Please read the following information before completing a referral form.

When making a referral, please ensure that it has been discussed with your link therapist. All sections of the form need to be completed and parental consent has to be obtained. Incomplete referrals will be declined and returned.

Please note, this Speech and Language Therapy Service is for primary school aged children only. There is currently no mainstream provision to secondary schools.

Referrals made due to concerns about a child's language development must be accompanied by a One Plan which clearly shows evidence of targeted interventions for language and/or communication. This should give details of specific interventions and show at least one full cycle of intervention and monitoring.

Refer if a child;

- Does not understand or cannot join in simple conversational language.
- Has difficulty following class-based instructions involving a sequence of items.
- Does not understand basic concepts eg size and position.
- Has difficulty understanding, learning and remembering new words.
- Often does not respond appropriately to longer questions and instructions.
- Isn't producing long, complex utterances using words such as 'but'/'because'
- Uses unusual word order and/or grammar.
- Demonstrates awareness/frustration of communication difficulties.
- Does not speak in front of adults but will communicate with peers.
- **EAL** - we will only accept referrals for children who are presenting with difficulties in their first language – please consult with parents.

Referrals for children with speech production difficulties must be submitted with the completed Speech Sound Screen.

Refer if a child

- Has unintelligible speech.
- Has speech production errors which cause them frustration or distress.
- Develops or has an existing stammer which is persistent or becoming more severe.
- Has noticeable changes to the quality of their voice eg their voice becomes husky or hoarse.

Eating / Swallowing / Choking If you notice a child has difficulties with swallowing liquid or food, **please refer as a matter of urgency.** Eating and Drinking Referral Form

If a referral is accepted, parents / carers will be invited to book an initial assessment in clinic/school. After this assessment, a report will be written giving details of any specific

difficulties noted during the session and specifying whether the child needs direct intervention in clinic/school, a review in school, or if they can be supported at home and in school without further input. If no further intervention is required, the child will be discharged. The initial report will be shared with the child's school and G.P.

Provide's Core Speech and Language Therapists offer the following levels of intervention to children in mainstream schools. Please consider these carefully so that you understand the level of support which is currently available.

- **Universal**
  Here, the main agents for change are parents / carers and educational staff. Many children with speech, language and communication difficulties can be adequately supported by adults embedding approaches and strategies into the home and school environments. **No Speech and Language Therapy intervention is offered** at this level of need. Please refer to the Ordinarily Available frameworks for guidance on creating and embedding an educational environment that will support children's speech, language and communication at a universal level.

- [Ordinarily Available: Inclusive Teaching Framework](#) – for all pupils – for classroom teachers
- [Ordinarily Available Targeted Support](#) – for some pupils – for classroom teachers, pastoral and SEND teams

- **Targeted**
  The main agents for change at this level are the parents / carers and school staff, **under the guidance of the Speech and Language Therapist**. Support consists of a review of the child's needs in school or clinic, followed by a Care Plan where specific targets will be set, and resources and recommendations given to parents / carers and staff. Following this review, the child will typically be discharged and can be referred again, should their difficulties persist, new concerns arise and if staff and parents / carers have implemented the previous advice and interventions. This level of intervention is given for most children who struggle to understand and use language or to communicate functionally with adults and peers within their educational environment.

- **Specialist**
  Specialist support is indicated when **a Speech and Language Therapist is the main agent for change and direct therapy sessions, usually provided in clinic/school, are necessary**. This is referred to as an episode of care, meaning that once the block of sessions is completed, the child will typically be discharged but can be referred again, should their difficulties persist, or new concerns arise and if school staff and parents / carers can show that they have followed the previous recommendations.
  Currently, only children with specific speech difficulties, a stammer, or in need of input for AAC, (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) receive a specialist level of support.

Sources of advice and support

- Learn more about the support available for developing children's speech, language and communication at https://www.provide.org.uk/service/childrens-speech-language-therapy/
- ICAN – a charity which supports children with speech, language and communication difficulties. https://www.icancharity.org.uk/
- Essex County Council Padlets which contain a wealth of information around SLCN - View the early years Padlet   View the primary Padlet

STAMMERING:

- The Michael Palin Centre; https://michaelpalincentreforstammering.org/
- STAMMA: National charity for people who stammer https://stamma.org (Previously The British Stammering Association).
- Action for Stammering Children. School settings can register to use the Stammering Toolkit for schools free of charge : https://actionforstammeringchildren.org/
- Penguin app is for parents and carers of children who stammer.

AUTISM:
- Free training is available to school with Autism Education Trust training via inclusion partner (Essex County Council)
- www.widgitononline.com for creating Core boards / visual supports.   Inclusion partners can give schools licences. £60 individual £600 small organisation. Or ACE Centre for free AAC resources www.acecentre.org.uk .
- Visual timetables and task planners (available on www.twinkl.co.uk)
- The Maze Parenting Programme www.themazegroup.co.uk
- The National Autistic Society website www.autism.org.uk
- Sunshine Support webinars https://sunshine-support.org/events-and-webinars/
- Resources to support Gestalt Language Processing: https://www.meaningfulspeech.com/ https://communicationdevelopmentcenter.com/

SELECTIVE MUTISM:
- Maggie Johnson - Selective Mutism manual and workbook
- SMIRA – charity which offers advice and support to families with selectively mute children and provides information to health and education professionals. www.selectivemutism.org.uk

Developmental Language Disorder awareness resources:
DLDandme.co.uk
RADLD.org

Essex County Council

Useful online SLCN (Speech, Language, Communication Needs) resources and links.

For guidance on SLCN visit Ages and stages on the Speech and Language UK's website.

Use the following links to watch videos about speech and language therapy. All the following speech and language therapy YouTube videos were created by the Northeast London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT):

- An introduction to communication passports
- Attention and listening skills
- Developing play skills
- Developing understanding and use of action words and concepts
- Developing understanding of language
- Developing vocabulary
- Offering choices
- Supporting sharing and turn-taking skills

Teaching resources and tools

To find SLCN teaching resources, use the following online guidance and downloads:

- Child's progress checker - Gives an idea of how babies or children are developing and directs you to advice, resources and support
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) - Essex County Council resources
- Educator Shop - Buy resources from Speech and Language UK - including progression tools, posters and information booklets
- Educators and professionals - Tools and training - From Speech and Language UK
- Essex Match, Give, Name assessment of Early Vocabulary Skills (Word, 48KB)
- Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE) - Loan Resources
- One planning - A person-centred graduated approach (PDF, 1.27MB)

Videos - Watch the following videos about speech and language therapy:

- Building effective practice to support students with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Building effective practice to support students with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) - for secondary school teachers (intermediate level)
- Introduction to Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Language For Behaviour and Emotions: An introduction

From September 2025, The Balanced System®, developed by Marie Gascoigne, will be introduced into schools. This framework ensures that children with speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) receive the right support from the right people at the right time, helping them achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

The Balanced System® framework has 5 outcome strands:

1. **Family support**: parents have the confidence, knowledge and skills to support their role as a key communication partner for their child, and young people can make proactive choices about how they are supported.

2. **Environment:** the places where children and young people spend their time are set up to help them to understand and express themselves effectively.

3. **Workforce development**: everyone working with children and young people know how to support them with their speech, language and communication.

4. **Identification**: speech, language and communication needs are identified early and effectively.

5. **Intervention:** children and young people get the help they need to make progress with their speech, language and communication.

And within each strand, there are 3 levels of support:

• **Universal support** is available to all children and young people to develop their speech, language and communication skills.

• **Targeted support** is used when there is a concern about speech, language and communication or a need has been identified.

• **Specialist or individualised support** is used where a child has more complicated speech, language and communication needs or may prequire more specialist information and help.

Children can access all levels of support as appropriate and may benefit from support at more than one level at a given time. For most children with SLCN, universal and targeted provision will be enough to meet their needs.

Role of link therapist
A link therapist is a named speech and language therapist assigned to a school. Their role is to build a strong relationship with the school and support the development of speech language and communication provision across the five outcome strands and three levels.

The link therapist provides a range of support to schools, ensuring everyone is equipped to support children's communication needs. They help to create communication-friendly environments in schools, making it easier for children to understand and express themselves.

The link therapist will meet regularly with the SENCo to discuss specific children with SLCN and plan how to support them. They can also work with individual pupils or groups as appropriate.

Speech sound screen

The aim of the speech screen is to support referrers in identifying those children who have significant speech production difficulties which are not resolving naturally, are causing them distress or frustration and which result in the child's speech being unintelligible to some or all listeners.

Please be aware that when children start school at age 4 or 5, their speech may contain some common, age-appropriate immaturities. At age 7, their speech should be fully intelligible with all sounds present.

Useful approaches are outlined in the online 'Speech Sounds' training which can be accessed via Provide's Training portal:
https://providechildrenandfamilyservices.co.uk/training/

- o Register for an account to access training on the portal.
- o Password for Speech Sounds: Provide2

How to complete the screen

Complete the screen in a quiet, distraction free room.

- Point to each picture and ask the child 'what's this?'

- If the child produces the sound accurately, put a tick in the appropriate blank box marked initial, middle or end position.

- If the child does not produce the target sound, write down the sound that they do use, (for example, if they produce 'pear' as 'bear' write 'b' in the initial position box), or, if you are unsure, mark the box with a cross.

- If the child cannot name the picture, prompt them or ask them to copy the word but please indicate this by writing a 'p' or 'c' in the relevant box.

Children's Speech & Language Therapy
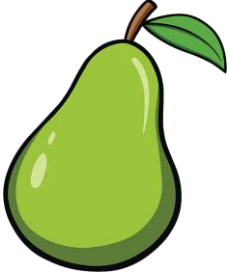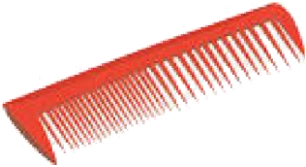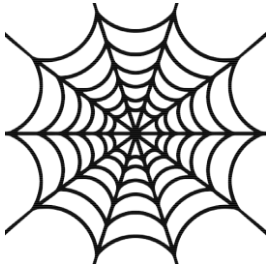
The following screen was developed by NHS Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service, Bedfordshire and Luton.

Name: **Age:**   **DOB:**   **Year:**   **Date:**

School: **Assessed by:**
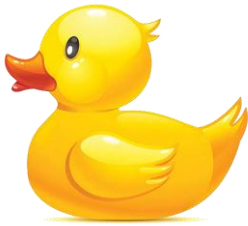
Target Sound	Word	Initial Position	Word	Initial Position	Middle Position	Word	Initial Position	End Position
These sounds typically develop by age 2							
p	**p**ear	☐	a**pp**le		☐	mo**p**		☐
m	**m**ilk	☐	le**m**on		☐	co**m**b		☐
b	**b**ike	☐	bu**bb**les		☐	we**b**		☐
t	**t**iger	☐	bu**tt**ons		☐	ki**t**e		☐
d	**d**uck	☐	da**dd**y		☐	brea**d**		☐
n	**n**urse	☐	pla**n**et		☐	pho**n**e		☐
These sounds typically develop by age 3							
w	**w**all	☐	fire**w**ork		☐			
h	**h**eart							
These sounds typically develop by age 4							
c/k	**c**arrot	☐	bu**ck**et		☐	lo**ck**		☐
g	**g**host	☐	su**g**ar		☐	ba**g**		☐
Ng			ha**ng**er		☐	ki**ng**		☐
y	**y**oghurt	☐	cra**y**on		☐			
f	**f**ire	☐	mu**ff**in		☐	roo**f**		☐
s	**s**un	☐	dino**s**aur		☐	bu**s**		☐
These sounds typically develop by age 5							
l	**l**ion	☐	ba**ll**oon		☐	whee**l**		☐
v	**v**olcano	☐	se**v**en		☐	ca**v**e		☐
z	**z**oo	☐	wi**z**ard		☐	no**s**e		☐
sh	**sh**ark	☐	wa**sh**ing		☐	bru**sh**		☐
ch	**ch**erries	☐	tea**ch**er		☐	wit**ch**		☐
j	**j**elly	☐	ba**dg**er		☐	ca**g**e		☐
s blends	**sc**arecrow	☐	**sm**oke		☐	**sn**owman	☐	
s blends	**sp**anner	☐	**st**ar	☐		**sw**im	☐	
			mea**s**ure					
These sounds typically develop by age 7							
r	**r**ed	☐	gi**r**affe		☐			
th	**th**umb	☐	bro**th**er		☐	ba**th**		☐
blends	**bl**ack	☐	**br**own	☐		**cl**own	☐	
	crisps	☐	**dr**ess	☐		**fl**ower	☐	
	fruit	☐	**gl**ue	☐		**gr**ass	☐	
	plaster	☐	**pr**incess	☐		**qu**iet	☐	
	slug	☐	**tr**ee	☐		**tw**elve	☐	
	throw	☐					☐	

Pre-referral Advice: **Children's Speech and Language Therapy (Mainstream Schools)**

Pear	**Apple**	**Mop**
Milk	**Lemon**	**Comb**
Bike/bicycle	**Bubbles**	**Web**
Tiger	**Buttons**	**Kite**

provide**children**and**family**services.co.uk
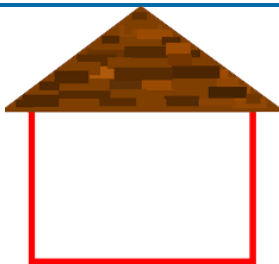
Duck	Daddy	Bread
Nurse	Planet	Telephone/Phone
Wall	Firework	Heart

Carrot	Bucket	Lock
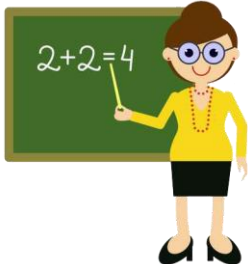
Ghost	Sugar	Bag
Hanger	King	
Yoghurt	Crayons	
Fire	Muffin	Roof

Sun	Dinosaur	Bus
Lion	Balloon	Wheel
Volcano	Seven	Cave
Zoo	Wizard	Nose

Shark	**Washing**	**Hairbrush/Brush**
Cherries	**Teacher**	**Witch**
Jelly	**Badger**	**Cage**
Scarecrow	**Smoke**	**Snowman**

Children's Speech & Language Therapy

Spanner	**Star**	**Swim**
Measure/ Measuring Tape	**Red**	**Giraffe**
Thumb	**Brother**	**Bath**
Black	**Brown**	**Clown**

Pre-referral Advice: **Children's Speech and Language Therapy**
(Mainstream Schools)

Children's
Speech &
Language
Therapy

Spanner	**Star**	**Swim**
Measure/ Measuring Tape	**Red**	**Giraffe**
Thumb	**Brother**	**Bath**
Black	**Brown**	**Clown**

Crisps	Dress	Flower
Fruit	Glue	Grass
Plaster	Princess	Quiet

Slug	Tree	Twelve	Throw

Please also complete the Intelligibility Rating Scale below for your child:

The Following questions are about how much of the child's speech is understood by different people. Tick one number for each question. Use the scale to help you think about the child's intelligibility when using the referral criteria

Do **immediate members of the family** understand the child?				
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5	4	3	2	1
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Do **familiar staff in setting/school** understand the child?				
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5	4	3	2	1
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Do **strangers/unfamiliar people** understand the child?				
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5	4	3	2	1
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

This scale is based on the Intelligibility in Context Scale (ICS) (McLeod, Harrison & McCormack, 2012)