



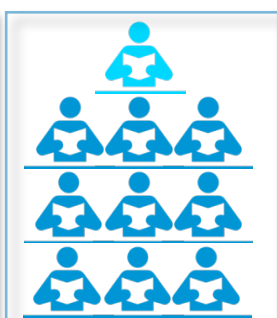
# Child First

## Speech & Language Therapy

### DOES MY CHILD NEED SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY?

The ability to say what you want to say and to understand what other people are saying is the most important skill we need in life. We often take communication for granted, but one in ten children and young people have difficulty communicating with others.

**1 in 10 children has  
Speech, Language  
& Communication  
Needs (SLCN)**



Although speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are common, they can often go unnoticed. Many children with SLCN look just like other children, and can be just as clever. This means that instead of spotting their communication difficulties people may see children struggling to learn to read, showing poor behaviour, having difficulties learning or socialising with others. Some children may become withdrawn or isolated. Their needs are often misinterpreted, misdiagnosed or missed altogether.

#### A child with SLCN may:

- have speech that is difficult to understand
- not understand words or instructions
- have difficulty saying certain sounds
- not know how to have a conversation

For some children, speech or language is the only difficulty they have; everything else is typical.

For other children, their speech, language and communication needs are part of another condition, such as autism, dyspraxia, dyslexia or learning difficulties.

#### What are **Speech, Language and Communication?**

- **SPEECH** refers to the ability to make sounds clearly so that people understand what you say
- **LANGUAGE** refers to understanding others and joining words together to express ideas
- **COMMUNICATION** refers to how we interact with others e.g. using and understanding body language or facial expression

Speech, language and communication skills are vital for a child to learn.

#### **In school**, students need language skills to:

- Listen to and understand new information, concepts, words and ideas
- Share their own ideas with others
- Answer questions
- Solve problems and ask for help
- Read, write and spell
- Interact with others, play and socialise

## HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD HAS SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS?

### If a young child of preschool or primary school age has SLCN you may notice:

You often need to tell them many times, or even show them, before they understand what you mean

They only have a few words in their vocabulary

People who don't know them well can't understand what they're saying (e.g. their speech is not clear, sentences are short or explanations are muddled)

They might get angry or frustrated when they don't understand or can't make themselves understood

At home, they may struggle to tell you much about what happened at school

They might seem to be left out or find it hard to join in with others' games

They may struggle with reading, spelling or maths

### If an older child or adolescent has SLCN you may notice:

They seem to ignore what you've asked them or do it wrong

They can't complete tasks because they don't understand the question or explanation

They struggle to learn and remember new words and might try to explain the word they're looking for (e.g. for "tripod" they might say "that science thing with three legs, it's metal")

At home, they might sound muddled or disorganised when explaining experiences or events

They find it hard to produce written work

In a group, they may appear very quiet as they have trouble keeping up

At home, they consistently struggle with homework and organising themselves

## IMPACT OF SLCN

SLCN can have a huge impact on many aspects of a child's life at school, including: difficulties with reading and writing; behaviour problems; social isolation; bullying; and exam failure.

**Without help**, children with SLCN are at risk of many future challenges:

- **School Attainment:**  
Only 15% of children with SLCN achieve 5 GCSE grades A\*-C.
- **Behavioural difficulties**  
Two thirds of 7-14 year olds with serious behaviour problems and at least 60% of young offenders have SLCN.
- **Unemployment**  
88% of long-term unemployed young men were found to have SLCN
- **Mental Health Problems**  
A third of children with SLCN need treatment for mental health problems in adulthood.



## WE CAN HELP!

Click here to find our more about [Our Services](#). Or if you're not sure whether Speech and Language Therapy is right for your child, [Contact Us](#) for a free initial consultation with a highly qualified Speech and Language Therapist.