

Further information and support

Information on what to expect and how to prepare for the first appointment will be sent out with the appointment letter. In the meantime, you may find it helpful to access the following information and support:

NHS Choices – NHS services information www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust – Dorset Paediatric Speech and Language Service www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/WS-Dorset-HealthCare/Pages/services/children-and-families/speech-and-language-therapy.htm

Afasic – Voice for Life - support and advice for parents, how to help your child at home www.afasic.org.uk/

I-Can – help and advice for parents www.ican.org.uk

Talking Point – further reading and support materials, free activities www.talkingpoint.org.uk/

The British Stammering Association – help, information and support for children who stammer www.stammering.org

The Communications Trust – resources for parents www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists – further reading www.rcslt.org

The information in this leaflet is available in additional languages and alternative formats. Please contact the Trust for further details.

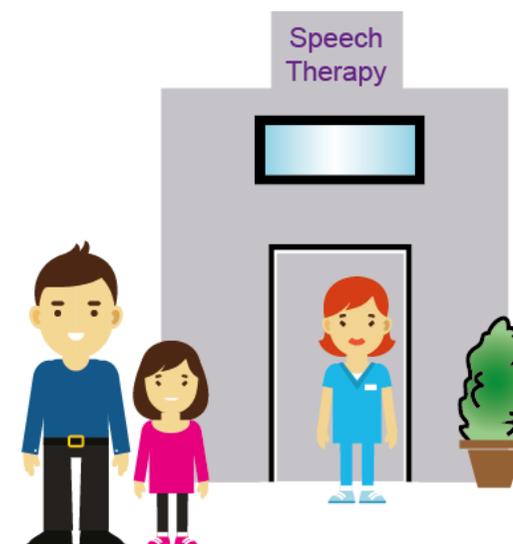
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NHS

**Dorset HealthCare
University**
NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to the Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service



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**Information for patients,
relatives and carers**

**Excellence
Compassion
Expertise**

What is a Speech and Language Therapist?

Speech and Language Therapists are qualified professionals with specific expertise in the study, assessment and treatment of problems with speech, language and communication. They also treat difficulties with swallowing. They support children and their families to reduce the impact of these problems on the child's wellbeing and their ability to achieve their full potential.

What kind of Speech and Language problems do children have?

Children may have problems in one or more of the following areas:

- Speaking clearly
- Understanding what others are saying to them
- Using words in sentences
- Stammering
- Husky voices
- Understanding and using the rules of talking (e.g. taking turns)

What causes Speech and Language difficulties?

Sometimes, it can be due to underlying factors such as hearing loss, attention and listening difficulties, cleft palate or Down Syndrome BUT in most cases we can't pinpoint any particular cause any more than we can explain why some children learn to walk early and easily, and others take longer and need more practice.

“The SALT team provided a speedy, efficient, caring and compassionate service at a very difficult time for our little boy's development. They reassured us thoroughly and gave excellent advice for future management.”



Who do Speech and Language Therapists work with and where?

Speech and Language Therapists work in close partnership with the child and their family, education, other healthcare professionals and the voluntary sector meeting children's needs. Involving other professionals and families is vital to ensure comprehensive support is provided to encourage children to reach their full potential. Speech and Language Therapists work in a variety of settings such as nurseries, schools, clinics and other locations in the community.

What can I expect from the Speech and Language Therapy Service?



Following acceptance of a referral by the service, the next step is information gathering and assessment to identify your child's specific areas of speech, language and communication difficulty. This is mainly achieved at the first appointment with a Speech and Language Therapist.

The appointment may be a telephone consultation or participation in a group session or an individual appointment at the most appropriate setting. The outcome of the initial assessment and strategies to support your child will be discussed with you and followed up in a written report.

Appointments are held between 08.30am to 4.30pm Monday–Friday.

The first assessment appointment may take up to an hour, telephone consultations are usually 20–30 minutes. Your appointment letter will provide you with full details.

The decision whether to offer further support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service is based on the outcome of the assessment, the impact of the difficulty on the child's life and the likelihood of effecting change at this time. Further support may take the form of a review appointment, invitation to group therapy sessions, or in some cases one to one therapy in the most appropriate setting.

“Great service, so helpful”

“...really good at putting my daughter at ease and explaining everything to us”

