

# Little Bridge

How Little Bridge can help your  
EAL students learn English



EAL

ESOL

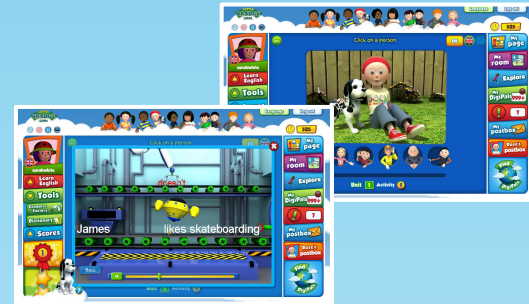
[www.littlebridge.com](http://www.littlebridge.com)

# Little Bridge is ...



Hugely motivating! Students willingly challenge themselves to improve their scores, revisit activities, reinforce understanding – and join in the Little Bridge community!

Structured and supportive - with 1000+ activities, all designed to show language in a living context, presenting, practicing and reinforcing key vocabulary and essential grammar.



Personalized and contextualized! Students engage with the world of Little Bridge – at school and at home - and rapidly develop important competencies across the key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

A resource that supports teachers with a user-friendly Teacher's Guide providing ideas beyond a mere commentary on the materials (both books and software) – and a complete package of FREE downloadable resources, including Flashcards, Copymasters, Audio files and Assessment materials.



Perfect for autonomous and whole class learning. Little Bridge prepares students for a smooth transition to full integration with their peers. A powerful and easy-to-use Learning Management System gives instant access to information about each activity and detailed real-time feedback on each student's progress.

The perfect blend of digital and print in 6 levels

# Little Bridge in the UK

Little Bridge is an online platform where children can make friends in a safe, fully moderated, English-speaking, global community. For children who require help with their language skills, Little Bridge offers an award winning, pedagogically sound English learning program. Full of structured games and activities, this gamified learning tool helps children of all ages to learn the skills they need to quickly become confident and capable speakers of English.

With the increasing focus from the Government on providing effective EAL provision in the UK, Little Bridge is excited to be part of the solution. We are already working with schools, local authorities and charities across the country, helping EAL students, refugees, and their families, learn English successfully.

As well as being used to great effect inside classrooms, Little Bridge is proving to be an excellent tool in out-of-hours clubs and Family Literacy projects; bringing together communities through learning a shared language. With its inclusive representation of ethnicities, lifestyles and its disability-awareness, Little Bridge not only covers language skills, but also the much talked about 'British values', key to successfully integrating new members into our communities.





# EAL case study 1

Springfield School, Hackney  
Angela Hunt (Teacher)

## Why do we use Little Bridge at Springfield?

Springfield school has an incredibly diverse cohort, with 80% of our children speaking English as an Additional Language. Children arrive at Springfield speaking Polish, Turkish, Portuguese, Spanish, Urdu, Romanian and Arabic to name a few. As such, we are always looking to support our EAL children with their language acquisition and understanding as well as supporting their families with the same process. When we discovered Little Bridge we knew we had found just the thing for us.

The unique selling point of Little Bridge, and the reason why it is proving to be so successful with children, parents and staff is the impressive interface and 'playability' of the software. Little Bridge effortlessly provides huge amounts of entertainment and engagement whilst supporting children with their learning. Children and parents consider Little Bridge to be a treat and never have we ever experienced children not wanting to spend time with their virtual English friends - precisely the opposite is true!



# EAL case study 1

Springfield School, Hackney  
Angela Hunt (Teacher)

## How do we introduce our children to Little Bridge?

We have done a big push throughout the school with teachers including Little Bridge as part of their homework and using it in whole class sessions.

Following the BETT show, Springfield became an affiliated school which allowed all of our children and staff to access the Little Bridge software. The programme was launched during staff training and a whole school assembly was run to show children what they now had access to.

Letters to parents were also sent home and children started to be exposed to the program both in school and in their homes. The popularity and success of Little Bridge has meant that we have extended what we offer to our students, including a weekly Little Bridge club is now run after school where children who do not have access to computers at home have the chance to practise their English skills! We have had 27 children sign up – with more on the waiting list!

We also made Little Bridge log in cards that have proved to be very popular and allowed children to be more independent about when and where they use the programme.

We have run Little Bridge assemblies where children share what they have been getting up to and we have documented some of our children's learning on our class blogs.

Our reception teacher runs a language group for parents to show them how they can be supporting their children at home.



# EAL case study 1

Springfield School, Hackney  
Angela Hunt (Teacher)

## Why Little Bridge works for us

Behind this wonderful interface is a robust and well thought out scheme of work that takes children and their families through the steps they need to successfully learn the English language and develop their comprehension.

Little Bridge has provided teachers with another tool to be able to breakdown the EAL barrier and has encouraged them to think 'outside the box' when it comes to this immersive learning style. To make lessons fun, engaging and dynamic to support children on their English journey.

The scope and sequence documents are particularly useful for teaching staff to be able to pinpoint the specific skills they would like to teach and so include these activities in their whole class teaching or interventions. Using Little Bridge activities as a starter or plenary is now a common occurrence, whole class sessions as well as guided intervention groups have been built around the programme and we are seeing children making excellent progress.

## What has been the impact of using Little Bridge with our students?

The areas we have seen the greatest impact is with children's speaking and listening, levels of vocabulary, retaining and retrieving information - and probably most importantly their confidence.

# EAL case study 1

Springfield School, Hackney  
Angela Hunt (Teacher)

## Extending Little Bridge

Probably one of the most exciting areas of Little Bridge success has been with our parental ESOL project. Little Bridge complements perfectly the work we are doing with our parents who want to improve their English and we now regularly have parent coffee mornings and after school sessions that are based around the software. Showing parents how to access Little Bridge has given them the confidence to be able to support their children at home and learn alongside their children. All parents new to the school who are EAL are invited to a coffee morning so they can see how the software can support their journey.

## Family Learning

Little Bridge has certainly become a firm favourite here at Springfield, as the smiles on these faces of our 'new mums' show!



# EAL case study 2

Baring School, Lewisham  
Nicky Laverty (Inclusion Manager)

## Why Little Bridge works for us

We first learned of Little Bridge when myself and our ICT co-ordinator attended a conference on ICT 2-3 years ago. One of the speakers was the Head teacher of an inner London school with high levels of EAL children and spoke about Little Bridge which he said had had an enormous impact on the progress made by these children.

At the time Little Bridge was subscription based and we could only afford for 10 children to have access to it. We prioritised those children who had little English or who we felt would benefit from a greater understanding of English. The children were very enthusiastic from the start. We were gradually able to increase the number of children who could access it and have found it to be very beneficial for children joining the school in KS2 with no English at all.

We particularly like the fact that children can access it at home as well and so benefit siblings and parents new to English. On one occasion, we were able to create an account for a Bulgarian girl with no English two weeks before she started at the school and she did it with her parents at home, so that she was completely familiar with the programme and with some English when she actually started with us.

We were very excited when Little Bridge became free for students and have been able to increase the number of children. We have children begging to be able to do it and have extended it to those native English-speaking children who have very poor language skills.





# EAL case study 2

Baring School, Lewisham  
Nicky Laverty (Inclusion Manager)

## What students say about Little Bridge

Here are some quotes from Year 3 children about using Little Bridge:

“It helps you learn.” Xing

“I like learning with Little Bridge. I like Rose because she is nice and she cares for people and I like Domino too.” Tolu

“I like Domino because you can teach him to do clever stuff.” Sonje

“You get to learn English and play games.” Hafsa

“I feel happy when I get a trophy.” Dhivana

“It helps me spell words I don’t know when I write stories. I like writing stories.” Naysa

“I like finding out about the people in Little Bridge. My favourite is Grace because I think she’s really kind.” Ashvini

“It can help you with your maths. Sometimes it has some number problems. I like Matthew - he is a good guitar player and footballer.” Samad



# EAL case study 3

Shireland Academy, West Midlands

Sir Mark Grundy (Executive Principal)

Kirsty Tonks (Principal Designate, Shireland Technology Primary)

Deanne Howe (Learning Support Lead Teacher)

## Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative feedback and results:

### Qualitative

‘Over 8 months, every child using Little Bridge made progress... Little Bridge is unique in that it truly crosses [the home and school] divide.’

### Quantitative

Using the Salford Reading Test, a literacy test used in UK primary schools to determine children's reading age, the school found that all the children improved their reading age. Most notably, in the 8-month test period:

- 5 pupils made 18 months progress
- 1 child (spent 25 hours on LB at home and school) made 35 months progress



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Deanne Howe (Learning Support Lead Teacher)

## Why do Shireland use Little Bridge?

With almost 60 different languages spoken at Shireland, we have to be really selective about the solutions we provide to our learners who have English as an Additional Language. We need them to improve their literacy skills quickly and effectively.

Having observed the continued impact over time that Little Bridge has had on these students and their families, we have seen that widening the use of the program beyond this cohort has also benefited those students who may not have language barriers but need extra support with their literacy skills.

Using the 'higher' Levels of Little Bridge and the emphasis on developing grammatical knowledge and spelling skills, we see this as a platform upon which to build a program that touches an ever-wider cohort, by bringing it into our mainstream teaching. It provides a smooth transition of vulnerable students to full integration with their peers and can be successfully incorporated into whole class literacy sessions.

What we have seen is Little Bridge become a far more comprehensive solution to a range of issues we need to address within the Academy and with our feeder Primary Schools. Little Bridge provides continuity and helps address problems of stigma. It is also an extremely cost-effective solution providing a platform for use, not just in school, but also at home – and, with school budgets in mind, means that we can show absolute value for money.



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### How did Shireland get started with / implement and what support did we get from the Little Bridge team?

Just under 3 years ago we introduced Little Bridge to Shireland Learning Support Department and to our feeder schools.

Little Bridge's 'open' Level approach was ideal, allowing us the degree of flexibility and personalized learning we required. It allowed us to support a wide variety of students, at various levels of competency in English. We can focus on particular skills, submerging the children in the spoken word, then introducing reading and writing as and when required. The skillful use of repetition (that is never 'boring') and consolidation ensures that practice is regular and effortless and really solid foundations are laid for all students.

Of course, one of the key factors of a successful implementation of a digital program such as Little Bridge is the support provided by the company involved. The team at Little Bridge has been fantastic, from the initial training to regular updates and refresher sessions. The supporting materials are first rate. The fact you can blend digital and paper resources is great. And the quality is superb. The Little Bridge team have thought of everything and they are continually innovating, always with a view to improve the child's experience and outcomes!

We needed a solution that students could relate to and become 'emotionally' involved with. Little Bridge is the sort of visual and tactile solution that enables these students to excel and feel confident about using.

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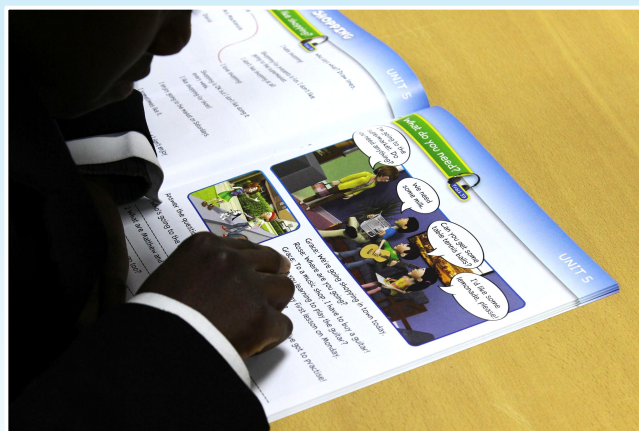
Deanne Howe (Learning Support Lead Teacher)

## What makes Little Bridge stand out from other products?

From the start, Little Bridge engages. We have found that students 'get it' straight away and are immersed in the world immediately. They want to continue, explore and learn for themselves. Little Bridge allows interaction and independent learning in a very natural and unforced way.

Students are in control of their learning, but we as teachers can still monitor and guide, where necessary. The ability to track progress is vital and the fact that both as a learner and as a teacher you can do this, makes monitoring very easy to do. Moreover, our students can continue learning at home (and they do this often without being prompted and voluntarily spend much more time on it that you would expect). This is really important. What is truly interesting is that we have been able to draw a clear correlation between the amount of time spent on Little Bridge and attainment. And the Little Bridge LMS is a hugely powerful tool, allowing us to see how much time each learner has spent on Little Bridge, and where they have focused.

Overall, we have seen a significant impact: following 8 months' use of Little Bridge, independent results show 18-36 months improvement (Salford Reading Tests).





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## Family Engagement with Little Bridge

One year on, and the Family Literacy project created by Shireland Academy in the West Midlands has been recognised as an outstanding success - and offers itself as a national template for encouraging life-long learning, community cohesion and integration.

Born from a need to support newly arrived families to the UK, this initiative has helped them to become empowered and able to support their children in their learning. It was also about allowing students and their families to learn together. Regular sessions using the Little Bridge online program, where they come and learn alongside their children, provides such an important message to their children; that these parents value learning.

In fact, they prioritise it so much that often it comes before other things that they do on a weekly basis, including job centre visits and shopping!

The families 'love' Little Bridge; to them it is a way of learning not just English, but what England is like. They had already seen their children using it at home and at Parent's Evening and were keen to learn about it themselves. In the Family Literacy session they identify with the personalities of the characters in Little Bridge and discuss the 'real-life' scenarios between themselves. They do get very competitive sometimes and this also further engages the students! At home where some of them have internet access only through the Smart TV, all the family get to learn about Little Bridge! It's become a family event!

The Family Literacy Project for them is central to their week and all other activities fit around it. How powerful a message is this to their children!

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## Family Engagement with Little Bridge

The project has seen unexpected benefits, including genuine friendship groups and a support network between the families that previously did not know each other. All involved gain from it. Families feel included. They have a better understanding of what their child is learning and how school works. They are building those all-important relationships with staff and at the same time are learning English alongside their children.

This is one of the few projects we have been involved with where the positives and benefits just keep growing and Little Bridge is absolutely central to its success. In these times of tension and cross community misperceptions, it would be great to see this kind of project, born in the heartland of our country, replicated successfully across the United Kingdom.



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## Family Engagement with Little Bridge

Please see below some of the feedback from young learners of English at Shireland and from their parents:

For parents, this experience has been life-changing...

“I am so happy to be coming to Little Bridge English classes. It makes Parents’ Evening so much easier”

“I have been in this country for 32 years and never learnt English - until now!”

“I got 10 out of 10 in the spellings! My son will be so proud!”

“I can help my daughter with her homework now!”

“I now have a part-time job thanks to the Family Literacy Project!”

For students, they know that by their families attending it shows that they care about learning; they get the chance to act as ‘teacher’ themselves, by supporting their parents. There’s even an element of ‘reverse pressure’ on parents from their children :

“Sometimes, I didn’t understand the work in lesson. But when I started to teach my mum, I knew I had to know it really well. It made me work really hard. I understand it now!”

“I’m really glad my mum comes... I don’t speak my mother tongue that well so now I can speak to my mum in the language I am comfortable in.”

“Miss did my mum come? How did she do on the spelling test? We studied on Saturday and Sunday!”

“I’m glad my mum comes and gets homework. Now she gets what I have to do!”