learning in hand.*

Researcher: *So you had it in your hand to learn. Okay, and did that help?*

Joanna: *Yeah.*

Teachers' attitudes towards languages

Like the students, the teachers in both schools had a positive attitude towards the linguistic and cultural diversity in their school. The following two comments illustrate the development of cultural openness within the school community as a whole:

I think we all recognise that the community is really diverse and also actually quite disadvantaged, that's the make-up of the community. So we aim to be a fully inclusive school for all our children to be safe, happy, achieving their potential, and also to offer a curriculum that embraces the diversity of this community and the world as well because the children need to learn about the world around them and we're very much of the view that the diversity you can offer within the curriculum is really important to help the curriculum with, you know, the next stage of their education as well as when they become adults and, you know, go to work hopefully in what can continue to be a very diverse society.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

Well I think we try to encourage students not to be ethnocentric or xenophobic. We want them to I think as a whole close the divide between different cultures and different languages and to help them embrace each other and to live in more of a peaceful community as a school and outside.

(Lynne Upton, French Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Despite a general open attitude towards cultural and linguistic diversity, however, there were some mixed feelings about the actual use of English and home languages in the classroom. On the one hand, it was felt that all languages should be encouraged where possible; but, on the other hand, there were some concerns that the use of home languages would take up time that should be spent on developing their English skills.

Despite a general open attitude towards cultural and linguistic diversity, however, there were some mixed feelings about the actual use of English and home languages in the classroom. On the one hand, it was felt that all languages should be encouraged where possible; but, on the other hand, there were some concerns that the use of home languages would take up time that should be spent on developing their English skills. The dilemma is well illustrated in the following two comments by a teaching assistant from Brenton Primary School and a drama teacher from Windscott Academy:

It is quite interesting that other children will ask the child who's from Poland or wherever else, they will actually ask them what does that mean in Polish, which is good, but I think once they're here and once they have the basis of the English language, once it's very basic, but you can work on that. I don't think you should have somebody in all the time in their own language, but I do think social wise I think they need that.
(Lucy Thornton, Teaching Assistant Year 6, Brenton Primary School)

Oh I'd probably use it [home language] all the time, but I do think that it's important, I mean if they're in this country, they're going to live in this country, they're going to work in this country, yes it's fantastic they speak more than one language but they do need to be able to speak English clearly and I think in an English school they should be able to speak English clearly.
(Tracey Page, Drama Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The bilingual teaching assistants' views provided another dimension to our understanding of teachers' attitudes towards languages. They seemed to be very clear about their role in the school, which was to support the EAL students in developing their English skills. They tended not to use home languages to communicate with the EAL students except when translating for students who struggled with English and the newly arrived students. They explained that they wanted to serve as a model for the students who they believed needed to use the English language in order to integrate into the community quickly. The use of home languages in the school was seen as a barrier to achieving these goals:

Even today I had to cover for science and some – two Lithuanian students say – started speaking in Lithuanian. I said, "Speak English" you know and this is quite funny because.... I'm a foreigner as well. But I try, "Why we should speak English?" I said, "Because I don't feel comfortable and the people around don't feel comfortable when you're speaking your own language and maybe if you will start speaking English, we can join the conversation because it may be an interesting conversation. So that's why you should speak English and you're going to learn how to speak English".
(Aron Letwick, PE Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Parents' attitudes towards languages

Our research did not generate much data about parents' attitudes towards languages, due to the difficulty of arranging interviews with parents and the problem of translation. However, based on the available data and through cross-referencing with the interviews conducted with the students and teachers, three observations can be made.

First, like the students and teachers, the parents in both schools were aware that Windscott Academy and Brenton Primary School are linguistically and culturally diverse communities and were generally happy for their children to learn in a multilingual environment.

Finally, there seems to be a clear division between home and school in terms of language use: home languages are meant to be spoken at home and English in the school. The division demonstrates the dilemma of many immigrant background parents. On the one hand, they want their children to learn and become more English, but, on other hand, they expect them to preserve their heritage language and culture.

Second, with regard to which language should be used in the school, they appeared to be very strict with their children and urged them only to use English for various reasons, such as 'learn English better to help family', 'mix with other children' or even 'become an English girl'. A student from Brenton Primary School, for example, lamented that when her father knew that she used Slovakian in the school she got told off. She reported that her father 'shouted' at her and called her 'hlúpa baba' or 'a stupid girl'.

Finally, there seems to be a clear division between home and school in terms of language use: home languages are meant to be spoken at home and English in the school. The division demonstrates the dilemma of many immigrant background parents. On the one hand, they want their children to learn and become more English, but, on other hand, they expect them to preserve their heritage language and culture.

Parents' attitudes seemed to have great influence on their children, which can be illustrated in the following two excerpts of interviews:

Researcher: *...How would they [your parents] explain, would they explain to you why you should use it [English]?*

Alena: *They would, because, well basically they think that my school's only for English, learning only English not Slovakian and they would, they would have a reason to like, right be mean to me about it. (Alena, Slovakian Child, Brenton Primary School)*

Researcher: *About it? And you said they want you to be an English girl?*

Alena: *Yeah.*

Another similar example is provided by the discussion with Ludis, a Latvian student at Windscott Academy:

Researcher: *[...] What languages do you speak?*

Ludis: *Just Latvian and English.*

Researcher: *[...] And when you speak these languages, Latvian and English, where do you speak them?*

Ludis: *Speak Latvian at home, and speak English everywhere else.*

5.3 Classroom strategies for EAL students

The large number of EAL students poses great challenges for both schools, but the teachers have shown a very welcoming attitude towards these students and put in enormous effort to help them to learn and integrate into the community. In the primary school, classroom activities are mainly organised to develop students' general literacy and learning skills. With the EAL students, the main goal is to get them to start to speak English and help them mix with other students. In the secondary school, there is more emphasis on subject teaching and the activities are mainly organised to achieve specific learning targets. The support for EAL students mainly focuses on helping them access the content of the class. Despite the differences, the teachers in both schools have drawn upon similar teaching strategies in the classroom.

Task simplification

Many teachers acknowledged that the situation was sometimes 'overwhelming' with classes full of EAL students speaking different languages. However, they did not see EAL students as the 'problem source'. Rather, they tended to think that this

is a common challenge that any teacher could face when teaching mixed ability groups:

I model all the answers because all of our students need literacy help - all of them. So everything that I do for a student with the EAL is only going to benefit a student with English, especially the Year 7s. I teach the two bottom sets and, yeah, they need a lot of help. So, for example, today we were doing PEE* [Points, Evidence, Explain] paragraphs, so the point was in one colour, the evidence in another, the explanation in another so they can see it broken down. And key word banks, so every lesson we have a board where we just put the key words up from that lesson so everyone gets to use them and they get repeated over and over, spelt out over and over, because every student needs that help. So I don't do anything differently.

(Samantha Benton, Drama Teacher, Windscott Academy)

A wide range of general classroom strategies of supporting weaker students were drawn upon by the teachers, such as 'slow it down', 'spoon feed everything in small chunks', 'demonstrate a bit more', 'break things down' 'repeat a bit', 'give a gesture', 'present the questions in different ways' and so on. The main purpose of these strategies was to facilitate the learning process by simplifying the tasks. The teachers did not seem to follow any specific EAL teaching principles, but mainly used a case-by-case approach and differentiate their teaching based on their knowledge, experience and observation over the years:

Well, not really apart from you would differentiate to suit your students. You know your students, you know how far they can go, you know how far to push them so you would just differentiate to that using strategies that have been put in place.

(Alison Black, English Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Translation

When asked specifically how they dealt with struggling EAL students who had very little English, the teachers agreed that translation and interpreting was the most effective and commonly used strategy.

Translators of a wide range of home languages were employed by both schools, who visited the school on a regular basis. There were also bilingual support teachers in both schools. They worked alongside the class teachers and provided bilingual support for the EAL students as well as liaison support for the family. Their work was highly commended by the students, teachers and parents alike, which can be illustrated by the comments below:

I think it is good to have somebody who can speak their language and speaks English very well, and I think they learn much quicker that way, by that person because they can switch from one to the other. Whereas if you're just trying to translate on a laptop there's this delay and you have to wait for it, and then you have to wait for a reply. Whereas if they're talking they can just talk and they switch into the English, and I think they learn a lot more like that, yeah.

(Lucy Thornton, EAL Teaching Assistant, Year 6, Brenton Primary School)

Because we don't just tend to have one other language in the class. Or at least a multilingual translator. But yeah, I mean I could definitely make use of something like that in a lesson, but having not had it then we can't do it.

(Tracy Page, Drama Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Other teaching strategies that involve translation are more textual, visual and material based. These strategies include using bilingual worksheet, word bank, translation software, dictionary, multilingual visual aids, bilingual books, etc. Many teachers reported that they often used dictionaries and translation software such as Google Translate in their teaching. In general, the use of translation as a teaching strategy was considered to be 'easy to use', 'helpful', and 'effective' in solving some immediate problems of understanding and communication:

Yeah, you've got all the different levels in English and it's using translation software to try and translate things. Then, try and break things down for her and then present the questions in different ways so you know, using the word 'add' and using the word 'total', just trying to put that into the software as well because we have so many different words for 'add' and so many different words for 'subtract'. Quite often the translation software then produces different things as well.

(Rachel Knight, Class Teacher, Year 4, Brenton Primary School)

It's easier to give them a dictionary and get them to translate key words and do that than maybe it is to do anything else.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Peer support

The use of peer support also appeared as a strategy in the classroom. For example, some senior EAL students were designated as 'young interpreters' who actively engaged in supporting the newly arrived EAL students. In the classroom, teachers also tended to pair up the students who spoke the same language so that they could help each other in lessons. The buddy system seemed to work quite well in both schools, and was highly appreciated by the students and teachers, which can be illustrated in the following comments:

There's a culture within the school that's very welcoming towards new children, so socially [...]– socially the procedure is in place to welcome the child and buddy up with a friend, we try and put children who've got the same first language in the same class where it's possible. We've got like a Lithuanian speaker[...]a new arrival, stick them in the same class if their age group is obviously correct. But very much, you know, trying to support their learning and make sure that we have high expectations of them, make sure that... you know, you expect them to be talking within a few months of listening first of all, then talking, then reading and writing and, you know, they can progress very quickly.

(Mary Carrs, Principal, Brenton Primary School)

Other things I've tried is like buddying them up in the classroom. Sometimes if they are very, very newly arrived I will buddy them up with a person who speaks a similar language who can at least explain the task to them. That is the biggest challenge, you really want them to do some work but it's finding different ways of allowing them to do it and not having to teach them a whole different lesson. For them it's like finding ways they can access the lesson that everybody else is doing.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Use of home languages

The teachers in both schools made a great effort to create opportunities to draw upon EAL students' home languages. However, since they did not speak these languages, they mainly used this strategy to make the EAL students feel welcome

and included rather than having an explicit pedagogical purpose. The opportunities to relate to individuals' home languages in lessons were quite limited in general and the activities were mainly constrained within non-pedagogical settings, such as register, greeting, and social events:

You know, they'll be asking the children to answer the register in a different language, you know, count in different languages, and if you've got a new child arrive, "Well why not help us all count to ten in your first language? We'd love to be able to count to ten in Tagalog [the language of Indonesia] or answer the register in Mandarin," you know, why not? The children think that's great fun as well. So various sorts of activities are encouraged and promoted in the school.

(Mary Carrs, Principal, Brenton Primary School)

What is nice is we've started to use, so in assembly at Christmas time they were saying Happy Christmas in their languages and we were embracing that and getting them to kind of promote it.

(Lynne Upton, French Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Making reference to home cultures

Another commonly used strategy by the class teachers was making reference to EAL students' home cultures. Many teachers reported that they could not 'do much about languages', since they did not speak them. However, they found it a lot easier to make reference to EAL students' home cultures, particularly in activities involving history, environment, weather, festivals and religions:

... we'll use the Bengali children a lot when we're doing religion [...] so they would speak about their experiences and share pictures of celebrations they've been to and things like that. Sometimes we do invite, I think like around Eid and stuff they brought in pictures of their fancy dresses and clothes to share with us. So we've kind of done it in that way, but that's more of a cultural celebration rather than a language celebration.

(Rachel Knight, Class Teacher, Year 4, Brenton Primary School)

Yes, I think it is because usually if we do that it's usually in a group discussion. Just for instance when it snows and everyone here we come to a standstill because we've got a little bit of snow, and then I might say to one of my Lithuanian or Russian students, "This is nothing to what you're used to." And they'll say, "No," and they'll explain to the other children that they have six foot of snow and they still manage to do this, this, this and this.

(Alison Black, English Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The effectiveness of this strategy is reflected in the positive responses by the EAL students who felt 'good', 'happy' and 'proud'. A teacher from Windscott Academy further explained why this strategy worked:

Well I think it's... because of a divide socially sometimes it's an opportunity to let them show off what they know and have some individuality, and to be anti, you know, encourage them to be proud of who they are, and I think when it comes to language learning often certainly in the socioeconomic context where we are now it's not particularly valued, so I think if children can see other students do it who they may perceive as being inferior to them, if they can witness them showing off a skill that they don't have, that can grow.

(Lynne Upton, French Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Overall, it is easier to create opportunities in lessons to make reference to the EAL students' cultures in arts and humanities subjects such as art, history and geography where the main focus is the production and interpretation of meaning:

On their cultural background, definitely. I mean, if we're talking about, [...]gardening or what plants you know, or what plants do you grow and how cold is it here, and how wet is it, and how dry it is in your country, there's tons of areas in which you would do that.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

Similarly, a science teacher reported that she had asked the EAL children to comment on the ethical issues of stem cell research in their home country:

I like to keep a bearing of it because if you're on about certain topical things in science it's nice to sometimes try and find out what's going on in their country around those topical things. But yeah, it's time. If you're doing stem cell research or something really topical you can sort of find out what the views around their... you know, because you might be sat there saying all this stuff and they might have completely different views and you've got to work on getting students to be tolerant of one another in different views, so you know, if you've then got them saying, "Oh well..." and then you get another kid going, "well..." but you've got to work with them.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

5.4 Summary

This section provides a detailed analysis of the language issues in the two case schools. In general, both schools have displayed strong characteristics of a multilingual learning environment, featuring a wide range of languages and multilingual practices. Despite the complex linguistic situation, however, there seems to be no specific written language policy in the school regarding the use of languages. Teachers seem to have their own classroom language policies which are based on their knowledge and experience with EAL.

The multiplicity of practice in the classroom also reflects the students', teachers' and parents' diverse attitudes towards languages. In general, teachers' views are mixed and vary considerably. In contrast, parents seem to all support the use of English only in the school. Students have less strong views in comparison with their teachers and parents. They tend to think that learning and using English is a natural thing to do, but they are also aware of their cultural connection with their home language.

In general, the teachers in Brenton Primary School and Windscott Academy draw on similar general classroom strategies, although there is more emphasis on subject teaching in the secondary school than in the primary school. There is also considerable commonality in the strategies used by the class teachers to teach EAL students. These include general classroom strategies with the purpose to simplify the tasks and facilitate learning as well as specific strategies, such as translation, peer support and making reference to home languages and cultures. The variety of teaching strategies we have identified in the primary and secondary settings reflects the presence of mixed abilities of EAL students as well as the linguistic and cultural diversity in the school.

SECTION 6: EAL STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

The average achievement patterns of EAL pupils discussed in Section 5 reflect and cover a wide diversity relating to prior knowledge of English, general linguistic ability, school year entered at arrival, socio-economic background, the experiences of different EAL support strategies developed by schools in England. They also reflect different levels of parental and community support outside the school and the various school experiences of EAL students prior to coming to England etc. (see Hollingworth and Mansaray, 2012; Demie, 2013).

Our research explores the issue of educational achievement within the context of the two case study schools. We identify the difficulty of assessing such achievement in these contexts.

6.1 Achievement data for Brenton Primary School

Table 5 shows that the achievement of EAL pupils at KS 2 in the East of England is slightly below the achievement of pupils whose first language is English (81% and 85% respectively) and slightly below the overall EAL achievement for England. EAL children at Brenton School achieved considerably below the average for England and the East of England and with regard to their non-EAL counterparts. However, the school data also showed that EAL students in Year 3 and Year 4 did very well when compared to the overall cohort. EAL pupils achieved, for example, significantly better results in reading in year 3 and 4 when compared to the overall cohort. Maths results for year 3 and year 4 also reflected EAL pupils' achievements where they did significantly better than the overall cohort. These figures show that the EAL student population reflects a very diverse cohort which is not captured by EAL average figures on achievement. There were no school data available for disadvantaged EAL students (i.e. EAL students who were on free school meals).

TABLE 5: ACHIEVEMENT AT KS2 LEVEL (2012/2013)²⁰

	Pupils whose first language is English		Pupils whose first language is other than English	
	Number of eligible students	Percentage achieving level 4 or above	Number of eligible students	Percentage achieving level 4 or above
England	447,943	86	85,789	83
East of England	54,255	85	5,849	81
Brenton Primary School	Over 35 pupils	Over 85% slightly above regional and national average	below 10 pupils	Over 65% significantly below national average

6.2 Staff perceptions of EAL primary school students' educational achievement

The general view towards the educational achievement of EAL children within Brenton Primary School would appear to be that EAL children who arrive in the first years of primary school will have reached similar attainment levels as their non-EAL peers by the end of Key Stage 2.

20. To safeguard the anonymity of the school concrete data have not been provided.

I would say as a sort of rule of thumb, if a child arrives in Reception ... if they arrived when they are five and they start the school year and they attend regularly, by the end of Key Stage 1, they should be attaining at an average level for a child for whom English is not their second language.....again, if they come to us at the beginning of Year 3 and attend regularly all the way through, we would expect them to be national average in line with their English speaking peers by the end of Year 6.

(Mary Carrs, Head Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

The above quote also suggests that those EAL children who enter primary school after the first years of schooling are less likely to have caught up with their non-EAL counterparts by the end of primary school. It may be that different (additional) strategies need to be developed for those children so that they can progress faster and have a chance to catch up with their English speaking peers by the end of the primary school. Some members of staff highlighted that some EAL pupils were 'out-stripping some of the white British children in their achievements' (Lisa Stone, EAL coordinator, Brenton Primary School) which reflects some of the data outlined above (see Year 3 and Year 4 cohort).

The quote below highlights the perception that EAL children who have lower levels of English should not achieve differently to non-EAL children in maths:

I think we would always view a second language shouldn't ever be a disadvantage in mathematics, you should be able to overcome that very quickly. So you would use translating tools, visual images, models, to make sure the children very quickly learn their numbers [...]. The children who come here, perhaps even further up the school, I mean, we've got four currently who are in Year 6 and they all arrived less than two years ago and, apart from one who's got some learning issues, the others have all got Level 4 in maths.

(Mary Carrs, Head Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

A few teachers linked different generalised views on EAL students' achievement according to their families' countries of origin. For example, there appeared to be a strong belief that Chinese students displayed a very high ability within numeracy, especially regarding calculations, when compared with their EAL peers. Interestingly, these generalised impressions were not applied to other EAL nationalities at the primary school which had 20 different countries represented (see also Lee 1994 who criticised the generalised view regarding Chinese achievement). For some, it was less a case of nationality and more one of ensuring parental support for education. As Laura Nield also commented, the ability to speak different home languages could be a positive force in children's development:

I just think it all interlinks with how much your family are involved in your education, your attitude to learning, if you speak several different languages....

(Laura Nield, EAL Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

Brenton teachers highlighted a range of relevant factors which they thought influenced the achievement of EAL children including initial English language ability, staff time for support, pupils' personalities and abilities and support from home. The experience of different education systems prior to coming to England was also highlighted - for example, different education systems of many EU countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, Poland) do not start primary schooling until the age of six or seven. The quote below reflects awareness of this:

Polish children coming, new, into primary school, they arrive, they come aged 7, they've had no formal education sometimes – same with Eastern European countries where compulsory education starts at Year 7. And we've got kids in school from 4 or 5, so there's a bit of catch-up to do there.

(Gordon Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

From the school's perspective, differences between children and catering for such differences should be valued. The headteacher saw diversity as an opportunity rather than a barrier:

I think you'd just want to [...], remain a school where we embrace all the opportunities that you have to have... you know, learning about different cultures and languages as part of your day to day experiences and [...] just to continue with the work we do about valuing difference and not seeing it as a disadvantage.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

6.3 Support for EAL students at Brenton Primary School

Several Brenton Primary School staff members focused on EAL issues including an EAL coordinator and an EAL specialist teaching assistant. The staff who could offer support for teachers, parents and pupils were crucial with regard to the achievement and monitoring of achievement of EAL children. In particular the one-to-one support with the EAL children in the classroom and outside the classroom was vital for their progression.

It seemed that, in particular, newly arrived EAL children with low levels of English received intense support in the first months to support their learning. It was not clear to what extent this support was continued for EAL children who had achieved a good level of English, however, needed to improve their Curriculum English. A local authority EAL advisor speculated that EAL students often appear to progress to the BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills)²¹ stage of learning but have yet to achieve the CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency)²². There is a need to focus on their written grammar, comprehension and reading to ensure this is achieved.

Within the classroom support strategies differed between the lower and the higher year groups of primary school. In the lower year groups support was often based around gestures, modeling and the use of pictures and the students were required to carry out practical tasks and then learn from them. Higher up in the school the tasks became more abstract and gestures and pictures were less efficient in explaining the tasks and increasingly CALP English abilities (mentioned above) were demanded.

Their curriculum English isn't developed and so they underachieve in terms of exam results etc.

(Victoria King, LA Manager)

Brenton Primary School devised an effective strategy to overcome this barrier in the subject of numeracy. They had three students in Year 6 who had arrived in the UK less than two years ago. When they were required to sit their Key Stage 2 numeracy test paper an interpreter was used to read out all the questions in their home language; all three students achieved a Level 4.

• **Their curriculum English isn't developed and so they underachieve in terms of exam results etc.** •

(Victoria King, LA Manager)

21. BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) relates to the day-to-day language which pupils use to interact with other people.
22. CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) refers to formal academic communication (listening, speaking, reading and writing) relating to specific subject areas. Skills such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring are reflected in CALP [see http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/bics_calp.php].

The engagement of the EAL students' parents was perceived as being fairly good although the staff felt that an increase in parental engagement with the school would help to support children's achievement. The school had recently introduced a number of initiatives such as parent buddying and Parent Mail to enhance parents' engagement with the school. As these strategies were newly implemented it was too early to see whether they had an impact on engagement and achievement. From the EAL children's perspective, they felt that their achievement (learning) was good.

6.4 Achievement data for Windscott Academy

Table 6 shows that the achievement of EAL pupils at GCSE in the East of England (of level 4 or above) is below the achievement of pupils whose first language is English (53.7 % and 58.6 % respectively). Overall, the EAL achievement figures for GCSE results in the East of England are below the average EAL achievement in England (58% for EAL students). Table 6 shows that EAL children at the Windscott Academy achieved below non-EAL children in their GCSEs (5+A*- C). The gap between EAL and non-EAL students' achievement becomes even more prominent when comparing GCSE results which included English and maths. There were no school achievement data available for disadvantaged EAL students (i.e. students who were on free school meals).

TABLE 6: ACHIEVEMENTS AT GCSE LEVEL (2012/13)

	Pupils whose first language is English		Pupils whose first language is other than English	
	Number of eligible students	Percentage achieved 5+A*-C grades	Number of eligible students	Percentage achieved 5+A*-C grades
England	490,311	59.2	68,040	58.0
East of England	58,572	58.6	4,864	53.7
Windscott Academy	over 200	Over 60%; slightly above the national average Achievement significantly below national average if English and maths are included (over 40%)	Between 40 and 50	Over 50%; in line with the national average Significantly below if English and Maths are included (over 15%)

6.5 Staff perceptions of EAL secondary school students' educational achievement

The general perception held by the teachers at Windscott Academy was that EAL students who entered with low levels of English struggled with the immediate submersion into mainstream education. The majority felt the students would benefit greatly by receiving intensive English lessons upon arrival. There was a perception that EAL students with low levels of English who had been immediately placed into mainstream secondary schooling withdrew for the first few months or they became disruptive due to their lack of understanding within lessons. One member of staff referred to the initial stage as 'the silent six months'. Confidence was highlighted as an important factor to enhance their language skills and overall educational achievement and progression.

So I think that's the main barrier, is their own self-confidence. But once you get over that or try and get through to them that, actually, they're doing okay. It doesn't matter, you know, how little they write: it's their second, third – some of them it's their fifth language. You know, they're doing a good job. Then once that confidence starts to build, actually, they pick it up really, really quickly and start really progressing very well.

(Samantha Benton, EAL Lead Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The teaching staff interviewed believed that the majority of EAL students struggled to achieve their full potential due to the literacy skills they possessed. Their inability to evaluate, investigate or to create informal dialogue whilst answering questions at GCSE level resulted in EAL students shying away from the more text heavy subjects. The quote below highlights, in particular, low levels of achievement for those EAL students who arrived with low levels of English in the final years of secondary school.

We try with the pictures, we try and engage them and we try to simplify but if that child is sitting in front of me, cannot write; they cannot pass a humanities GCSE. So are we setting them up to fail by trying to integrate them..? That's the main concern. Now clearly, with strategies we've got, discrete teaching of year 7, better career information, advice and guidance, so that would mitigate sometimes us putting EAL students on easier courses where there's no exam, BTECs, BTEC sport, you know, but that's wrong because some of these youngsters are super-bright.

(Susan Austin, Headteacher, Windscott Academy)

However, staff also recognised that some EAL students were achieving and progressing very well:

But it is definitely the case that some groups of EAL students, particularly girls, particularly at Key Stage 4, they want to thrive and they are doing well. They are hungry for success and their progress is outstripping [that of others].

(Susan Austin, Headteacher, Windscott Academy) (our addition)

I am proud of the Year 8 girl, because she was very, very quiet and we've sort of bought her out of that and she now does role play and she'll... it's like we're reading a play at the moment and she's not totally confident but I gave her just a small couple of lines to read and she read them out no problem, which she wouldn't have done. And then there was a Year 11 boy last year who worked really hard, really hard to get his grade in English that he needed. So I was quite proud of him as well. But I mean it's just what I do, you work with them in the classroom.

(Alison Black, English Teacher, Windscott Academy).

...Last year my Year 8, yeah, they all did really well and I'm teaching one of them this year in Year 9 and this is where I have a thing about - I think they're placed into lower groups because of EAL and not actually ability, because I have one student in there who's now gone into a higher group this year because he just shone last year, he really did, yeah, and he was a hand up and if he didn't quite know how to write something he'd be, "Oh Miss," you know, and we just really worked through and he was really good, yeah and that was really nice.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

● I am proud of the Year 8 girl, because she was very, very quiet and we've sort of bought her out of that and she now does role play and she'll... it's like we're reading a play at the moment and she's not totally confident but I gave her just a small couple of lines to read and she read them out no problem, which she wouldn't have done. And then there was a Year 11 boy last year who worked really hard, really hard to get his grade in English that he needed. So I was quite proud of him as well. But I mean it's just what I do, you work with them in the classroom. ●

(Alison Black, English Teacher, Windscott Academy).

The following interview extract also reflects EAL students' achievements in the early years of secondary school:

Interviewer:Where do you find the EAL students sit in relation to attainment compared to the whole school?

Alison Black: *I don't know. Again I can only speak for my classes and both of my EAL are sort of in the middle of the band that they're in. They're in one of the lower bands but they are sitting in the middle of the group, they're not behind other students.*

Interviewer: *So they're holding their own in the middle of that band?*

Alison Black: *Yeah.*

Interviewer: *In what way does your approach make a difference in the academic attainment of EAL children? Does it help do you think?*

Alison Black: *Well I think so because as I say, Angelica, she has moved up sublevels so...*

Interviewer: *Is there anything else that you do in the classroom that you feel that helps their attainment? Do you want me to give you some examples?*

Alison Black: *It's a small group so I can spend more time with her, which last year when she first came over, helped, and with this group being a small group it means that if I think she doesn't understand anything I can actually work more one-to-one with her than I could if I'd got a really big group.*

Interviewer: *How small is the group just out of interest?*

Alison Black: *15.*

The interviews with school staff revealed a range of opinions and knowledge regarding the achievement of disadvantaged EAL students (defined by free school meals). Some teachers seemed not to be aware of who was on free school meals while other teachers knew but were not necessarily concerned about this distinction since they did not perceive a difference between disadvantaged (EAL and non-EAL) students and those who were not on free school meals (a view that is now accepted by many in education).

No, free school meals or anything, so I wouldn't really know socio economically who is worse off and who isn't worse off.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

No, I don't. Not really. When I think about, if I, kind of, equate a couple of students... So, for example, I teach bottom set Year 7 and there's quite a lot of children in there that you can see come from a deprived background, both English and EAL, and no, some of them have been in the country six years. No, I don't see any difference.

(Samantha Banton, EAL Lead Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The range of teachers' perceptions might reflect that achievement patterns are quite different across the years and subjects and that there is no clear pattern across the school when analysing the achievement data. Explanations for achievement patterns in particular subjects were not readily available as two teachers commented:

There is still a gap between those that access Pupil Premium, in both those that have English as a first language and those that don't. It's one of the areas where it depends on the subject area; it's more marked in some subject areas, interestingly ...We were looking at this the other day and in one year group for example, there's an 8%, you know eight point gap between, so say for example, I can't remember what the numbers are we're talking about now, but 54% of students – of the

whole school cohort – were meeting their targets, but only 46 were in science. But in English, they were on par. And that's odd to me, because you'd think, "Well why? Why is there a difference in English?" One would assume if there were lots of students with additional needs, literacy needs within the sort of Pupil Premium, that English would be the one that's different, so we've got to really drill down as to why in certain areas.

(Alice Hale, Pastoral Care, Windscott Academy)

But if you ask me for a pattern across the school, there isn't one. And this is why we're scratching our heads. But there is no pattern for any other students either, because you could say, "If we got things right, our provision for students with SEN, there would be a trend going across the school that really they're either doing Okay or they're not". And some pattern would be replicated; it isn't the case.[...] I have sat with department data and looked at, "Okay what's the progress of students with EAL like in DT?" And I look at it in Year 9 and I think, "Wow! Crikey!" In fact I was doing this last night, that's well below non-EAL students. So I flipped through and I find year seven, that trend is totally reversed. What's that all about? In some students, the progress of students at the end of Key Stage 4 is better than non-EAL students. But then you have to look at the – that would be in the option blocks, so you then have to be careful of how many people are actually doing that course, you know the "small numbers are not significant" type argument. And at the moment, there is no pattern. We're scratching our heads; there's no pattern in the whole school.

(Susan Austin, Headteacher, Windscott Academy)

The two EAL students we interviewed had a fairly negative perception of their educational achievement. Below is the perspective of Ludis, a student from Latvia:

Interviewer: *How well do you think you're doing at school overall?*

Ludis: *Mmmm, a little bit under average.*

Interviewer: *A little bit under average. Is that across subjects, or are there subjects that you feel you do better at than others?*

Ludis: *Like some subjects ... I'm very bad at.*

Interviewer: *Okay, and what are the subjects that you're very bad at, for example?*

Ludis: *Basically maths, history, geography, stuff like that.*

Interviewer: *[...] and what do you find difficult in those subjects?*

Ludis: *I don't know.*

Interviewer: *And the subjects you do really well at?*

Ludis: *Construction, Spanish...*

The quote below by the Advisory Teacher highlights the awareness and frustration of EAL students regarding their potential achievement and the language barrier they face.

I can remember teaching a Lithuanian boy, and in Year 11...He'd come to us some time in Year 10. In Year 11, we were talking and he was very frustrated, because he said, "I know the maths, I know the science – we did this in Year 8 in Lithuania – but I don't have the English to talk about it the way I want to or to write about it the way I want to.

(Gordon Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

6.6 Support for EAL students at the secondary school

Staff at the Windscott Academy had many strategies in place to assist the achievement and progression of EAL students including translated hand-outs, display of key words, support outside the classroom; although not all teachers applied the same (level of) support. The Academy had also recently undergone significant restructuring to their inclusion facilities and they had employed additional translators. One new strategy that had a clear impact on EAL students' educational achievements was the introduction of intensive literacy lessons. This programme included all students who were performing at Level 2 literacy. They received five hours of extra tuition every week, in small group settings. They were continuously assessed and the results show they have moved up from level 2 to level 5 over a period of three months:

And we've been testing them on SATs papers, so it's not as if they've just had a wishy-washy test. They have sat down and actually done a two hour assessment and it's just fantastic. Some of them, their reading comprehension, you know, they started at level 3 and they're a Level 5 in reading. And it's just amazing.

(Samantha Benton, EAL Lead Teacher, Windscott Academy)

This initiative had been targeted at Key Stage 3 students, whose progress had enabled them to move up sets. However, support for Key Stage 4 had not yet been implemented. Recognition has been given to these promising results but the Senior Management Team was still monitoring the data very carefully, as the programme was still in its infancy.

The Head highlighted that since her arrival they had also changed the initial assessment system (McGraw Hill) arguing that it was a 'self-fulfilling prophecy':

But if you're talking to me about how – when they come in – in the past, they have been tested using a programme called McGraw Hill, which is designed to elicit or to support students with low levels of literacy - English speaking students. So it was the case at [our school] that they would be assessed using that tool and inevitably assigned to a bottom set in English. Now the way the setting happened, was that they would then be in the bottom sets for everything and I genuinely feel that that's very wrong. So we haven't got it right yet but ... we've been able to test using Raven's Matrices which as I understand it, and I would by no means profess to know what the test is – but it's more a test of cognitive ability. So on the basis of that we have now begun discrete English teaching and it is the case that some students have been assigned a slightly higher set, but it is the case from next year that if they need to be in bottom set in English for a while, they can be in the top set in Maths, because we completely and utterly restructured the curriculum to make that possible. Because otherwise, you end up with saying to students where English is an additional language, "You're in the bottom set" and it's, you're a self-fulfilling prophecy, which inevitably will lead to problems of unrest, mistrust, lack of achievement, as you go up the years.

(Susan Austin, Headteacher, Windscott Academy)

Parental support

Staff at the Academy generally commented on low levels of EAL (and non-EAL) parental engagement; although some subject teachers (e.g. the science teacher) viewed the engagement as being slightly better than other subject

teachers. Language barriers and shift work were often referred to when staff speculated about the reasons regarding low engagement. Teachers also made assumptions about the interest of EAL students' parents in education although mixed perceptions were given whereby some teachers highlighted the aspirations of some EAL parents and communities whilst other teachers assumed low aspirations.

It's not because they don't want to be at home, it's because they've got a 12 hour shift in the factory that day, so they're not there when their child gets home or they don't understand.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

The Academy was aware that the area of EAL parental engagement was one that had to be addressed in the future.

6.7 Summary

In general, there was a distinction between the primary and the secondary school with regard to achievement. The primary school staff emphasised that EAL children who arrived in the early years of primary school will achieve as well as their non-EAL counterparts. The achievement figures of the primary school also reflected that in some years (Year 4 and Year 5) EAL students achieved better than the average for the overall cohort. These pockets of achievement might be explained by EAL pupils' backgrounds, their arrival time, the specific class context etc. At the secondary school the general perception of teachers was that EAL students did not reach their full potential which was also reflected in the GCSE results and here, in particular, GCSE results which included English and Maths. Again these figures represent an average achievement and staff highlighted that some EAL students in specific year groups and subjects achieved well; although no pattern could be identified with regard to EAL achievement data across the years and subjects. However, overall the impression was that EAL students were less likely to take GCSEs in the Humanities because they had not achieved 'Curriculum English' or what Cummins (1999) calls Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). The secondary school had implemented a literacy programme for EAL students and had been encouraged by the results of its targeted approach to improve the level of literacy for EAL students. However, this project was in its infancy and the effects on overall achievement (e.g. the uptake of more GCSEs in the Humanities by EAL students) will need to be monitored further.

Although both schools and, in particular, the primary school had a range of strategies and some staff support available for EAL it was difficult to decipher whether one specific strategy was more effective than another strategy regarding achievement. All stakeholders agreed that EAL coordinators who provided one-to-one or group tuition within and outside the classroom had a considerable impact on achievement. Translating exams papers in mathematics and science also seemed very effective to achieve the right level in these subjects.

EAL achievement in the primary school was similar to non-EAL students if students had arrived in the early years. An area which needs to be looked at is how students who arrived later can be supported more effectively so that they will reach their potential and reflect overall the non-EAL students' achievement. There was also a question to what extent students could be supported beyond the BICS stage. Support seemed to cluster around new arrivals and intensive support should be also provided for EAL students who have settled in so that they could progress to the CALP stage.

The findings outlined above are preliminary and need to be tested in a larger scale study to see whether they can be generalised beyond the two case studies.

Although both schools and, in particular, the primary school had a range of strategies and some staff support available for EAL it was difficult to decipher whether one specific strategy was more effective than another strategy regarding achievement. All stakeholders agreed that EAL coordinators who provided one-to-one or group tuition within and outside the classroom had a considerable impact on achievement. Translating exams papers in mathematics and science also seemed very effective to achieve the right level in these subjects.

SECTION 7: SOCIAL INTEGRATION

This section examines perceptions of the social integration of EAL children in each school, looking at each case individually. Social integration is understood here as peer group relations and friendships in school.

7.1 Social integration in Brenton Primary School

Perceptions from staff and pupils in Brenton Primary School pointed towards a positive integration of EAL children in school. Staff members insisted on the mix of friendships between EAL and non-EAL children and this view was echoed by the children themselves. The headteacher commented that there was 'strong mixing' and that children were 'very well integrated'. Overall the view was that of good friendships between EAL and non-EAL children, insisting on the fact that non-EAL children tended to welcome EAL children no matter what the language. However, this socialisation did not always extend outside school, as few children met up outside school.

Conversely, in some cases, staff commented that children tended to group by linguistic group. This was particularly the case for Polish children as there were more of them in the school:

I think in some places across the school though, some of the Polish boys have sort of got each other and they stick together. I think it really depends. Obviously if someone's in the same year group and they speak the same language as you, I think then quite often they gravitate towards that person. It's not like they've separated themselves, they have integrated with other children as well but they just primarily go towards each other.

(Rachel Knight, Year 4 class teacher)

Teachers' conceptualisation of social integration

Members of staff viewed school as playing an active role in 'community cohesion' (Mary Carrs, Headteacher) and helping overcome some of the tensions and divisions experienced in the local community. Social integration was thus defined in a wide sense, which encompassed social integration across the school and within the classroom. This echoed the overall school ethos, defined as 'accepting difference' by the EAL support teaching assistant.

The whole school ethos is about accepting difference, and we have such a diverse range of children in this school, that normally works quite well in school.

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

This view was carried through in the classroom with a focus on 'celebrating differences' and 'developing empathy' towards others (Rachel Knight, Year 4 class teacher, Brenton Primary School).

Social integration was thus conceptualised as part of the overall inclusive ethos of the school, which was promoted both in and outside the classroom and encompassed both EAL and non-EAL children. As part of this ethos, as voiced by the headteacher, speaking another language was promoted as an asset, something to be proud of, that made children feel valued in the classroom and the school.

However, the EAL support assistant acknowledged that the positive social integration in the school 'might not carry through' outside. She gave an example of how two girls who were close friends in school, could not meet outside of school and ended up having to Skype each other:

I heard of one pair of friends who, one was a Bangladeshi girl and one was a white kid and they were friends but they come from very different families, but they Skype each other. They live like two blocks away and they Skype each other! They're best mates in school, so they're obviously not physically getting together when they're home! So I think in school we have a very good attitude towards everyone mixing up. It might not carry through!

(Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

School strategies and effectiveness

Members of staff perceived school as playing an active role in promoting social integration for EAL children. This role was viewed by Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School as providing continuity between the classroom and the whole school. Specific strategies to help the integration of EAL children were a 'buddy system', which was put into place as soon as a child with no or little English entered the school. The aim of the 'buddy system' was to provide 'instant friends' (Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School). This included seating newly arrived children next to 'buddies' who could support them in the classroom, as well as a peer buddy system for the playground. These strategies were defined as 'very much about making sure that they're starting to make friends' (Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School).

A 'young interpreters' scheme was also organised in the school, under the coordination of the EAL support assistant. The aim of the young interpreters was to provide linguistic support for newly arrived children, both in the classroom and outside the classroom, as well as provide friendship and peer support. In some cases, children were buddied up with a young interpreter, in other cases the young interpreter would come into the classroom to help a child, or only help during playtime and lunchtime.

For some children, the young interpreter scheme was the first step in ensuring the integration of a newly arrived child within peer and friendship groups.

Yeah, then I decided to sort of sit her, sit Joanna when she first came with friends of Neera who's our young interpreter. So then she got to know the rest of Neera's social group as well. So then now there's like four or five of them that all play together. Because I kind of moved them around so they're in different... so sat next to Miranda who's one of the other girls and in another lesson she was sat next to Kathy who's one of the other girls and, they all play together so it's just like she then fitted into that social group.

(Rachel Knight, Year 4 class teacher, Brenton Primary School)

Another strategy was to provide newly-arrived children with a 'diagram' designed by the whole class, with a drawing of each child and their name. This was meant to help newly-arrived children get familiar with their class and feel welcomed.

These strategies were deemed very effective by members of staff, who considered they played an important role in the social integration of newly-arrived and EAL

children in school, even though the role of the school was seen to be a balance between intervention and 'laissez-faire':

I think it's the same with friendship groups, because obviously you can't force children to get on if they're not going to get on.

(Rachel Knight, Year 4 class teacher, Brenton Primary School)

Such strategies, as mentioned earlier, were part of a wider school ethos of inclusion. As such, other non-specific, whole school strategies were also viewed as having an impact on the positive social integration of the school.

Non-targeted strategies and their impact

Members of staff insisted on the fact that the whole school cohesive and inclusive ethos participated in promoting social integration of EAL children. The headteacher pointed out the role of class organisation, which were of mixed ability and reorganised every year, in promoting social integration for all children:

So mixed ability classes. We remix our classes every year so they don't just move up as a class, they're remixed every year into two new classes. That definitely encourages social integration as well as rebalancing of the classes.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

Seating arrangements were also put forward as a way of encouraging social integration, by making sure EAL children were sat next to 'caring children' (Rachel Knight, Year 4 class teacher, Brenton Primary School). However, this was not always the case, as reported by the Lucy Thornton, a teaching assistant:

Sit with him, yes. Quite difficult really because I am also, you're not just sitting with that one child, you've also got another three, four children on the table who may have different language, I mean I sit on the table with two from Lithuania, one from Poland and two special needs children

(Lucy Thornton, Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

The cohesive school ethos was also promoted in specific curriculum areas, such as Personal Social Citizenship and Health Education programmes:

Our Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education programme promotes social cohesion. That's a very important part of the curriculum, to make sure the skills are covered and how we problem solve, units about, you know, responsibility, relationship, anti bullying, all those are part of the curriculum which promotes complete integration.

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School)

This inclusive ethos was echoed in particular strategies to promote positive play such as play leaders in playground. Their aim was to 'promote positive interaction between everybody' and 'involve all the children'

(Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School).

Attitudes towards the use and promotion of EAL children's L1 was also perceived as a way to favour social integration. This built on developing the idea of speaking other languages as an asset rather than a 'deficit' and recognising the skills of EAL children who are learning English as an additional language.

I suppose make a thing of how great it is that this child's got another language and it's this new experience.

(Rachel Knight, Year 4 Class Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

This was perceived as giving EAL children 'extra kudos' (EAL support assistant), as they could then be seen as the 'literacy ninjas of the classroom' (Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School), which could favour social integration.

The pastoral side of teaching was put forward as having a positive effect on the social integration of non-EAL children. Non-specific lessons on including people who are different were also offered as examples of favouring social integration, without singling out a specific child. This was seen as a way of developing empathy, which could help with social integration.

But, I didn't say like this is because we've got a new student arriving. I just kind of did it in a sort of... we just talked more generally about how would you feel if you were in a new place, and then kind of just said, "Oh and she's new and she doesn't speak our language, she might be finding it quite difficult."

(Rachel Knight, Year 4 Class Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

The views of pupils

EAL pupils comments during interviews supported the idea of positive social integration and mixed EAL/non-EAL friendships, even though these were at times limited to the school and did not happen much outside school. In some cases, children would socialise in the park outside school but not go to each other's houses. Other children tended to socialise exclusively with pupils from the same linguistic group outside school. This, however, was not the case for all EAL children.

Children did not perceive the school or teachers as playing an active part in their socialisation in school. They viewed their peers as much more important in the way they had managed to make friends and feel part of the school. In particular, friendships with individual children to start with were pointed out as helping feel more confident in school, finding their way around and then feeling included within wider friendship groups.

Interviewer: *Yeah, and how did you make friends when you first arrived in October, how did you make your friends? How are you friends with Francesca and Nadwa?*

Joanna (Polish EAL pupil): *Just talking with her and Francesca have got like friend and then he told me he can be your friend, and then I got friend.*

These individual friendships were considered easier in the early days as children found it hard to understand their English speaking peers and felt embarrassed to admit they could not understand them. Small friendship groups were perceived as more helpful as they allowed the use of hand gestures, miming and the use of the pictures provided in the young interpreters scheme. Asking for help with English and understanding was pointed out as a way of making friends Joanna, a Polish EAL child commented:

Just when you don't know something, just go to someone and say I don't understand and then when they are helping, make friends.

(Joanna, Polish EAL pupil, Brenton Primary school)

These views reflect the positive impact of the buddying up system and providing 'instant friends' for newly arrived children.

Pupils who had received the support of a child from the same linguistic background also insisted on the positive impact this had in helping them integrate in school and then join in wider friendship groups.

Irena (Lithuanian EAL pupil): *Like the boy that came from Lithuania, he doesn't know English, so I got to translate for him.*

Interviewer: *How easy do you think it is to make new friends, when you first arrived at school, what do you think? Was it easy?*

Tomek: *No.*

Interviewer: *No? What was difficult about it? Why was it difficult?*

Tomek: *Because I didn't know how to make friends in English.*

Interviewer: *Really? That must have been difficult, so what did you do?*

Tomek: *I asked Kamil [Polish boy].*

In relation to this, not having a child from the same linguistic background was seen as a difficulty for some pupils:

A bit ... a bit surprised and because I know there's a lot of people who are from Bulgaria here but there's no-one in the school. It's really hard to learn English because there is no-one to help you like in the Bulgarian language.

(Petia, Bulgarian EAL pupil, Brenton Primary School)

However, the language barrier was also seen as problematic by some pupils, who felt it prevented them from joining in. This was the case for Petia and Tomek:

Petia (Bulgarian EAL pupil): *Yeah. And sometimes that's a bit hard because your friends are speaking but you can't get in the conversation because you don't know [English].*

Interviewer: *When you arrived in this school and you didn't speak English, what did you find really difficult? Can you remember that?*

Tomek (Polish EAL pupil): *To speak with my friends.*

Sitting next to supportive friends was also viewed as a way to feel more comfortable in the class and get to know other children quickly.

Areas for development

One area that was seen to hold potential for developing further social integration was reaching out towards parents in this primary school. A parent buddying system had been set up by the Parent's Association but it was not as successful as hoped as few parents got involved. It did, however, provide a form of support both personal and linguistic for newly-arrived families with no or little English (Niki Murray, parent governor, Brenton Primary School) and strengthening 'links between home and school' (Mary Carrs, Headteacher, Brenton Primary School), as well as encouraging cohesion across the school by 'opting in' to different cultural practices (Natalie Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School).

7.2 Social integration in Windscott Academy

The overall view on social integration in Windscott Academy pointed to some lines of tension between students, both in and outside the classroom. These lines of tension included difficulties for newly arrived, non-English speaking students to integrate within the mainstream because of language barriers.

As a result, some students experienced strong feelings of isolation upon arrival in the school. Friendship groups tended, in a first instance, to be organised along national/linguistic backgrounds. However, it was not clear whether this was only the case for newly-arrived students. Some teachers and students insisted on the mix of social relations in general between EAL and non-EAL students, stressing that there was 'no particular tension' (Alice, Pastoral Care) whilst others pointed to more linguistically segregated groups (Tracey Page, Drama Teacher and Aron Letwick PE Teacher).

The tendency for students to group according to linguistic background was presented in some cases as a problem for social integration, as noted by the teacher below:

Some groups of EAL students who naturally come together [...] I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing but I think it can cause a bit of pressure for social integration.

(Joanne York, History Teacher)

Some teachers noted that there were tensions between different groups of EAL students. In particular, tensions were noted between Polish and Lithuanian speaking students (Aron Letwick, PE Teacher), expressed through antagonism between the groups and swearing in the respective languages.

In the classroom, issues linked to social integration were dependent on the class composition. In particular, the issues were associated with the concentration of a large number of non-English speaking students in a class. This led to difficulties in terms of behaviour management, in particular swearing in the classroom, which led to a feeling of lack of control and caused difficulties for teaching

(Tracey Page, Drama Teacher).

From the viewpoint of the students that were interviewed, it appeared that it was easy to make friends. One student, however, insisted on how falling with the wrong crowd early in his school years had a negative impact on his school career. This student felt he would be more focused and successful at school if he could be taught in isolation to avoid 'messaging about' (Ludis, Latvian EAL student).

Teachers' conceptualisation of social integration in school

The Senior Management Team and teachers' overall views and conceptualisation of social integration in school pointed toward developing a 'cohesive school' (Ben Peacock, School Governor).

This ethos of cohesion and inclusion built on making students feel they belonged to the school, helping them feel comfortable and building their confidence. Social integration was conceptualised at different levels by staff. For some teachers, social integration was understood as integrating students in the classroom, helping them access learning and the curriculum.

Some saw social integration as mainly taking place outside the classroom, especially during lunch break when teachers could note whether some children were excluded or whether students from the same linguistic background grouped together. The school ethos of not having a separate staff room and of members of staff eating in the same place as students helped develop this awareness of social integration outside the classroom. In addition, clubs and sport groups were seen as important settings for social integration of EAL students (Aron Letwick, PE Teacher and Ben Peacock, School Governor).

Other teachers expressed a wider conception of social integration, which stretched outside school. This in particular included parents, and the need to develop more communication and stronger relationships with parents of EAL students (Ben Peacock, School Governor). The overall view, however, was that social integration in the school did not reflect issues around social integration outside school, which were depicted as more difficult and problematic (Alice Hale, Pastoral Care). This view was expressed by teachers and one student, who mentioned being the victim of racist incidents outside school. Few of the school's staff comments addressed wider issues of social integration in society, and school was rarely presented as a vector of social integration that could have an impact on integration in the community. One teacher, however, stressed the importance of 'learning English in an English speaking country' (Tracey Page, Drama Teacher). The view was more in terms of assimilation into the country from an economic perspective, along the lines of needing English to get jobs in England.

There was also ambivalence about the desired level of intervention of the school in promoting social integration. In the 'restricted' view of social integration, defined as integrating in the classroom, teaching strategies were considered important in promoting this integration, to construct a positive and inclusive learning environment, and cater to the linguistic need of different students. In the 'extended' view however, the role of school was less clearly defined and sometimes contested. One teacher noted that labeling EAL children was in itself counter-productive for social integration:

I don't think it's always beneficial to be always labelling EAL, EAL, EAL [...] the point is that you want to be integrating them into a group. [...] I think if you're always kind of isolating that point and segregating it doesn't do anything for social cohesion
(Lynne Upton, French Teacher).

Another teacher insisted on the fact that teachers could encourage social integration in the classroom, but admitted it was more difficult outside: *'so they're integrated almost in a classroom but we can't control them, we can't control their lives'* (Joanne York, History Teacher).

School strategies and effectiveness

This ambivalence around the role of school in promoting social integration in the wider sense was reflected in the lack of consensus in staff's perception about school strategies and their effectiveness. The overall school ethos of inclusion and acceptance of diversity and difference was promoted in school assemblies. This ethos was echoed by teachers who insisted on 'embracing their [EAL students] opinions' (Lynne Upton, MFL Teacher). However, there was no consensus amongst staff on what constituted a 'strategy' to help with the social integration of EAL children within the school. For some, there were no particular strategies for the social integration of students and support was 'generic' (Alison Black, English Teacher). For senior management however, forms of pastoral support, one-on-one conversations with children were put forward as the main strategies towards social integration of EAL students.

I don't think it's always beneficial to be always labelling EAL, EAL, EAL [...] the point is that you want to be integrating them into a group. [...] I think if you're always kind of isolating that point and segregating it doesn't do anything for social cohesion 🗨️

(Lynne Upton,
French Teacher).

For some members of staff, in particular the teachers, 'buddying up' in the classroom and the 'young interpreters' scheme were the main strategies, and these were deemed fairly effective. These strategies, however, were more geared towards language support than social integration, which appeared to be more of a 'side effect'. Views differed also when it came to the effectiveness of these various strategies. For teachers, buddying up in the classroom was viewed as an effective classroom strategy to help develop English language learning, to access the curriculum and understand lessons. The young interpreter's scheme was viewed as important and effective, both 'language to language' and 'year group to year group' (Samantha Benton, EAL Lead Teacher).

However, although teachers recognised the positive impact this had on learning and might leave students less isolated, they were also ambivalent about the effectiveness in terms of social integration. For one teacher buddying up was interpreted as 'forcing them to make friends' (Joanne York, History Teacher), for others it meant that students from the same linguistic background would then group together, and as discussed above, this was not equated to 'social integration'. All teachers recognised the impact of learning English on social integration. As summarised by this teacher's comments:

The ones that can speak fluent English are fully integrated members of the school, but the ones that don't speak as fluent English will tend to stay with their own cultural and social groupings

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher).

The school governor (Ben Peacock), pastoral care coordinator (Alice Hale) and the PE teacher (Aron Letwick) insisted on the role of sport in favouring social integration. This, however, carried its own limitations. For the school governor this only worked in the favour of students who liked to take part in sports, and other initiatives would be necessary to benefit all students. The PE teacher noted that some sport activities were favoured by a certain linguistic/national group, in particular basketball which was mainly practised by Lithuanians, which created forms of national/linguistic segregation.

However, there was no clear guidance on what other groups or clubs could help students. The idea of an 'international' club was rejected on the basis that it ran the risk of creating segregated groups such as a 'Polish club'.

Non-specific strategies and their impact

Senior management staff and teachers also viewed strategies that were not directly targeted at encouraging social integration as having an impact on the social integration of EAL children. Teachers highlighted the ways in which classroom organisation and strategies had an impact on social integration. Classroom composition and the ratio of EAL/non-EAL children was seen to play an important part in encouraging or dissuading social integration. According to Tracey Page, the drama teacher, large numbers of EAL children concentrated in a class created linguistic segregation and caused disruption in the terms of behaviour which went against positive social integration. Events such as swearing, singling others out were seen to occur if behaviour management was difficult.

Seating plans were also considered to play a role in promoting social integration. For some teachers, this meant placing children in non-linguistic groups to encourage mixing and avoid grouping through common language. For other teachers, the system of buddying up an EAL student with another EAL student from the same linguistic background was considered helpful in that, as argued by

the science teacher, it allowed the newly-arrived student to feel less isolated and build confidence socially, by allowing a more 'established' EAL student to support a newly arrived student. This came both from being allocated a 'friend' and from being able to access the lesson more easily. However, this strategy was not always successful, and teachers and students mentioned some form of resistance to being 'associated to a new arrival' (Lynne Upton, French Teacher).

For others, seating plans were a way of ensuring mixing in the classroom and avoiding linguistically segregated groups. The use of clear instructions was also seen as a way of encouraging social integration. Aron Letwick, the PE teacher, explained how he used different levels of language complexity when communicating instructions, which encouraged non-EAL children to explain details to EAL children. In his view this encouraged cooperation and thus social integration.

Beliefs about social integration and the use of home language (L1)

Beliefs about the use of students L1 (home language) in school and the classroom was also linked to social integration, although views were far from consensual in that respect.

As mentioned earlier, for one teacher, speaking English only was central to integration in an English school (Tracey Page, Drama Teacher). For others speaking in the students' L1 was acceptable as long as it did not make others uncomfortable: 'speak your own language but do not make others uncomfortable and allow joining in' (Aron Letwick, PE Teacher).

Some teachers supported the use of L1 as a strategy to build confidence and help with social integration. This was expressed by Lynne Upton, the French teacher:

Because of a divide socially, sometimes it's an opportunity to let them show off what they know and have some individuality [...] if children can see other students do it [speak another language] who they may perceive as being inferior to them, if they can witness them showing off a skill that they don't have, they can grow.

(Lynne Upton, French Teacher)

The views of students

In Windscott, the EAL students that were interviewed mentioned having friends from the same linguistic background as well as English friends. However, both students spoke to their friends predominantly in English. Juris a Latvian EAL pupil said it was because he felt more comfortable speaking English.

Juris: *I'm friends with a couple of Latvians in the school.*

Interviewer: *Okay. What is it like to be in a classroom where most of the children don't speak Latvian?*

Juris: *Normal. It's like, I'm better at English anyway, so...*

(...)

Juris: *If anything, I'm like, like some of my best friends are English and I'm actually better at English than them (Juris, Latvian EAL student, Windscott Academy)*

Interviewer: *Okay, and with your Latvian friends, do you ever speak in Latvian?*

Ludis: *Mostly English.*

When recalling his initial experience of arriving in an English speaking school, one student insisted on the benefits of having a friend who spoke the same language.

Interviewer: *Who helped you the most?*

Ludis: *My friend. He was Latvian as well, and he speaks good English.*

Interviewer: *Okay, so did you sit with him in the class?*

Ludis: *Yeah.*

Interviewer: *And how would he help you?*

Ludis: *He like helped me with the words and stuff.*

However, for another student, initial language difficulties upon arrival, in primary school, were brought up as a reason for 'falling with the wrong crowd' and developing anti-school attitudes.

Basically there was people who basically I kept on messing about with them in primary, so basically in a way they've stopped my education, because like I mess about every time in lesson, only if I like a lesson [...] I don't mess about in them.

(Juris, Latvian EAL student, Windscott Academy)

Discriminatory incidents were mentioned in relation to school, and the student's view was that school intervention was not all that effective.

Interviewer: *And what about in school, have these kind of racist incidents happened in school as well?*

Juris: *Sometimes, just like, if like someone says something racist, I can get my foreign friends.*

Juris: *And we just [...] basically just argue with them.*

Interviewer: *Really. And has that happened to your friends, people have said things to your friends?*

Juris: *Yeah.*

Interviewer: *What kind of things do they say?*

Juris: *Just like, you're stupid, whatever country you're from, go back to your own country, and stuff like that.*

Interviewer: *And what happens if it's in school, do the teachers do something about it or?*

Juris: *Yeah, they try to, but it don't really work. [...] Basically they put, they used to put, I think they used to put posters up about racism and stuff like that.*

Interviewer: *Okay, and you feel that didn't work very well?*

Juris: *No.*

Interviewer: *Why not? Why do you think it didn't work?*

Juris: *Because like people will still do it, because like, if we're like saying bad stuff, you know when you argue, yeah, you try to say bad stuff to say to [...] And if I'm saying that stuff, they all just say go back to your own country [...] Then I just go up to them and say fight me.*

The same student mentioned the experience of discrimination outside school, which points to some of the tensions and issues surrounding social integration in that community:

And like I was in a park [...] , and this boy was keeping, kept calling me a foreigner, like Latvians are stupid [...]

(Juris, Latvian student, Windscott Academy)

7.3 Summary

Brenton Primary School had developed some effective strategies to promote successful integration in the school. These strategies built on an ethos of inclusion and focused on ensuring that newly arrived children established friendships early on and received a range of support by teachers, staff and peers in the classroom and in the playground.

However, these strategies were mainly targeted at the initial period of arrival, and there was less information about the way in which this integration was monitored and supported later on. The social integration also did not seem to always carry on outside the school, where friendships tended to be more restricted to friends from the same linguistic community. There were, however, exceptions to this.

Overall, the social integration of EAL pupils in the primary school appeared to be successful in that all EAL pupils interviewed felt they had made friends in the school. In addition, these friends were presented as one of the main sources of support in learning English.

The success of social integration for children in the primary school needs to be understood within the distinct characteristics of primary schools, the fact that children are in one class with one or two teachers only, its size which allowed a more family like atmosphere, the insistence on pastoral care at that age and the limited number of EAL pupils in the school, which encouraged making friends with children who did not share the same linguistic background.

In Windscott Academy the view of social integration was more fragmented. This fragmentation was apparent for teachers and staff through the fact that there were linguistic groups across the school and tensions between different national/linguistic groups as well. In addition, teachers insisted on the fact that many newly-arrived students experienced feelings of loneliness and isolation.

The view of what constituted social integration was also fragmentary. For some social integration was what happened in the classroom, for others it was outside the classroom. The overall view, however, was that social integration in the school was more positive than what happened in the wider community. This view was contradicted, to some extent, by the comment of one student about xenophobic incidents in school.

The fragmentation was also apparent in the lack of consensus about what should be done to encourage social integration for EAL students in school. For some the very fact of labeling students as EAL went against social integration, for others there were doubts about the level of intervention the school should adopt to promote friendships. Finally the grouping of children by linguistic background was interpreted in different ways, it was seen as a source of confidence for students by some teachers and a problem by others.

Overall, the social integration of EAL pupils in the primary school appeared to be successful in that all EAL pupils interviewed felt they had made friends in the school. In addition, these friends were presented as one of the main sources of support in learning English.

Overall, the view that emerged was that there were issues and tensions around social integration both in the classroom and in the school at large. Whilst the schools were active in developing certain strategies to help promote cohesion and integration, there were still contradictions and uncertainties. This can also be attributed to the nature of secondary schools, in which students move from one lesson to another, and the focus of the teacher cannot be on the same level of pastoral care as in primary schools.

SECTION 8: COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

The insight into communication structures and processes regarding EAL is an important factor for the understanding of the social integration, educational achievement and the language development of EAL pupils. This section addresses the following questions: how is communication about different aspects of EAL organised within the schools? How do teachers, senior management and non-EAL pupils perceive their communication with EAL pupils²³ and their parents and vice versa²⁴? Communication structures and processes between the two schools and their local communities are also addressed.

8.1 Formal and informal communication structures regarding EAL

A number of formal communication structures and processes which dealt specifically with EAL issues existed in both case study schools and facilitated the social integration, achievement and language development of EAL pupils. Both schools identified staff who specifically dealt with EAL issues. The primary school employed an EAL coordinator and an EAL specialist teaching assistant. The secondary school did not have an EAL coordinator; instead the person responsible for pastoral care, an EAL-lead teacher (who was also a history teacher) and two bilingual teaching assistants were dealing with EAL issues at the school; as the school had over 200 students this was not an ideal situation with regard to EAL support. These members of staff were central points of communication regarding EAL issues and served as a communication and information hub for EAL pupils, EAL parents, teachers and senior management as reflected, for example, in the quote below:

...but since [the EAL specialist teaching assistant] has been in the school and that is her job it's much better, because you can go to her and she will say, well you know we ought to do this or we ought to do that, which is fantastic. We do have TAs (teaching assistants) who aren't familiar with all of the EAL, you do need the guidance. It's very important that you have guidance from somebody who knows what they are doing.

(Lucy Thornton, EAL Coordinator, Brenton Primary School)

In Brenton Primary School, the EAL coordinator was responsible for the EAL students' induction into the school and the administrative side of EAL while the main responsibility of the EAL specialist teaching assistant was to help newly arrived pupils settle in and provide one-to-one support for those who were at the early stages of learning English. The EAL specialist teaching assistant assisted children in the classroom and organised a 'booster' group for those children who were advanced learners of English which took place after school. There was a small budget for EAL which for example, was used to buy a tablet so that EAL staff could use Google Translate and show pictures to children who were at the early stages of learning English. The EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant thought that pictures were, in particular, effective in learning English:

Sometimes those translation tools are not nearly as good as a picture, because you can talk about the picture, so I find that very useful.

(Laura Neild, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

The EAL Lead Teacher at Windscott Academy started in 2011 and was initially 'a go-to person if people were unsure what was the best avenue or strategy to use in class and, kind of, community cohesion' (Samantha Benton, EAL Lead Teacher, Windscott Academy). By 2013 her role had developed further and she said that she had much more a 'head of department role' dealing with the setting up of EAL Programmes including assessment and achievement data analysis. She emphasised that it is now 'very much more progress led rather than strategy

23. Please see section 5 for linguistic issues relating to communication.

24. Perceptions of non-EAL students at secondary school will be developed further by the research team in the next report (2014/2015) for the Bell Foundation.

led'. Her aim was to move all EAL students up to level 4 in English (or above). The secondary school had a separate room where one-to-one tuition and the Enhanced Provision for EAL students took place.

Both schools had a range of activities and strategies which supported the EAL communication process outlined in the table below:

TABLE 7: ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES WHICH SUPPORT THE EAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication	Detail
EAL pupils ↔ senior management team	<p>An introductory meeting with EAL pupils (and their parents) and senior management (including normally the principal and the EAL coordinator/ staff responsible for Pastoral Care) was conducted in both schools.</p> <p>Regular meetings were organised with EAL staff and EAL students within and outside the classroom (primary school). The secondary school had regular meetings with EAL staff and EAL pupils outside the classroom.</p> <p>Both schools organised regular meetings to monitor the progress of EAL pupils.</p>
EAL pupils ↔ non-EAL pupils	<p>Both schools have a buddy system between non-EAL and EAL pupils.</p> <p>A selection of non-EAL children (or EAL children who had been in the country longer term) could participate in a young interpreters training (primary and secondary school).</p>
EAL students' parents ↔ Teachers and senior management team	<p>An introductory meeting with EAL pupils (and their parents) and senior management (including normally the principal and the EAL coordinator) was conducted in both schools.</p> <p>Parent mail was introduced at the primary school in Sep 2013.</p> <p>A comments box for parents existed in the foyer for parents (primary school).</p> <p>A feedback site for parents existed on the school website (primary; in different languages?).</p> <p>A questionnaire was sent to EAL and non-EAL students' parents about the way they would like to communicate with the school (primary school).</p> <p>Windscott Academy had a teaching assistant who could speak several languages of the A8 countries and whose role was to facilitate communication between the school and these parents.</p>
EAL students' parents ↔ EAL students' parents	<p>(EAL) 'parent buddies' were introduced in the primary school whereby parent volunteers supported the communication with new EAL students' parents.</p>
EAL students' parents ↔ non-EAL students' parents	<p>A parent (EAL and non-EAL) group was initiated in the primary school.</p>
Teachers ↔ senior management team	<p>A survey amongst teachers about communication with EAL and non-EAL pupils and parents was conducted in the primary school.</p>
New staff ↔ senior management team	<p>A specific induction regarding EAL took place for new staff (delivered by EAL coordinator) addressing topics such as communication with EAL pupils and parents and stereotyping (primary school)</p>

Table 7 reflects a range of formal structures. Brenton Primary School, in particular, had a wide variety of strategies to link up EAL students' parents, teachers and senior management. They also started initiatives to bring together (formally) EAL and non-EAL students' parents. Both schools had introductory meetings with EAL students and their parents. While useful information was gathered during the meeting the interviews with senior management showed that these meetings could provide more information about previous learning, educational context of country of origin and socio-economic background in country of origin and in England; acknowledging that employees from A8 countries often down-skill when working in England (see, for example, Pollard, Latorre and Sriksandarajah, 2008; Schneider and Holman, 2011).

Ideally, the communication structures should reflect a mix of oral and written communication as EAL students and their parents have different strengths and weaknesses, e.g. some of them might have a good reading comprehension in English but be weaker at oral communication. Others might feel more confident in their oral communication than in their written communication (see Schneider and Holman, 2011 for A8 migrants). For example, the primary school offered a variety of communication structures with the parents of EAL students combining oral and written means of communication. The communication with such parents in Windscott Academy was primarily written communication although at times an interpreter was helping with oral communication (mainly in the context of EAL students' negative behaviour and via telephone conversations or messages).

The interviews with staff and children showed that the formal structures outlined above were supported by a high level of informal communication. For example, the meetings between teachers and the parents of EAL students after school is an important feature at Brenton Primary School although nearly non-existent at Windscott; reflecting the lower levels of parents' involvement at secondary school in general and the social disadvantage apparent in the local area of Windscott. Informal communication amongst and between teachers, EAL pupils, non EAL pupils and their parents and senior management is a vital element in the EAL communication process of both schools. Although informal communication offers flexibility and fast decision making it also risks being inconsistent and biased with regard to decisions on EAL. It is, therefore, important that formal communication structures are also in place to support the informal communication processes.

The following outlines in more detail the communication processes between different members of the school.

8.2 EAL pupils ↔ senior management

The initial meeting with new EAL pupils, their parents and senior management team (SMT) (normally the principal and the EAL coordinator or staff responsible for pastoral care) is an important part of the communication structure. Senior management staff at the primary school prioritised certain areas in their initial communication with the EAL pupils, e.g. the emotional state of children, their situation at home, followed by their language and academic knowledge. At the secondary school the focus of the initial meeting was, in particular, on language ability of the EAL student. In the case of the secondary school it was often the only occasion when parents visited the school with their child.

The EAL staff at both schools engaged in specific communication processes and strategies with the EAL pupils. There was a high level of formal communication between EAL staff and EAL pupils, e.g. scheduled support within the classroom, meetings outside the classroom for extra support and discussions regarding progress. In both schools EAL staff and EAL pupils perceived their communication in a very positive way.

8.3 EAL pupils ↔ teachers

EAL pupils at the primary school reflected good communication with class teachers and provided many examples as to how teachers were supporting the communication with them. Windscott Academy EAL students' perceptions of the communication between EAL students and teachers was more varied; reflecting that EAL students had a range of teachers whereby some were perceived as being better than others at communicating with EAL students.

A number of strategies and tools were used in Brenton Primary School to facilitate and/or to enhance the communication process between EAL students and teachers within the classroom: Google Translate, written signs, pictures which helped with communication in English; tablet using pictures to communicate. Both case study schools did not have a universal policy regarding the use of communication tools and teachers' perceptions of using these tools varied as reflected in the quotes below:

I have key word sheets that are translated, English, Polish and English Lithuanian, all these, trying to build up an archive of those. And I have like a progress pyramid which is a progress strategy and it's triangles made up of three boxes at the bottom, two in the middle and one at the top, and they've got three things that they already knew at the beginning of the lesson, two things they've learnt and one thing they need to learn more about, and I've translated those into Polish and Lithuanian and stuff so they can... and then I have to try and translate.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

I do try and say that in my room, because drama's a subject that's closely related to English, that it's an English speaking room.

(Tracey Page, Drama Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Some teachers relied in their communication with EAL pupils on other children who spoke the same language. Other teachers translated material before the lesson to support the communication process with EAL pupils. At times the EAL coordinators translated for children "so that other children from the same country of origin don't have to translate and interrupt the learning" (Mrs Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School). The EAL students perceived all of these strategies as being very helpful although some pupils were less keen to use dictionaries and translations in the classroom; especially those children who were advanced learners of English were very opposed to the idea that communication took place in their home language.

Teachers' perceptions of their communication with EAL pupils varied. Some teachers thought that their communication with EAL (and non-EAL) students was good even if language skills were low and they felt they formed good relationships with the pupils:

I don't know if it's just me because ... I just think I've got a very good relationship with all the kids that I teach, and I think that is mainly because they just know what to expect, they know where the boundaries are and they know I'm just exactly what to expect... I just try and let them be themselves. I try not to suppress any of them, due to whatever background they've come from whether it be another country or just another socioeconomic background, I just try and let them be themselves and as long as they know what the line is and not to cross it then we're usually alright.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Other teachers mentioned that their communication with EAL pupils was problematic. They gave a variety of explanations. Apart from linguistic issues (see Section 4) they referred to the (often assumed) background of the children, e.g. their experiences of migration, their educational, social, financial background in their home country and in England. The quote below represents some of the tentative explanations regarding barriers to communication:

I think sometimes you have children who arrive, and they just feel bad about themselves. Maybe they weren't that bright at their last school. Maybe they weren't a high-achieving child, and suddenly they've had this huge setback. Maybe they were comfortable at home, and they lived in a nice big house, and now they're living in a draughty caravan. Maybe they've lost all their friends. Maybe they're just having a really rough time.

(Natalie Jones; EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

As outlined in section 4 teachers highlighted the limited (or lack of) information they had about EAL pupils' families and parents. The lack of knowledge represented a strong barrier with regard to more effective and efficient communication with the pupils and their parents. Teachers' knowledge about countries of origin, their school systems, families' economic and educational backgrounds in home country and in England and EAL pupils' former learning and achievement was very limited. Knowledge was gathered mainly via informal communication with EAL pupils. Some data were available for teachers via the school; however, most of the time teachers made assumptions and relied on inferences from some observations and limited information. The quotes below reflect some of these assumptions:

I know that the girl who's come to me has beautiful handwriting and has great imagination. So I think she's done a lot of literacy.

(Rachel Knight Class Teacher, Brenton Primary School)

I mean I think that's the difference is you kind of just assume ... they've come over to work in the factories and sometimes you forget that maybe the families that are coming over aren't necessarily just that demographic, they've got a different background, so maybe her... I mean I would assume maybe her parents come over here with quite a high level and quite well paid jobs. She is such a bright and well spoken young lady, so that'll be interesting.

(Joanne York, History Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Another barrier to communication (perceived by teachers) related to the reluctance by some pupils to utilise the tools which make communication easier within the classroom, e.g. dictionaries and Google Translate, even if there is some debate about its value. Several teachers assumed that EAL pupils did not use these tools as they did not want to stand out.

Empathy is important for effective communication and good relationships. Several projects were mentioned by both schools which improved the empathy for understanding other countries' contexts. The primary school, for example, engaged with the 'Literacy For All' project which promoted the achievement of students with English as second language. The secondary school participated in the 'World Hello Day' whereby staff and students had to collect different languages amongst school staff and pupils. As several staff members had also a migration background (e.g. from India, Poland and South Africa,) the EAL Lead Teacher viewed the project as a good strategy to improve communication between staff, EAL and non-EAL students.

8.4 EAL pupils ↔ non-EAL pupils

EAL pupils were interviewed in Brenton Primary School generally had a positive perception of the communication with non-EAL students. Most EAL children referred to a small number of non-EAL students with whom they communicated on a regular basis. Although communication amongst the children seemed very positive in the primary school an older EAL pupil mentioned that some younger non-EAL children were communicating with them in an unfriendly way.

EAL pupils at the primary school showed high levels of empathy towards their non-EAL pupils which is vital for a good communication process. This was reflected, for example, in the EAL pupils' reflections as to how it must feel for non-EAL students to have different languages spoken in the classroom. At times EAL students became too aware of the (assumed) perceptions of non-EAL children and were reluctant to communicate in their home language at school 'because for them [other children] it sounds really funny'. Some EAL students from the secondary school also highlighted reluctance to communicate in their home language in the school while others were much keener to do so (reflected in teachers' perceptions of EAL students' communication within and outside the classroom).

At secondary school the communication between EAL and non-EAL students seemed more problematic than at the primary school. One EAL student referred to situations where non-EAL students often mentioned in arguments with EAL students that they 'should go back home to their own country'. The EAL student viewed this situation as racism and mentioned that it continued despite the school's policies and strategies against racism.

Non-EAL pupils who were interviewed in the primary school reflected strong communication links with EAL pupils. They viewed the communication with EAL students in a very positive manner; describing it, for example, as 'fun' 'excitement' reflecting that their communication was enriched by learning about different countries and cultural backgrounds, by communicating in different ways with EAL pupils who had lower levels of English and by learning some words in the home languages of the EAL pupils. The intense communication processes formed strong relationships between some EAL and non-EAL pupils which continued in some cases even if the EAL child had moved away from the school.

Non-EAL students at the primary school utilised diverse and innovative strategies to facilitate and improve communication with EAL pupils who had lower levels of English such as picture cards, gestures, pointing, facial expressions; reflecting their engagement with the 'young interpreters' programme at the school. They had also access to laptops with translation programmes. The young interpreter's strategy equipped non-EAL pupils with a range of materials to facilitate communication and had a very positive impact on the communication between non-EAL and EAL pupils.

Empathy is an important factor in successful communication and the interviews with non-EAL primary school pupils reflected a strong ability to empathise with EAL pupils and they were keen on learning other languages.

👉 **I think it's the fact that when they come in, it's a new place, it's a new country and it's something new and sometimes they feel shy and don't know what to say** 🗣️

(Petia, EAL pupil from Bulgaria, Brenton Primary School)

I think it's the fact that when they come in, it's a new place, it's a new country and it's something new and sometimes they feel shy and don't know what to say.

(Petia, EAL pupil from Bulgaria, Brenton Primary School)

Maybe if they're in a group of friends and their friends are all talking about stuff that they don't have a clue what they're talking about.

(Irena, EAL Student, Brenton Primary School)

Well it was a great experience for me because I learnt some Polish as well.

(Petia, EAL Student, Brenton Primary School)

The two non-EAL students interviewed at the secondary school were generally positive about their communication with EAL students and showed empathy towards EAL students.²⁵ They were also positive about the use of other languages in the classroom:

It makes you like want to learn a different language because it helps you get a job.

(Chloe, Non-EAL Student, Windscott Academy)

8.5 Senior management team ↔ EAL students' parents

Communication between EAL students' parents and senior management in both schools took place during the initial admission procedure. Both schools focused in their initial meeting on the EAL pupil and his/her level of English. Although both schools tried to find out about the family's background there was no structured communication process to collect information about families' backgrounds in countries of origin and in England.

Brenton Primary School had sent out a questionnaire to parents regarding their preferred way of communication with the school. The feedback showed that parents wanted 'ParentMail' as a preferred communication system between the school and parents (set up in September 2013). The advantage of 'ParentMail' is that positive messages can also be easily disseminated to parents and pupils; translated template letters which can be used to report good news or matters of concern (e.g. attendance, behaviour) can also be fairly quickly developed. 'ParentMail' is, therefore, an efficient and effective communication strategy for routine communication of positive and negative messages between the school and EAL and non-EAL students' parents. The secondary school did not have 'ParentMail' in place at the time of the interviews.

The primary school was also in the process of establishing a parent group to allow for communication with all parents representing the diverse backgrounds with regard to EAL and non-EAL social class background etc. The set-up was carefully planned represented in the quote below:

It's got to be – not to be patronising but it must be sort of led by the parents but carefully steered [...] Because if you are going to encourage everyone you've got to expect people maybe have different ways of communicating with each other or dealing with a situation...it's not going to necessarily be that easy or that straightforward if we want to do it properly. And we want to do it properly.

(Niki Murray, Parent Governor, Brenton Primary School)

Windscott Academy had two bilingual teaching assistants who could speak several languages of the A8 countries and whose role was to facilitate communication between the school and the parents of EAL students. The interviews with staff at the secondary school reflected that messages that were communicated via the interpreter were often exceptional and the situations described by teachers were generally relating to negative messages to EAL students' parents (e.g. student's lack of attendance; behavioural problems).

25. Meta-cognition refers to the conscious knowledge and strategies that learners use to control the processes of learning and problem solving.

Both schools and, in particular the primary school, included bilingual signage in their schools. This is also encouraged by the local authority teaching advisors so that students and parents feel 'valued' and 'at home':

Most schools that we talk to get onboard with that. Again, it varies from place to place. The one I'm doing a lot of work in at the moment hasn't got a lot of bilingual signage, but it's something that we would encourage and something that's going to start changing. Other schools you go to and there's languages all over the place and it's fantastic. It makes the children feel valued, if you like, and it makes the parents feel more at home because they can see their own language around. So, again, it's something that varies, but it's something that we encourage.
(Greg Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

8.6 Teachers ↔ EAL students' parents

All teachers highlighted the lack of information they have about EAL pupils and their parents to facilitate a more efficient communication with the parents and (their children).

There is a bit of information. I usually find that out by chatting to the teachers, because the teachers have been seeing the parents at the beginning and end of the day. Obviously the older the children are, the less the parents are going to be around, but the more they're going to tell you about their lives, and their home life, so the more information you get from them...The thing we've tried to do that hasn't worked so far, we haven't had the right languages coincide, is get parent volunteers who speak a language to come in, so then you discover whether they're the kind of people who are going to volunteer to help other people who have their same language, so there's lots of little ways in which you get information, but I don't really have a lot of information about the parents, I have to say.

(Niki Jones, EAL Specialist Teaching Assistant, Brenton Primary School)

Several teachers at the Windscott Academy presented a generalised view that the communication with EAL students' parents was problematic (e.g. sporadic or non-existent); often illustrating this by these parents non-attendance of parent evenings. However, often teachers gave a slightly different picture when they discussed in more detail their relationship with EAL pupils and their parents and mentioned that they spoke to some EAL students' parents at parent evenings. The science teacher at Windscott who was quoted above as using a variety of strategies to engage EAL students and who said she had a good relationship with the EAL students stressed that their parents had attended her session at the parent evening.

[Y]ou've got the parents coming in and you get that one on one contact then, and you often find that they'll have a family member that will translate or it'll be their son or daughter translating for them.

(Gill Clifford, Science Teacher, Windscott Academy)

Teachers at Windscott who felt that the communication with EAL students' parents was problematic gave a number of explanations for parents' lack of communication. Language issues were a major factor (see Section 5). However, even if language levels were good other factors such as lack of educational background, lack of interest in education, lack of communication between children and parents/ carers and shift work were mentioned to explain problems regarding communication. These were explanations based on assumptions rather than knowledge.

● **I think they need developing in different respects, but parental engagement is a big issue, partly because we have a number of families from Eastern Europe, for example, where one parent is working one shift and the other parent is working the other shift, so it's difficult to get both parents into school or either parent into school, because there might be some kind of an overlap or there might be...contacting parents, getting them to engage, getting them to come into school and not seeing school as something to be frightened of.●**

(Greg Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

The teachers at Brenton Primary School did not highlight a general lack of communication with EAL students' parents; although some EAL (and non-EAL) groups were viewed as being less engaged/ present at school than others. There was also more informal communication between these parents and teachers after school when compared to the secondary school (which reflects the lower levels of parents' contact with secondary schools in general).

One of the local authority advisory teachers pointed out that EAL parents are generally employed and often in shift work (reflecting the recruitment of migrant workers into agriculture, food processing and the caring industries as outlined in Section 3). This relates, in particular, to the secondary school which was situated in an area with high levels of agricultural work.

I think they need developing in different respects, but parental engagement is a big issue, partly because we have a number of families from Eastern Europe, for example, where one parent is working one shift and the other parent is working the other shift, so it's difficult to get both parents into school or either parent into school, because there might be some kind of an overlap or there might be...contacting parents, getting them to engage, getting them to come into school and not seeing school as something to be frightened of.

(Greg Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

Lack of knowledge about EAL pupils and their families was highlighted by all teachers in both schools. Knowledge is a key factor for empathy and effective communication between teachers and EAL students' parents. Due to limited or lack of knowledge about EAL families, teachers' communication with EAL students and EAL students and their parents was characterised by a range of assumptions; in particular, about the educational backgrounds of A8 families. Although levels of English might be low and European citizens from the A 8 countries might work in low skilled jobs in England they often achieved medium to high levels of education (e.g. A-levels and degrees) in their countries of origin and are under-employed in England (see Schneider and Holman, 2011).

Brenton Primary School conducted a small survey amongst their teachers regarding communication with parents (EAL and non-EAL). The questionnaire revealed "a lot of positive stuff but there was a lot of frustration as well concerning communication (with the parents of EAL and non EAL student)" (Niki Murray, Parent Governor, Brenton Primary School). The parent governor also pointed out that young teachers face a challenge with some EAL and non-EAL students' parents as they have such a different background to their own background. Again, knowledge and information about backgrounds will help to bridge the gap between different backgrounds.

The local authority supports the schools with a number of important services which are vital to facilitate and enhance communication with EAL parents:

We've set up a number of letters, ways to communicate with students' parents, getting teachers to send homework in advance, if you see what I mean? So here's the topic for the next few weeks, can you make sure your child is familiar with these words – and we can give them the translation, so Polish and English. In one school, recently, the Great Fire of London is the topic that's coming up, and they want to send a vocabulary sheet back with the child – so fantastic, because, that way, the parents at least know what's going on and they can maybe help with homework. Even though they may not understand all of the English, they can still research the history and talk about that.

(Greg Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

8.7 Communication between the school and the local community

The EAL specialist teaching assistant at Brenton Primary School was responsible for liaising with the community. She highlighted that there was good communication with the local church. Other religions and religious festivals such as Eid were also acknowledged within the school. However, there was no specific communication between the school and organisations in the community which represented other religions and/or EAL communities. The primary school participated in EAL leading teachers meetings which took place in other schools in the community to exchange ideas and strategies regarding EAL teaching.

Windscott Academy had strong links with local community organisations which facilitated the communication between EAL and non-EAL students after school and at the weekend. However, the secondary school was in a community where an anti-migration party was fairly influential and the parent governor of this school mentioned that there were some tensions between the EAL and non-EAL community outside school. The school's sports teacher (himself having a migration background from an A8 country) was, in particular, interested to link the school with the wider community of European citizens arriving from the A8 countries. He had also planned a trip to Poland for non-EAL and EAL students.

The interviews with the local authority advisors highlighted their important role in facilitating and enhancing communication with EAL pupils, their parents and school staff. They offered a wide range of strategies relating, for example, to the admission process of EAL families (e.g. disseminating a new arrivals guidance booklet), to parental engagement (translated letters, support with homework tasks) and students' assessment (bilingual support and translations of assessment tasks). There was a certain amount of ambiguity to what extent schools in the region took their recommendations on board. The primary school seemed to have better contacts with the local authority advisory teachers than the secondary school. The interviews showed that bilingual support and the knowledge of EAL students and parents to be able to access the service had a positive impact:

There's a lot of bilingual communication, letters get translated, that sort of thing, so there's a lot of communication that goes on anyway, but if there's a meeting, whether it's because there's been a problem with the student or whether it's a language assessment or whether it's a parents' evening, if we can get bilingual support in there, it just makes a huge difference.

(Greg Fletcher, Local Authority EAL Advisor)

8.8 Summary

Both schools showed high levels of enthusiasm and dedication regarding the facilitation and improvement of communication with EAL students and their parents. It was apparent that both schools managed with limited resources to facilitate and improve communication with EAL students and their parents. The schools had developed a variety of communication structures with their EAL students which helped especially EAL students with low level of English who arrived in the early years of primary and secondary school. The research raises the question as to whether additional strategies need to be developed for EAL students who arrive with low levels of English in the middle or later years of primary and secondary school. Additionally, the interviews with school staff and EAL students highlighted the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of EAL students with regard to personality, ability, English language levels when arriving at school, English training before arriving in England etc. Although generalised strategies to improve communication are important they need to be accompanied by individualised strategies to cater for the diversity amongst EAL students.

Communication with EAL students' parents was a main focus in both schools. Although the primary school highlighted some good communication with these parents they also stated that some EAL communities were more difficult to engage. The primary school had introduced more recently a wide range of strategies and initiatives. However, it was not clear how the information gathered via the different channels was disseminated amongst school staff and to what extent these processes allowed for feedback procedures from EAL students' parents (e.g. two-way communication processes). A clear strategy (possibly reflected in a visual scheme) regarding feedback and dissemination of information might be useful for the overall communication regarding EAL. Due to the recent implementation of several strategies in 2013 effects on parents' engagement and knowledge of school processes could not be researched. The secondary school was, in particular, focusing on communication strategies with EAL students and was planning to emphasise further communication with the parents of EAL students. Communication at the secondary school focused more on 'emergency' situations and negative messages regarding students' behaviour and/or attendance when compared to the primary school. A major barrier to successful communication between the school and EAL students and their parents was the lack of staff knowledge of students' and families' background (see also Section 4).

SECTION 9:

**LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT,
SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT**

Our research aimed to extend the understanding of the pedagogic and social issues relating to language development, social integration and educational achievement of EAL students by investigating the contribution that primary and secondary schools make. We set out to discover how schools conceptualised and addressed the linguistic academic and social needs of such youth. Our research design ensured that we elicited the views of senior management, teachers, children and parents. Although ambitious, we were aware that the project was in itself exploratory as we were unsure what we might discover when we went below the surface of EAL children's education and the culture of schools. The next stage of the project will explore in more depth issues to do with initial and continuous assessment of learning, parental engagement and support, and the use of English language development in improving social integration and educational achievement.

In the event, our research revealed as much about what the school system does not know as what schools do know and provide for. EAL children, as migrant children, although categorised and included in local authority and the DfE's annual School Census data are a largely unknown quantity not least because of the sheer diversity associated with their language backgrounds, skills, their knowledge of different school subjects, their home cultures and their motivations.

In our case we focused mainly on one type of EAL child - the Eastern European child who lives in the Eastern region of England, a largely rural area with far less experience than cosmopolitan inner-city linguistic and cultural diversity.

Below we bring together some of the findings which our research uncovered, in the authority and in the two case study schools - Brenton Primary School and Windscott Academy. Both schools were selected because they had a proportion of Eastern European children on their roll - from Latvia, Lithuania and Poland; although other EAL communities were also represented and referred to in the interviews with school staff. Although the children in our sample were European citizens they fall in the category of (transnational) migrants both in the sense of arriving in the UK from other European countries but also in the sense that they are often transitory and do not necessarily stay in the same school or country during their educational careers. The statistical pattern of entry and retention of such children and their pattern of distribution across years, subject sets and as candidates in national assessments and examinations is therefore not easy to collect as each year the composition of the EAL school community changes, and the patterns of achievement change as a result.

Researching such a moving population is difficult in itself and we find therefore we are not in a position by the end of this first stage of the project to make definitive statements about the progress of such children through the school - that will be the focus of the second stage of this research. What we are able to ascertain are the various responses to the presence of such Eastern European children in school, their language needs and their integration into predominantly but not wholly white school communities where English is the mother tongue of the majority of pupils. Below we try to capture the contradictory and sometimes incompatible views about EAL students and their needs, as a catalyst for more discussion.

9.1 Language development

We start by directly addressing what we discovered about the interconnections between language development, social integration and educational achievement.

It is clear from our research that the multilingual learning environment within the two case study schools reflected a wide range of languages and multilingual

In the event, our research revealed as much about what the school system does not know as what schools do know and provide for. EAL children, as migrant children, although categorised and included in local authority and the DfE's annual School Census data are a largely unknown quantity not least because of the sheer diversity associated with their language backgrounds, skills, their knowledge of different school subjects, their home cultures and their motivations.

practices. However, there seemed to be no specific written language policy in the schools regarding the use of languages with which to guide teachers or assess the effectiveness of such strategies.

This finding is largely in accord with the general consensus in the field that EAL practice in the UK is very varied, from school to school, and from region to region, and lacks a continuous national strategy to promote the 'best practice' (see Demie, 2013a & b; Leung, 2001; Creese, 2004; Conteh & Brock, 2011). In a study of ten case schools conducted by the Institute of Education and commissioned by the TDA, Wallace (2005 & 2011) reaches a similar conclusion that, although each school featured a very multilingual environment, the EAL related policies and practices vary significantly from school to school. This recommendation echoes NALDIC's call for a coherent national strategy and our recommendation that a continuous national policy approach is needed to support schools in this area.

With regard to literacy strategies, our study seems to show that there is clear difference between the primary and the secondary school. In the primary school the EAL students' general literacy and learning skills were being developed. The main goal, in addition to general learning, was to encourage them to start speaking English quickly so that they could mix as soon as possible with other students. In Windscott Academy, the promotion of EAL students' learning was more targeted on subject teaching and a specific learning target. A unique contribution of our research with respect to pedagogy is its comparative angle. Previous studies on EAL pedagogy mainly focus on either primary or secondary schooling. If developed further, such a comparative angle would improve our knowledge of 'progression' within primary and secondary education but also shed light on our understanding of 'transition' between the two, an important aspect which is well documented in modern foreign language (MFL) education (Evans & Fisher, 2010), but is barely touched upon in EAL literature.

Despite the differences in general pedagogical goals, however, both primary and secondary teachers employed similar techniques and strategies in the classroom such as translation, peer support and making reference to home languages. Our research largely concurs with previous studies conducted in the UK and internationally and reaches a similar conclusion that teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to support EAL learners to access the curriculum (see Purdy, 2008; Olson & Land, 2007). However, some interesting strategies reported in other studies, such as meta-cognitive strategies²⁶ (Cortazzi & Jin, 2007), small group work (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2004), and partnership teaching (Creese, 2006), did not feature in our data. This is partly because our research uses a naturalistic approach to understand practice rather than targeted interventions which aim at particular strategies.

Research has also suggested that instruction for EAL learners should include the use of their mother tongue (L1). For example, in a US study Lugo-Neris et al. (2010) suggest that second language acquisition can be enhanced by supporting and strengthening the child's first language. In a US based study these authors examined whether English-only vocabulary instruction or English vocabulary instruction enhanced with Spanish bridging produced greater word learning in young Spanish-speaking EAL learners. They found significant improvement in naming, receptive knowledge and expressive definitions for those children who received Spanish bridging. However whereas the use of the first language (L1) in teaching may be feasible in some areas of the US where the majority of EAL learners share Spanish as an L1, this is often not the case in the UK where EAL learners often come from a wide range of countries and language backgrounds.

However, our project highlights the fact that different stakeholders (i.e. EAL students, non-EAL students, EAL students' parents, teachers, EAL coordinators and senior management staff) can have different and contradictory views about

26. Meta-cognition refers to the conscious knowledge and strategies that learners use to control the processes of learning and problem solving.

the role of English and home languages in learning. For example, the group of teachers we interviewed veered between different approaches such as:

- (a) **A perception that only English should be spoken in an English classroom.**
- (b) **The idea that a multilingual classroom is not only beneficial to EAL students but also to non-EAL students.**

Overall it has not been possible to capture a consensus amongst teachers about the actual or potential value and role of L1 (mother tongue) in the classroom. But it is clear that teachers in our study only occasionally used students' home languages to achieve a particular pedagogical goal. In most cases, the use of home languages (L1) in both schools only took place in informal activities, such as taking of the register, greetings and social events. It seems that the sheer range of languages in the school and lack of knowledge of these languages made it impossible for teachers to conduct teaching tasks with home languages. Thus they simply used them as a means of celebrating diversity and raising EAL students' confidence, demonstrate their pride in their culture and contribute something interesting to class discussions. For example, another explanation of the lack of use of home languages may be linked to the fact that we do not have sufficient empirical evidence to demonstrate the link between different stages of language development and academic achievement (see also Demie and Strand, 2006, Strand & Demie, 2005).²⁷

In our research, there was little emphasis upon the use of EAL teachers as peer support, and on the bridging of different languages. It was unclear whether relevant research on EAL teaching had been discussed in the context of our two school sites or drawn upon in the development of the school approach. Both the primary and secondary school in our study used the 'immersion strategy' or 'mainstreaming approach' placing all new EAL arrivals (irrespective of their English language skills) into the mainstream classroom as well as providing extra English tuition in withdrawal groups. However several teachers took the view that students should only enter the classroom after attaining a suitable level of competence in English following intensive English language training. The effects this mainstreaming strategy or different EAL teaching approaches have on social integration and educational achievement are difficult to decipher within a one-off snapshot study and without a comparison with other schools which employ different school and classroom based practice. Below we consider how these two elements might have affected or in turn been affected by EAL children's integration, both academically and socially.

9.2 Social integration in relation to language development

The relationship between language development and social integration has been explored through a number of studies. Most of this research adopts an ethnographic approach to classroom learning in order to investigate pupils' experiences as EAL learners in school. These studies stress a link between language development, the use of L1, the culture of the school, the formation of positive learning identities. Mills' (2001) study of Asian children's views of bilingualism, for example, shows that language played a key role in children's identities and in the way they maintain symbolic forms of religious, cultural, family and community affiliation. The language strategies used in the classroom have

27. This can be explored further in the second phase of the project, which looks more specifically at the relationship between languages and assessment.

also been found to have an impact on children's identities as well as their language and literacy learning. In their review of experimental and quasi-experimental studies to examine strategies for teaching English literacy to EAL learners, Adesope et al. (2011) found that students from low socio-economic backgrounds benefited academically and socially from ESL literacy interventions where they had the opportunity to engage in oral interaction with peers and teachers in order to discuss and negotiate meaning of texts. Similarly, recognising the culture and identity of the child has been found to be important to literacy learning²⁸ along with questioning, teaching vocabulary, and engaging in collaborative talk. This has implications for understanding the relationship between language development and social integration in school.

Below, we briefly report some of the findings of five well known qualitative studies in which we glimpse the sort of factors that influence EAL students' identities as learners and as members of the school community.

Study 1: After observing three newly arrived EAL children in the UK during their first year at school, Chen (2007) found that they experienced deep feelings of isolation, misunderstanding and frustration. They all wanted to promote their own learning of English actively, but felt unsupported in doing so, which caused the author to question the principles of 'inclusion' and 'equality' that govern the EAL policies in the UK, calling for more focused support for new arrivals in small groups out of the mainstream classroom.

Study 2: The monolingual approach of British schools has been challenged by Blackledge (2000) which he argues does not meet the linguistic needs of ethnic minority pupils. He warns of the danger of considering linguistic minorities in terms of language 'deficit' in which speaking another language is perceived as limiting children's literacy skills and cognitive development and acts as a process of exclusion for EAL learners and their families.

Study 3: In a different context of specialised ESL classes in the US, Cohen (2011) reported that for the three adolescent Mexican EAL learners in his study, the ESL classroom provided a socially comfortable learning environment, yet in comparison with their limited experience of the mainstream classroom through elective lessons, did not provide sufficiently cognitively challenging material and did not meet students' expectations for their future careers. Due to their disillusionment with the programme, the primary goal of the students therefore became to transition out of the ESL classroom and into an idealised mainstream curriculum.

Study 4: Wassell et al. (2010) found that students benefited from resources such as space, time and a schema of caring which were created by teachers' practices, yet were discouraged by poor instructional practices, a lack of empathy of students' experiences and diminished access to the curriculum.

Study 5: In the Canadian context, Day (2002) shows how EAL pupils draw on their linguistic resources in both the L2 and their L1 and use both in interactions with peers and teachers to construct different pupil identities. This impacts on the way they integrate in the classroom. New learners of English tend initially to remain at the periphery of the classroom, then progressively move towards the 'centre' as they develop more proficiency in English.

28. See Purdy(2008).

These studies emphasize the complexity of social integration in relation to language development, the ways in which certain classroom and school strategies and ethos can have a positive impact on pupils' social integration, whilst others are perceived as a hindrance or as not providing the necessary support and environment for EAL pupils as learners. Senior managers went out of their way to highlight the beneficial impact of multilingual and multicultural school cultures for their pupils, and displayed a strong awareness of the range of strategies required to meet these goals.

The case studies highlighted the important role of school cultural factors and language development which can affect the social integration of EAL pupils in primary and secondary school. One central finding was that social integration of EAL pupils seemed to be more clearly conceptualised in Brenton Primary School whilst in the secondary school, interviews with senior management, teachers and EAL leaders reflected more fragmented and diverse understandings about what constitutes social integration and how it could be achieved for such students. Brenton Primary School had effective strategies which helped newly arrived EAL children integrate in school. In addition to support from specialised staff and teachers, peers came across as playing a central role in offering language support, be it by sitting next to a newly-arrived child, working as a young interpreter or relying on resources such as 'communication cards' to help the child access words in English. Such peer support played an important role in both EAL pupils' language development and sense of integration within the classroom and the school community. However, it was less clear how social integration was monitored and supported after the initial period of settling in. In addition, this social integration was restricted to the school and did not carry over to the wider community, and children often did not meet outside school.

In contrast, in Windscott Academy, although we found evidence of a commitment to integrate EAL students into the school, the curriculum and its student culture, this commitment was not always conceptualized in an even way across different members of staff and teachers. There was evidence that friendships were developed amongst EAL and non-EAL students. However, evidence from interviews with staff and teachers also supported the view that certain peer groups were based on linguistic homogeneity, which caused division within the school and also lines of differentiation within the classroom. National/linguistic groupings were perceived, by some teachers, to be a hindrance to language development and engagement within certain areas of the curriculum (e.g drama). In addition, there were indications that there was, on occasion, conflict amongst and between these two groups. Such conflict (which could even be violent) was not investigated in our project but the small evidence we collected on the issue pointed to conflict based on national and linguistic difference and stereotyping. In order to tap this, a deeper understanding of social integration and its relationship to language development also requires a more ethnographic study of the various communities which a school serves, listening as it were to parents, gatekeepers, community leaders, and local professionals.

The differences between the strategies for social integration at the primary and secondary school and their relationship to language development can be partially explained by the different structures of primary and secondary school in general (e.g. one classroom at Brenton Primary School versus several classrooms and teachers at Windscott Academy) and the fact that the secondary school had a larger number of EAL students and was situated in a wider semi-urban community in which an anti-immigration party had a strong influence. This made the integrative task of Windscott Academy that much harder.

If we listen to the views of EAL children themselves, it seems that in the primary school such pupils perceived their social integration in a positive way and felt that the buddying system, in particular, had provided them with 'instant friends'.

Some children also appreciated the support of a child from the same linguistic background as it helped them to integrate and join in wider friendship groups; although other EAL children perceived this as problematic and preferred to spend time with English speaking children. The small number of children interviewed at the secondary school indicate that they also had made friends easily; although one student pointed out that he had been integrated into the 'wrong crowd' which had impacted on his achievement.

In general, social integration raises questions about the extent to which it is the responsibility of schools to promote friendships amongst and between EAL and non-EAL students. There are difficult questions about the role of language: in some cases not speaking English was construed as leading to isolation for EAL students, in other cases it encouraged students to help newly arrived EAL students and thus participate in forms of peer group interaction and social integration.

In terms of classroom strategies, teachers debated whether children should be grouped by linguistic background or not. It is unclear whether teachers' different pedagogical strategies in relation to language development are related to more successful social integration. But the link between social inclusion and educational achievement also clearly needs further research. For example schools need to know whether EAL students are likely to integrate more successfully when they are high or average achievers or are they more easily integrated into youth cultures around resistance to schooling. Arguably school approaches could benefit from the knowledge gained from various research studies on the impact of teachers' pedagogic and inclusion strategies on EAL learners' academic progress. It is this aspect to which we now turn.

9.3 Educational achievement

There are shortcomings in exploring the impact of language development and social integration on educational achievement because of the absence of appropriate and sufficient pupil achievement data. Our project revealed that there are shortcomings with regard to statistical data regarding EAL progression and achievement both at local authority and school level. Far more data collection is required if we are to assess the impact of current language development strategies and the types and nature of social integration at school level, on EAL students' educational achievement and vice versa.

At the international level, the pattern of achievement of EAL learners constitutes a major concern. Christensen and Stanat (2007), for example, conducted an analysis of PISA data from 17 countries which have a significant number of immigrant students²⁹. They found that 15-year-old immigrant students who do not speak the language of instruction at home are, on average, one year behind non-immigrant students in terms of achievement. Such a gap in achievement between EAL and non-EAL learners in both the US and the UK has similarly been identified by English as an Additional Language Association of Wales (EALAW) (2003), Hakuta, Butler and Witt (2000) and Slama (2012). The only two countries examined by Christensen and Stanat (2007) which showed no significant differences between the performance of these two groups of students were Australia and Canada which the authors suggest may be linked to the more selective immigration policies in these two countries. They also highlight the need for long-term investments in systematic language support programmes and teacher training in second language acquisition.

Our research revealed some mixed messages about achievement of EAL pupils in comparison to non-EAL pupils. Our preliminary study found that the primary

However the data gathered did not distinguish between disadvantaged (i.e. on free school meals) and non-disadvantaged EAL students. The lack of this information is critical since it masks the differential social class status of EAL families and also tends to leave the impression that those without developed English language skills are a homogenous group.

29. Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, Hong Kong China, Macao China, and the Russian Federation.

school collected monitoring data regarding the progress of EAL and non-EAL students throughout the school years and the EAL coordinator monitored individual students' progression. However the data gathered did not distinguish between disadvantaged (i.e. on free school meals³⁰) and non-disadvantaged EAL students. The lack of this information is critical since it masks the differential social class status of EAL families and also tends to leave the impression that those without developed English language skills are a homogenous group.

The Brenton Primary School staff we interviewed believed that EAL children who arrived in the early years of primary school achieved as well as their non-EAL counterparts by the end of Key Stage 2; although there were not objective data available to reflect this assumption. The school data for 2012/13 showed that non-EAL pupils had performed considerably better at the end of KS2 than EAL pupils. However, the data also highlighted that there were pockets of EAL achievement in Year 3 and Year 4 which outstripped the achievement of the overall cohort. These data reflect the diverse backgrounds and teaching contexts of EAL students and indicate that generalised comments about EAL students and achievement fail to address the variety and complexity of the issue.

At Windscott Academy, the senior management and teaching staff's perceptions regarding the link between language development and educational achievement suggested that some newly arrived EAL students progressed very well. However, overall students were not confident enough to select humanities subjects for their GCSEs. GCSE 2012/13 data showed that EAL students were also considerably less likely than their non-EAL counterparts to take and obtain GCSEs in English but also in mathematics even though some EAL students do well in this subject in their secondary school careers.

Standing back from our research, it is important to note research findings which suggest that the promotion of educational achievement of EAL students is directly connected to their progression in learning English. Of importance is the development of an appropriate school-based language. Research, for example, indicates that it is a lack of vocabulary which places the most significant constraints on their comprehension of written and spoken texts³¹. In response to this, a number of studies call for a more systematic focus on the development of vocabulary skills in EAL learners across the primary school curriculum³².

Cameron and Besser (2004) found that EAL learners at the primary school level handle a variety of genres, prepositions and the composition of short, fixed phrases less well than native English speaking pupils and therefore require more explicit instruction in these areas. At secondary level, they continue to struggle with genres and also show weaknesses in the quality of content, sentence structure and word level grammar as well as difficulties in organising and writing extended texts (c.f. Cameron, 2003). This is interesting and potentially has wider applicability to educating EAL learners and teachers in terms of thinking about the development of academic vocabulary. The need of placing more emphasis on academic vocabulary was highlighted in our research findings which showed that newly arrived EAL pupils in both schools fairly quickly picked up BICS levels of English (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) while CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) levels which focused on analysis, inference and synthesising were less developed and focused on by teaching staff.

Research has explored ways of closing the gap in achievement between EAL and non-EAL learners. For example, a number of pedagogic strategies have been suggested as ways of improving EAL students' learning in the classroom. The majority of such strategies in the UK and internationally are aimed at developing the literacy skills of EAL learners. In relation to writing, Ofsted (2005, 2006) guidelines encourage, for example, the exposure to 'good' writing and feedback provided by teachers which takes specific account of EAL. However, it seems as

30. There is general acknowledgment that free school meals might be a limited indicator for economic disadvantage as some families might not apply and it might not capture that families might drift in and out of economic disadvantage. See <http://cee.lse.ac.uk/ceedps/ceedp84.pdf>

31. Burgoyne, Kelly, Whiteley & Spooner (2009); Burgoyne, Whiteley & Hutchinson, (2011)

32. For example: Burgoyne, Whiteley & Hutchinson (2011), Cheung & Slavin (2005), Davis (2012), Hutchinson, Whiteley, Smith & Connors (2003) and Robinson (2005).

though valuable research into the benefits of developing students' awareness and use of language learning strategies has not been readily applied to EAL learners. Cortazzi & Jin (2007) therefore suggest an approach to narrative development which encourages EAL students to reflect on their learning processes, for example, by developing opportunities for planning for, remembering, understanding and reflecting on storytelling.

In order to improve the oral skills of EAL learners, a number of teaching strategies have been identified by researchers. For example:

- **The inclusion of planned opportunities for speaking and listening and the use of 'talk partners', talk frames and role plays are encouraged and speaking and listening should be prioritised over writing³³;**
- **The use of role-plays allow EAL pupils to practise words and phrases in a relaxed atmosphere supported by peers, teachers or bilingual assistants³⁴;**
- **Small group work can be beneficial for EAL learners (Parker-Jenkins et al. (2004) which could be of particular benefit in providing support for new arrivals in a separate EAL class (see Chen, 2009); and,**
- **Several studies suggest that EAL learners might require more explicit language instruction³⁵ and that they should also be exposed to explicit teaching, modelling and guided practice in a variety of language learning strategies³⁶.**

Below are further strategies which have been discussed in the literature to raise the achievement of EAL pupils in general:

- **In Canada, Guo and Mohan (2008) highlighted the importance of parents and teachers working together to support the achievement of EAL pupils in mainstream classes;**
- **Extra sessions with adult talking partners made a real difference to the pupils' spoken English in an educational context and so to their engagement in education (see Kotler et al. 2001)**
- **Due to constraints in school hours, alternatives such as summer school and after-school programmes may be needed to enhance learning (see Hakuta et al. 2000).**
- **Thomas and Collier (2002) call for a constant and long-term approach, stating that language support programmes must be well implemented, not segregated, and be sustained for five to six years.**

However many of these recommendations require a considerable investment of time and money on the part of schools, such as the development and staffing of additional extra-curricular programmes. There are few intervention-based studies into how regular classroom subject teachers can improve the learning and achievement of EAL pupils within their normal lessons alongside their native English-speaking peers. One such study by Benton and White (2007), for example, analysed the attainment of EAL pupils in primary schools across 21 local authorities in England which participated in a two-year EAL pilot programme aimed at raising the achievement of bilingual learners. Schools involved in the programme had access to an EAL consultant, were provided with EAL-specific materials on assessment for learning, planning and teaching, and were involved

33. Conteh (2012); McDermott (2008); Parke, Drury, Kenner & Robertson (2002)

34. Abedi (2007), Clewell & Consentino de Cohen (2007), Short & Fitzsimmons (2007) and Solorzano (2008)

35. Gardner & Rea-Dickins (2001), Rea-Dickins (2001) and Teasdale & Leung (2000)

36. Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer and Rivera (2006), Kieffer, Lesaux, Rivera & Francis (2009), Rivera, Acosta & Willner (2008) and Willner, Rivera & Acosta (2009)

in regional networks to provide a platform for sharing ideas and good practice. Teachers adopted particular approaches such as planned opportunities for speaking and listening and the use of curricular/layered targets to plan for language development.

Benton and White (2007) found that the schools involved in the programme made more progress with their Key Stage 2 results than similar schools not involved in the programme, and in particular, they found no significant differences in the rates of improvement for EAL and non-EAL learners with regard to Key Stage 2 English. In fact, the teaching approaches adopted seemed to have assisted both EAL and non-EAL pupils in their learning. On the other hand, in relation to Key Stage 2 mathematics and science, there were no significant differences in the pupils' rates of progress in programme schools compared to non-programme schools. This is attributed to the fact that schools adopted the practices in these subjects at a later stage in the programme, emphasising the importance of a prolonged and consistent approach.

It is important to highlight that in spite of the fact that the strategies outlined in the section above are targeted towards benefitting EAL learners, Facella, Rampino and Shea (2005) found that many of the teaching strategies successful for English language learners were also successful for native English speaking pupils. More emphasis should be placed on this finding in future research and policy development as it shows that so-called EAL targeted resources can potentially benefit both EAL and non-EAL pupils.

Both schools used a number of strategies to improve achievement such as focusing on parental engagement (the primary school in particular) and having separate English lessons for newly arrived EAL learners. However, several of the strategies outlined above such as role play, summer schools and the use of a variety of language learning strategies have not been utilised and it might be useful to consider them to complement the existing strategies.

Several researchers have also emphasised the importance for educational achievement of recognising the range of languages that bilingual pupils bring to learning, both in and out of the classroom³⁷. Supporting the development of pupils' L1 has also been shown to benefit pupils' general academic progress and learning in a number of studies:

- **Thomas and Collier (2002) found that academic achievement was often delayed by as much as one to five years if there had been no mother tongue schooling;**
- **Robertson (2006) explored the processes of five year old children learning to read simultaneously in different languages and scripts and discovered that, rather than finding this confusing, it had a powerful impact in enabling them to see literacies as systems that change and can be manipulated; and,**
- **Ryu (2004) draws attention to the positive effects of being bilingual, such as high cognitive development and a higher level of divergent thinking than monolingual children but warns that these benefits are only applied to balanced bilinguals, highlighting the importance for both teachers and parents of supporting the child's adjustment to new environments while preserving aspects of their original culture and language.**
- **McDermott (2008) suggests that one way to prevent the loss of native language skills is to provide support to community language schools (a number of which are emerging in the UK), which in turn could have a positive effect on the perceptions of community languages and promote a greater respect for bilingualism.**

37. Conteh (2012); McDermott (2008); Parke, Drury, Kenner & Robertson (2002)

However in relation to the learning of EAL pupils, Pagett (2006) suggests it is also worth noting that there may be a tension between schools' efforts to build upon the children's use of the home language and their reluctance to use it in a school setting where the dominant language is English and where they would prefer to appear 'like everybody else'. She advises schools to consider strategies that value EAL learners' commonality with the school culture, although in our two case studies, this aspect did not seem to be prevalent. There was more recognition of the differences in educational background and culture than commonality with the culture of the school.

A strategy outlined by Dakin (2012) involved a successful project in which primary level EAL pupils created illustrated books in English and their home language with the collaboration of parents and other community members. In a similar vein, Wardman, Bell and Sharp (2010) reported how teachers in an English primary school implemented a 'language-buddies' scheme and a 'Pashto club' which raised the confidence of the EAL workforce through increasing understanding of second language acquisition, while helping to support the pupils' maintenance of their L1 alongside their learning of English.

A more controversial approach suggests that the label of 'EAL' in itself may not be a good guide to levels of attainment, and that there is a much stronger relationship between stage of fluency in English and educational achievement (see Strand & Demie 2005; 2006). The EALAW (2003) study for example suggested that the achievement of EAL learners should be considered alongside other influential factors such as their proficiency in English, gender, attendance at school, time spent in the UK, socio-economic background and parental education and literacy. This begs the question about whether schools have sufficient knowledge about the social/educational background of EAL students' backgrounds and school history, and whether the initial assessment and tests of EAL students' academic performance are sufficiently sensitive to issues relating to EAL student's academic level and potential. In the next section we consider these issues.

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9.4 Knowledge, assessment and communication

Both knowledge about EAL students' backgrounds, and adequate communication structures between the school and EAL students and their parents are identified as important factors in the triangular relationship between language development, social integration and education achievement. Yet we found this aspect of school practice to be problematic for a number of reasons. Although the teaching staff we interviewed knew about the linguistic background of the EAL students, knowledge about other relevant aspects of the students' educational backgrounds and abilities and skills seemed to be scarce. Schools had only little formal information about EAL students' prior attainment before coming to England. Knowledge regarding the socio-economic background of such students' families prior to coming to England seemed to be unavailable to the school which they were attending. The initial assessment of EAL students was made difficult by the lack of English of parents, the lack of school records, the problem of testing in English, and the reluctance of students and parents to discuss the latter's prior educational experiences and attainment.

There are also other forms of knowledge about EAL students that can be acquired whilst these students are in school. Without much contact (as we have seen in our study), teachers might have made wrong assumptions about the educational backgrounds of families when they heard about the family members' employment in England. Below we consider first the nature of initial assessment of achievement and English proficiency levels and educational achievement, before exploring in more depth the contact our two case study schools had with the parents of EAL students.

The assessment of EAL learners

The complex nature of both formative and summative assessment of EAL learners has generated a number of research papers and reports. Researchers in the Anglophone world are calling for an appropriate English proficiency test (see Demie & Strand, 2006, Strand & Demie, 2005).

One of the first issues to arise when EAL learners join a school is how to correctly identify and classify them. Abedi (2008) states that “the most important prerequisite to providing appropriate instruction and fair and valid assessment for English Language Learners (ELL) students is to correctly identify them” (p.28), yet it seems as though EAL learners are too often considered to be ‘learning disabled’ and/or classified as SEN rather than simply being less proficient in English (August, 2003; IOE, 2009).

There are several studies outlined which focus on this matter. Interestingly, many such studies are conducted in the US, which is not surprising when one considers that there is a wider variety of programmes in which EAL learners could be placed. The US, Canada and Australia use assessment frameworks developed specifically for EAL learners both within specialized language programmes and in mainstream education. A major strength of these frameworks is that they not only highlight the distinctiveness of EAL, but also distinguish between different groups of EAL learners and between individual learners. However, despite the US having such a framework, within the American-based literature³⁸ all commentators call for the quality of assessment for EAL learners to be improved.

In the UK, Scott and Erduran (2004) argue that the national arrangement for the assessment of EAL learners is inadequately based on a combination of National Curriculum descriptors developed for mother-tongue speakers together with a range of EAL descriptors developed individually by local education authorities and schools.³⁹ They call for a framework to be developed to make sense of language development and assessment of EAL learners, which should clarify between assessment for English and assessment for EAL and between a grammar-based view of English and a cross-curriculum view of English (Leung & Rea-Dickins, 2007).

One of the main issues identified with existing assessments is that they need to take into consideration that these students are forced to perform double the work of native English speakers, in developing proficiency in English and academic English at the same time, yet are being held to the same accountability standards (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

In their investigation of large-scale standardised assessments, Abedi et al. (2003) identified major differences between EAL and non-EAL responses. They found that the more linguistically complex the test, the greater the disparity between the results of EAL and non-EAL students. Overall, the study suggested that high-language load test items in assessment of content (for example, in mathematics and science tests), may act as a source of measurement error for EAL students.

As a result of such problems being identified, there are accommodations and allowances which can be made for EAL learners during assessments such as the use of a dictionary, making individual assessment decisions and providing them with a language assistant. However concern has been expressed⁴⁰ that many accommodations in use are not particularly effective, are not always distinguished from accommodations designed for students with disabilities and do not actually address the linguistic needs of EAL learners.

38. Abedi (2007), Clewell & Consentino de Cohen (2007), Short & Fitzsimmons (2007) and Solorzano (2008)

39. Gardner & Rea-Dickins (2001), Rea-Dickins (2001) and Teasdale & Leung (2000)

40. Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer and Rivera (2006), Kieffer, Lesaux, Rivera & Francis (2009), Rivera, Acosta & Willner (2008) and Willner, Rivera & Acosta (2009)

According to Kieffer, et al., (2009), the single accommodation with clear evidence of effectiveness is providing students with an English dictionary or glossary, which resulted in a 10 -25% reduction in the performance gap between EAL and non-EAL learners - however only if they are used to using a dictionary as part of classroom instruction. Test-makers should therefore consider the challenges faced by EAL learners and any accommodations made must be designed to address the unique linguistic and sociocultural needs of the student without impacting the concept being tested.⁴¹

The initial assessment of EAL students is made difficult by the lack of English of parents, the lack of school records, the problem of testing in English, and the potential 'silence' of students themselves in giving information about what they had learnt before coming to the UK and how they had learnt (e.g. mathematics). In order to avoid EAL pupils being wrongly 'diagnosed' as having learning disabilities, Layton and Lock (2002) suggest that all teachers should receive training in the second language acquisition process in order to discern the sometimes subtle differences between typical language development and the presence of concomitant learning disabilities, while Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) state the need for common criteria for identifying EAL learners and tracking their performance. Abedi (2008) also suggests that other relevant variables such as the student's proficiency in their first language and the number of years they have spent in this case in the US should also be taken into consideration

There is also concern about how EAL learners are tracked and if necessary, 'reclassified'. In his study which focuses on issues relating to the reclassification of students from limited to fluent English proficiency, Liguanti (2001) concludes that if this is done poorly it can exacerbate educational inequality, lack of accountability and student failure. He calls for educators to be trained in reclassifying students and for more research-informed policies to be implemented in schools.

McLaughlin (1992) also claims that teachers often "mainstream" EAL learners who are capable of conversational English into an all-English classroom too soon (a strategy noted by some teachers in Windscott Academy), and stresses that proficiency in oral communication skills does not mean that a child has the complex academic language skills needed for classroom activities. In fact, Slama (2012) found that large numbers of high school EAL learners who had spent nine or more years in the US still had not developed sufficient academic language needed to perform mainstream academic work in English.

The first phase of our research did not focus on this aspect of knowledge and communication. In the second phase, the initial assessment and continuous monitoring of EAL students' progress will be investigated.

Communication

One of the ways in which knowledge about EAL students' capabilities can be improved is through sufficiently focused and developed communication systems, both within the school between EAL students and the school, between teachers, and between the school and the community of EAL students' parents. As section 8 indicated there are a number of important issues here that relate to whether language development of EAL students can be improved, whether EAL students and their families could feel integrated into the school culture and whether the achievement of EAL students could be raised by more effective communication systems.

Both Brenton Primary School and Windscott Academy teachers showed that these initiatives were useful in facilitating and improving formal communication with

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41. Willner, Rivera & Acosta (2009)

EAL students and their families. The EAL coordinator (primary school) and the EAL Lead Teacher (secondary school) saw themselves as communication hubs in both schools for pupils, staff and parents. The sorts of strategies Brenton Primary School, in particular, used to communicate with EAL students and with their parents involved for example:

- **Bilingual teaching assistants;**
- **Google Translate which was particularly useful for letters sent to EAL students' homes;**
- **Parentmail and parent groups;**
- **'Buddying' initiatives for new EAL student arrivals and parents at the primary school; and,**
- **Young interpreters' programmes for non-EAL students.**

With regard to EAL parent communication generally, it seemed that the primary school was focusing more on this aspect than the secondary school. The relative newness of these strategies meant that their effects on parents' engagement could not be identified at this stage. The interviews with teachers however suggested that such initiatives were productive in terms of engaging EAL students and their parents who were newly arrived and had low levels of English. They used as a marker the fact that those EAL students who had entered lower classes had caught up with their non-EAL counterparts by the time they left for secondary school.

In contrast, the interviews with Brenton Primary School staff indicated that the communication process was also characterised by ambiguities and potentially (wrong) assumptions. There is always a danger that without sufficient information about EAL students' parents, teachers may think that EAL students come from unemployed and disadvantaged families when in fact in many cases they are employed and have considerable educational skills. Migrant families often experience down-skilling when arriving in England (Schneider and Holman, 2011).

At the secondary level, such assumptions can also be a problem. Windscott Academy's communication with EAL students' parents was fragmented. The interviews with teachers highlighted that messages to parents via the bilingual teaching assistant were often negative (e.g. relating to attendance and behaviour issues). It was also more difficult to identify and judge the success of communication initiatives at secondary level. Judging the success of such communication strategies was problematic in a large school with over 240 EAL students on the roll.

Our interviews revealed that neither the primary nor the secondary school seemed to have a formal system of gathering such background knowledge about EAL students and their families, disseminating the knowledge they had amongst staff in the school and using parent-teacher relationships to help support the EAL students' learning.

Building on knowledge of an EAL student's culture and language is clearly an important part of a communication system. There are various ways in which this can be achieved. For example, partnership teaching with EAL teachers or the use of bilingual teachers have been suggested. Our research however does not indicate that these strategies are being used. Gardner (2006) suggested that partnership talk between the monolingual English speaking subject teachers and specialised

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EAL teachers can develop an understanding and appreciation of the roles, skills and linguistic behaviour of the other. This may in turn have rewards in terms of easier joint planning and more positive perceptions of EAL in schools by children and staff generally. A careful analysis of the language capabilities of teachers in the UK has also been recommended as there is significant untapped linguistic potential amongst bilingual EAL teachers but also in the teaching profession generally. Schools might use such skills to offer teaching in heritage/community languages (potentially at GCSE level)⁴².

Local authority advisors where they still exist can offer important help in facilitating and enhancing communication with EAL pupils, their parents and school staff. Although primary schools may be in contact with this service (relating to the admission procedure, parental engagement and students' assessment) it was not clear whether secondary schools use the services provided by the local authority. It is not clear whether the fact that Academies have to pay for EAL support service has a differential impact on the achievement of EAL students.

42. E.g. EALAW(2003); Hakuta, Butler & Witt (2000); Slama (2012).

SECTION 10: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL PRACTICE

The following outlines our recommendations relating to research, language development, social integration, educational achievement, communication and knowledge in relation to primary and secondary schooling. We also consider the implications for teacher education and development.

10.1 Developing research on EAL students' school education

Far more investigation is required to answer the sorts of questions which our project has raised – in particular the relationship between linguistic issues, social integration and achievement issues. More research is needed to enhance our knowledge of how to improve the educational achievement and social integration of EAL students through language development, and by so doing, reduce social and academic disadvantage. This could usefully be shaped by the following aims:

1. the identification of successful pedagogical practices in EAL teaching and learning particularly in the demographically changing areas of the UK. Ideally this research would be larger scale (rather than just small scale classroom based research of teachers' perceptions). Longitudinal studies which combine qualitative and quantitative data on EAL and non-EAL students would be beneficial. More experimental or quasi-experimental intervention and evaluative studies are needed which take account of differing local and school contexts.
2. the assessment and tracking of individual student progress from initial assessment on admission, at regular stages in succeeding years and at performance in examinations so as to assess the effectiveness of different pedagogic strategies in helping language development, promoting educational achievement and social integration.
3. the identification of the particular linguistic and cultural challenges that different school subjects (history, science, mathematics) pose for newly arrived EAL students learning these subjects in English. This pedagogic knowledge could be developed centrally through the work of language education researchers and subject associations, and locally through practitioner research strategies in which teachers and schools build their own understandings of the subject-related academic needs of their EAL pupils.
4. uncovering the experiences of those seen as the 'foreigner' child and possible tensions in terms of resourcing for EAL needs and continuity of support.
5. the analysis of EAL parents' engagement patterns (regarding participation in school events and homework) and the identification of strategies which have a positive effect on parental engagement. This can be coupled usefully with an exploration of how stronger communications with the community of EAL students' parents can be achieved and how support from local authority networks and community projects could be used to assist in such research endeavours.

More research is needed to enhance our knowledge of how to improve the educational achievement and social integration of EAL students through language development, and by so doing, reduce social and academic disadvantage.

There is a need to access EAL children especially those most in difficulty although access through schools can be problematic. So too is finding translators to help collect data in and outside school which also complicates the research process. More sharing of good research practice would be beneficial.

10.2 Promoting English language development (L2) at primary and secondary school level

Below we have listed some of the elements which for our study and our reading of relevant research appear to be key to the successful promotion of EAL children's proficiency in English and its use in schools. These include:

1. an acknowledgement of the existence of different languages both inside and outside the classroom by developing a whole-school 'language for all' strategy. This would increase general awareness of the importance of languages in relation to inclusion and diversity. Such a strategy could be developed in consultation with students, teachers, parents, local authorities and other relevant parties.
2. emphasising the importance of English for access to learning and pedagogical context as well as communication but also acknowledging that multilingual practices are valued.
3. developing a school-wide language policy in relation to the use of different languages in the school, and the development of appropriate approaches to the use of home languages in the school and classroom. The policy would need to be developed in consultation with students, teachers, parents, local authorities and other relevant parties. The purpose would be to provide transparent information about the linguistic needs of EAL and non-EAL students.
4. providing illustrative case profiles in individual schools, reflecting different learning trajectories of EAL learners in terms of social integration, language development and educational achievement. These case profiles can provide three types of information: a visual representation of the trajectory, a narrative of the student's experience and a case-specific video for teacher training. A national resource bank could be developed to link school profiles and representative individual case profiles.
5. defining a staged-approach to curriculum-based English language support which would align with different learning trajectories of EAL learners. The initial support within the first six months needs to be continued in order to take the English skills of EAL students to an advanced (academic) level.

10.3 Encouraging social integration at primary and secondary school level

Our research and that of others suggests that what is required of schools is to improve the relationship between language development and social integration. This ideally should involve:

1. clearer understandings of what constitutes social integration and what role the school should play in the classroom, playground and in relation to out of school youth cultures.
2. a focus on the issues relating to the ways in which social class and gender, relations between national/linguistic groups, and the relationship between established and newly arrived students impacts on social integration.
3. building on the positive impact of strategies for the social integration of EAL children in school, especially after the early stages of welcoming newly-arrived EAL children.
4. locating the responsibility for supporting social integration in all year groups and key stages.
5. being aware of possible negative aspects of social interactions between EAL students and non-EAL students and taking a strong ethical/disciplinary line in relation to xenophobic incidents, and situations where EAL students are isolated, and the linguistic/social tensions associated with EAL student friendship groups speaking their home language and thus excluding non-EAL students.
6. ensuring that school policies on bullying or harassment address conflicts between EAL and non-EAL students as well as within these groups.
7. recognition of the multilingual profile of the school which involves validating the bilingualism of EAL students (if not multilingualism), encouraging reference to home languages within the context of learning, social ethos and values of the school.
8. being aware of the implications for all students of the composition of different classes and tutorial groups by focusing on the ratio of EAL/non-EAL students and the dangers of clustering EAL students in lower sets. The danger of automatically locating EAL students with SEN students' needs to be avoided (see IOE 2009).
9. achieving clarity on the strategies required to help social integration and in relation to this, the attitudes towards EAL students' use of L1 in school. This can involve developing continuity between effective strategies to promote integration in the classroom and outside the classroom.

10. strengthening links between school and parents and encouraging links between parents is essential for the purpose of encouraging social integration in the local community and between EAL and non-EAL youth. EAL students' parents need to play an active role in the education of their children but this requires effort on the part of the school to help them integrate into the school community. The possibility of running induction courses for all family members is one such suggestion.

11. reconsidering the terminology used regarding EAL learners by researching the effectiveness of this category as an educational instrument and a means of ensuring social integration without incurring social stigmatisation.

10.4 Improving the educational achievement of EAL students at primary and secondary level

This project has highlighted the various ways in which the educational achievement of EAL students can be improved. These rely on more focused data collection by schools and policy-makers on patterns of achievement and to provide information at school level about EAL students' academic progression. They include:

1. developing statistical categories of EAL which offer further sub-dimensions such as the level of education before arriving in the UK, types of learning environments and practices in the home country, social class indicators such as free school meals and gender issues.
2. ensuring the monitoring of EAL students' progression so that all teachers are aware of the variations of EAL students' achievements in their subject/classes. Such monitoring would need to be sufficiently detailed to take account of educational and social variables so that some explanatory models might be offered for differential patterns of achievement between EAL and non-EAL students and within the EAL category.
3. evaluating the range of pedagogic strategies that best support EAL students in terms of the use of L1 in the classroom, bilingual classrooms, different ways of improving English language development through resources, task setting, and support systems in the classroom. There is no 'silver bullet' in terms of improving the achievement of a diverse group of EAL students who come from different socio-economic backgrounds, from different educational systems and who need support to be able to succeed in different school and subject cultures
4. promoting detailed experimental research on such proposed teaching and learning strategies to inform teachers and policy makers of the likely effectiveness of particular interventions.
5. raising EAL students' academic confidence, particularly at secondary level. Such confidence is affected by the level of English proficiency in the classroom and particularly restricts the choice of subjects for GCSE. Academic confidence is also affected by the levels of social integration in the school. More research is needed to discover how to sustain EAL students' confidence as learners, whether learning Curriculum English is a particularly important element of this, and whether other strategies are needed to ensure that such students are given opportunities to excel.

10.5 Improving knowledge, assessment and communication

Our research signals that there is a need to encourage more transfers of knowledge about the EAL families, their motivations and aspirations, levels of support and their concerns for their children's education to improve communication with EAL families and to avoid (potential) stereotyping which restrict the schools' view of such families.

Recommendations include:

1. gathering more detailed knowledge about individual students at admissions. A questionnaire (translated into different languages of the countries of origin) could be completed by the parents during the admission procedure; gathering information about country of origin, pupil's achievement prior to coming to the school and/or England; parents' employment and educational backgrounds in country of origin in England. This would improve the accuracy of assumptions about pupils' backgrounds and enhance communication between teachers, senior management staff, EAL pupils and their parents.
2. improving general school knowledge about countries of origin (e.g. geographical, economic, social, educational, key words) by using websites as well as through EAL community based events. Information could be put on the school website to be accessed by school staff, EAL and non-EAL students and their parents.
3. establishing a strong systematic assessment system (including an appropriate English proficiency test) should be built in the school curriculum, which aims to differentiate the linguistic and cognitive abilities of newly arrived EAL learners, particularly in the first six months. Research is needed to consider how far should the mother tongue be used in such a system.
4. ensuring careful consideration of how EAL learners are assessed, classified and located within school groupings, classes and sets such that they are not assumed to be 'learning disabled' given their lack of English proficiency.
5. distinguishing through appropriate formative and summative assessment⁴³ and testing between different groups of EAL learners and individual learners ensuring that both grammar based and cross curriculum views of English are taken into account. This implies monitoring EAL learners' cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) that is appropriate for different school subjects.
6. ensuring that there is an adequate system of monitoring, tracking and, if necessary, 'reclassifying' EAL learners as they progress through schooling.

43. Formative assessment usually refers to a range of classroom assessment procedures which aim to monitor students' learning progress. It can provide on-going feedback for teachers to improve their teaching and for students to improve their learning. Formative assessment is often contrasted with summative assessment which aims to evaluate students' learning attainment at a particular time point with reference to standardized benchmarks for intended learning outcomes.

Communication

A variety of recommendations for improving a schools' communication strategy are suggested by our research and that of relevant literature on this theme. For example, schools could consider:

1. developing a clear structure (e.g. flow chart) outlining school communication structures regarding EAL which can be disseminated to teachers, EAL pupils, and their parents and senior management.
2. establishing efficient ways of communicating positive and negative messages to EAL (and non-EAL) students' parents, for example, through ParentMail. Some basic messages (positive and negative) could be translated for teachers so that templates in different languages are easily available to them to communicate with parents.
3. developing a formal and systematic communication strategy in the classroom and the school (e.g. assemblies) about the countries of origin of school students (e.g. portfolio project in geography). This would improve the communication about EAL students' countries of origin within the classroom as schools often use sporadic and irregular strategies including some but not all countries of origin and EAL pupils.
4. enhancing the communication between the parents of EAL and non-EAL students, to increase the engagement of latter in their children's schooling and to improve relations between EAL and non-EAL pupils. There is a key role to be played by school governors, particularly parent governors and community groups/centres. Such communication could help diffuse potential stereotyping and social conflict between EAL and non-EAL communities.
5. making available ESOL classes for EAL students' parents helps to improve parents' language development and social integration and can potentially lead to more effective support strategies with regard to their children's learning and achievement.

10.6 A holistic school approach to EAL support

Our research suggests that there is a need to debate whether or not the label of EAL is useful, not least because it does not necessarily correspond to levels of attainment in different subjects. The level of fluency in English might have more relevance for educational achievement but so too might social class, ethnicity and gender, attendance at school in the country of origin, time spent in the UK, parental education and literacy. The collection of more detailed and sophisticated data on the educational patterns of children with no or only little familiarity with English may encourage more questioning of the value of the category which underpins educational achievement on the level of language development as the sole explanatory variable.

Closing achievement gaps between EAL and non-EAL students is clearly difficult not least since the gap in attainment can work in one direction one year and in the opposite direction in the next, and achievement patterns in English might be different from achievement patterns in, say, mathematics. There is a need to define what represents an achievement gap in this area and what represents substantial achievement for those students who arrive in the UK without English language proficiency.

The initial exploration of the relationship between language development, social integration and educational achievement has exposed the need for schools to take account of these three important dimensions when addressing the needs of EAL students. These dimensions focus attention on the need to develop a more holistic and integrated approach to school provision and practice whether at the primary or secondary level.

Drawing on our research, we have identified those major aspects which appear to be essential to the development of an EAL learner's academic process and social integration into the culture of English schools and their curricula:

- **the establishment of good practice across the school in relation to management, classroom pedagogic and learning strategies, and whole school ethos**
- **the monitoring and evaluation of good practice and continuous assessment of the effectiveness of such practice**
- **the successful integration of the school into the EAL parental community with the possibility of drawing on this community to help in educating the EAL child.**

A holistic systematic approach to school provision of support for EAL children involves four different aspects all of which, if in place, would assist in supporting the above goals:

- a. **Information** (on family backgrounds, prior educational history and records, appropriate testing and progress monitoring and comparison between EAL and non-EAL levels of achievement taking into account relevant variables);
- b. **Coordination within the school of all categories of staff, support and assistant staff** (in terms of EAL policy, planning, organisation and allocation of resources and budget, appropriate pedagogic strategies and rules about the relationship between for example L1 and English language development, integrated approaches to EAL elements in teacher training and professional development programmes);
- c. **Support for the EAL child and family** (in all areas: social integration, achievement, monitoring, prevention of bullying, valuing of other cultures and languages, taking social disadvantage and other relevant variables into account); and,
- d. **Communication** (in school between management and teachers, between school and parents, teacher and pupils, specialist and general teachers and between pupils themselves).

These four dimensions are described visually in Figure 2 below:

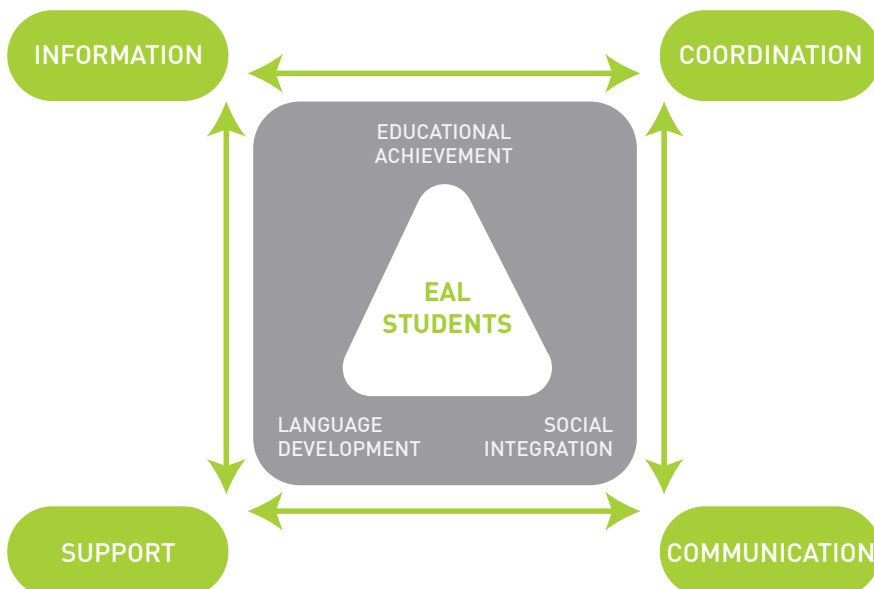


Figure 2: A holistic school approach

In the second stage of our research programme we intend to explore these elements further.

Teacher education and development

Finally our school based inquiry highlights the need, as others have done, to consider the provision of initial and professional education for the teaching profession so as to be well prepared for teaching in multilingual schools, especially where there are groups of EAL students. The presence of EAL students can be a source of tension for teachers although many hold positive attitudes, some might be less supportive.⁴⁴ Of those who believe in the benefits of bilingualism, they might yet implement strategies in their classrooms which draw on their own language learning beliefs and teaching experience (MacKinney and Rios-Aguilar, 2012). Efforts to improve teachers' strategies in relation to unfamiliar cultural and linguistic barriers can reduce their sense of self-efficacy as teachers (Haworth, 2008). Cultural awareness is therefore not sufficient if there is not experience of supporting EAL children, and overcoming the view that EAL pupils do not threaten the accomplishment of lessons, or teachers' sense of their own competence⁴⁵.

There have been several studies into teacher training programmes which call for more pre-service and in-service training to support teachers in dealing with the cultural and linguistic diversity of the classroom. Butcher et al., (2007) criticised teacher education in England for paying bilingualism "lip service at best" and "persisting with a policy discourse emphasising the problem of EAL" (p.483). They call for more training to improve teacher confidence and competence in England's increasingly linguistically diverse classrooms,⁴⁶ a sentiment echoed by many authors with some also noting the absence of nationally agreed content areas which have led to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision that is reactive rather than progressive⁴⁷.

Central to this field is the development of teachers' intercultural awareness in order to avoid EAL pupils being wrongly 'diagnosed' as having learning disabilities. As we saw in Section 9.4, Layton and Lock (2002) suggest that all teachers should receive training in the second language acquisition process in order to discern the sometimes subtle differences between typical language development and the presence of concomitant learning disabilities.

The following studies recommend that such training for teachers should include:

- **an appreciation of how new languages are learned (Conteh & Brock, 2011);**
- **the provision of placements for trainee teachers to work with EAL pupils (Hall & Cajkler, 2008); and,**
- **training should be long-term, not just one day or one hour in-service sessions (Hansen-Thomas & Cavagnetto, 2010).**

44. Karabenick & Noda (2004)

45. Mistry & Sood (2010); Sood & Mistry (2011); Walters (2007)

46. Barnard & Burgess (2001), Cajkler & Hall (2009, 2012a and b), Conteh & Brock (2011), Green (2012), Hall & Cajkler (2008), Mistry & Sood (2012) and NALDIC (2009)

47. Similar training needs have been identified in Northern Ireland (Skinner, 2010), Ireland (Murtagh & Francis, 2012; Nowlan, 2008), Canada and South Africa (Breton-Carbonneau, Cleghorn, Evans & Pesco, 2012) and in the US (Hansen-Thomas & Cavagnetto, 2010; Pettit, 2011).

However Khong and Saito (2013) warn that even the development of strong teacher education programmes may not be sufficient to help teachers overcome all the challenges they face in teaching EAL learners, and they stress that concerned efforts must also be made by local and central administrators, academics, local communities and law makers.

Our case study fieldwork suggests that there are many training related issues that arise in relation to supporting EAL students within the three dimensions of language development, social integration and educational achievement. We strongly recommend that this interactive triangular model is used to inform all modes of initial teacher education and professional development. Teacher research in this area would be invaluable, in partnership with teacher education providers and educational researchers.

10.7 Conclusions

Overall, the project has started to identify potential links between language development, social integration and educational achievement. However, more data need to be collected to make stronger assertions about the interrelationship between the three dimensions. The next two years of the project (2014-15) intend to collect wider quantitative and qualitative data to follow up these potential links and recommendations outlined above.

We strongly recommend that this interactive triangular model is used to inform all modes of initial teacher education and professional development. Teacher research in this area would be invaluable, in partnership with teacher education providers and educational researchers.

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Appendix 1

EAL Enrolment at Brenton Primary School

2012-2013 **3 mid year New to English Arrivals**

2012-2013 **9 mid year EAL leavers**

Chinese 6 children
Dutch / Flemish 2 children
Albanian / Shqip 2 children
Bengali 42 children
Hindi 1 child
Arabic 1 child
Latvian 2 children
Ukrainian 1 child
Lithuanian 3 children
Swahili 1 child
Kiswahili 1 child
Telugu 1 child
Thai 2 children
Sinhala 1 child
Vietnamese 1 child
Portuguese 1 child
Persian / Farsi 2 children
Malayalam 6 children
German 3 children
French 4 children
Polish 14 children

Appendix 2

EAL Enrolment at Windscott Academy (2013)

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Lithuanian	31	19	24	32	35
Polish	16	10	9	12	8
Russian	13	5	4	4	3
Latvian	5	8	10	4	3
Portuguese	2	5	7	7	7
Bengali	2	1	1	0	0
Czech	1	1	0	0	0
Hindi	0	1	0	0	0
Slovak	1	0	2	0	0
Tamil	0	0	1	0	0
Tagalog/Filipino	0	0	1	0	0
Hungarian	0	0	0	1	0
Total	71	50	59	60	56

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