

Information for Bristol parents regarding Speech and Language Therapy's new core service offer

From 1 April 2017 the Children's Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Service will be delivering a new 'core service offer' as commissioned by Bristol and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

The emphasis of our new service is:-

- Easier and quicker initial access to a Speech and Language Therapist.
- Giving you as parents, and those who work with your child at pre-school and school, information and resources about how they can best help your child's communication.
- Practical training and demonstration for you as parents and professionals working with your child
- Specialist individual therapy for your child if they have a specific and severe communication difficulty.

We have some exciting new additions to our service including:

- Regular drop-in clinics at schools, clinics and Children's Centres.
- A weekly phone advice line.
- A rolling programme of therapy groups
- Workshops and training sessions for parents and professionals.
- A Link Speech and Language Therapist for every school.

A referral for specialist individual therapy will be made if your child has a specific and severe communication difficulty. This includes children with:

- Severe Developmental Speech and Language Disorders
- Eating and drinking difficulties.
- Children needing support with Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC).
- Stammering.

All children assessed by the service will receive a written report with recommendations and signposting to appropriate resources.

What does this mean for my child?

If your child is considered to have a specific and severe communication difficulty, as described above and as already identified by professionals, they will receive a package of specialist individual input as agreed with your Speech and Language Therapist.

If your pre-school child is not identified as having a specific and severe communication difficulty, but early years' professionals believe they require some SLT support, they will be offered an appointment to review their current needs and a report will be written with recommendations and signposting of resources to meet these needs.

If your school age child does not have a specific and severe communication difficulty, but they may require some SLT support, the School Link Speech and Language Therapist will discuss their needs with the Senco or class teacher and provide advice and resources to help meet their communication needs in school. Your child will not be routinely offered appointments to see the Speech and Language Therapist, but you can contact us via the telephone helpline, or via the drops-ins in early years and school settings. Speech and Language Therapists will be on hand, either on the phone, or at drop-in clinics, to offer advice and suggestions to help your child's communication.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), they will receive our new core service offer as described above. If there are communication needs on your child's EHCP or Statement that are not covered by the new core service offer, the school and the Local Authority will be responsible for meeting their needs. A key part of our new core service offer is to provide training for early years and school staff so they are able to meet the speech, language and communication needs of children who do not need specialist direct input from a Speech and Language Therapist.

From 1 May, the new phone advice line number, schools and early years drop in clinics and other parent information will start to be available on the main SLT page on this website:

<http://cchp.nhs.uk/cchp/explore-cchp/childrens-speech-language-therapy/childrens-slt-how-get-help>

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact our service via SLT@cchp.nhs.uk.

We recognise that this will mean a change of service for some children, but we hope to work closely with our colleagues in Education to ensure a smooth transition to our new way of working. We will be asking for feedback from parents as we move forwards, and will adapt the way we work as necessary.

Jenny Moultrie
Head of Children's Speech and Language Therapy

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