Speech and Language Therapy in Special Schools

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This leaflet tells you about our service, what you can expect from us and how you can contact us.

What sort of therapy might my child receive?

We are a team of speech and language therapists who specialise in supporting children with special needs and their families. We provide specialist support within the special schools in Gateshead. We assess and support children with speech, language, communication needs (SLCN) and swallowing difficulties.

We may support:

- Developing early communication skills such as eye contact, turn taking, attention and vocalisations
- Communication through play
- Understanding of language, e.g. meaning of words and following instructions
- Expressive communication, e.g. expanding vocabulary and developing sentences
- Using signs, symbols and photos to support language
- Speech production
- Communicating with others
- Advice on feeding and swallowing

How is my child supported by your team within special schools?

Your child will be supported in school by one of our speech and language therapists (SLT) or speech and language therapy assistants (SLTA).

The needs of each child are different and change over time. The speech and language therapist may wish to see your child often during some stages of development and less often at other times. The therapist will discuss this with you.

Therapy may include:

- Assessment of your child's speech, language and communication needs
- Periods of 1:1 therapy with a SLT or SLTA* (this is mainly for children who have difficulty saying the right sounds within words)
- Group therapy with two or more peers *
- Active classroom support* (working alongside staff and children within the classroom environment)
- Target and programme setting* (school staff are provided with clear goals for your child to develop specific SLCN skills)
- Environmental strategies* (school staff are provided with general advice in order to support specific communication needs that have been identified, e.g. using Makaton signs).

*More information can be provided on these approaches should you wish.

Following assessment, we will discuss with you the best therapy approach in order to achieve the communication outcomes identified for your child. At times we work with other professions including occupational therapy, nursing and physiotherapy.

We are in regular contact with your child and class staff to ensure the service they are receiving is appropriate. We welcome input from parents to review this also.

If your child's current needs are being met, we will contact you to discuss the possibility of discharging your child from our caseload. We will always ensure we agree this with you. We are happy to accept further referrals if your child's needs change.

How will I know what Speech and Language Therapy my child is receiving?

We will contact you at the start of the school academic year to find out more about your child's communication needs and discuss an appropriate therapy model for your child. We will also contact you when we begin to support your child in school. After each therapy session, we will provide you with brief written feedback on a 'therapy summary sheet' which we will send home with your child. The class teacher will also get a copy of this document. We will keep in regular contact with you.

Please contact us on the number given in this document if you are unsure of anything, or would like some further information. We are always happy to discuss your child's progress or arrange a home visit.

Contact Details

Dunston Health Centre,
Dunston Bank,
Gateshead,
NE11 9PY
Tel: 0191 497 1500

Data Protection

In order to assist us improve the services available your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews. Further information is available in the leaflet Disclosure of Confidential Information IL137, via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or the PALS Service.

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request