

Does your child speak more than one language?

If your child can use two languages, they are **bilingual**. If they can use more than two languages, they are **multilingual**.

Being bilingual or multilingual gives students important advantages for communicating and learning. Research into bilingualism shows that high levels of literacy skills in the home language greatly support the learning of English. (Gibbons, 1991)

NSW government schools support multilingualism. The EAL/D Advice for Schools states that:

Bilingual, or multilingual, students should be supported to develop academic language across a range of languages.

The goal of EAL/D education is not just to develop students' English language proficiency, but rather to support students to become bi/multilingual and promote the importance of retaining home language to support learning in English.

([EAL/D Advice for Schools](#), p 20)

The advantages of being bilingual or multilingual

Research has shown that speaking more than one language is very good for the brain. Multilingualism has been shown to

- give learners academic advantages
- improve employment prospects
- give access to more than one culture
- keep our brains healthy as we age.

Ollerhead, S. & Taylor-Leech, K. (2019) Promoting multilingual approaches in teaching and learning, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, <https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/blog/promoting-multilingual-approaches-in-teaching-and-learning>

Questions about languages at enrolment

When you complete the [Application to Enrol in a NSW Government School](#), you are asked questions about language background on pages 2, 4 and 5, including

- Does the student speak a language other than English at home?
- Do the parents/carers speak languages other than English?

The information from these questions is important for helping the school to understand students and the community. If you answer, 'yes' to one of the above questions, then your child is recorded as LBOTE, meaning 'from a language background other than English'.

Application to Enrol in a NSW Government School – page 2

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH SPOKEN AT HOME

Does the student speak a language other than English at home?

No, English only Yes

If **yes**, what language(s) other than English are spoken at home?

Please write the actual language(s) used, for example, Swahili (not African), Punjabi (not Indian), Auslan, Aboriginal English, Torres Strait Creole.

Main language other than English spoken at home by the student

Other language(s) spoken at home

Main language other than English spoken at home by the student

- If the student or parent/ carer speaks English only, do not write anything here.
- If the student or one of the parents/ carers speaks a language other than English at home, then the student is recorded as having a language background other than English (LBOTE)
- If a student is LBOTE, they may also be EAL/D (see definitions next page)

LBOTE

LBOTE students are those students who speak a language other than English in the home, or have a mother, father or guardian who speaks a language other than English in the home.

EAL/D

Some LBOTE students are also EAL/D, which means they are learning English as an Additional Language or Dialect.

A student is EAL/D if

- their first language is a language or dialect other than English
- and**
- they require additional support to assist them in developing proficiency in Standard Australian English.

These students are assessed on the EAL/D Learning Progression as beginning, emerging, developing or consolidating.

EAL/D learners include both overseas and Australian born learners. EAL/D learners may be students who are high potential and gifted and those who are bilingual or multilingual.

If you want to know more about LBOTE and EAL/D refer to the NSW Department of Education webpage– ‘Who are EAL/D Learners?’

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald>

What are the benefits for my child if they are an EAL/D learner?

NSW public schools are provided with resourcing for EAL/D programs based on each school's need. This resourcing includes funding and teacher allocation for EAL/D specialist teachers.

At WPS, EAL/D student support is an integral part of the whole school plan. Our EAL/D specialist teachers work across all year groups to enhance the learning of EAL/D students depending on their needs. Our programs provide for all EAL/D students, including beginners and those operating at a high level and requiring extension and enrichment.

Examples of how EAL/D learners benefit include:

- EAL/D specialist teachers may co-teach with class teachers to improve learning outcomes for EAL/D students. For example, two teachers work together in a classroom, providing each child with more targeted instruction and feedback based on their needs. This can include enrichment and extension activities.
- EAL/D specialist teachers help class teachers to program, identifying language and cultural demands
- EAL/D specialist teachers help class teachers to assess and track students' English language proficiency and achievement of curriculum outcomes.
- EAL/D teachers provide professional learning for class teachers, including demonstration lessons and expert advice in language and teaching methodology

Further reading

If you would like to know more about how NSW public schools support multicultural education, refer to the NSW Department of Education Multicultural Education webpage–

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education>