

(This is the guidance given to schools before a MLA starts work.)

Guidelines for working with Multilingual Assistants (MLAs) in the classroom

1. Explaining instructions, tasks and curriculum content.

- a) Ideally, MLAs need to know the aim and content of the lesson before the start. This is so that they can support appropriately.
- b) MLAs need direction on what is needed in a particular lesson. They need to know what the teacher expects from the pupil (i.e. method of recording opportunities for pupil feedback, amount of support teacher requires pupil to have).
- c) MLAs can support pupils by preparing them for tasks they have to do when the MLA is not there, or reviewing tasks already done by pupils on their own.

2. Redefining words and phrases critical to a pupil's understanding.

- a) MLAs need time to discuss the book as well as hearing a pupil read. Guidance on supported reading might be required.
- b) MLAs can explain culturally loaded items on worksheets, or in books. MLAs can inform the teacher of areas that may cause difficulties due to a different cultural background.
- c) MLAs can support pupils prior to lessons by introducing new vocabulary or concepts in pupil's first language.

3. Encourage children to articulate ideas in their preferred language.

- a) MLAs can encourage 1:1 dialogue or small group talk.
- b) MLAs can encourage the use of preferred language by interpreting for the child in a small group discussion.
- a) MLAs can actively intervene in a large group or whole class discussion enabling individual pupils to participate and demonstrate understanding and knowledge.

4. Developing children's confidence in expressing themselves.

5. Presenting themselves as role models.

- a) MLAs will share their knowledge of the pupil and her/his culture with the class teacher. They can also share their informal assessment of the pupil's ability in her/his preferred language.
- b) MLAs can contribute to the cultural diversity of the whole school curriculum, thus raising the individual pupil's confidence and benefiting all pupils.

6. Home-school liaison.

- a) MLAs can visit families with another member of the school staff.
- b) MLAs share information about the pupil and her/his educational background.

N.B. MLAs are not teachers. They should not prepare lessons, formally assess the linguistic ability of pupils or withdraw pupils for English teaching.

**For more information please contact: Minority Group Support Services on
024 7668 9250.**