



Welcome back to a new school year – and what year it is! We hope very much that you have had a safe and stress-free start to the new term. We are continuing to provide advice and support to schools through phone calls, emails and other available platforms in line with the current SMBC visits guidance which can be found on our Solgrid home page

<https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/english-as-an-additional-language/> .

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.

Farewell to Clare Webster



It is with great sadness that we have had to say goodbye to Clare. She has worked with our team for 5 years and during that time made a wonderful contribution, sharing her teaching expertise as well as her fluent Italian. Many of you will know that Clare has been unwell for some time and has been incredibly brave in continuing to work. We hope she will enjoy a much deserved retirement and wish her all the very best. She will be greatly missed by all the team and many staff, families and children and we hope she will keep in touch.

Initial assessment arrangements

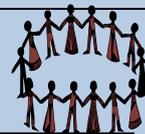
It is vital that children with English as an additional language do not get overlooked during the Covid-19 pandemic and the disruption it is causing in schools. The Service is continuing to take new referrals and would like to encourage schools to refer new arrivals as well as children about whom there may be concerns about language development. The referral forms can be found on our Solgrid page <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/english-as-an-additional-language/referrals> .

Once you have referred a child to the service we will send you information about how to conduct some simple assessments/observations as well as a parent meeting. We are happy to attend parent meetings via phone or other platform that your school may be using. We are providing bespoke support with each individual child and will provide specific recommendations and strategies based on the assessment information you provide.

Initial assessment documents

Please ask a Teacher or TA to complete the **Initial assessment** with the EAL pupil. Please complete the tasks and make notes about how the pupil responds, reacts and include examples of spoken language if possible.

The Profile of Competence (PoC) should be completed by the class teacher, or if it is a secondary school pupil, the English teacher. This document only needs to be completed for pupils from Year 1.



The Additional Language Information needs to be completed by parents. This will also be e-mailed directly to parents.

Once you have completed the assessment please scan and e-mail the documents to Nicola.hunter@solihull.gov.uk. We can then take the necessary follow-up steps e.g. provide feedback, give suitable strategies, suggest useful resources.

Also, a gentle reminder to everyone, please ensure that the referral forms are signed by both parents and the school. We would be grateful if you could complete the 2020-21 version of the referral form as the older versions do not include the parents e-mail address. If you did not receive the new version by e-mail, please let us know.

Reading at home

We all understand that reading is a key skill to progressing with learning and acquiring good language skills and this is especially important for EAL pupils. Reading at home is always encouraged but it is important that children are exposed to good reading skills, pronunciation and intonation as well as expressive reading which sometimes is difficult for parents to achieve if their command of English is not secure. Being exposed to good reading models can be beneficial in helping a child understand correct pronunciation which can impact learning as words not properly enunciated can result in incorrect spellings thereby affecting writing skills.

The following are a few websites that provide audio stories with transcripts so that parents and children can listen and read together or a child can listen to stories by themselves. The storyline and world stories sites provide stories from other countries and cultures, some are available in different languages which would help parents and children to have a better connection with the stories told as culturally they would be more relatable/appropriate. Children and parents can use these to listen to the stories in their first language (if available) and then listen to them in English which would help with understanding and vocabulary acquisition. Listening to stories and watching the visuals could also help with creative story writing tasks in lessons as they would hopefully provide ideas and examples of good story writing.

Good language skills and correct pronunciation can impact positively on emotional well-being and confidence and have a positive effect on other areas of learning and social skills.

Children generally love being read to and while this is not the same as a parent or teacher reading to them, it may just be the next best thing. Happy Reading and hopefully these prove useful

[.https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/childrens-stories](https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/childrens-stories)

Simple stories for new to English learners (children) – video and transcript

<https://www.storylineonline.net/>

Large selection of stories from different cultures read by famous people – video and transcript

<https://worldstories.org.uk/>

Stories from different cultures and countries – audio, video and translations in various languages

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