

The current evidence base for school-aged children with language impairments

Course leader: Dr Susan Ebbels

Location: Moor House School, Hurst Green, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 9AQ

This course aims to update Speech and Language Therapists (and other interested professionals) on the current evidence base for intervention for school-aged children with language impairments. It will focus predominantly on comprehension and production at the word (vocabulary and word-finding), sentence (sentence construction and comprehension of sentences) and narrative level. It does not focus on articulation, phonology, literacy, phonological awareness, pragmatics or social skills.

Attendees will learn about how to appraise research evidence and a traffic light colour-coding system will be used throughout so that attendees can see at a glance the reliability of each piece of evidence mentioned. Background theory concerning how children learn language (and why some children may have difficulties) will be included.

At the sentence level, attendees will learn about studies which contrast different methods and agents of delivery of intervention to children with language impairments (where the details of the actual intervention approach not main focus). They will then learn about the evidence for different intervention approaches including grammar facilitation approaches, metalinguistic approaches and acoustically modified speech. At the word level, attendees will learn about studies aiming to improve word learning and vocabulary and also intervention for word finding difficulties.

Throughout the day, attendees will be asked to reflect on their own practice in the light of the evidence presented and what changes they may wish to make. Traffic-light colour-coded summaries are provided at the end of each section which aim to provide a quick reference for future use. A comprehensive reference list will also be provided for those who wish to follow up any of the studies discussed.

This course costs £175 per person and will be limited to 30 attendees. It takes place in the conference room at Moor House School in Surrey, within walking distance of Hurst Green station (40 mins from London Victoria) and includes a buffet lunch, tea and coffee.

Feedback from previous attendees:

“Enormous condensation of EBP studies across areas in just one day and fabulous reference list”

“Great presentation style – not complicated and lots of examples. Very practical, great to have so much discussion time throughout. Engaging throughout.”

“Comprehensive range of evidence heavily linked to practice, not just theoretical discussion”

“I really found the overview and analysis of current research useful to reflect on my personal clinical practice, but also to consider from a service point of view and now aim to use this to inform service delivery models and school based training.”

“Thought provoking regarding what our service delivers and the evidence base for what is effective. Gave me ideas on changes to make to the whole service to improve efficacy and efficiency – ammunition to use in service planning”.

“Very useful and interesting to think about evidence and lack of evidence”

“Research now demystified and great to feel research is perhaps an option accessible to us all”

“Information given very clearly – love the colour coding re evidence”

“I enjoyed the interactive workshop elements and chance to discuss with SLTs. I thought the clarification of ‘levels’ of evidence was valuable.”

“I liked the networking and discussions with other SLTs / teachers”

“Such an interesting day – thank you so much. A really varied cohort of people attending leading to some useful discussion. Your colour-coding and written notes were great.”

“Very good use of time – interesting and enjoyable!”

“Handout will be really useful for reference”

“your knowledge and ability to convey it was brilliant, as always”

“so much information and knowledge imparted. Great notes to take away. Ability to discuss with someone who has such an in depth understanding of research and the research”.

“I will be feeding back to my schools that there is an evidence base for our model!”

“Great day thanks. I have lots to think about”

“Fascinating day”