

Ending an episode of care

It is difficult to say how long your child will require support from our service with their speech and language. An episode of care is usually ended once the impact of their speech and language skills on learning and social-emotional wellbeing is effectively managed through the techniques and strategies put in place to ensure they are able to fulfil their potential at that time. This decision is made jointly by all involved. You can also decide to stop therapy at any time or the therapy can be postponed if it is felt that it is of no benefit to your child at that time.

Re-referral to Speech and Language

Once an episode of care has ended, your child will be discharged back to the care of the most appropriate health or education professional. This will usually be the person who made the initial referral. If things change and your child was to require further specialist support in the future, a re-referral to the service may be requested by asking your GP, paediatrician or other health or education professional.

Failure to attend / cancellation policy

We understand that there are times when you must miss an appointment due to emergencies or obligations to work or family. However, when you do not call in advance of an appointment to cancel, you may be preventing another patient from receiving support from a therapist. Therefore we ask that you let us know as soon as possible by telephoning the number at the top of your appointment letter if you are unable to attend so we can offer the valuable appointment time to someone else.

Failure to attend two assessment appointments or two appointments during a block of therapy may result in your child's episode of care being closed. Cancellation of two assessment appointments or two appointments during a block of therapy may also result in your child's episode of care being closed. Exceptional circumstances may be taken into account if known.

We recognise that you may be apprehensive about your child's appointment but please be assured our therapists are highly trained and experienced in working with children of all ages. They will work with you and your child to help support your child's language difficulties.

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Leaflet ref: PED-SS-PSALT3-17

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Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service

Assessment Appointment Guidance



Information for patients, relatives and carers

**Excellence
Compassion
Expertise**

What to expect at your child's first appointment for assessment

Your child's first appointment will provide an opportunity for you to talk about your concerns with the Speech and Language Therapist and discuss your child's early development. The therapist will also spend some time with your child to find out more about their speech and language skills using age appropriate methods, such as playing with toys and games and assessments to gauge whether their speech and language is within the typical range for their age. If the first assessment is a telephone consultation, contact with your child may take place at a later date.

How to prepare for your child's first appointment for assessment

To allow the Therapist to complete a thorough assessment of your child's speech and language skills, there are a number of things you can do to prepare, including:

- Watch and listen to how your child is communicating and make a note of any words or errors they use.
- Think about your child's developmental milestones, such as when they first started walking and talking as well as their early language development, such as their first words. It would be useful for the therapist to know if your child speaks or hears different languages at home.
- Bring your child's 'Red Book' along to the appointment and any reports from other professionals that have seen your child or have the information to hand for the telephone consultation.



To help you with the above we have enclosed a case history form, which includes the type of information the therapist will find helpful as part of their assessment. You may find it easier to think about the answers in advance and bring a completed copy with you to the appointment or have it to hand for the telephone consultation.

What happens next?

The Speech and Language Therapist will discuss the results of the assessments with you and provide initial advice. This will be followed up by a written report which will be sent to you and the referrer within 15 working days. It may benefit your child to share this information with other professionals involved with your child. Should this be the case, the therapist will discuss this with you first.

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 your child's life and the likelihood of effecting change at that time. The Speech and Language Therapist will therefore normally recommend one of the following:

- That by following the advice given by the therapist, difficulties are expected to improve or resolve in time. Therefore, ongoing specialist support is not indicated or appropriate and your child's episode of care with the service will be closed.
- That a personalised programme of support from others would be beneficial. In this case written recommendations will be made by the therapist and a package of practical activities will be provided for you to use at home. Your child's pre-school or school may also be sent some activities to complete with your child. At this point, your child's episode of care with the Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service will be closed.
- That a personalised programme of support as detailed above and a further package of support would be beneficial. This may take the form of a review appointment to monitor progress, invitation to group therapy sessions, or in some cases one to one therapy in the most appropriate setting with a Speech and Language Therapist or Assistant. Review appointments may take place by telephone or at a school, hospital or community clinic location.



“ Great summary review to parents and suggestions to support at home ”

“ I felt very comfortable and felt the assessment on my son was very well done ”