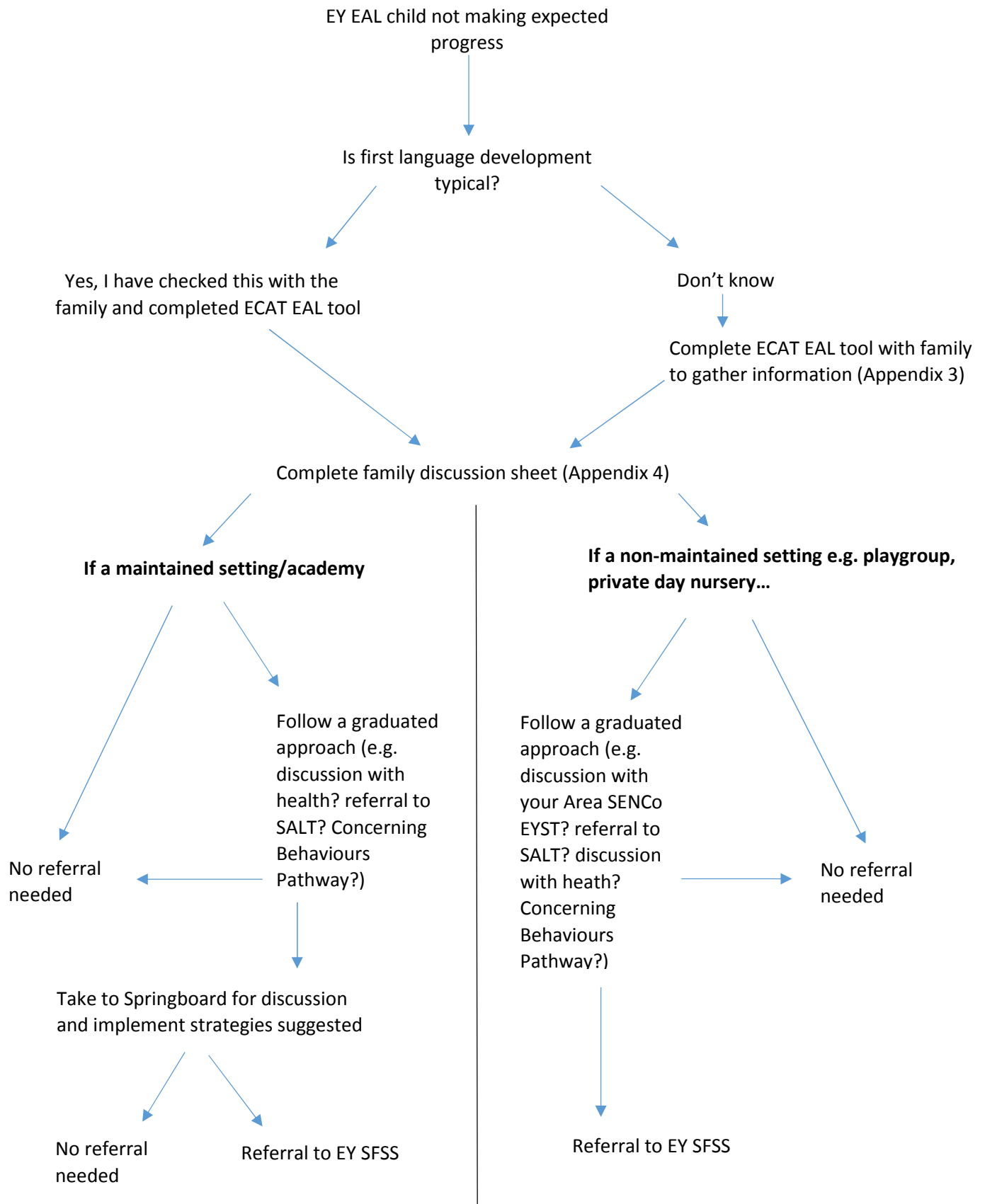


Children learning through English as an Additional Language (EAL) with suspected Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Guidance materials to support effective
practice in the Early Years

EY Practitioner has knowledge of EAL development (Appendix 1) and is using EAL strategies (Appendix 2). If unsure contact ecas@nottscc.gov.uk



APPENDIX 1 : EY Practitioner knowledge of EAL development

There are certain aspects/stages which are often true for many children:

- Receptive language acquisition tends to run ahead of expressive language development. This is true of first language development, but particularly so for additional language development. Bilingual/multilingual learners need time to ‘tune into’ the unfamiliar language before they start to speak in their new language. So a child will understand a lot more of their additional language before they start speaking it. Usually a child will think in their first language and then translate it into their additional language. Beginner bilingual children in particular will become very tired by this process.
- This leads onto a frequently observed stage – a ‘non-verbal’ or ‘silent’ period. Some children, depending on personality and learning style, need a considerable amount of time to hear and listen to the additional language before they feel confident enough to start using it expressively. This is **not** a passive, but very active stage of learning. The child is internalising the language – its structure, vocabulary and contextual use – and will then use the additional language when s/he is ready. The child should be exposed to as much language modelling as possible during this stage, so that practitioners are supporting this active learning phase. **During this time, a child will be making progress in all other areas of learning and development.**
- Children will often use chunks of language at first. So they might say “Good morning, Mrs Bradley” without at first understanding the meaning of each word in the phrase/chunk. They will need to hear the component words used in different, meaningful contexts to begin to understand that the chunk is made up of separate words, which each have their own meaning.
- Sometimes children use words from each of their languages. They are drawing on their wide range of resources to communicate. Sometimes they use this strategy because they do not know all of the words they need in their additional language; sometimes because the word represents a concept that has no alternative in the other language; or it may be because that the child has a strong emotional connection to the word and they choose to use it in this way (such as a familiar name for a relative in their first language).
- It is vital that children maintain and develop their first language as it is a central part of their identity. **The factor that has the most impact on successful additional language acquisition is the extent to which the first language is maintained and developed.** Thus practitioners should encourage and support continued first language use at home, for example, by borrowing dual language texts from the Education Library Service to share with the family. Families should be encouraged to use their first language at home as it is the language in which they can offer the strongest model.

APPENDIX 2 : EY Practitioner knowledge of EAL strategies

Ensure you have strategies in place from each of the four sections. Dip into each section as necessary for an individual child.

Do you involve parents/carers by:	Tick if in place:
Using a home-school book to communicate with parents?	
Inviting them into the setting to read to their child in their first language?	
Providing them with information on the topics / books being shared, so that they can discuss these in first language with their child?	
Using interpreters when needed to ensure effective communication?	

Do you use the child's first language by:	Tick if in place:
Encouraging parents to continue to use their first language with their child at home?	
Providing books in the child's first language?	
Learning some key words in the child's first language?	
Providing stories, music and rhymes in the child's first language?	
Displaying first language signs around the setting?	

Do you model language by:	Tick if in place:
Using clear, natural and highly repetitive speech with lots of expression?	
Allowing the child time (around 10 seconds) to respond?	
Providing a running commentary by talking through your actions and using gestures as you introduce and participate in an activity?	

Do you plan and resource with regard to the child's cultural and linguistic needs by:	Tick if in place:
Listing vocabulary to be modelled in weekly planning so that all practitioners are aware?	
Preparing a visual timetable with symbols?	
Creating a choice board with photos of areas in the setting?	
Making picture fans (similar to number fans) to help the child to acquire some survival words (eg toilet, drink, snack)?	
Helping the child to acquire some useful social interaction phrases (Let's play.. can I?...) by modelling the language in appropriate contexts?	
Ensuring that, in adult led activities, the child has opportunities to learn from peers who are strong English language role models?	
Using role play areas to reflect aspects of the child's cultural experiences?	

APPENDIX 3: ECAT MONITORING TOOL – EAL VERSION

TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH PRACTITIONER OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Use this tool as a basis for a general conversation with parents to find out about the language(s) they use at home and to share information about ages and stages in language development.

Child's name:	Date of birth:	Setting/School:
Completed by (name and role):	Family member/s present:	
Date completed:	Relationship to child:	

-

Instructions for completion:

- 1. Start with the section that precedes the child's date of birth. So, if the child is aged 33 months, start completing the 'By 24 months' section with the parents/carers. This is to ensure that skills in the earlier stage of development are in place. If not all statements in each column are ticked, go back to the earlier age band for that particular column. Again using the child aged 33 months as an example, if you only tick two out of the four statements in the 'By 24 months' section for *Understanding of Language*, go back to the 'By 18 months' section for this aspect (i.e. column).**
- 2. Talk through each statement with the family; reminding them throughout that you are referring to the child's first language, not English. Tick if the child has the skills mentioned in each statement. For each aspect (i.e. each column), all four statements must be ticked before moving on to the next age band. If there are any gaps, stop at this age band. If they are all ticked, continue discussing the statements in the next age band.**
- 3. Once you have finished the discussion with the parents/carers, you will have an overview of the child's developmental level in their first language. This will enable you to make a judgement about whether they are 'below', 'on track' or 'above' age-related expectations.**

Some Useful Questions:

- What is the child's communication like at home in their home language?
- What languages has the child been used to hearing/using - how long has s/he used each language, including English ?
- What sort of things do they understand in their home language?
- How do they let you know they want something?
- Is your child roughly at the same language level as other children of the same age who are learning the same language and who have had similar opportunities to hear/use that language?
- Is there a history of speech and language problems/dyslexia in your family?

You will be able to observe some of the child's communication skills yourself – e.g. interaction skills, attention and listening

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH PRACTITIONER OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Practitioner can assess

Parental discussion to find out about child's skills in home language

Points to note

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 12 Months (0-12m) EYFS 0-11m	Gazes at faces. Copies facial movements (e.g. sticking out tongue)	Turn towards a familiar sound	Recognises parent's voice, face brightens, activity increases	Cries to communicate
	Likes cuddles and being held – calms and snuggles in	Watches face when someone talks	<p>Begins to understand frequently used words such as 'all-gone' 'no' and 'bye-bye'</p> <p><i>This may be a question asked on entry to the setting</i></p>	<p>Uses speech sounds to communicate (simple babbling) 'baba' 'nono'</p> <p><i>May be different from English speech sound units</i></p>
	Responds when talked to, e.g. moves arms and legs, changes facial expression	<p>Enjoys action rhymes and songs</p> <p><i>Can use recorded versions of songs and rhymes in first language. Be aware that not all cultures sing with their children.</i></p>	<p>Stops and looks when hears own name</p> <p><i>Make sure you are sure how to pronounce child's name accurately</i></p>	<p>Uses gestures such as waving and pointing to communicate</p> <p><i>Remember that gestures may differ according to culture</i></p>
	Takes turns in interaction using babble	Responds to what carer is paying attention to, e.g. by following their gaze	Understands simple instructions when supported by gesture e.g. 'Where's the ball?' (carer points at ball)	Lifts arms to ask to be picked up

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 18 Months (13-18m) EYFS 8-20m	Likes being with familiar adults – wary of strangers	Attention drawn to most dominant thing in room – fleeting attention	Is able to point out body parts when asked	Constant babbling during play
	Engages other people in order to achieve a goal, e.g. to get an object out of reach	Interested in music and singing and may join in using some simple actions and sounds <i>If family do not usually sing with child, if possible use first language songs and rhymes, otherwise use English action rhymes to establish interest</i>	Understands lots more words than can say	Reaches or points to something they want whilst making speech sound and eye contact
	Beginning with some simple pretend play	Listens to simple instructions	Recognises and points to objects and pictures if asked <i>Can use a bilingual picture dictionary</i>	Says around 10 single words though these may not be clear <i>It is useful to ask parents for a list of words that children know and use at home</i>
	Plays alone although likes being near familiar adult	Enjoys sound-making toys	Gives named familiar objects to adults, e.g. coat, book, cup	Copies gestures and words from adults who use or share first language

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 24 Months (19-24m) EYFS 16-26m	Able to engage in pretend play with toys	Starting to focus on activity of their own choice	Understands lots of simple words – this develops very rapidly	Uses approximately 50 single words
	Plays alongside other children	Cuts self off in order to concentrate – single-channelled	Understands action words e.g. walk, run, jump, sleep	Is beginning to put two words together
	Wants to do things independently - says 'no' to adults	Using their names helps them to attend to what an adult is saying, e.g. 'Mateusz, coat on'	Follows simple stories in picture books <i>Consider parent's literacy level. Some languages are not written, they are oral languages. Use bilingual book and CD if available.</i>	Asks simple questions, eg 'what's that?', 'where drink?'
	Seeks attention or affection when tired or afraid	Starting to take turns with an adult, e.g. rolling a ball	Understands some simple instructions involving two main elements, e.g. 'where's mummy's nose?', 'put your cup on the table'	Many words unclear. Uses some consonant sounds – e.g. b, m, d

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 3 Years (25-36m) EYFS 22-36m	Holds a conversation but may jump from topic to topic	Beginning to listen to talk with interest <i>Children will 'switch off' easily when they do not hear their first language</i>	Understands simple 'who?', 'what?' and 'where?' questions but not 'why?'	Uses hundreds of words and is learning new vocabulary rapidly
	Interested in others' play and joins in	Child can listen if he stops activity and looks at an adult. Needs adult to help to do this.	Understands phrases like 'put teddy in the box', 'get your book and coat' even when there are no visual cues like gestures or pointing	Links 4-5 words together
	Expresses emotions using words, not just actions <i>Can use 'emotion fan' with images and child can describe feeling using word in first language</i>	Follows adult-led interaction for a short time	Understands concepts of big/little	Beginning to use word endings e.g. going, cats
	Shows affection and concern to people special to them. May form a relationship with another child	Repeats words or phrases from familiar stories <i>Some cultures have a strong oral storytelling tradition and so these may not rely on texts. Look for joining in and repeating back in English at story/song time too</i>	Understands concepts of in/on/under	Understood by familiar adults, but some words will not yet be clear

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 4 Years (37-48m) EYFS 30-50m	Understands turn-taking and sharing but may need adult support	Enjoys listening to stories. Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories	Understands and responds to more complex sentences where they are expected to follow more than one thing e.g. 'get your coat and put on your shoes'	Is able to talk in past tense, uses regular endings – e.g. –ed, may overgeneralise these, e.g. 'runned'
	Initiates conversation and play with adults and peers <i>Easier to assess when two or more children share the same first language. Can also include non-verbal initiation</i>	Notices if adult uses wrong language in familiar story	Understands 'why?' questions	Uses sentences of 4–6 words, linking ideas with 'and' 'because'
	Can play in a group extending and elaborating ideas <i>Child may interact using non-verbal methods of communication. May play alongside as hasn't got the English to initiate play</i>	Child looks automatically when adult speaks. Can shift attention from task to speaker.	Aware of time in relation to past, present and future. Beginning to understand yesterday, today and tomorrow	Able to remember and enjoys telling long stories or singing songs
	Able to remember and enjoy telling stories – real or imaginary	Is able to differentiate between sounds e.g. loud/quiet, long/short	Understands position words like behind, in front, next to and differentiates pronouns like he/she/they	Speech is quite clear, may have difficulty with a few sounds

ECAT Communication and Language Monitoring Tool – EAL Version

Stage	Social Skills	Attention and Listening Skills	Understanding of Language	Expressive Communication Skills
By 5 Years (49-60m) EYFS 40-60m	Generally co-operative with playmates. Uses language to negotiate and solve problems	Is now more flexible with attention – can listen whilst doing	Understands a range of words to describe concepts, e.g. soon, early, late, soft, hard, smooth	Uses well-formed sentences – may still be some grammatical errors, e.g. I falled down
	Uses language to gain information, discuss feelings/ideas and give longer opinions	Can hear and say the initial sounds in words	Able to follow a simple story without pictures	Describes events but not always joined together in the right order
	Confidently starts and joins in individual and group talk	Can continue a rhyming string, e.g. cat, bat, mat, hat	Aware of more complex humour – laughs at jokes that are told	Uses language to imagine and re-create roles and experiences
	Joins in and organises co-operative role play with friends and can pretend to be someone else talking	Knows to look at who's talking and think about what they're saying	Understands 2-3 part spoken language, e.g. finish your picture, then sit on the carpet with a book	Says words clearly although may struggle with complex speech sounds, consonant blends and words with more than one syllable

APPENDIX 4 : EY Family discussion sheet

Use the headings in the boxes to guide your discussion as necessary.
Use an interpreter when appropriate. Sensitivity may be needed around aspects of this discussion.

Child's name:

Date of birth:

Date completed:

Completed by:

- Health (e.g. pregnancy, birth, hearing screening assessment, sight, sleeping patterns...)

- Physical development (i.e. gross and fine motor skills; self-care skills...)

- Behaviour

- Involvement of other agencies (past & present)

- Other impact factors *

These could include: racism, culture shock, separation issues...Families may share such information but **should not be asked directly about individual factors.*

- Family history

- Other

SUMMARY of first language development using ECAT EAL tool with family

Social Skills	above	on track	below
Attention and Listening Skills	above	on track	below
Understanding of Language	above	on track	below
Expressive Communication Skills	above	on track	below

EY Case Study 1:

Speech and Language Therapy

Concern

You are using the “Language of the Month” interactive video on a laptop. You have chosen Arabic as you have a newly arrived boy, Ali, in your day nursery who speaks very little English. The group are learning how to say “hello” in Arabic and you notice that when Ali speaks, his pronunciation is not very clear.

One of the practitioners continues to use this website to count in Arabic with Ali. She reports that his pronunciation does not match that on the website. Another Arabic -speaking parent comments that she cannot understand what Ali is saying.

Response

You ask Ali’s parents to come to a meeting with you to discuss his progress and needs. Ali’s dad speaks good English so you feel there is no need to book an interpreter. You complete the ECAT EAL tool to assess his Arabic language development. The tool shows you that Ali is working below age-related expectations. You also complete the family discussion sheet and mum informs you that Ali had problems with his hearing when he was younger and she cannot always understand what he says.

You complete a referral to the speech and language team and refer to the findings from the ECAT EAL tool and family discussion sheet. The team arrange for Ali to receive speech and language therapy.

Ali and his parents visit Mansfield Community Hospital where the team have provided an interpreter to support the discussion with parents and help them assess his skills in Arabic. With the support of the interpreter Ali is offered speech and language sessions in Arabic, and advice is offered to his parents as to how to continue this at home.

Ali’s spoken Arabic improves and, with time, so does his English.

EY Case Study 2: Non-verbal phase

Concern

Marta has been in your setting for 5 months. She attends regularly and engages non-verbally with the full range of provision. However, you are increasingly concerned as she is not using any English in the setting. She uses gestures to communicate with her English peers. Marta is making progress in all aspects of learning that are not dependent on speaking. It is clear that she can follow a variety of everyday instructions given in English and that she takes cues from her peers readily.

Response

You have observed Marta with her mum and they seem to communicate well in Polish. You decide to check this is accurate and ask mum some questions about her Polish language development using the ECAT EAL tool. From the chat you have using the family discussion sheet, you also establish that Marta is happy at nursery.

You create different communication-friendly spaces which offer Marta a chance to use her first language with a peer who shares this language. It is clear from 'standback' observations that Marta and her Polish-speaking peer are taking turns to speak and that they are using longer utterances to communicate. Marta is only observed doing this when she thinks she cannot be heard!

You refer to Appendix 1: Practitioner knowledge of EAL development and reassure yourself that the non-verbal phase is a normal development stage when learning a new language. As her Polish is developing appropriately; she is interacting well socially; and making progress in many aspects of learning, you relax and continue to use EAL strategies in your setting.

Three months later, Marta is using short phrases in English accurately and confidently. She is able to understand and follow simple instructions without visual support.

EY Case Study 3: Social Interaction

Concern

Nandi has arrived recently in the UK with her parents and two older brothers. She has come from Kerala, India and her first language is Malayalam. You have prepared for her arrival by making a picture fan of 'survival' words (eg toilet, drink). When you meet the family, you check how to say these words in Malayalam so that you can both recognise and say them. Nandi readily uses this fan to make her basic needs known to staff. However, Nandi is very physical with her peers and often pushes them. She frequently then overturns or empties resources. This is happening to the extent that her peers are unwilling to play alongside her in case they are pushed, or their play is disrupted. A few of the parents have started to comment on their child's unwillingness to play with her and are asking you to intervene.

Response

You have a conversation with her parents, supported by a family friend who interprets and translates for them. You complete the ECAT EAL tool and family discussion sheet to gather information. Her parents feel sure that Nandi's understanding and use of Malayalam is good and have no concerns about any aspects of her development. They share stories of how sociable she is. It appears that these behaviours are limited to the setting.

You make additional focused observations using an ABC format. You note the antecedents, behaviours and consequences. These observations show that when Nandi pushes a child, she vocalises loudly and looks behind her as she runs away, to see what the other child is doing. It becomes clear that Nandi is inviting other children to follow her so that they can join in with her play. You explain this to the other children.

You refer to Appendix 2: Practitioner knowledge of EAL strategies. You note that it is often important to teach short social interaction phrases, as well as survival language. You know that Nandi is responsive to adult modelling of language from her response to the 'survival' picture fan. You model "let's play" to her at times when she appears ready to physically invite her peers to play. Although it is not possible to intervene on every occasion, Nandi increasingly uses this phrase. In addition, you use photos of your areas of learning for her to offer to her peers, so that she can show them where she wants to go/what she would like to share with them. After a couple of months of adult modelling, Nandi begins to interact appropriately with all of her peers and develops some close friendships.

Case Study 4: SEND

Concern

Matei joins F1 in November, having newly arrived in the UK from Romania. He has no experience of a setting or having to separate from Mum. You give him time to settle as he was previously at home with his Mum all the time. By January, he still doesn't want to join group times and only likes to play in the water and sand by himself. He is shown a visual timetable so that he knows what will happen next, but he doesn't seem interested in looking at it. He isn't using any language in the setting.

Response

You are new to working with children learning through EAL and so refer to Appendix 1: Practitioner knowledge of EAL development. You note the non-verbal period and wonder if Matei is going through this phase. You invite mum and dad in to talk through the ECAT EAL tool. You find out that Matei is not using any Romanian at home either and communicates by taking a family member's hand to show them what he wants. Using the family discussion sheet, you establish that Matei has an older brother who was diagnosed with autism when he was six.

You follow a graduated approach. You continue to make regular observations of Matei. You refer to Appendix 2: Practitioner knowledge of EAL strategies and also talk to your SENCo about additional strategies to put in place to support his communication and interaction. The SENCo also recommends following the Concerning Behaviours Pathway*. The SENCo makes a referral to SaLT as there are concerns about his first language development. You monitor the impact of the new strategies, but his lack of progress suggests that there must be more that you can do to support Matei. You decide to ask for a Springboard referral so that all the SENCos in the Family can contribute to strategy ideas. At the Springboard meeting a referral to EY SFSS is made and subsequently Matei receives monthly support in your setting. While in F2 he is given a diagnosis of autism by his paediatrician.

*<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/concerning-behaviours-multi-agency-pathway>