

d. Registration



Making multilingual families feel welcome

Registering a child for school entails filling in forms requested by the school administration. Unfortunately, those forms are often monolingual with vocabulary that parents may not even know. If the forms that parents have to complete are in a language they do not understand, this makes the whole process difficult and stressful. It may also give those families the impression that they are not respected and/or welcomed.

Some local authorities may have the registration forms in other languages. In some countries, school administrative staff may contact the Ministry of Education or the local authorities and request the translated versions of those forms. Please find [on our website](#) a list of links to the translated versions of registration forms - check for your own country and language.

We would advise to have bilingual forms as it will make it easier for you as administrative staff to find back the information you need and for the parents the information they have to provide.

What about the languages of the families?

In the registration form, we would also suggest adding a question concerning the languages spoken at home. This is an important question both for the school, but also for the families.

For the school, this information is important as it makes the staff aware of how the languages are used in the home and how fluent the parents are in the school language. It will also help the school staff in working out on how they are going to deliver information to the families.

For the families, it is a recognition of who they are, of their identities. It makes them feel welcome and respected. Migrant families have left a lot behind and the recognition of who they are, is of prime importance for the well-being of the children and their success at school.

There are different manners of asking parents about the languages they speak, also the languages they speak with their children - as sometimes, parents have not passed on their mother tongue to them for various reasons.

Including languages spoken at home helps teachers and the school to gather important information about their students. This information can help in the development of targeted programs and resources that can support multilingual students and their families, improving overall communication and educational outcomes. Often this information is given to the school in registration but the child's teacher does not see this information. The above template is a great activity for both children and parents and is beneficial for the teacher to understand more about the child's language skills. This template can be modified to suit each teacher/ school.