



Guidance

Curriculum, Examination  
and Assessment

## Key Stage 3 *National Strategy*

# Access and engagement in RE

*Teaching pupils for whom English  
is an additional language*

**Heads of RE and  
EMA teachers**

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department for

**education and skills**

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence



## About this guidance

The guidance is in two parts.

**Sections 1 to 4** are intended for subject leaders of religious education (RE) and ethnic minority achievement (EMA) in secondary schools. These sections are designed to support a departmental meeting focused on reviewing the attainment of pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL), and should be read in conjunction with the later sections.

**Sections 5 to 8** are for all RE teachers and their EMA colleagues. They aim to help teachers support pupils learning EAL in the classroom, particularly those working at levels 3 to 4 and who have been learning in English for a minimum of two years, in order to raise their attainment in RE lessons.

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The Key Stage 3 National Strategy is based on four important principles:

- **Expectations:** establishing high expectations for all pupils and setting challenging targets for them to achieve;
- **Progression:** strengthening the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 and ensuring progression in teaching and learning across Key Stage 3;
- **Engagement:** promoting approaches to teaching and learning that engage and motivate pupils and demand their active participation;
- **Transformation:** strengthening teaching and learning through a programme of professional development and practical support.

This guidance applies these principles to the teaching and learning of RE for pupils learning EAL. It suggests strategies to help teachers support pupils at different points of learning English:

- to develop their understanding and use of the English language;
- to enhance their learning in RE lessons.

The guidance also considers how pupils' self-esteem can be developed. Pupils cannot derive full benefit from their RE lessons unless social aspects of their learning are taken into account.

The Strategy has high expectations for *all* pupils, and the inclusion of pupils learning EAL is a fundamental principle.

The Ofsted report *Managing support for the attainment of pupils from ethnic minority groups* (October 2001) identifies factors that enable bilingual learners to develop their English successfully:

- joint planning between mainstream and specialist ethnic minority achievement (EMA) staff;
- a focus on the content of the lesson, ensuring appropriate cognitive challenge;
- a parallel focus on the language necessary to complete the task;
- activities that enable pupils to rehearse and explore the language they need;
- opportunities to use and build on their first-language skills, where appropriate;
- continuing support with writing through, for example, the use of matrices for organising information and writing frames for more extended contributions.

Acquisition of academic language can take considerably longer to develop than social language. This advanced level of proficiency in the language for learning is crucial to the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language in all subjects of the curriculum.

The report draws attention to the 'considerable evidence that once proficiency in English was achieved, the progress for pupils with EAL across the curriculum was rapid and their attainment on a par with or higher than that of their monolingual peers'.



### *The role of the subject leader*

Success for pupils learning EAL depends on close monitoring of their academic and personal targets. Meeting their needs should be an integral part of a departmental development plan. The Key Stage 3 Strategy booklet *Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* identifies three core roles for subject leaders in securing the progress of pupils:

- 1 Judging standards**, including:
  - analysing and interpreting data on pupils' attainment;
  - reviewing with teachers their assessments of progress for classes, identified groups and individuals;
  - sampling pupils' work;
  - discussing work, progress and attitudes with sample groups of pupils.
- 2 Evaluating teaching and learning:**
  - evaluating the Key Stage 3 schemes of work to ensure they focus on effective teaching and learning;
  - observing teaching and giving feedback to colleagues;
  - reviewing teachers' planning.
- 3 Leading sustainable improvements:**
  - leading departmental discussions about priorities for the subject;
  - agreeing targets for raising pupils' attainment;
  - leading the improvement of teaching quality;
  - leading the review, construction and resourcing of the curriculum.

Part of the role of the head of RE is to ensure that there is an effective learning environment across the department – one which promotes an ethos where pupils learning EAL can feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.

### *A supportive learning environment*

Schools implementing the Key Stage 3 Strategy will provide a supportive, inclusive learning environment based on the following features:

- structured lessons that draw pupils in from the start of the lesson;
- active and engaging tasks which encourage all pupils to participate;
- teaching and learning strategies that are oral and interactive;
- an emphasis on short-term planning, which includes planning for input and support from other adults in the classroom, to ensure the learning opportunities are maximised;
- subject-specific language skills and conventions of particular forms of writing, which are made explicit and demonstrated by the teacher;
- planned opportunities for oral rehearsal in pairs and in small groups;
- a requirement that pupils apply learning, supported by group work, before moving to independent activity.



## *The use of first languages in RE lessons*

It is an advantage to be multilingual; teachers can acknowledge this in the way they encourage and respond to the use of first languages. Pupils learning EAL are likely to have a better understanding of grammars and the ways in which languages work because they have the advantage of being able to compare languages.

The appropriate use of pupils' first languages in RE lessons can be crucial to their attainment. Engagement and access to RE can be impeded if a pupil's first language is not appropriately supported. Here are some golden rules for first-language use.

### **Pupils should be encouraged to use their first language in lessons when:**

- the cognitive challenge is likely to be high:** problem solving and critical thinking are difficult in a second language, even when the target language has been learnt for several years;
- they are still developing proficiency in English:** it is particularly supportive if pupils try out ideas in their first language before writing in English;
- oral rehearsal will help reflection:** for example, before responding to a text, picture or artefact.

### **It may not be appropriate for pupils to use their first language when:**

- pupils need to practise the target language to improve fluency;
- pupils need oral rehearsal in the target language so that they are prepared for writing tasks;
- pupils need to take risks in their spoken English in order to build confidence;
- pupils need to practise expressing themselves quickly in English, for examination preparation.

discussion  
points

### **Securing progress for pupils learning EAL**

*These questions could be used to begin a departmental review of how pupils learning EAL are currently supported.*

- *Does the current marking policy support diagnostic marking and the identification of targets for pupils?*
- *Are language-learning targets for pupils learning EAL clearly identified?*
- *Where a teacher works with an EMA colleague, do both have a clearly defined and negotiated role in delivering the lesson?*
- *Are opportunities for planned talk maximised in group tasks and plenary sessions?*
- *Does planning allow all pupils to contribute or give feedback over the course of a half-term?*
- *Do teachers provide a frame or other structure to help pupils to listen and make sense of what they hear?*
- *Is there enough support to help pupils with reading and writing in RE?*
- *Which features of a supportive learning environment occur in lessons you teach or observe within the department? Which require further development?*
- *What is the departmental policy on the effective use of pupils' first languages in lessons?*
- *How do teachers plan for the use of first languages to move pupils into proficient use of English in RE lessons?*



Pupils for whom English is an additional language are not a homogenous group. Extra planning and support may be required to take their specific learning needs into account. Many pupils learning EAL will not reach their maximum attainment without planned intervention in their English language development. Consideration of their learning needs will be essential to maximise their inclusion in classroom activities.

This section focuses on the following:

- pupils' prior experience of learning English;
- composition of peer groups;
- pupils' prior experiences of learning;
- availability of classroom support.

### *Pupils' prior experience of learning English*

Pupils learning EAL in your classes are likely to be at different points along a continuum of experience in learning English.

#### **Pupils relatively new to learning in English**

Beginner learners of English will have minimal or no reading and writing skills in English. They are likely to have been living in England for a very short period of time. Their speaking and listening skills in English may also be at an early stage of development. However, they will all be competent and fluent speakers of their own first languages.

#### **Pupils becoming familiar with English**

Typically pupils at this stage will have increased their fluency in spoken English. They are able to understand instructions and conversations and can participate in learning activities if the context is clear. They may appear to be superficially competent with oral language in English (social talk) but lack the development of English for formal academic purposes, both orally and in reading and writing activities in the classroom. The pupils' facility with 'playground' English sometimes misleads teachers into thinking that the pupils understand and can produce more than is the case. Academic English can take much longer to develop and therefore needs to be planned for, explicitly taught and learning reinforced in meaningful and purposeful contexts.

#### **Pupils growing in confidence as users of English**

Pupils at this stage need continuing support to develop their skills as readers and writers. Pupils may decode text accurately when reading but not process all texts at the necessary level of understanding or speed. Errors in writing will still occur as a result of the different syntaxes of English and the pupils' first languages.

#### **Fluent English users**

These pupils will be competent, knowledgeable and fluent users of English, as well as other languages in most social and learning contexts. They will often be high attainers and literate in other languages. They will have gained explicit understanding of how more than one language is structured.



### *Composition of peer groups*

The classrooms in which pupils learning EAL will be taught will differ in terms of the languages and literacies prevalent in the peer group. In your school, pupils learning EAL may be in RE classes with peer groups similar to the following.

#### **A first language shared by a majority**

The *majority* of pupils *share* a common home language and cultural identity other than English. This is a common experience in many inner-city schools. The first language then becomes the *lingua franca* of the school and there is a particular onus on teachers who become the sole role models of spoken standard English for the pupils in their classes. Using their first language may be helpful for pupils in the early months of acquiring English. Clear expectations that *all* pupils rehearse and use English as the target language for learning in the classroom need to be established.

#### **A first language in common**

There are just *one or two* other pupils with a shared home language in common in the class. Such pupils may be able to support each other's understanding through use of their first language to explore concepts and ideas before moving into use of English.

#### **A range of languages and cultures**

There are other pupils learning EAL in the class but from *different language* and cultural groups. The teacher will be able to maximise discussions about how different languages work and for all pupils to use their knowledge to compare them in developing English.

#### **'Isolated learners'**

The pupil is the *only* learner of EAL in the class or a speaker of a language not represented elsewhere in the school – an 'isolated learner'. The pupil will be totally immersed in an English-speaking environment at school but may not feel included. It may be some time before the pupil builds the confidence to risk saying anything in English.

### *Pupils' prior experiences of learning*

The rate at which a pupil learning EAL is likely to make progress in RE classrooms can be determined by their prior experiences of learning.

#### **Little or no prior formal schooling**

Pupils may be disadvantaged though their lack of knowledge and understanding about expectations of learning at school. They may not be literate in a standard first language so will be learning to read and write for the first time in an additional language. Some pupils entering Key Stage 3 classes may also be asylum seekers and have limited or interrupted experiences of schooling.

#### **Some education in the UK or overseas, but with significant gaps in formal schooling**

Pupils may require considerable support to consolidate and transfer key English skills.

#### **Experience of different education systems in two or more countries**

Pupils may not be used to expectations that they play an active part in lessons.

#### **Full primary schooling (six years or longer) in the UK**

The pupils should be as literate and fluent in English as their peer group, although their spoken and written English may still show some non-native errors.

#### **Full formal education abroad**

Pupils who have received full education abroad are likely to be fluent and literate in a standard language. This advantage will support a speedy transfer into RE lessons.





### *Availability of classroom support*

RE teachers *may* have the added bonus of additional support for EAL learners in their classes. The provision of support in terms of personnel and frequency will vary from school to school.

#### **Support from an EMA-funded specialist teacher**

Agree who are the targeted pupils for support. Plan jointly for a full partnership role for both teachers. Decide who will do what during the course of the lesson (e.g. model writing, devise and resource starter, guided groups). Share evaluation, marking and target setting.

#### **Support from an EMA-funded classroom assistant in the lesson**

Negotiate with the assistant a clear, agreed role in supporting you with teaching, supporting and assessing targeted pupils learning EAL.

#### **Support from someone who speaks the pupil's home language in the lesson**

This is valuable in supporting pupils who are inexperienced in English and in helping you to assess what they know and can do in their first language.

#### **Support from teacher/adviser with planning and resources outside the lesson**

Utilise their expertise and knowledge of pupils learning EAL to help you plan for inclusion.

#### **Support for *all* lessons with a particular class or year group for a specified period of time**

This resource should give considerable added value to the pupils in the class. Maximise the opportunities to plan, teach and assess collaboratively as above.

#### **Support for *some* RE lessons with one class in the week**

Plan specific activities particularly relevant for pupils learning EAL within this lesson.

discussion  
points

#### **Pupils learning English: some considerations**

- *A school's population can change over time. Which of the descriptions on pages 5 and 6 most closely fit pupils learning EAL in your school? Are these the same in all classes across Years 7, 8 and 9?*
- *What support is available to your department at Key Stage 3? How is this allocated? How is it used by the department or individual teachers?*



# 4

## Frequently asked questions

This section looks at some frequently asked questions and possible answers.

**Q** What provision and support can be made for 'new arrivals' in and outside RE lessons?

**A** *An induction programme – including being paired with a 'buddy' and being given a booklet introducing pupils to the school's staff, rules and routines – can be organised. In addition, a dictionary and support materials for key RE lessons, including visuals and sentence starters, can be used.*

**Q** We don't have any support in class. How can we help pupils learning EAL in our lessons?

**A** *It is often the case that there are no support teachers or assistants working in RE lessons. However, it will be possible to use the expertise and personnel in the EMA team in school or in the LEA to help you plan ways in which pupils learning EAL can reach their maximum levels of attainment in RE.*

**Q** How can teachers find time to plan alongside support teachers and assistants who support them for part of the week?

**A** *It is difficult to find time for planning, but even a short discussion or brief planning session can be beneficial. If time cannot be found, sharing medium-term plans with support staff can help them to understand the context of their work. In addition, if short-term plans state how support staff should be deployed and how they should work in lessons, this can greatly enhance their effectiveness.*

**Q** Can flexible groupings be provided to ensure that pupils learning EAL are not constantly placed in lower-ability groups or with pupils who have special educational needs in class or withdrawn from lessons inappropriately?

**A** *This is a key issue: groupings should always be flexible, determined by the objective of the lesson and how pupils can be supported in achieving it. For example, it is unlikely that the reading, writing, speaking and listening groups would be the same for many pupils, but this will be particularly true for pupils learning EAL, who will be more proficient in spoken English.*

*It is also of paramount importance that pupils who are learning English have the opportunity to hear positive English language models. Groupings need to be managed carefully to ensure that this happens.*

**Q** Pupils often use their first language between themselves in class. I know that in theory this is OK but I have a feeling that often they do so to exclude others. Neither am I sure that they are 'on task' all the time. What is appropriate?

**A** *Class rules, including those for talk tasks, need to be crystal clear and negotiated with pupils. The use of English as the target language for learning is expected at all times unless you expressly suggest that particular pupils work in their first language for a clearly defined purpose.*



Here are some suggestions to ensure that teaching supports pupils learning EAL in RE lessons. They are focused on pupils who have been learning English for a minimum of two years and who are underperforming. Most of the suggestions do not require separate planning or provision but are examples of effective teaching and learning that will be particularly supportive of pupils learning EAL. In each section additional suggestions are made for where extra support is available.

### *Before the lesson*

- Seek advice from specialist staff; plan together where possible.
- Check that learning objectives are clearly planned to build on prior attainment. Display them and refer to them during the lesson.
- With additional support it may be appropriate to pre-teach key vocabulary, read a piece of text in advance, or provide additional visual materials. This is particularly helpful when the reading of text during the lesson is going to be fairly rapid, for example, when reading a section in a textbook.
- Plan for the deployment of additional adults. Short-term planning should clearly define the roles of all adults and with whom they will be working; this is especially helpful when planning guided work.
- Decide how to group pupils during the main part of the lesson. Identify targeted pupils.
- Identify talk activities, ensuring groups provide peer support wherever possible. Assign roles carefully and support active listening. Module 7 of the *Literacy across the curriculum* training file offers many helpful examples of pupil groupings and strategies.
- Select which pupils or groups to ask to feed back to the class in the plenary (remember to tell the pupils at the start of the lesson).
- Provide additional support and plan questions for the plenary to enable pupils to contribute a full response, rather than a one-word answer.
- Plan structured lessons and lesson sequences that offer additional support for pupils learning EAL to enable them to meet the lesson objectives and expected outcomes.

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### Planning a sequence of lessons in RE

This example of a structured learning sequence demonstrates how an RE lesson or sequence of lessons might be planned to maximise visual and kinaesthetic forms of learning through collaborative group work.

*Aim: To understand and explain why gurdwaras are special to Sikhs*

Planning model	RE planning
Sharing experience and prior knowledge – starter activity with whole class	Pupils visit a gurdwara. In groups, label key features of a large picture of a gurdwara.
Accessing new information and experience	Use of information presented visually. In small groups: ■ study photographs; ■ read short pieces of text.
Processing understanding	In small groups: ■ match text to pictures; ■ collate information from large picture and add this to the matching exercise.
Expressing understanding – independent activity	Convert information from matching and labelling exercise to short paragraphs.
Outcome	Written explanation on importance of gurdwaras in Sikh religion.

### During starter activities

- Pair a pupil learning EAL with a 'buddy' or sympathetic peer so that the pupil can receive help with 'oral rehearsal' of contributions.
- Make the starter activity 'concrete': for example, matching vocabulary or grouping similar words. Whiteboards are useful as they provide a link between talk and writing, allowing pupils to try out their ideas without errors being permanent.
- Differentiate questioning to ensure that all are engaged and appropriately challenged or supported.

### With classroom support

- Ask an additional adult to pre-teach and prompt for 'show me' activities; correct and ask the pupil to try again.
- Ask the additional teacher or assistant to run the starter activity while you work with a group of pupils learning EAL.
- Ask an additional adult to assess pupils' responses while you run the starter.



## *During main teaching activities*

### **Teacher introduction**

- Make clear the context for learning and relate this to pupils' prior knowledge and experience where possible. Remember that pupils in the group are likely to come from a variety of religious backgrounds and will have substantial knowledge of their own religion. They may be prepared to share their knowledge of their religion with the class.
- Use visual clues and pictures to help make the meaning clear.
- Make the introduction interactive so that it encourages questioning and discussion.
- Build in opportunities for pupils to have oral language modelled and to rehearse what they will say before they are expected to respond to the whole class.
- Build in brief 'thinking time': it allows pupils learning EAL to reflect on the question before answering. The 'Questioning' module of the Key Stage 3 Strategy foundation subjects training materials includes some helpful guidance.

### **With classroom support**

- Work collaboratively – model speaker/listener roles to pupils and make explicit the criteria for successful speaking and listening.
- Use the expertise of specialist staff to model language features of shared reading or writing.
- Set explicit listening tasks using key words or a listening frame.
- Read text with pupils in advance of the lesson.
- Provide a copy of the text or extract with key words and features already highlighted in colour for pupils.
- Where appropriate, the support teacher could encourage pupils to use their first language.

### **Development: the main part of the lesson**

- Group pupils thoughtfully and with different pupils for different purposes, such as providing a good peer model of language use.
- Planning for a guided group with pupils learning EAL will allow them to show what they know through more extended talk in a small supportive group. It will also enable focused teaching and assessment of learning needs.
- Make clear to groups what individual contributions are expected – allocate roles carefully. This is especially important in group discussion or in other group work, where a teacher may not be supporting.
- Allow pupils, particularly at the early stages of fluency in English, to talk or write in their first language, particularly when planning writing or attempting to respond to questions on a text.
- Ensure that purposeful talk and rehearsal are built into tasks.
- Provide matching, grid or DARTs type activities with some completed parts as a model. Make sure that the task requires some collaborative investigation and is not too easy.
- In group writing, provide appropriate support, writing frames, talk frames, word lists etc. These are particularly helpful when pupils are developing an extended piece of writing, where the language may be unfamiliar.
- Avoid worksheet tasks that limit talk or investigation and inadvertently result in independent work.



### With classroom support

- Work collaboratively with specialist staff in preparing group activities and in allocating pupils to groups.
- Be explicit about the role of the additional adult – for example, running a guided group, supporting a pupil within a group, or working generally with the whole class.

classroom  
example

### Using support from an EAL department

Departments in Plumstead Manor School, in Greenwich, London, bid for support from the language development department. This support can take place in classrooms and also to help subject teachers plan for the pupils learning EAL.

The RE department bid for support to help improve teachers' understanding of strategies that enable Year 8 pupils learning EAL to produce extended writing. They also bid for support in class so that EMA teachers could work in partnership with RE teachers to help embed the practice.

### During plenaries

- Ensure pupils have a role and opportunity to contribute to feedback.
- Tell individual pupils at the beginning of the lesson if they are going to be expected to speak in the plenary. This will give them time to plan for it.
- Make explicit how presentations to the rest of class are delivered – for example, standing up, facing the class and speaking so that others can hear.
- Encourage pupils to talk about what they have learned and how they learned it – use talk prompts or frames.
- Differentiate questioning.
- Use 'sentence starters' to encourage pupils to summarise what they have learned and record it.
- Use opportunities to revise and consolidate new and/or key vocabulary.

discussion  
points

### Supporting teaching and learning

- *Identify which of the suggestions for starter activities, for main teaching activities and for plenaries are already strong features of teaching RE to pupils learning EAL in your school.*
- *Identify which suggestions you would like to develop further in your teaching.*
- *Prioritise these suggestions and agree how you will put them into action.*



Talk is a vital part of the acquisition of any language. As part of the process, oral rehearsal is essential to support the development of English use for pupils learning EAL. It is also an important factor in developing thinking and understanding. Pupils who engage in exploratory talk, using the metacognitive process of 'thinking out loud' by sharing their reasoning with their peers, are more likely to understand, develop and internalise related concepts.

Typical exchanges during collaborative tasks might include rehearsal of language structures for questioning, explaining, advising, arguing a case, reflecting, predicting, empathising or formulating hypotheses. These will need to be modelled by the teacher beforehand.

Involve pupils in establishing clear organisational routines and ground rules for talk activities in your classroom early in the year and reinforce them regularly.

**classroom  
example**

### Structuring talk in a sequence of lessons

Pupils in Year 8 were studying places of worship in different religions. They were working in groups of three, with each group researching a different place of worship prior to producing a detailed, annotated diagram of the place of worship as well as a written indication of why the place of worship was important to believers. They were then going to present their place of worship to the class. The groups were carefully structured to ensure that pupils who were beginning to learn English were supported in their group.

#### *Lesson 1*

Each group researched aspects of the place of worship they were studying, using pictures and diagrams, books and CD-ROMs. They logged the information on to grids. The teacher supported beginning learners of English through setting up two guided groups so that she could work with the pupils who needed most help. She also ensured that beginning learners of English were supported through the use of visual materials.

#### *Lesson 2*

The groups assembled the information they had collected and talked about which information was needed for the task. They then worked collaboratively to produce a large annotated diagram of the place of worship and an account of its importance to believers. Again the teacher worked with guided groups to support them.

#### *Lesson 3*

The groups prepared to tell the rest of the class about their place of worship. The lesson began with a starter in which pupils were asked to contribute one piece of information about their place of worship. Each group had one minute to decide which information should be given. Then the presentations were made to the class by the groups of three, to support the bilingual learners.



## *Strategies to develop speaking and listening*

- Make oral language structures explicit in lesson objectives and planning.
- Model and explain the purpose and form of language structures involved in talk activities.
- Set expectations for using formal language in presentations and model it first.
- Ensure your questions encourage full responses rather than one-word answers.
- Wait more than 15 seconds for a pupil learning EAL to answer questions or, better still, ask them to rehearse a response quickly with a talk partner and come back to them.
- Suggest that peer first-language speakers rehearse ideas in their first language before moving into English.
- Group and regroup pupils with clear criteria related to the lesson's objectives and available peer support.
- Use drama to support pupils' understanding of and engagement in reading.
- Create opportunities for pupils to be active listeners: invite comments from a range of pupils, asking questions and expecting pupils to ask questions for themselves.
- Provide a purpose for listening. For example, pupils watching a video could be told to listen for certain things: 'This part of the video gives three reasons why Mecca is important to Muslims. Listen carefully to see if you can spot them.'
- Provide a listening frame for pupils to use if they have to listen for a prolonged length of time, such as when watching a video.

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### Using a listening frame

This example illustrates a listening frame which pupils could use when watching a video about rites of passage in Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Each pupil learning EAL is paired with a pupil who is fluent in English. The listening frame helps the pair to focus on the information they need. Working in pairs supports language development through discussion.

#### Rites of passage in four world religions

When you are watching the video, work with a partner to fill in information about each of the four religions.

Life event	Rites of passage in Christianity	Rites of passage in Islam	Rites of passage in Hinduism	Rites of passage in Judaism
Birth				
Becoming a member of the religion				
Becoming an adult in the religion				
Marriage				
Death				

### Speaking and listening

- *How do you currently involve your bilingual pupils in speaking and listening activities?*
- *Do you build in appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their first language?*
- *Discuss ways in which you could strengthen speaking and listening skills and agree on at least three approaches that could be further developed in RE lessons in your school.*



Pupils learning RE are often expected to read texts in order to extract information from them. Reading for information requires the reader to be able to focus on the specific information they need to complete the task they have been set. Many pupils learning EAL are likely to need continuing support to access meaning and use the information in the texts provided in RE lessons. The *Literacy across the curriculum* folder has two useful modules on reading that provide further guidance: module 5, 'Active reading strategies', and module 6, 'Reading for information'.

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Pupils learning EAL will need structured support and active tasks to help them to begin to engage with text and to utilise a range of strategies for reading for different purposes. Depending on their previous experience, confusions can arise with the following:

- cultural references – for example, references to common aspects of life in Britain, which may be unfamiliar;
- reference in text, where meaning is carried across sentences and paragraphs through reference (to previously stated nouns) using pronouns (*it, they, he, she*);
- meaning carried through the use of complex sentences or clause construction in some texts;
- imagery – metaphors, similes, idiomatic phrases;
- use of the passive voice, particularly in RE textbooks and reference materials;
- contextual definitions of words that can have different meanings from those encountered elsewhere, such as *passage*;
- subject-specific vocabulary and technical terms which have very specific meanings.



## Strategies to develop reading

- Model strategies for reading texts – for example, skimming, scanning, reading on, using images, subheadings etc. – during whole-class sessions and in guided reading groups. Be explicit in describing the strategies you are using as you model them. For example, draw reference links with arrows or mark textual clues in colour. Relate this to the lesson objectives and to the purpose for reading.
- Use strategies which help to structure reading, such as DARTs (directed activities related to text). These help pupils to access text and focus on the information they need. They also allow pupils' reading skills and needs to be assessed. DARTs should be used as part of interactive whole-class teaching and collaborative group and paired work so that pupils can try out their ideas orally. Examples of DARTs include:
  - sequencing;
  - prioritising;
  - matching pictures to text;
  - matching phrases to definitions;
  - matching examples of cause and effect;
  - filling in gaps in text;
  - the use of true/false statements;
  - matching concepts to examples;
  - sorting to determine which information is not needed for a piece of work;
  - grouping information together to identify similarities and differences between key words and phrases.

### discussion points

#### Reading

- *Which aspects of reading do your pupils learning EAL find particularly challenging?*
- *What do you currently do to support them with reading tasks in your lessons?*
- *Do you provide opportunities for analysis of text to promote more independent study for pupils learning EAL?*
- *Identify which suggestions listed above could be developed further in your teaching.*



Many pupils learning EAL may experience and demonstrate particular difficulty in their writing. Oral language use may be more fluent and mislead teachers as to the amount of specific targeted teaching required for written expression. In general, as for formal speaking and reading, the processes of writing need to be explicitly modelled by the teacher and supported through collaborative activities and guided group work. After this experience, carefully planned frames and sentence starters can support pupils toward independent writing.

Pupils will also need to experience reading good clear examples of the kind of writing which is required for the task. Writing activity needs to be preceded by purposeful talk so that pupils can hear and rehearse some of the sentences they will need in order to develop a mental model ('a voice in the head') of the English structures required.

Pupils learning EAL may show patterns of error when writing in English in their RE lessons which are related to their experience of the structures of their first language. Teachers should sample pupils' work and read it carefully in order to detect any patterns of error which can then be discussed with the pupil concerned.

### *Strategies to develop writing*

- Modelled writing: demonstrate how writing is composed and refined, especially at word and sentence levels.
- Shared writing: include pupils in a shared writing activity to which they contribute, to support and shape their first attempts at writing in a whole-class context.
- Shared reading of pupils' writing: explicitly identify successful conventions.
- Guided writing: this allows pupils' writing targets to be addressed through interactive focused teaching.
- 'Scaffold' writing through writing frames etc. It is important that 'scaffolding' is scaled down and removed once it is no longer necessary.
- Structured questions will allow answers to be combined as continuous prose.
- Provide paragraph headings.
- Diagnostic marking: ascertain the most commonly made errors by close-marking pupils' work. These can indicate writing targets for individuals or groups of pupils.

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### A 'scaffold' to help pupils prepare for extended writing

The RE department at Rushey Mead School in Leicester has identified pupils with less than two years experience of schooling in England and provides very structured work to support their writing. The following is an example of work prepared for a Year 9 group on initiation ceremonies.

The pupils have a grid to help them to organise information about the Sikh amrit ceremony.

#### The amrit ceremony

Name of symbol	Description	Meaning	Picture

They also have a text about the five Ks of Sikhism. The teacher reads the text first while the pupils follow. Pupils then read the text in pairs and look at the grid. They use three colours to underline the information needed to complete the grid:

*Name of symbol    Description of symbol    Meaning of symbol*

The teacher then tells the pupils how the Khalsa was founded, followed by a description of the amrit ceremony. Key words and new vocabulary are written on the board and grouped according to which account they come from.

The pupils then work in small groups with cut-up versions of the accounts of the Khalsa and the amrit ceremony. They have to separate the accounts and then sequence them.

Finally they use their grids and the sequenced accounts to complete written work, supported by sentence starters and paragraph headings, where appropriate.

### Writing

- Which aspects of writing do your pupils learning EAL find particularly challenging?
- What do you currently do to support them with writing tasks in your lessons?
- Identify which suggestions listed above could be developed further in your teaching.



## Resources and further reading

*Educational inequality: mapping race, class and gender*, D. Gilborn and H. Mirza (Ofsted, 2000; ref: HMI 232)

*Inclusive schools, inclusive society*, R. Richardson and A. Woods (Trentham Books, 1999)

*Literacy across the curriculum* (DfES ref: 0235/2001)

Key Stage 3 National Strategy *The foundation subjects training folder* (DfES ref: 0350/2002)

*Managing support for the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups* (Ofsted, 2001)

*Planning for bilingual learners*, Maggie Gravelle (ed.) (Trentham Books, 2000)

*Raising aspects of ethnic minority achievement* (DfES ref: 0639/2001)

*Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* (DfES ref: 0102/2002)

*Supporting bilingual learners in schools*, Maggie Gravelle (Trentham Books, 2001)

*Supporting refugees in 21st century Britain*, J. Rutter (Trentham Books, 2001)

### Websites

This small selection of websites offers a range of different types of support. Numerous commercial materials can be found via the Internet by using one of the commonly used search engines and searching for 'inclusion'.

### General advice on inclusion and availability of resources

[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)

[inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk](http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk)

### Resource materials, including translation sites and foreign-language resources such as newspapers

[www.linguanet.org.uk](http://www.linguanet.org.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

[www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com)

[www.onlinenewspapers.com](http://www.onlinenewspapers.com)

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