

EAL & NEW ARRIVALS · GRADES 1–6

EAL Initial Language Assessment

A structured first conversation

When to use

After the child has been in your class for at least a week, sit with them 1:1 for 20 minutes when they're calm and rested. This is not a test — frame it as 'I want to know what you can already do, so I can help in the right way.'

Section 1 — Background information

Question	Answer
Child's full name (and pronunciation)	_____
Date of birth / age	_____
First language(s) spoken at home	_____
Other languages spoken	_____
Country of birth	_____
Date arrived in this country	_____
Previous schooling (years, country)	_____
Can they read in their first language?	Y / N / Some
Can they write in their first language?	Y / N / Some
Anyone at home who speaks English?	_____
Any known SEND or health needs	_____



Section 2 — Assessing English (4 areas)

Tick the highest level the child can do confidently. Levels broadly match DfE Proficiency in English: A=New to English, B=Early acquisition, C=Developing, D=Competent, E=Fluent. Most new arrivals start at A or B.

Section 2a — Listening

Level	Can the child...	Tick
A	Understand a few simple words and gestures	_____
B	Follow simple instructions with visual support	_____
C	Follow most classroom instructions	_____
D	Understand most lesson content with some support	_____
E	Understand at age-appropriate levels	_____

Section 2b — Speaking

Level	Can the child...	Tick
A	Use a few isolated words; mostly silent	_____
B	Use short phrases; communicate basic needs	_____
C	Hold a short conversation about familiar topics	_____
D	Speak fluently about most topics; some grammar errors	_____
E	Speak at age-appropriate level	_____

Section 2c — Reading



Level	Can the child...	Tick
A	Recognise some letters; cannot decode	_____
B	Decode simple words; little comprehension	_____
C	Read simple texts with comprehension	_____
D	Read age-appropriate texts with some support	_____
E	Read at age-appropriate level	_____

Section 2d — Writing

Level	Can the child...	Tick
A	Write a few isolated letters or words	_____
B	Write simple words and phrases; lots of errors	_____
C	Write simple sentences with support	_____
D	Write paragraphs with some support; grammar errors	_____
E	Write at age-appropriate level	_____



Overall proficiency level (A–E): _____ What strengths did you notice? What will be the biggest priorities for support? Who else needs to know? (SEND/Co, EAL coordinator, parents, support staff)