



English as an Additional Language Policy

Statement of Intent

At Wickham Montessori undertake to include all children and welcome those who are not able to speak or understand English.

Our strategy to support these children and their families will be implemented by all members of the staff, and temporary or new staff will receive support and information during their induction to enable the same strategies.

Children attending our setting may be monolingual in English or another heritage language, or multilingual and able to understand and speak a number of languages.

It is important to identify the child's first language at the pre-admission stage. To establish whether the parents are able to converse in English, or whether they may need alternative support to understand the routines and learning environment that their child will experience.

To speak another language other than English or to be multi lingual will be celebrated and not seen as a deficit or disadvantage for the individual children and their family. It is the responsibility of staff to be flexible and creative to ensure that effective communication takes place.

Creating a positive environment

Children from different cultures may find our setting environment quite strange: it is important that we include pictures with which the children can identify. These may be of landscapes, houses, families, or children playing.

We need to include labels and captions in alternative languages but these are only relevant if we draw the attention of the children to them.

Bilingual books will be displayed in the book area, and when possible a parent will be asked to co-tell a bilingual story with the children, or record a simple story for the children to listen to whilst looking at the book with an adult. Staff who can speak an alternative language will be encouraged to use it with the children in a variety of situations.

The role-play area will reflect diversity and the adults are responsible for ensuring that the children respect and understand the function of the resources on offer.

Language rich environment

Communication involves speaking, listening and understanding: it affects the social as well as the learning outcomes for children.

A language rich environment will be provided for all children, and any strategies which we use to support EAL children will also benefit all the children, including those with special needs.

Staff must find ways of encouraging children to keep talking, even if they are unable to do so in English

- We will keep language simple and literal initially so that the child has the best opportunity to understand.
- We will give instructions to the child individually and with eye contact, getting down to the child's level, as generalised instructions are hard to follow.
- We will give plenty of time for the child to respond – it takes time to translate!
- We will learn key words in the child's first language so they can tell us important things like needing the toilet, being thirsty, wanting to play with a toy.
- We will use non-verbal clues when working with the child.
- We will choose stories which are simple, have clear pictures, repetitive, but interesting (Farmer Duck for example)
- We will encourage the child to teach the other children the name of objects in their own language.
- We will borrow music/story CDs from the family to play to the whole group to enjoy.
- We will model correct sentences for the child when they have tried to communicate.