



To: All Schools/Academies

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

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Dear Colleague

Educational Outcomes of Children with English as an Additional Language

The [Education Policy Institute](#), The Bell Foundation and [Unbound Philanthropy](#) have published a new report which analyses current policies and funding for EAL learners and provides recommendations on how they can be supported to fulfil their potential.

The report, written by Jo Hutchinson, Director for Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners at EPI, is a comprehensive analysis of the current policy and funding regime available to support children with EAL in England.

This report highlights the significant disparities in EAL learners' performance.

Although headline figures published by the [Department for Education](#) show that, on average, in 2016 EAL pupils performed well, the data used is distorted by missing or misleading prior attainment records.

Key Findings include:

- Attainment is affected by English language proficiency. Children with EAL have widely varying levels of English proficiency; some have no English and some are fluent multilingual English-speakers; some may have lived in English-speaking countries or have been educated in English throughout their childhood.
- Attainment is affected by first language. There are marked differences between, for example, Tamil and Chinese speakers who perform better than Pashto and Turkish speakers irrespective of when they arrive in the system. Prior education and where they live in England all impact on attainment.
- Attainment is also affected by arrival time. There is a severe attainment penalty for pupils arriving late into the English school system. For example, at GCSE level, pupils with EAL scored an average grade of a C if they arrived between reception and Year 7. This decreased to a grade of around a D if they arrived in Year 8, 9 or 10 – falling further to below an E if they arrived in Year 11.

- There is a lack of specialist expertise compared to other countries – with England’s system for developing support for EAL pupils through specialist roles insufficient.

Key Recommendations the Government should consider:

- Introducing a ‘late arrival premium’ in the national funding formula for schools as the current funding provision for pupils arriving late into the English school system is inadequate. This funding would provide intensive support, and, in particular, to help address the large attainment differences between those arriving in Year 7 and those arriving later in Year 10 or 11.
- Developing new policies to generate and maintain EAL expertise in schools. Lessons can be drawn from other English-speaking jurisdictions – where there are effective policies for establishing specialist EAL roles, programmes for staff development and graduate level specialist qualifications.
- Establishing a plan for the future of English proficiency assessment. Going forward the data should be quality assessed and reviewed in order to decide whether any changes to the assessment are required.
- Providing for additional eligible years of less intensive EAL funding (extending its duration)
- Ensuring that more comprehensive official data and analysis of the EAL population and their attainment outcomes are used to inform policies so that these are adequate, appropriate, targeted and relevant. Consideration should be given to introducing benchmarks by time of arrival.

Yours sincerely

Helen Rowe

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