



Training opportunities

EAL Network meeting: Wednesday 4th March, 1.30pm – 3.30pm at Sans Souci, free to Solihull schools, £50 for out-of-borough/independent schools. If you wish to book a place, please email inset@solihull.gov.uk

Training for EAL co-ordinators: Monday 23rd March, 1.30pm to 4pm at Sans Souci, £70. Whether you are new in post or have been doing the job for a while, this course will cover all the essentials you need to know for your role including

- Identifying EAL learners and managing data
- Working with parents
- Classroom strategies
- Resources
- SEN or EAL – distinguishing the difference

If you wish to book a place please email inset@solihull.gov.uk. Please see below for details of what we will cover.

SEN or EAL: Distinguishing the difference: Tuesday 31st March, 1.30pm – 4pm at Sans Souci, £70. If you wish to book a place please email inset@solihull.gov.uk.

This course will look at how language develops and the similarities and differences between developmental language disorders and the features of English as an additional language. We will also look at some tools which you can use in your schools to help distinguish the difference. We will also consider other additional needs such as dyslexia.

Bespoke training: We offer bespoke training to schools which is free of charge. If you wish to book this please contact us on nicola.hunter@solihull.gov.uk.

OFSTED new framework – reading guidance.

We are working alongside the school improvement team in supporting schools with the new reading audits with regards to the new OFSTED framework. Children learning English as an additional language have some different requirements when it comes to reading as young children, in particular are often learning to read as well as learning a new language simultaneously, which means there has to be a greater focus on vocabulary at the same time as learning phonics. We often advise that children with English as an additional language take home a wider range of reading materials than those which are purely phonics based. We may also sometime suggest that reading at home is in the first language, particularly when parents have limited English proficiency, and that phonics work needs to be carefully supported and explained to parents.

Schools who are devising Reading policies may wish to bear their EAL pupils in mind and we would be happy to support schools in writing and amending policies to reflect this group of pupils. Please contact us for further details.

Advisory visits for schools:

The Service continues to offer advisory visits for schools. These are free of charge and are entirely supportive in nature. We can advise on a range of areas, such as how to write an EAL policy, supporting children in the classroom, data collection and analysis, working with parents, writing and action plan and planning lessons. Please contact us if you would like one of our advisory teachers to visit.

Speech and Language resources

Last term we were lucky enough to receive training from Dr Sean Pert of Manchester University, Speech and Language therapist and member of the RCSLT. The theme of the day was Bilingual Children with Speech and Language difficulties. Dr Pert examined the many myths and misunderstandings surrounding bilingualism and also the issues and difficulties in distinguishing language difficulties from second language acquisition. There were a number of key messages which are worth sharing

- The importance of ensuring that bilingual children and their families have access to interpreters
- The importance of considering and assessing all languages when investigating a child's difficulties
- The need to provide speech and language therapy (if it is required) in both/all languages.
- Bilingualism is both a positive and a protective characteristic

Dr Pert also showcased his new Bilingual Assessment of Simple Sentences (BASS) which is a new assessment tool for bilingual pupils. We have copies of this if anyone is interested and we will be meeting with Speech and Language therapists later this term to discuss how speech and language therapy works for bilingual children in Solihull.

If you have bilingual children with potential/possible speech and language difficulties we strongly advise that you refer to our service so that we can work alongside speech and language therapy services to ensure they get treatment which considers all of their language needs.

We will cover some of these findings in our SEN/EAL: Distinguishing the Difference course on 31st March.

Solgrid – information for schools

The EAL Service is in the process of moving information from the Extranet to the Solgrid website <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/english-as-an-additional-language/> . In the next few months we will have all our documentation on the website and you will be able to go there for advice and information as well as to download forms etc.

For enquiries please phone 0121 704 8613 or email nicola.hunter@solihull.gov.uk or for courses inset@solihull.gov.uk

If you have ideas for topics you would like to be covered at the EAL Network, please contact us.