

## Why it is good to be bilingual ?

Your children will better understand your extended family, its history and culture.

Your children can better communicate with you and with other people in your family.

Your children will have more opportunities in work later on as bilingual people are valuable to employers.

Your children will develop 'elastic' thinking brains.

Your children will feel better about themselves and their heritage.

Your children will understand language in a way that one-language children can't.

Make learning language a fun and positive experience.

Continue to use your first language.

Speak it

Read it

Teach your children to write it.



# LEAD

# RAISING BILINGUAL CHILDREN



## Greerton Village School

This brochure is taken from  
**Bilingual Snippets: A Resource and Guide for Schools**  
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## Raising Bilingual Children

There is a choice of ways to do this:

1. You may choose to use one language at home. This would be your first language and the one in which you feel the strongest. Your home language can be as rich as it can be and this can make it easy for your children to learn English outside your home.
2. You may choose to use both languages at home – your first language and English. This could be more confusing for your children as they may have difficulty understanding which language is which.
3. Each parent/family member speaks a different language to your children. This is not confusing as the children will know which language is used with which person.

### What choice is best?

The most successful bilingual children are those who have two languages available in a rich form – a rich home language and a rich “outside home” language.

### How can children learn two languages?

Information available about language learning shows that two languages can be learnt, understood and used separately. They can both be well developed. Both languages add to and develop a deeper understanding of language in general. Children can use one language to support and compare with the other.

## What stages do children show when learning two languages ?

Stage 1:

Children mix the two languages when talking. They may know one word for something and not know the word in both languages. This is not something to worry about.

Stage 2:

Children begin to separate the two languages. They use each language with the people who use that language. The children will have words in both languages for more and more things although there may still be some mixing of the languages.

Stage 3:

Children are beginning to easily switch from one language to the other without mixing them. They know there are two languages and develop each one separately and well. They may choose to use one language in some situations and the other language in other situations.



It is easier to become bilingual as young children. They pick up language easily through play and interaction. They are not worried about making mistakes and are interested in giving and getting messages of communication. They pick up pronunciation quickly. Seeing and hearing go together – children need to learn both spoken and written forms of a language.

## How can you Help ?



Use one language at a time.

Praise your children when they try to read or speak in one of the two languages.

Encourage your children to keep trying because it will get easier and better all the time.

Provide a good model, saying something again correctly rather than criticising.

Give your children lots of words and rich language.

Tell your children how clever it is to know and use more than one language.

Give lots of repetition.

Use full sentences, not just ‘bits and pieces’ of the language.