**Speak a language other than English at home?**

Acquiring a means of communication is vital to a child’s development.

Here at Little Villagers we are passionate about encouraging language development and helping your child to communicate with adults and peers.

**How you can help your child**

Please allow us to suggest some helpful ideas that have proven to facilitate language acquisition.

Studies have found that it is vital that a child learn one language fluently, before starting to learn a new language.

So please do what feels comfortable for you and your family. Don’t feel that you must speak a language to your child that you are not comfortable speaking or not fluent in yourself.

It is more beneficial to your child to learn your language and then when confident, move onto English in the preschool setting.

It is normal for bilingual children to mix the two languages initially when speaking and is therefore nothing to worry about.

We would advise that you continue to give your child plentiful chances to interact, play, sing and read stories in your home language.

**How we support you and your child**

We are very happy to support your child’s learning in both languages, by provided books and signage in our setting; in your language as well as English.

We often invite parents in to preschool to talk to the children about their and their children’s cultural background. If you feel able to do this, please let us know. The content of your talk may include fun facts, pictures, songs and stories. As well as being a treat for your child, there is no doubt the other children will also be enthralled. If you would like to do this, please get in touch so that we can discuss all the details with you.

In addition to this, we may ask if you can provide translation for signs on our displays. Research has shown that having written words in the setting can be beneficial to learning words quickly, when the time comes for children to start learning to read and write.

**How we communicate with you**

We have an open door policy, and welcome feedback from families. We want to hear your news of family events, holidays and significant religious celebrations, so that we can fully understand the different backgrounds of our students.

We endeavour to email and display on notice boards all important updates. Some parents have found this invaluable, because they can use online translation tools to better understand the correspondence in their own time.

If you would like to talk to us, but feel there maybe a language barrier, we can arrange for someone to come in and help with translation.

Communication really is key, and we hope this information is useful to you. Please feel free to let us know if there are any further steps we can take to help your child in their language development.

Other ways in which we will help EAL children

We undertake EAL audits to ensure we help develop children with English as an Additional Language.

Firstly, we will ascertain to what level your child speaks EAL at home and what language is spoken.

We assess EAL children against the EAL Development Matters Checkpoints to ensure their language is at a good level of development.

Family and Parents are an important part of an EAL child’s development -we will encourage you to be a part of our setting introducing your language and culture to all.

Visual support is important to EAL children especially when English is first being introduced – we will ask you to provide key words in your language so we can use these key words within the setting.

Key words/routine cards are situated around the setting to assist EAL children at all times should they/wee need them.

If you require help with translations we will direct you to organisations that can help us and you communicate together.

EAL children are valued within our setting.