**Information for Parents/Carers – Speech and Language Therapy in Specialist Schools and Integrated Resources**

From September 2023, children and young people will access the Speech and Language Therapy Service through episodes of care. This means they will be open to us when they need specific support, but closed during times when their needs can be met by the support in place in school and at home.

This document explains how the Speech and Language Therapy service will work with your child or young person throughout their time at school. We work closely with schools and parents/carers to give you the skills to help your child or young person’s communication across all parts of their life.

**Levels of support**

Sheffield Speech and Language Therapy Service provides support at three levels:



Marie Gascoigne’s © The Balanced System framework (<https://pathway.thebalancedsystem.org/>)

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| **Universal** | Most children and young people who go to specialist schools and integrated resources have speech, language and communication differences or difficulties. These needs may change over time and may impact on them in different ways. All children and young people in specialist settings benefit from strategies and support. We work with school to develop the skills of staff so that they can support children and young people’s communication in the classroom. We also signpost staff to training they can access that will help them learn to use communication and eating/drinking strategies throughout the school day.Most specialist settings are able to provide this ‘universal’ level of support, without children and young people needing to be referred to Speech and Language Therapy. Language and communication is at the centre of the curriculum in specialist provision and staff have experience of working with children and young people with a range of diagnoses affecting communication.The Sheffield SaLT service have created a vast library of resources and training, which can be accessed for free by following the links below. |
| **Targeted** | Some children and young people in specialist settings benefit from ‘targeted’ speech and language therapy support. These children and young people will be referred to our service for assessment, advice and intervention, delivered by a:* Speech and Language Therapist
* Speech and Language Therapy Assistant
* Supervised Speech and Language Therapy student
* Trained member of school staff

The interventions might be one-to-one, in a small group or incorporated into everyday strategies at home or school. For many children and young people and their families, this level will provide enough support. |
| **Specialist** | A small number of children and young people in specialist settings may need more intensive ‘specialist’ therapy at certain times. The therapist will work with the school, assistants, families and members of the multi-disciplinary team to support their communication and eating/drinking/swallowing needs. Specialist level may not be needed all of the time and may be helpful at certain points on a child or young person or young person’s journey. |

Descriptions taken from the Better Communication website © The Balanced System- https://pathway.thebalancedsystem.org/professionals/professionals-framework

**Reasons for referral**

* The Speech and Language Therapist has recommended a referral back to the service.
* Your child or young person is showing any of the red flags from the attached ‘meal and snack time red flags’ document.
* Your child or young person needs an updated communication profile or mealtime mat due to changes in their communication or eating, drinking and swallowing.
* Your child or young person has a degenerative condition and there has been a change in their communication or eating, drinking and swallowing drinking.
* Your child or young person needs help to use other ways of communicating, such as pictures, symbols or signing.
* Your child or young person needs help with their speech sounds and is motivated to engage in practise.

**Eating and drinking -** **requests for help from Speech and Language Therapy**

Children and young people with eating and drinking difficulties can be referred using the referral form on our website. The referral form should be sent to the Speech and Language Therapy central email address on the form. Referrals can be made by parents/carers or school staff / other professionals with your permission.

**Communication - requests for help from Speech and Language Therapy**

Most referrals for children and young people who need support with their communication will come through a referral meeting with school. These will happen every half-term. If you have concerns about your child or young person, the first step would be to speak to your child or young person’s class teacher. From the information provided, we identify which children and young people need to see us. For those who do not need to see us, we talk to school or parents/carers about other support they can put in place.

**What happens when a child or young person is referred to Speech and Language Therapy?**

When your child or young person is referred to our service, you can expect:

**A first appointment over the phone** – the therapist will ask questions about your child or young person’s speech, language, communication or eating/drinking and any concerns or questions you might have. We will signpost you to useful resources from our online resource library. This may be enough at this stage and it may be agreed that your child or young person does not need to access any targeted or specialist support at this time.

**Appointments in school** – If further support is needed, we will book appointments for your child or young person in school. Parents/carers are always welcome to attend appointments in school, or to meet the therapist or assistant before or after the appointment.

Children and young people will be seen for an ‘episode of care’. We will work collaboratively with your child or young person, their family, school and other key people in their life. Once support is in place, we end the episode of care and close them. Some children or young people may need another episode of care at another time. Others will not need to see us again if they are well supported by school at a universal level.

**Communication profile or mealtime mat**

At the end of an episode of care, the therapist will write either a summary letter, an updated communication profile or a mealtime mat. These can be used to update your child or young person’s Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their Communication and Health Passport.

**Helpful links**

* The Sheffield Children’s Patient Resource Library: [https://library.sheffieldchild or young personrens.nhs.uk/](https://library.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/)
* Learn Sheffield: [https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Training/Salt-Resources-and-training/](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.learnsheffield.co.uk%2FTraining%2FSalt-Resources-and-training%2F&data=05%7C01%7Csally.twigg%40nhs.net%7C1d6016db20d84503b5db08db52e535c5%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C1%7C638194916629152703%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ATJR0UhenuQumSI6%2BlYMqPE5G6HhSCy9bMgfGsfwRA8%3D&reserved=0)
* Website: [https://www.sheffieldchild or young personrens.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-new-homepage/](https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-new-homepage/)
* Communication and health passport: <https://tinyurl.com/2nezm5l7>

Speech and Language Therapy

Flockton House

18 & 20 Union Road

Sheffield

S11 9EF

Telephone: 0114 2262333

**This leaflet can be translated into different languages.** Please follow the link below:

 <http://tinyurl.com/293en243>

**MEAL AND SNACK TME RED FLAGS**

If you see any of the following, please report this to the child or young person’s class teacher straight away.

It may mean that the child or young person is having difficulty eating and/or drinking and that a mealtime checklist needs to be completed and the child or young person may need a referral to the Speech and Language Therapist.

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| Diagram  Description automatically generated | Coughing when eating |  | Diagram  Description automatically generated | Coughing when drinking |
| Circle  Description automatically generated | Eye tearing when eating |  | Circle  Description automatically generated | Eye tearing when drinking |
| Diagram  Description automatically generated | Choking when eating |  | A picture containing text, clipart  Description automatically generated | Gulping or gasping when drinking |
| A picture containing clipart  Description automatically generated | Wet breathing or wet voice after eating |  | Shape  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | Wet breathing or wet voice after drinking |
| A picture containing text, clipart  Description automatically generated | Gagging when eating |  | A person standing on a white background  Description automatically generated | Weight loss |
| A picture containing text, clipart  Description automatically generated | Throat clearing when eating |  | A person with various symbols on their back  Description automatically generated | Recurrent chest infections |
| Diagram  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | Multiple swallows for one piece of food/spoon |  | A picture containing text, clipart  Description automatically generated | A reluctance to eat and drink (not associated with a temporary illness) |
| A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Food left in a child or young person’s mouth after swallowing |  | Circle  Description automatically generated | Distress at mealtimes or when drinking |
| A picture containing text, clock  Description automatically generated | Long mealtimes and minimal food intake |  | A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Minimal fluid intake |
| Circle  Description automatically generated | Falling asleep at mealtimes |  | A picture containing text  Description automatically generated | Frequent seizures at mealtimes |