

## **Children with speech, language and communication needs**

Around 10% of all children have long term speech, language and communication needs. Many more have delayed speech, language and communication, where their skills are developing more slowly than expected.

The aim of speech and language therapy is to help your child to communicate to the best of their ability.

Children may have difficulties with the following:

**Speech sounds** – they may not be able to say the right sounds in words or they may miss out some sounds altogether, which means their speech is unclear. For example, ‘a tup of tea’

**Understanding of language** – they may struggle to listen and understand words and sentences at the level of other children their age

**Spoken language (talking)** – they may not use many words or find it difficult to put words together to make sentences. They may be muddled and disorganised when talking.

**Fluency** – they might have a stammer or a stutter. Their speech may have a lot of hesitations. They may repeat sounds, words or sentences and sometimes may struggle to get words out altogether.

**Social use of language** – they might use lots of words and can put sentences together but don’t know how to use their language to have conversations, play or make friends with others very well

### **What will happen at the first appointment?**

At the first appointment, the therapist will discuss with you:

- any concerns you may have about your child’s speech, language and communication skills.
- the reason your child has been referred.

- your child’s health and general development.

The information you give to the therapist will help to decide whether your child would benefit from therapy.

The therapist may use toys or pictures to gain more information about your child’s communication skills.

At the end of the session, the therapist will discuss with you whether speech and language therapy could help your child.

For a child who does need help, the therapist will suggest a plan.

### **How Speech and Language Therapists help you and your child**

Some children may need further assessment before the therapist can decide the best way to help your child.

Following assessment, the therapist will work in partnership with you and your child to identify and prioritise needs and agree a treatment plan.

## Treatment

The development of your child's skills and abilities are encouraged through:

- Individual sessions, where the therapist will work with you and your child
- Group sessions with a small number of other children to work on specific skills
- Sharing of information with other people working with your child
- Activity programmes with ideas/games for developing your child's skills at home and in other settings

## Advice

The therapist may also need to liaise with others, for instance, other health professionals, schools or nurseries. This will help to develop a complete approach to assessment and therapy.

Therapists may also offer advice and / or training to other professionals and carers involved with your child's daily life at home and school.

**Please note** It is department policy that if you do not attend an appointment your child will be discharged from the service.

Children with speech, language and communication needs 11325

## Comments, compliments or complaints

We welcome any suggestions you have about the quality of our care and our services.

### Contact us:

Freephone: 0800 1613997  
Phone: 01625 661449  
Textphone: 01625 663723  
Customer Care, Reception,  
Macclesfield District General  
Hospital, Victoria Road,  
SK10 3BL

For large print, audio, Braille version or translation contact Patient & Public Involvement on 0800 195 494.

NHS Direct (part of NHS Choices) is a 24 hr phone advice service providing confidential health advice and information.

Phone: **0845 4647**  
(Textphone 0845 606 46 47)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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# Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Patient Information

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Macclesfield District General  
Hospital

[www.eastcheshire.nhs.uk](http://www.eastcheshire.nhs.uk)

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