



Welcome to the fourteenth issue of the Solihull EAL Network newsletter. We hope you are all keeping safe and well amid the changing climate of teaching. We were very disappointed to have cancelled all our Spring Term activities (meetings, training sessions, etc.) and look forward to the next time we can all meet again. We recognise that this is an unprecedented period of anxiety, disruption and uncertainty for schools, EAL pupils and their families. At the EAL Service, we continue to focus on the advisory and educational provision for EAL children, young people and their families - in these times of constant change and isolation. Therefore our website has been recently updated and has links to many information on learning from home. It can be accessed via the following hyperlink:

<https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/english-as-an-additional-language/learning-from-home/> . Please feel free to contact us if you need any further information and support. During the Covid-19 crisis Aggie Polanski agnieszka.polanski@solihull.gov.uk will be the main contact for the EAL Service while Helen Rowe is working with the LACES and safeguarding teams.

Supporting EAL Parents

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve schools will remain closed until further notice. Parents and carers are facing the situation of educating their children at home. Home-schooling is challenging for all parents but particularly parents and carers of our EAL pupils who themselves don't speak English very well. They experience a double challenge: the challenge of both language and subject knowledge. It is essential that we work together to ease the pressure and provide the best possible support and advice for the parents.

We need to keep reminding EAL families the value of speaking and developing their first language at home. A strong and secure first language will help their children to acquire and develop English as an additional language. Knowledge of the home language will also help to ensure that our EAL children will have a stronger identity, better understanding of their own culture and closer relationships with extended family and relatives.

We should inform EAL parents that school work could be explained in the first language. The parents will then be able to explain concepts or find resources in their home languages, which will help their children develop a good understanding of the topic or subject being studied.

When it comes to learning English language, fortunately, many English language teaching organisations already offer a lot of resources, available for free, during the school closures. Most of those educational exercises include automatic checking and involve animations, songs and stories, which make learning attractive for EAL pupils. Please use the following links to find some useful websites for learning English from home:

[LearnEnglish Kids](#)

[LearnEnglish Teens](#)

[ESOL](#) (all resources on the site are free to access until 30 June 2020)

[Rainbow Bridge](#) (for young English learners)

EAL Ambassadors Infants - new and updated course

The EAL Ambassadors programme provides a fantastic opportunity for pupils to learn the skills needed to support new EAL arrivals, so that they feel safe and welcome, right from the start, in the Solihull community. In the borough, over 130 pupils have been trained as EAL Ambassadors since December 2016. The programme has been run in infant, primary and secondary schools.

EAL Ambassadors for Infants is a new and updated course, which has been re-written to appeal to children of a younger age. The new programme is based around a film produced by EAL children in Rochdale.

We are planning to start our new EAL Ambassador Infants training in September 2020. We currently have a waiting list of schools that are keen to participate in this programme. If you would like to add your school to the list, or would like to know more about it, please contact our admin officer, Nicola Hunter Nicola.hunter@solihull.gov.uk

Message from our Admin

This is a quick update from the administration side of the EAL service. In a move to reduce our carbon footprint, we are now only using electronic means of communication (you will not receive printed letters and reports). So as a gentle reminder to everyone, please ensure that the referral forms are completed fully especially the parent's e-mail address. Also, please ensure that both parents and the school have signed at the end of the form.

Following queries regarding the nature of our advisory support, we have started to provide you with more detailed information regarding the follow up process within the IPP outcome e-mail. I will also continue to attach our EAL protocol which outlines the different support we offer. Hopefully all these changes are helping to further improve our service.

Thanks, Nicola

Funding for pupils with English as an additional language

As in previous years, you may be aware that the funding for EAL pupils has already been received in school as part of this year's budget from April 2020.

The payments are for pupils who are in the first three years of learning English/being in the UK and the data was gathered from the October census. Please note:

- The funding is not ring-fenced, although we strongly urge schools to consider this when planning for EAL learners in schools.
- Schools can calculate the approximate funding, they believe their EAL learners are entitled to, by multiplying by approx. £500 or £1,000 the number of EAL learners on roll, who are within the first 3 years of their schooling in the UK, as recorded in the October school census.
- There is no in-year funding.

If you need further information with regards to EAL funding being allocated specifically to your school, please contact Aggie Polanski on agnieszka.polanski@solihull.gov.uk

For any enquiries and advice please email nicola.hunter@solihull.gov.uk .