
LANGUAGE AND LEARNING FOR MINORITY COMMUNITIES

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with information on the work of the Language for Learning Service.

Summary

2. Staff from this support service work with children and young people who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) and their school staff. In doing so, they support the local authority's duty to provide equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and young people. There are 4.2 full time teachers (including the team leader), 1.0 full time equivalent Teaching Assistant (TA) and 2.2 bilingual TAs. The bilingual staff speak Polish, Bengali (Sylheti) and Punjabi.
3. The support offered is targeted appropriately to need, with swift and easy access for schools. The aim of the support is to improve opportunities for BME pupils and narrow the gap across ECM outcomes.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that this report is received by Members.

Murray Rose,
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Linda Watts : Extension 348607

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| S17 Crime and Disorder | The content of this report has no effect on the Council's duty in this regard |
| Health and Well Being | Emotional health and wellbeing are affected by a young person's access to the curriculum |
| Sustainability | There are no sustainable issues |
| Diversity | The report sets out the provision made for our BME communities |
| Wards Affected | All |
| Groups Affected | Black and minority ethnic communities |
| Budget and Policy Framework | No changes to budget or policy framework are suggested in the report |
| Key Decision | None, for information and discussion |
| Urgent Decision | None |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | This report is linked to SCS and relates to the prosperity and inspirations of children and young |

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| | people from black and minority ethnic communities |
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MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. The service has been in existence since 1992 and 5 years later, when Darlington became a unitary authority, it functioned as a consortium service with Durham. Three years ago the consortium was disaggregated and is now run solely by Darlington.
6. The arrival of additional families from the accession states of Eastern Europe since 2004 have begun to impact on effective service delivery as more children and young people have arrived in Darlington with little or no spoken English. In autumn 2007, a growth bid was submitted for the recruitment of a Polish speaker to the team. The subsequent new appointment has added a welcome dimension to the effectiveness of work with schools, pupils and their families.
7. The staff are deployed in the following ways to:
 - (a) Follow service procedures with all referrals ie meet pupils and parents/carers before admission to school where possible, sometimes in the home, to find out about prior educational achievements (older pupils), interests, strengths and needs. This contributes towards a more successful start to school for both pupil and school staff.
 - (b) Offer advice to school staff on induction and classroom practice relating to newly arrived EAL and minority ethnic pupils.
 - (c) Establish/maintain relationships with parents/carers to enable more efficient support of their children's learning when at home.
 - (d) Offer direct, pupil-focused support in school ie supporting the teaching and work of school staff with specific pupil groups or individuals for a negotiated timescale. When supporting groups of pupils it is of additional benefit to other, monolingual pupils also as research shows that children and young people acquire and develop their English most effectively from their peers.
 - (e) Support transition, particularly Y6-Y7, with bilingual support where appropriate, including visits to Y6 pupils during the Summer Term by secondary support staff and liaison with secondary SENCOs regarding pupils' specific learning needs.
 - (f) Loan and/or produce additional resources to enable pupils to more easily access lesson content eg translated glossaries of useful words and phrases, translated key word lists of technical vocabulary, bilingual dictionaries.
 - (g) Offer an interpreting service to schools and families (where available) to help with induction, familiarity with school routines and finding out background information.
 - (h) Translate standard school letters and also correspondence from other agencies eg EPS, EWS.
 - (i) Compile distance learning materials for pupils taking extended visits to country of family origin.

- (j) Provide support for children and young people who are seeking asylum and who speak a language other than English.
- (k) Provide training for:
 - (i) Foundation settings on cultural diversity.
 - (ii) School staff on meeting the needs of EAL pupils.
 - (iii) School governors on racial equality and minority ethnic attainment.
 - (iv) Students on the School Centred Initial Teacher Training course (SCITT) based at Barnard Castle on meeting the needs of EAL pupils.

Pupil information

8. In the past 4 years, Darlington has seen the arrival of families from Eastern Europe who are coming to start work in a variety of establishments eg Amdega, Tallent Engineering, Richmond Ice Cream Factory, to name but a few. This is in addition to ongoing recruitment of hospital and NHS staff from abroad, staff working in food and retail businesses from China and the Asian sub-continent and intercultural marriages bringing in adults and families from Russia, the Ukraine, Thailand etc.
9. Since the start of the current school year there have been 87 pupils referred to the service. These are in addition to 96 pupils still receiving varying degrees of support from the previous year. The biggest impact has been the number of those new referrals who have very little English and who are of Key Stage 3 and 4, ie 34 young people, (22 of whom speak Polish). Some of these pupils have embarked on a steep learning curve, having left friends and extended family back home.
10. There are currently 29 different languages spoken in Darlington schools in addition to English. Some of these languages are spoken by single pupils in a school, eg Pashto, Tagalog and Telugu, while other languages across town have many speakers – Polish 94 and Sylheti 41.
11. There are varying levels of literacy in the first language, some pupils cannot read or write their language, whilst others are fully literate and in the early weeks of being in school are able to make notes in lessons in their first language which they can later study and translate at home, thus involving parental support.
12. Some languages have a different script eg Bengali, and others are not only written in a different script, but have right to left orientation eg Urdu and Arabic.
13. In Summer 2008, 27 young people are entered for Polish GCSE and bilingual support is being used to support the speaking elements of the test and for explaining the requirements of the written tests to both students and parents.
14. Through service staff working in partnership with school staff and other agencies, it is hoped that all the children and young people who speak a home language other than English are provided with opportunities to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to the wider community of Darlington.

Impact on Looked After Children

15. It is considered there will be positive outcomes for any looked after children who may require the Language for Learning Service, either currently or in the future.
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