



## Home Language Guide Parents & Caregivers

*It is important for your child's development that home language skills are maintained.*

### **Why is it important for me to continue to develop my child's home language(s) skills?**

*Maintaining your child's home language(s) is vital for their education and it also helps your child to retain their own culture and identity as this language has been passed down from one generation to the next. Your home language(s) is the best way to communicate your feelings and emotions.*

*It is important that you continue to speak your home language(s) with your child at home. Your child will have plenty of opportunities to hear and speak English outside of their home environment.*

*Your child's home language(s) provides a firm foundation on which they can build English language skills. Research proves that children with well-developed home language skills acquire additional language more quickly. Children who do not continue to develop their home language(s) may have trouble with their English language skills.*



### **How can I help my child to develop their home language(s) skills?**

There are lots of ways in which you can help your child to continue their home language(s) skills. Here are some ideas:

- Read fact and fiction books in your home language daily with your child
- Ask your child's class teacher about topics they will be covering soon and talk to your child about them in your home language, before they learn about them in English
- For younger children, sing songs, rhymes and play counting games in your home language. Sing the songs & rhymes you were sung when you were a child.
- Storytelling, retell the stories you were told when you were a child.
- Keep in touch with your extended family and encourage them to talk regularly to your child in your home language

- Together with your child, watch films and television in your home language and then talk about them afterwards.
- Talk about and encourage reading and writing skills in your home language
- Encourage your child to feel proud of the fact that they can speak another language

### **What do I need to do if my child mixes languages?**

*Children often mix languages at a young age; this is very common when a child is learning two languages at the same time. You don't need to be overly concerned because in time your child will gradually begin to separate the two languages.*

### **What do I do if my child only wants to talk to me in English?**

*This is very common especially in older children. If your child only speaks to you in English, we recommend that you do not worry and continue to talk to them in your home language(s).*

### **Our home language uses a different script. Will this confuse my child?**

*Learning to read and write in your home language will help your child to learn to read and write in English. With practice, your child should be able to learn to read and write in two completely different languages*

