



Adventure Pre-School – Policy for Children & Families with English as an Additional Language

Adventure welcomes children and families from all countries and we aim to do our best to support children's language development whatever the language. Children coming to Adventure do so as part of their participation in an English-speaking education system. Part of the core function of the pre-school is to help children learn to speak English in order to be ready to attend school.

Child with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may be bi-lingual, multi-lingual, have limited English but are becoming confident in their home language or may have no spoken language.

As with any child and family it is important that a relationship is built of openness and trust. Adventure aims to make every family welcome. Language should not be a barrier. As trust is built it is easier to gauge language needs of both parents, family members and children including siblings. It is important to know what level of English is spoken in the home.

If wanted we will also introduce families to other families with similar language profiles so that support networks can be broadened.

Learning English as an additional language

Expert advice for children learning two languages is that the two should be kept separate. For example, English at the setting and 'home' language at home. Or if one parent speaks one language and the other another language, then as long as there is one 'good' role model of speaking English (e.g. a fluent parent or older sibling), English can be spoken at home too.

It is useful for us to know some key words (e.g. toilet, home, tired) in home languages, as this can help us to settle children and build our understanding.

Language development in English

As a general rule, children who have EAL may have up to a six month 'silent period' when they observe, listen and take in language. Typically, children learn to listen first, understand second and speak finally. This is not to be worried about. As long as children are speaking in a 'home' language then their language development can be assessed, it is just their English that may be delayed.

Children with EAL also often 'code-switch' which means they speak primarily in one language with occasional words in the other, mainly because it is easier. These are both normal stages to go through.

As with any language, English develops from naming objects on to how they move (nouns then verbs). Beyond this, children learn words that describe others (adjectives and adverbs) as well as how they relate to each other (prepositions and conjunctions). Language starts with one word, then one more is added at a time. As a guide single words come at 1 year of age, two linked words at 2, three at 3 and so on.



Translation

We will help with translation where we can. For written translation, as much as errors can occur with online translation sites, sometimes they can give the gist of meaning to start with where there is no shared or common language. For spoken translation the first support network would come from the local community. This might be another family member, another pre-school family or someone from the local community.