

Assessment of New Arrivals

Initial Assessment

All children are entitled to access the National Curriculum, including those new to English.

As with other children, new arrivals need to be given work that is curriculum related and cognitively challenging. However, tasks also need to be achievable. In order for this to happen an initial assessment will need to be carried out. The assessment outcomes will provide staff with the information they need to determine what type of support - if any - will be required to enable the new arrival to actively engage with the National Curriculum.

The purpose of an initial assessment is not only to determine the child's level of English but also to find out the child's levels of achievement across the curriculum.

The Assessment in mathematics toolkit to support pupils for whom English is an additional language (DFES 02767-2003) provides support for assessing children in mathematics. Although it is a key stage 3 publication - it is actually suitable from reception to KS3. It includes strands, topics, and objectives by year, assessment activities and resources. Teachers need to use the information gathered on the **Admission Form** such as previous schooling, linguistic background assessment data in order to contextualise assessment data.

Initial assessments will:

- 1 Establish the academic achievement of the new arrival
- 2 Establish the English language proficiency
- 3 Provide a framework for tracking progress in English
- 4 Provide information which enables teachers to plan appropriate learning experience for new arrivals
- 5 Provide information which enables the teacher to determine what support - if any will be required

Methods of Assessment

Assessments of new arrivals should be carried out over time, after the child has settled in school. This may be more problematic in secondary schools.

A range of methods should be used including:

- 1 Informal assessment - discuss a picture, book, story
- 2 Previous school records - if available, these are invaluable
- 3 Discussion with parents at initial interview - they can provide information on subjects the child enjoyed, excelled at, their first language ability etc.
- 4 Discussion with the child - how they view their previous schooling and their views on their own strength and weaknesses
- 5 Discussion with support staff who may offer insights into child's learning style in a small group.

Profiles of EAL learners across the different areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing will often be more variable than those of monolingual children, some may be more advanced in literacy skills than in speaking and listening. Some may go through a **silent period** where they do not talk at all.

Schools need to exercise care when interpreting results from standardised assessment as these may be culturally biased or standardised against a monolingual norm.

A Language in common

Children working at a level below National Curriculum level 2 in English should be assessed using the **QCA extended scales**.