



Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

Dorset County Council
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
Pupil and School Improvement
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ORGANISATION

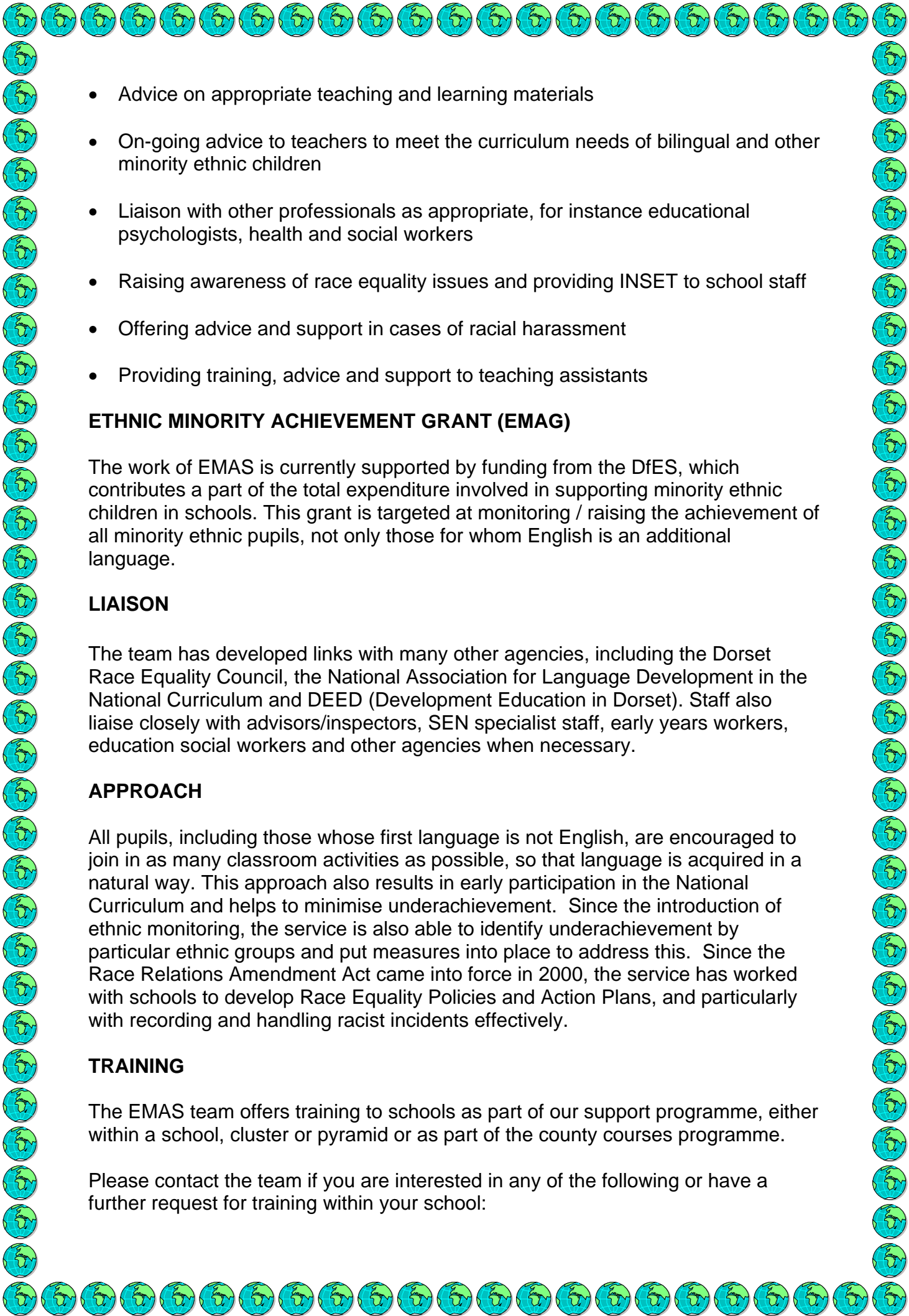
EMAS is centrally managed, forming part of Pupil & School Improvement, Children's Services Directorate. The team consists of well qualified, experienced teachers, who have many years of experience both teaching and supporting minority ethnic children in schools.

There are currently four team members (one full-time team head of service, three part-time). They are available for advice and support throughout the County Council area. In addition, two home-school liaison workers, funded by the Dorset Children's Fund, work across the County with Bangladeshi and Chinese children and families to increase their access to educational provision and develop understanding in schools of the culture, language and religion of these two groups.

ROLE

EMAS carries out the following wide range of functions:

- Monitoring the progress of all minority ethnic pupils in schools and seeking to raise the attainment of any underachieving ethnic groups, both within the LEA generally and in individual schools
- Helping schools in identifying current ethnic minority achievement and in setting realistic targets to address any underachievement
- Liaison with families
- Language assessment and provision of reports
- Allocation of financial support for minority ethnic pupils, via the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG)
- Advice regarding linguistic and cultural matters, including religious and dietary information
- Liaison with class teachers in developing language programmes in the curriculum

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- Advice on appropriate teaching and learning materials
 - On-going advice to teachers to meet the curriculum needs of bilingual and other minority ethnic children
 - Liaison with other professionals as appropriate, for instance educational psychologists, health and social workers
 - Raising awareness of race equality issues and providing INSET to school staff
 - Offering advice and support in cases of racial harassment
 - Providing training, advice and support to teaching assistants

ETHNIC MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT GRANT (EMAG)

The work of EMAS is currently supported by funding from the DfES, which contributes a part of the total expenditure involved in supporting minority ethnic children in schools. This grant is targeted at monitoring / raising the achievement of all minority ethnic pupils, not only those for whom English is an additional language.

LIAISON

The team has developed links with many other agencies, including the Dorset Race Equality Council, the National Association for Language Development in the National Curriculum and DEED (Development Education in Dorset). Staff also liaise closely with advisors/inspectors, SEN specialist staff, early years workers, education social workers and other agencies when necessary.

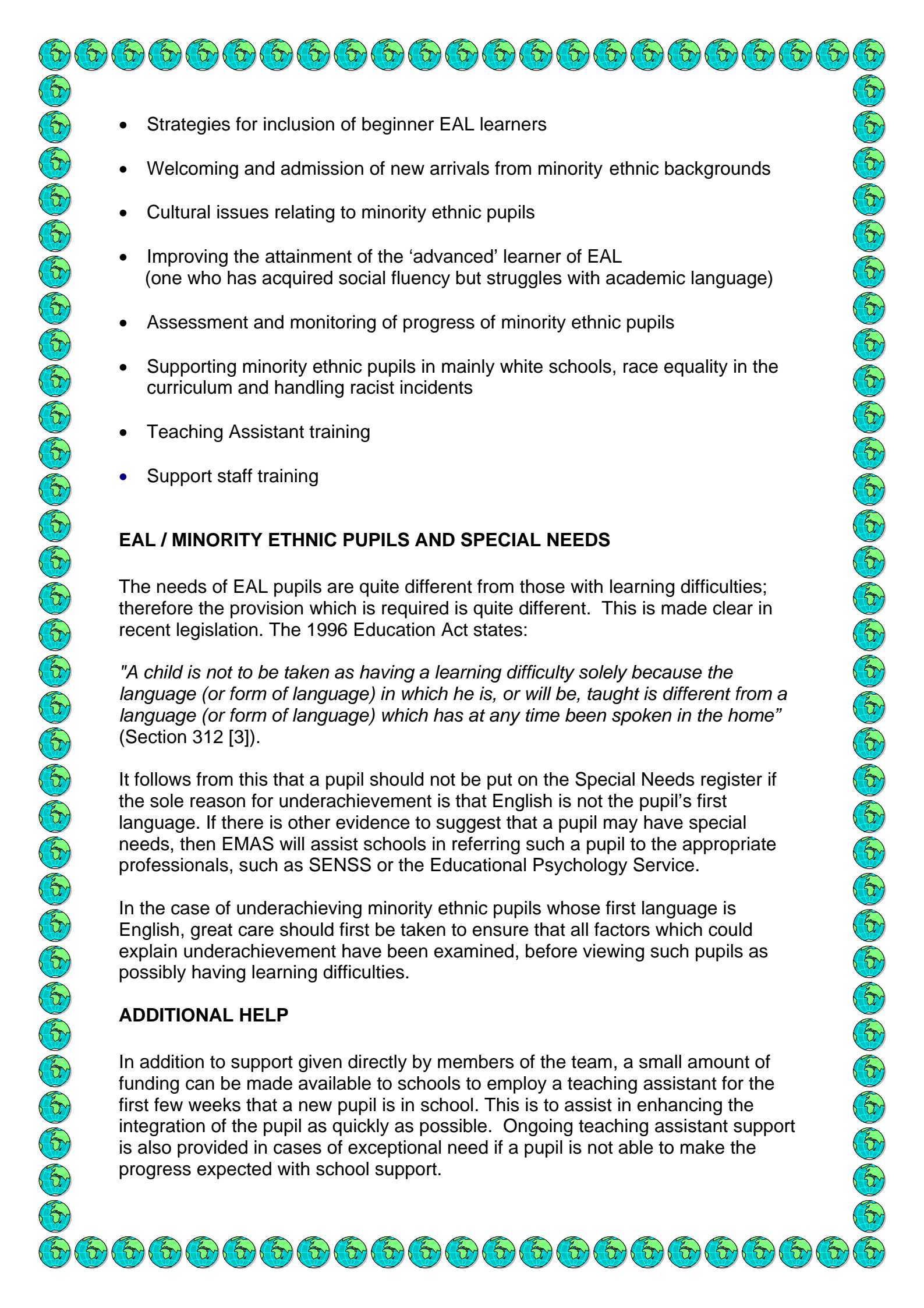
APPROACH

All pupils, including those whose first language is not English, are encouraged to join in as many classroom activities as possible, so that language is acquired in a natural way. This approach also results in early participation in the National Curriculum and helps to minimise underachievement. Since the introduction of ethnic monitoring, the service is also able to identify underachievement by particular ethnic groups and put measures into place to address this. Since the Race Relations Amendment Act came into force in 2000, the service has worked with schools to develop Race Equality Policies and Action Plans, and particularly with recording and handling racist incidents effectively.

TRAINING

The EMAS team offers training to schools as part of our support programme, either within a school, cluster or pyramid or as part of the county courses programme.

Please contact the team if you are interested in any of the following or have a further request for training within your school:

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- Strategies for inclusion of beginner EAL learners
 - Welcoming and admission of new arrivals from minority ethnic backgrounds
 - Cultural issues relating to minority ethnic pupils
 - Improving the attainment of the 'advanced' learner of EAL (one who has acquired social fluency but struggles with academic language)
 - Assessment and monitoring of progress of minority ethnic pupils
 - Supporting minority ethnic pupils in mainly white schools, race equality in the curriculum and handling racist incidents
 - Teaching Assistant training
 - Support staff training

EAL / MINORITY ETHNIC PUPILS AND SPECIAL NEEDS

The needs of EAL pupils are quite different from those with learning difficulties; therefore the provision which is required is quite different. This is made clear in recent legislation. The 1996 Education Act states:

"A child is not to be taken as having a learning difficulty solely because the language (or form of language) in which he is, or will be, taught is different from a language (or form of language) which has at any time been spoken in the home" (Section 312 [3]).

It follows from this that a pupil should not be put on the Special Needs register if the sole reason for underachievement is that English is not the pupil's first language. If there is other evidence to suggest that a pupil may have special needs, then EMAS will assist schools in referring such a pupil to the appropriate professionals, such as SENSS or the Educational Psychology Service.

In the case of underachieving minority ethnic pupils whose first language is English, great care should first be taken to ensure that all factors which could explain underachievement have been examined, before viewing such pupils as possibly having learning difficulties.

ADDITIONAL HELP

In addition to support given directly by members of the team, a small amount of funding can be made available to schools to employ a teaching assistant for the first few weeks that a new pupil is in school. This is to assist in enhancing the integration of the pupil as quickly as possible. Ongoing teaching assistant support is also provided in cases of exceptional need if a pupil is not able to make the progress expected with school support.



VALUE OF MOTHER TONGUE DEVELOPMENT

It is important that pupils are given time and opportunity to talk and work in their mother tongue and that school and support staff show that they value these languages. If a child senses that the mother tongue, the first language known, is considered to be of low status, it will be more difficult to learn an additional language well. On the other hand, those who feel that their first language is respected will develop a more positive attitude toward other languages. Pupils will also have developed conceptual skills in their first language, and these skills can be carried over into the more recently acquired language(s).

Parents/carers are therefore encouraged to continue using the home language they share with their children. There are, in addition, many ways that schools can show that they value pupils' home languages, for example:

- Purchasing bilingual/monolingual books featuring home languages
- Putting up notices in a number of languages in addition to English
- Inviting in voluntary or paid adults who share the same home language, to support pupils in accessing the curriculum or as a knowledge resource
- Entering secondary pupils for GCSE examinations in their home languages, where available
- Giving pupils access to educational internet sites in their home language
- The Service has a small budget for the provision of translation and interpretation services to help with communication with parents or to provide support or assessment for children in their first language. We can also give advice on finding professional or volunteer interpreters/translators.

CONTACTING THE SERVICE

Any requests for information, advice or support should be addressed to:

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