



Advice for parents

Parents play a very important role in supporting student learning. Studies consistently show that students perform better in school if their parents are involved in their education. You need not be proficient in English to help and support your child in school.

Helping my child to learn English

As parents, you are strongly encouraged to support your child to learn English by:

- reading to your child on a regular basis in the home language and/or English
- encouraging your child to develop and maintain active use of your home language
- becoming familiar with the [Australian Curriculum](#) and what your child is expected to learn at school
- involving your child in talking about their school experiences
- speaking with your child's teacher or appropriate staff member whenever you have questions or concerns about the learning program or your child's progress
- attending parent-teacher interviews.

When visiting your child's school, you can make an appointment to speak to teachers by contacting your school's front office. If English is not your first language and you feel more comfortable speaking in your own language, you can ask a family member or friend to accompany you to school and help you communicate with school staff. Alternatively, you can ask the school for an interpreter through the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#). This service is provided free of charge.

Using your own language

As a parent, it is important for you to continue using your family's home language at home.

Your child's first language or dialect is closely tied to their identity. Encouraging ongoing development of your child's first language eases the social and emotional transition that occurs when they move into new learning environments.

Continuing to use your child's first language allows them to develop age-appropriate world knowledge and vocabulary without having to wait until they have learned enough English language to engage with these topics.

There is a strong body of research that indicates learners with a strong foundation in their first language or dialect are likely to learn English more quickly and achieve greater success at school. It is difficult to build an additional language if the first language foundation is not established and supported while the additional language is being learned. Establishing and supporting your child's foundation in their home language is essential for successful development of their English language knowledge and skills.

Helping my child with school

If your child is still learning to speak, read and write in English, they are considered English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) learners and are given extra support to help them with their learning.

All students in Australian schools learn the content of the [Australian curriculum](#).

Because your child is learning English at the same time he/she is learning new content, learning tasks are modified to accommodate their level of English proficiency. As they learn more English, the kinds of support they receive will change.

Homework

Each school has its own homework policy. Homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning, develop good study habits and involve family members in their learning. If your child can't understand their homework, you should talk to the class teacher about it.

Reading books at home for fun and enjoyment is a very good homework activity. You can read to your child, with your child, or they can read by themselves. Books can be in English or in your home language and can be borrowed for free from the school library or the local council library.

