

EMAS Coventry Newsletter

Welcome to the Spring 2 EMAS Coventry Newsletter



Refugee Education UK



The frontline and research teams at [Refugee Education UK](#) have joined forces with Professor Joanna McIntyre of the University of Nottingham's School of Education to create a free, study-at-your-own-pace set of seven learning modules for teachers and other education practitioners who want to be better equipped to support the refugee learners in their classrooms.

- Designed for primary and secondary school teachers
- 0 - 15 hours of self study, broken into bite-size chunks
- Links to further resources and support

Sign up via [this link](#) on their website

Careers Information Session for Y10 and Y11 ARAP and UKRS students – Barr's Hill School



On 11th February, Y10 and Y11 resettlement students and their families had the opportunity to meet different local education providers, ask questions and explore wider options on Post 16 education. We were pleased to see the students leaving more confident and informed about their Post 16 options and pathways. We would like to thank Barr's Hill School for hosting such an important and productive event.

Hill Farm Primary Sharing Dual Language Stories



Recently the students at Hill Farm Primary school experienced a dual language sharing stories session. The School's Librarian, Mrs Nicholds, was joined by a parent of a year 2 pupil who graciously volunteered her time. They read aloud *Sleeping Beauty* in English and Arabic, and the parent spoke about her school years in Morocco. The children also had the opportunity to look at a selection of the School and Community Library's Arabic & English Dual Language books.

Next month a year 1 class will experience a Romanian and English Sharing Stories session, with Tamil and Kurdish sessions being planned for the near future.



Ramadan 2025 - Guidance for Schools



In 2025, Ramadan will be a month-long period of Islamic prayer, fasting, self-control and goodwill to others. It is stated that Ramadan will start on **28th February** and lasts for a month ending with Eid ul-Fitr.

Ramadan and its relevance for schools (mainly but not exclusively secondary schools)

While bringing many benefits, strict fasting throughout Ramadan is likely to impact on pupils' overall well-being and their cognitive performance.

It's important to note that no child younger than 'the age of puberty' is obliged or expected to fast – there are, however, two views on this:

1. The 'biological maturity' view holds that children should begin the practice of fasting at the age of 15 (ie the age of puberty)

2. Under the 'intellectual maturity' view, children should begin fasting between the ages of 16 to 19 (ie the age of intellectual capacity).

However, younger children (ie those at primary or secondary schools) may practice short periods of fasting to prepare them for adulthood.

School staff need to recognise that unless there are genuine safeguarding concerns, they should not interfere with how young Muslim pupils observe Ramadan. That said, Islamic law does offer children the opportunity to delay or exempt themselves from fasting and late-night prayers if they believe it may adversely impact their performance at school, especially if they are facing the prospect of taking exams.

A word about fasting, prayer and safeguarding

During Ramadan, those fasting can have one meal just before sunrise and another just after sunset. While fasting may bring about many benefits, the practice of fasting may also bring about greater levels of tiredness, lower energy and dehydration, and reduced focus, memory and concentration.

During Ramadan, young Muslims may also take part in prayer events, often held in mosques, which finish late at night. Prayer sessions should be kept short on school nights or, preferably, held on weekends when the impact of late nights or long prayer sessions on pupils could be better managed.

If there are safeguarding concerns about a pupil, schools have an overriding safeguarding duty and should apply professional judgement and common sense in each case. The Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education defines safeguarding as 'protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'.

With this overriding duty in mind, if you notice signs of dehydration or exhaustion in a pupil, you should ask the pupil if they are fasting. If so, encourage them to drink some water and reassure them that, in this situation, Islamic practice allows them to break their fast and make it up later. Muslim authorities agree that if there is a risk to a pupil's health, pupils can break their fast and, indeed, they should do so immediately.

The NHS advises the following: 'If you produce very little or no urine, or feel disorientated, confused or faint due to dehydration, you must stop fasting and have a drink of water or other fluid. Islam doesn't require you to harm yourself in fulfilling the fast.'

A note for primary schools

No child younger than the age of puberty is obliged or expected to fast. However, primary school-age children may be encouraged by their families to do a partial fast, but ideally, such types of fasting should be under parental control and outside of school hours. If fasting is happening in your primary school, school leaders and staff need to know so that they can safeguard against any risk to the health and welfare of pupils in their care.

A note for secondary schools

A thoughtful approach is needed, especially if you ask pupils whether they are fasting. We recommend that schools ask parents and carers to let them know if their child is fasting. If the pupil is presenting with poor health, it is also entirely appropriate to ask the parents and carers if their child is fasting.

Practical tips for schools

We strongly advise that you delegate a member of your school's leadership team with the task of ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to balance the school's statutory safeguarding duties with its wider moral obligations

Observing Ramadan is, of course, a particularly effective way of engaging pupils (Muslim or otherwise), staff, parents and carers. Schools should produce some information (e.g. a leaflet or flyer) that helps to cover all the issues outlined in this advice note, and it may become a useful template for subsequent years. You may also use the information in communications with all stakeholder groups (for example, to raise awareness among non-Muslims, create a resource for the school or become a topic for an assembly or an INSET day).

Our tips

1. Inform fasting pupils of the allowances Islam gives them for breaking their fast – for example, making it up later if fasting jeopardises their welfare or performance at school.
2. Provide a quiet, supervised space with activities for fasting pupils, especially during the lunch period.
3. Check room temperatures to ensure they are no higher or lower than they need to be.
4. Check whether it's best to hold learning or revision lessons in the mornings or afternoons.
5. Consider putting a bag together for fasting pupils who receive free school meals to take home.
6. Make allowances for fasting pupils who may need to reduce their overall levels of physical activity, say during PE lessons, and consider alternative activities on such occasions.
7. Consider the impact of Ramadan on the setting of dates for other school activities, such as sports days, trips and end-of-year celebrations.

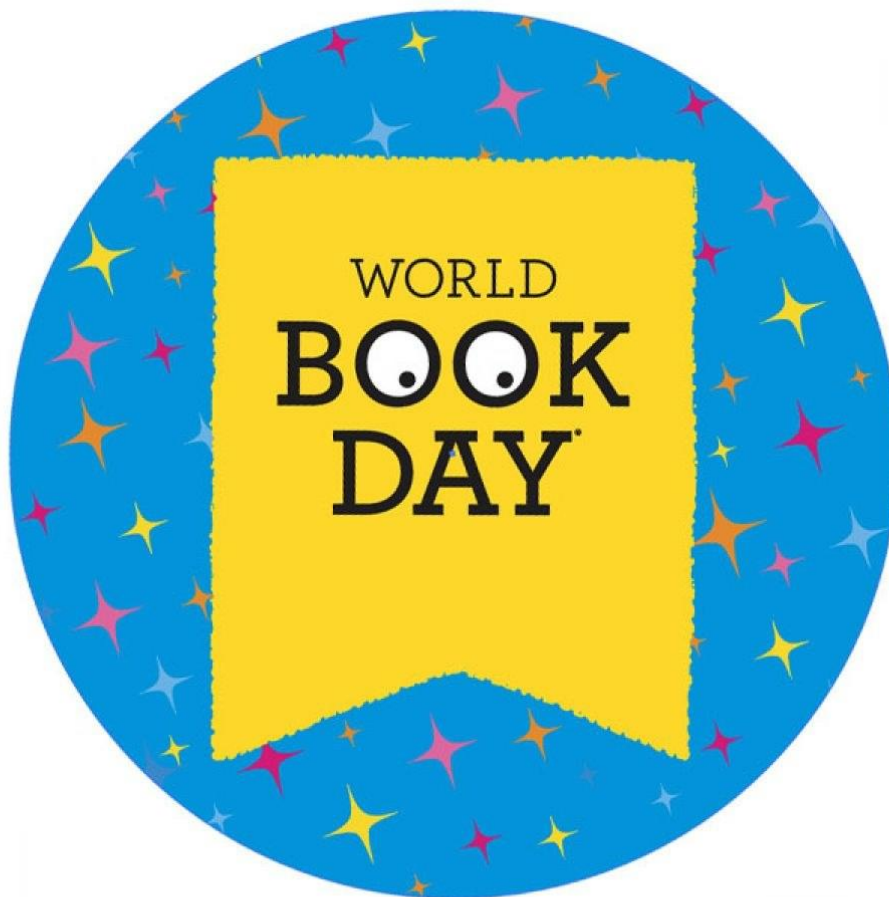
8. Intervene to provide care for a pupil only when there's a risk to their health, welfare or safety.

9. Ensure rooms are shaded, well-ventilated and have water available for fasting pupils.

10. Provide an additional room or space where fasting pupils can take rest breaks if needed.

(Guidance Taken from NAHT: [Ramadan in 2024](#))

World Book Day 2025



- World Book Day is an excellent opportunity to help learners read more by **reflecting the diversity of the interests, preferences, lives, experiences and abilities of readers** (McGeown & Wilkinson, 2021). One way to do this is to encourage multilingualism in your classroom and encourage reading in both home languages and English. Setting a

reading goal for your class and ensuring EAL learners have **the opportunity to read in their home language but report back in English** can be a route to enabling translanguaging.

- Giglets are holding a free story telling event on World Book Day (6th of March at 9.30am for 30 minutes). It is aimed at 7-11 year olds. Use the link to register interest. <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/c9a06189-df68-45af-8425-01ba8d184778@66175b07-85c5-4915-8533-1e4a9e7a2e35>
- Free tips and advice in 28 languages on sharing books with 4-6 year olds. [BookTrust: Reading with your child aged 4-6 years | BookTrust](#)
- Downloadable reading tip sheets for parents in the different languages: [Reading Tips for Parents of Third Graders | Reading Rockets](#)
- Links to books about refugees and asylum seekers [Books about refugees and asylum seekers \(younger children\) | BookTrust](#)

International Mother Language Day



International Mother Language Day is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate linguistic diversity and encourage pupils to explore the languages spoken in our communities.

Here are some ideas of ways for students to actively learn about and appreciate different languages.

Parent Storytelling Sessions

Invite families in to read stories in their home languages during break and lunch, giving students the chance to hear different languages in action.

Guess the Language Game

Challenge students to listen to different languages and try to identify them.

Language Identity Creations

Encouraging learners to reflect on and celebrate their own linguistic backgrounds.

Refugee Week 2025



This year's official theme is 'Community as a Superpower'.

Community is the incredible everyday. Ordinary and extraordinary. Simple acts of shared generosity. Kindness multiplied to become an unstoppable force!




"We can begin the process of making community wherever we are. We can begin by sharing a smile, a warm greeting, a bit of conversation; by doing a kind deed or by acknowledging kindness offered to us." - bell hooks.

Communities can bring people together. Bridging divides and offering support. Spaces of resilience and places for healing.





This Refugee Week everyone is invited to spend time with friends and build new connections in and beyond our neighbourhoods. From communal meals and open air film screenings, to football matches and music making, let's share the feelings of welcome and belonging. Listening, learning, laughing together.

It's amazing what we can do when we move together towards a shared goal. So let's redefine and rediscover our collective power to shape hopeful futures and begin by practicing, celebrating and rehearsing it every day.

There are 3 key ways to take part in Refugee Week:

1 Support Local  Find an event near you – Visit our [Event Calendar](#) to discover activities in your area or [contact](#) your local Refugee Week organiser.  Spread the word – Amplify Refugee Week events by sharing them with your networks.  Host your own event – [Submit your event](#) to our calendar and be part of the national programme.

2 Take Part in Simple Acts [Simple Acts](#) are small, everyday actions that anyone can take to stand in solidarity with refugees and make new connections in our communities. Explore this year's [Simple Acts](#) and discover creative, accessible ways to take part—whether in your neighbourhood, classroom, workplace, or at home.

3 Organise Your Own Event or Activity  [Event Organiser Packs](#) – Explore our free guides to help you plan Refugee Week activities.  [Children and Young People Pack](#) – Explore our free resource to help you get ready for Refugee Week (activities & teaching resources).  [Refugee Week Film Programme](#) – Watch a film or host a film screening featuring powerful films from filmmakers from refugee and migrant backgrounds.  [Social Media Toolkit](#) – Use our resources to share your message and amplify the movement.

Together we can take small steps to create big changes.

We will be sharing lots of exciting and inspiring resources and ideas as well as links to local events and projects at our FREE EMAS online planning session on Thursday 6th March 3:30 - 5:00.

If you wish to attend, please contact our admin team on admin.emas@coventry.gov.uk or the EMAS teacher team emasteachers@coventry.gov.uk who will include you on the attendee list .

Enabling Access to Education for Children Seeking Safety



Refugee Education UK (REUK), with support from [The Bell Foundation](#), conducted research on access to education for late arrivals - young people, aged 13-19, who have been forcibly displaced from their homes (for reasons including war, conflict, persecution, trafficking and persecution) and who arrive in the UK late in the education system. The study was commissioned by The Bell Foundation in response to increased interest from policy makers and practitioners in supporting the needs of these newly arrived displaced adolescents.

The research finds that late arrivals may remain out of education for extended periods of time, and that accessing secondary education becomes increasingly difficult the later young people arrive in the UK. Young people who arrive at a Year 11-age face enhanced challenges, with schools unlikely to accept them. Accessing a meaningful further education place can also be challenging for late arrivals. In the absence of school or college places, the charity sector is often left to bridge gaps.

The study used a mixed methods approach, and reflects the experiences of more than 400 individuals, predominantly practitioners from the charity, education and local government sectors.

An accompanying policy brief provides detailed recommendations aimed at national and local government to ensure all young people can access their right to education.

[Late arrivals research](#)

[Enabling Access to Education for Children Seeking Sanctuary - YouTube](#)

New evidence on how to support EAL pupils from The Bell Foundation



The number of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) has more than tripled since 1997. Over one in five schoolchildren use EAL and multilingual classrooms are now the norm. New evidence about EAL learners – and why measuring proficiency in English is essential for schools to understand their attainment trajectory and unlock their potential – is out now.

[How Can We Better Support the Growing Number of EAL Children? Our Latest Evidence on This is Out Now - The Bell Foundation](#)

EMAS Spring 2 CPD Offer

Refugee Week: Planning and Inspiration Thursday 6th March 3:30 - 5:00 online

Schools of Sanctuary Network Meeting Tuesday 18th March 4:00 - 5:30 at Earlsdon Primary School

English as an additional language and Special Educational Needs Thursday 20th March 3:30 - 5:00 online

The Bell Foundation; Adaptive Teaching for Learners using EAL for primary colleagues Tuesday 25th March 3:30 - 5:00 online

The Bell Foundation: Adaptive Teaching for Learners using EAL for secondary colleagues Wednesday 26th March 3:30-5:00 online

Spring Term EAL Co-ordinators meeting secondary Wednesday 9 April 4:00pm-5:30pm at Barr's Hill School

Spring Term EAL Co-ordinators meeting primary Thursday 10th April 4:00pm-5:30pm at
Richard Lee Primary School

If you wish to attend, please contact our admin team on admin.emas@coventry.gov.uk or
the EMAS teacher team emasteachers@coventry.gov.uk