

# Initial Meet-Up with Caregivers



Ensure the room chosen for the initial meet-up is a calm and relaxing place. Provide tea/coffee and snacks. Provide an interpreter either online or in-person. Consider which member of staff is conducting the meeting. Have the classroom teacher, EAL coordinator or a pastoral member of staff meet with families rather than the head teacher at first. Bear in mind that families may have had negative experiences with schools, authorities and people in positions of power in the past. It is vital that they feel safe, welcome and supported. Provide images of the school, a school map and translated welcome letters and brochures for families to take away.

## GETTING TO KNOW THE PUPIL

Make sure the pupil has something to make them feel calm such as a colouring book or a fidget toy. Older pupils can be given a welcome booklet or journal which they can take away with them.

### How is the pupil's name pronounced?

*Write the name phonetically and share this with staff.*

### What name would the child prefer to be called at school?

### When did the pupil arrive in the UK?

### Which country was the child born in and which countries have they lived in/travelled through to get here?

### Did the pupil arrive in UK with the parents/primary caregivers? If the child came to the UK after their parents/primary caregivers, who did the pupil live with while separated?

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## GETTING TO KNOW THE FAMILY

Make the family aware that any questions being asked are purely to get to know them and help support them. This information will not be shared with other organisations and will not impact any immigration decisions they may be waiting for.

**What are the full names of the parents or caregivers? What is their relationship to the pupil?**

**Do the family have access to English classes, employment support or other integration services?**

**Are the family living in a hotel or other temporary accommodation? Are they living with a host family?**

*Take contact details of host family if useful.*

**Do they have regular access to the internet, a phone or tablet?**

**How will the pupil travel to school?**

**Does the family have a support network, such as friends or family, in the local area?**

**Is there anybody in the family who can support the child with homework?**

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# GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT THE LANGUAGE SKILLS AND NEEDS OF THE FAMILY

Some families will have excellent English as they will have worked as translators or for international organisations previously. Others may not know a word of English. Some families may not be literate in any language due to gaps in education caused by conflict and displacement.

## Which are the main languages used at home?

*Note languages spoken at home with different members of the family. Consider which language the child watches TV or listens to music in. Check which is the most useful language for communicating with the family. Can family members read/write in that language?*

## Who in the family can read and write English?

*If no one can, do they have access to another family member or friend who could be used to translate information from school/interpret at parents' evenings?*

## Which languages has the child studied in before?

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# GETTING TO KNOW THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE PUPIL

This will vary from pupil to pupil. Some pupils may have attended school up until they had to leave their home. Other children may have experienced gaps or schooling in various countries on their way to the UK. Some children may never have been to school but may have lots of knowledge and skills from their lived experiences.

**How old was the pupil when they started going to school? If they have never been to school, what was the reason?**

**Did the child study English? If so, for how many years? How well does the child speak or understand English?**

**List all of the subjects studied and the pupil's favourite subjects.**

**Did the child use a computer at school? Are they familiar with using laptops, tablets and computers?**

**Does the pupil play any sports or have any hobbies or interests?**

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# GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT RELIGIOUS/CULTURAL/COMMUNITY LINKS

Map out what support the family is accessing so you can signpost them to services and help fill any gaps. Reach out to your local council if you see a family is not receiving adequate support to integrate. This will have significant, long-term impacts on the family and the pupil if not addressed.

**Is the child attending or likely to attend home language classes or a supplementary school?**

**Does the child attend a religious school, such as Madrassa (classes at Mosque)?  
Are the classes during the week or at weekends?**

**Does the family attend any religious, community or cultural organisations?  
Do they provide them with any specific support?**

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## GIVING THE FAMILY SPACE TO SPEAK

Families may have been spoken to a lot since arriving in the UK but may not have been given space to express themselves. Ask families if they have any concerns, questions or other key information they want the school to know. Make communication easy and accessible by designating this to one key member of staff who can be the point of contact for the family.

**Do parents/caregiver/pupil have any questions or other comments to share with the school?**

**Are the family facing any challenges outside of school that they are not getting support with?**

*Map out refugee support charities and organisations in local area to support.*

**Share a key contact for the family to use throughout the day (not the reception phone number but a key member of staff)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Does the pupil have a school uniform, bus pass, PE kit, accessibility to FSM or meal payment system, basic school equipment?**

Uniform

Set up on meal payment system

Bus pass/train pass

Pen, pencil, calculator, school bag

PE kit

Met classroom teacher / form tutor / head of year

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## WHAT NOW?

After the meeting, bring the family to meet with the classroom teacher or form tutor, head of year and other key staff and agree on school start date. Try not to arrange this the day after, as the family need time to get a uniform, school equipment and to mentally prepare. It's best to start the child midweek so they only have a few days before the weekend so they are not too overwhelmed. Take the family on a school tour after the school has closed so they can explore calmly and ask any other questions. Schedule pupil check-ins with a pastoral member of staff and ensure parents/caregivers are receiving regular updates. The support can be gradually reduced when the pupil starts to settle.

## INFORMATION SHARING

Consider the key information that classrooms teachers, pastoral leaders and other school staff may need to fully support the child and share this immediately with them. They do not need to see this full form although it should be available to staff who want to find out more information.