

SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS

UNIT 12

PUPILS WITH SLCN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Teachers will:

- Know the research evidence on outcomes for primary school pupils with SLCN
- Understand issues around transfer from primary to secondary school for pupils with SLCN
- Know effective strategies for developing pupils' speech, language and communication skills in primary school.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The content and tasks throughout these PDFs are supported by online resources that are designed to facilitate and supplement your training experience.

Links to these are signposted where appropriate. The resources use graphics and interactive elements to:

- Highlight salient points
- Provide at-a-glance content summaries
- Introduce further points of interest
- Offer visual context
- Break down and clearly present the different stages and elements of processes, tasks, practices, and theories

The online resources offer great benefits, both for concurrent use alongside the PDFs, or as post-reading revision and planning aids.

Please note that the resources cannot be used in isolation without referencing the PDFs. Their purpose is to complement and support your training process, rather than lead it.

You should complete any learning or teaching tasks and additional reading detailed in this PDF to make full use of the Advanced training materials for autism; dyslexia; speech, language and communication; emotional, social and behavioural difficulties; moderate learning difficulties.

To find out more about the resources, how they work, and how they can enhance your training, visit the homepage at: www.education.gov.uk/lamb

The first resource for this unit can be found here:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/intro

BRIEFING 1 - IMPLICATIONS AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH SLCN

In primary schools, SLCN pupils represent the most prevalent type of SEN among pupils with statements of SEN (almost 23 per cent).

Most adults working in primary schools will come into direct contact with pupils who have communication difficulties every day and the prevalence rates mean that, on average, every primary school classroom will have two or three pupils who have some form of SLCN and, in some parts of the country, pupils with language delay can be as many as one in three.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/prevalence-data

Effective language skills are essential for pupils to access the primary curriculum. In the primary classroom, spoken language is the main medium through which teachers teach and pupils learn.

It is expected that when a child starts primary school, they will be able to understand much of what is said, express themselves clearly, share their feelings and make their needs known. This level of proficiency in speech, language and communication is critical to the development of a child's cognitive, social and emotional well-being^{1 2}.

Primary school pupils with SLCN may have difficulties with one or more of the following areas:

- ***Understanding and formulating spoken language***

Some pupils may not be able to understand the words being spoken to them and/or the grammatical rules of sentence construction. So, when a teacher tells the class what they need to do, or explains a new idea or concept, pupils with SLCN may struggle to understand what is being said. Having an appropriate vocabulary is essential for the learning process; yet learning vocabulary has been identified as one of the most significant difficulties for some children with SLCN^{3 4}

making much teacher talk inaccessible. There is a whole range of phrases which will be new to pupils starting school, which can be very difficult and confusing for some pupils with SLCN to understand, e.g. 'fold your arms', 'line up' and 'break time', which can all be interpreted literally.

Recent government initiatives have recognised the importance of language for thinking and have encouraged paired talk and discussion among pupils as a way

¹ Rose, J. (2006) Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading DfES

² Chatter Matters DVD I CAN 2007 www.ican.org.uk

³ Haynes, C. (1992) Vocabulary Deficit: one problem or many? *Child Language Therapy and Teaching* 8 1-15

⁴ Bishop, D.V.M. (1997) *Uncommon Understanding* Hove: Psychology Press

to enhance learning⁵. However, this can be extremely difficult for pupils with SLCN, so they may miss vital learning opportunities.

Pupils with SLCN may struggle with developing an age-appropriate vocabulary, formulating sentences, using the right words in the right order and with following grammatical rules to express themselves clearly to others or to ask questions.

In addition, pupils may have difficulties in processing language. They may struggle to remember information given verbally, making it difficult for them to follow more than one instruction at a time⁶.

For many children with SLCN, their language skills are not proficient enough to be used as a learning tool and so they can fail before the task has even begun. This can be incredibly frustrating and have a serious impact on how they see themselves and how they are seen by their peers⁷.

- **Processing and producing speech sounds**

Pupils with SLCN may not be able to process the speech sounds that make up words effectively. This means they cannot identify which sounds come at the beginning of words or break up words into their component parts⁸. These skills are essential for learning to read and to spell; therefore pupils who struggle with processing speech sounds are at risk of literacy difficulties^{9 10}. The specific links between language and literacy are well documented in research literature¹¹ and the Rose Report highlights the importance of language not only for accessing literacy but across the whole of the curriculum and the child's development.

The development of speaking and listening skills requires fuller and more intensive attention to make sure that children acquire a good stock of words, learn to listen attentively, and speak clearly and confidently. ...they are prime communication skills, hugely important in their own right and central to children's intellectual, social and emotional development¹².

An inability to produce speech sounds appropriately can also have a significant impact on a child's ability to make themselves understood¹³, leading to difficulties in contributing to classroom discussions, making their needs known, sharing

⁵ DfES (2003) Primary National Strategy: speaking, listening, learning

⁶ Nation, K., Adams, J.W., Bowyer-Crane, C.A. and Snowling, M.J. (1999) Working Memory Deficits in Poor Comprehenders Reflect Underlying Language Impairments *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 73(2): 139-158

⁷ Jerome, A.C., Fujiki, M., Brinton, B. and James, S.L. (2002) Self-Esteem in Children with Specific Language Impairment *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research* 45, 4, p700-14

⁸ Carroll, J.M. and Snowling, M.J. Language and Phonological Skills in Children at High Risk of Reading Difficulties *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines* Volume 45, Number 3, March 2004, pp. 631-640(10)

⁹ Stackhouse, J. and Wells, B. (1997) *Children's Speech and Literacy Difficulties* London, Whurr

¹⁰ Goswami, U. and Bryant, P. (2007) *Children's Cognitive Development and Learning (Primary Review Research Survey 2/1a)* Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

¹¹ Snowling, M. and Stackhouse, J. (Eds) (2006) *Dyslexia, Speech and Language: A Practitioners Handbook – Dyslexia Series* Whurr

¹² Rose, J. (2006) *Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading* DfES

¹³ Yont, K.M., Hewitt, L.E. and Miccio, A.W. (2002) "What Did You Say?": understanding conversational breakdowns in children with speech and language impairments *Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics* Volume 16, Number 4, 1 June 2002, pp. 265-285 (21)

information about themselves, answering questions and joining in with conversations with peers.

- ***Using and understanding all aspects of language appropriately in different social contexts***

The ability to understand and use language in a social context can cause significant problems with social interaction. Pupils with SLCN may have difficulty knowing when and how to use their language in different social situations¹⁴, or with different people. They may not understand jokes or sarcasm and may struggle with figurative language¹⁵. This may result in adults and other pupils misunderstanding reactions, which can seem perverse, pedantic or unsympathetic¹⁶. Talk and social interaction among children play a key role in children's social development and learning¹⁷ and it has been found that improving pragmatic language skills can help prevent problems in later educational performance¹⁸.

In addition to using language socially, using language effectively for a range of academic purposes functions, e.g. to infer, debate, reason and predict or to clarify a message to others, can be problematic for many children with SLCN. Verbal reasoning is at the foundation of many elements of education and difficulties with using language to reason, to investigate and problem solve or to infer meaning has a significant impact on school work¹⁹.

SLCN can have a profound and lasting effect on children's lives. Longitudinal Studies of children with SLCN have shown that those whose language difficulties are unresolved by the time they start school are more likely to have later academic²⁰, social²¹ and emotional difficulties²² associated with their language difficulty.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/impact

¹⁴ Bishop, D.V.M., Chan, J., Adams C., Hartley, J. and Weir, F. (2000) Conversational Responsiveness in Specific Language Impairment: evidence of disproportionate pragmatic difficulties in a subset of children Development and Psychopathology 12, 177–99

¹⁵ Leinonen, E. and Letts, C. 1997 Why Pragmatic Impairment? A Case Study in the Comprehension of Inferential Meaning European Journal of Disorders of Communication 32, 35–52

¹⁶ Bishop, D.V. and Chan, J. et al. (2000) Conversational Responsiveness in Specific Language Impairment: evidence of disproportionate pragmatic difficulties in a subset of children Developmental Psychopathology 12(2): 177-99

¹⁷ Howe, C. and Mercer, N. (2007) Children's Social Development, Peer Interaction and Classroom Learning (Primary Review Research Survey 2/1b) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

¹⁸ Anderson-Wood, L. and Smith, B.R. (1997) Working with Pragmatics Winslow Press

¹⁹ Bishop, D.V. and Adams, C. (1992) Comprehension Problems in Children with Specific Language Impairment: literal and inferential meaning Journal of Speech and Hearing Research 35(1):119-29

²⁰ Snowling, M.J., Adams, J.W., Bishop, D.V.M., and Stothard, S.E. (2001) Educational Attainments of School Leavers with a Pre-School History of Speech-Language Impairments IJLCD 36

²¹ Botting, N. and Conti-Ramsden, G. (2000) Social and Behavioural Difficulties in Children with Language Impairment CLTT 16

²² Silva, P., Williams, S. and McGee, R. (1987) A Longitudinal Study of Children with Development Language Delay at Age 3 Years: later intellectual, reading and behaviour problems Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology 29, 630-640

- **Impact on learning**

The impact of SLCN in primary school can seriously affect the outcome of children's learning. It is often a daily challenge for pupils with SLCN to make their thoughts and needs known and to make themselves understood. Just listening to the amount of language in school can be an overwhelming task in itself.

Spoken language pervades the primary school environment and is the vehicle for most learning. On arrival at school there is an expectation for pupils to listen to language from adults and peers, understand what is being said to them and respond with well structured, clear and appropriate sentences. Pupils need to have proficient language skills in order to use their language to learn. Language is also used by teachers to manage their classrooms, determine rules and routines and ensure children are aware of their expectations.

For pupils with SLCN at primary school the demands and pace of literacy teaching, for example, have led to concerns about opportunities for differentiation²³. Observations in primary classrooms carried out as part of the Cambridge University Primary Review, suggest that pupils seldom have the opportunity to engage in productive social interaction and that group or pair-based activity needs more careful organisation in order to best achieve productive interaction and learning²⁴. Similarly, it has been suggested that the move towards reading and writing as key performance indicators, accompanied by increasingly complex and challenging language expectations have their greatest impact on pupils with SLCN.

- **Impact on literacy**

Well-developed language and subsequent literacy skills are crucial factors in ensuring access to the curriculum, later academic success, positive self-esteem and improved life chances. There is research evidence that highlights a clear link between spoken language and speech difficulties with subsequent literacy difficulties^{25 26}. All pupils with a SLCN are at risk of having difficulty with some aspect of learning to read and write^{27 28 29}. Difficulties may be compounded if children are exposed to teaching of reading and written language before their spoken language skills are developed enough to access this teaching³⁰. The

²³ Eke, R. and Lee, J. Pace and Differentiation in the Literacy Hour: some outcomes of an analysis of transcripts
The Curriculum Journal Vol. 15, No. 3, Autumn 2004

²⁴ Howe, C. and Mercer, N. (2007) Children's Social Development, Peer Interaction and Classroom Learning
(Primary Review Research Survey 2/1b) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

²⁵ Dockrell, J. and Lindsay, G. Specific Speech and Language Difficulties and Literacy in T. Nunes and P. Bryant
(eds) (2003) Handbook of Children's Literacy pp 403-435 London Kluwer Academic Publishers

²⁶ Myer, L. and Botting, N. (2008) Literacy in the mainstream inner-city school: its relationship to spoken
language CLTT 24, 1pp28-114

²⁷ Stackhouse, J. and Well, B. (1997) Children's Speech and Literacy Difficulties: A psycholinguistic framework
Whurr

²⁸ Dockrell, J., Lindsay, G., Mackie, C. and Connolly, V. (2007) Constraints in the Production of Written Text in
Children with Specific Language Impairments Exceptional Children 73, 147-164

²⁹ Mackie, C. and Dockrell, J.E. The Writing Skills of Children with SLI Journal of Speech Language and Hearing
Research 47

³⁰ Locke, E., Ginsborg, J. and Peers, I. (2002) Development and Disadvantage: implications for early years
IJLCD Vol 27 No1

Rose Report has highlighted the link between language and literacy, not only for the development of phonic skills, but for the development of reading comprehension³¹, which is the foundation of understanding for many areas of the curriculum. Without the ability to understand and produce written language, much of the curriculum is inaccessible, as is the ability to record achievements and their learning.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/key-skills

- ***Social development***

Friendships are extremely important for children in primary school. The ability to socialise with peers, negotiate disagreements and be part of a friendship group is paramount. For children with SLCN, making and maintaining friendships can be a real challenge. It becomes particularly difficult as children progress through primary school, when an increased understanding of reciprocity and awareness of motives, thoughts and feelings of others becomes important³². Many pupils with SLCN show withdrawn social interaction styles, which means they are less likely to initiate conversation, they play alone more and are less liked by others in their class³³. Other pupils display significant behaviour difficulties which, equally, can alienate their peers. Pupils with SLCN perceive they are at risk of being the target of bullying behaviour at school³⁴.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/social-emotional

- ***Emotional development and behaviour***

SLCN can have a devastating effect on interpersonal relationships, within the family, with peers and in the long term. Language and emotional development occur together in children and affect each other powerfully³⁵. This shared development is evident with very young children as they learn about different emotions through play. In the early stages of primary school, children learn to share their feelings in words, consider the effects of their actions, reflect on and plan what they feel, do and say. All of this requires an appreciation of the emotions and thoughts of other people, and the language to put this into words. There are opportunities in school and in the playground to play and interact through language, which allows children to develop skills in managing their emotions and behaviour appropriately. With developed language skills, pupils can negotiate their roles in play situations, organise activities, clarify their thoughts to others and make it clear when they are unhappy with a situation. For older

³¹ Rose, J. (2005) Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading: Interim Report

³² Attwood, T. The Development of Friendship Skills www.tonyattwood.com

³³ Coster, F.W., Goorhuis-Brouwer, S.M., Nakken, H. and Lutje Spelberg, H.C. (1999) Specific Language Impairments and Behavioural Problems *Folia Phoniatria et Logopaedica* 51:99-107

³⁴ Conti-Ramsden, G. and Botting, N. (2004) Social Difficulties and Victimization in Children with SLI at 11 Years of Age *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research* Vol 47

³⁵ Cross, M. (2004) *Children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Problems: there is always a reason* Jessica Kingsley Press

primary school pupils, these skills are necessary for team games and group activities within the classroom. Pupils with SLCN often do not have these skills and abilities, resulting at times in frustration and behaviour that is seen as poor, in reaction to situations that could be resolved easily through language³⁶. In some cases, however, pupils' unacceptable behaviour is seen as the difficulty and the underlying language difficulties can seem less important or can be missed completely.

There is increasing evidence for a link between SLCN and emotional and behavioural problems³⁷. Several longitudinal studies have found that children with an early diagnosis of language or communication difficulties are more likely to have behavioural difficulties than their peers^{38 39} and that these problems can increase with age⁴⁰. In addition, studies investigating pupils with identified behaviour difficulties found that three-quarters of them had significant language deficits⁴¹.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/besd-data

- **Self-esteem**

Feeling self confident is vitally important for primary school pupils. However, there is evidence that older primary-aged pupils with SLCN perceive themselves more negatively in terms of their academic competence, social acceptance and behaviour than pupils with typical language development⁴². This low self-esteem is not so apparent in younger pupils⁴³.

Video related task

Watch the video clip “A structured approach to teaching language”.

The practitioner talks of quality first teaching. Make notes on what in the clip illustrates this.

See this clip: www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/structured-approach-video

³⁶ Greenberg, M.T., Kusche, C.A., Cook, E.T. and Quamma, J.P. (1995) Promoting Emotional Competence in School-aged Children: the effects of the PATHS Curriculum Development and Psychopathology 7, 117–136

³⁷ Lindsay, G. and Dockrell, J. 2000 The Behaviour and Self-esteem of Children with Specific Speech and Language Difficulties British Journal of Educational Psychology 7, 4

³⁸ Willinger, U. et al (2003) Behaviour in Children with Language Developmental Disorders Canadian Journal of Psychiatry Vol 48, 9, 607-614

³⁹ Botting, et al (2000) Social and Behavioural Difficulties in Children with Language Impairment Child Language Teaching and Therapy 16, 2

⁴⁰ Ripley, K. and Yuill, N. 2005 Patterns of Language Impairment and Behaviour in Boys Excluded from School March, 75

⁴¹ Benner, J., Nelson, J., Ron, Epstein, M. (2002) Summary of Language Skills of Children with EBD: a literature review Journal of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders 2002

⁴² Jerome, A.C., Fujiki, M., Brinton, B. and James, S. 2002 Self-esteem in Children with Specific Language Impairment Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research 45,4

⁴³ Lindsay, G. and Dockrell, J. 2000 The Behaviour and Self-esteem of Children with Specific Speech and Language Difficulties British Journal of Educational Psychology 7, 4

Now think of any children in your school who would need additional interventions. Why might they need these? Who would you need to involve in ensuring these children get appropriate interventions?

Observe a colleague's lesson and note anything that builds on the Every Child a Speaker strategies. Feed back to your colleague. What other strategies are in place in your school to develop language?

BRIEFING 2 – TRANSFER FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Times of transition, between educational phases, key stages and even between classes needs careful planning and a collaborative approach to ensure information is available and all concerned understand the implications of SLCN on individual pupils.

The move from primary to secondary school means different vocabulary, subjects, curriculum, teachers, teaching style and organisation. This can be challenging for all pupils. Shifting from one teacher style to the next, understanding technical terminology, making links between different subject areas and managing less structured social 'free' time are all dependent on pupils having effective, flexible language and communication skills⁴⁴.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/transition

For young people with SLCN, secondary school can be particularly demanding. Pupils identify secondary school as being more difficult than their subsequent college experience⁴⁵. Parents of pupils with SLCN express concern about the academic focus in secondary schools⁴⁶ as well as quality of life issues such as friendships, social skills and choice⁴⁷. Despite a growing number of packages that prepare pupils for the transition between primary and secondary school, there is evidence that continued support and resources are needed.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Afasic (2009) Including young people with speech, language and communication difficulties in secondary school www.afasic.org.uk

⁴⁵ Palikara, O, Lindsay, G and Dockrell, J (2009) Voices of young people with a history of specific language impairment (SLI) in the first year of post-16 education: IJLCD

⁴⁶ Conti-Ramsden, G, Durkin, K, Simkin, Z and Knox, E (2009) Specific language impairment and school outcomes II: Educational content, student satisfaction, and post compulsory progress: IJLCD Vol 44 (1)

⁴⁷ Markham, C and Dean, T (2006) Parents' and professionals' perceptions of quality of life in children with speech and language difficulty: IJLCD 41

⁴⁸ Roulestone, S and Ayre, A (2009) Identifying the scope and format of resources to support the transition of pupils with SLCN to secondary school. The Communication Trust

BRIEFING 3 – EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING PUPILS’ SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

There is evidence that the following are important in developing the speech, language and communication skills of primary-aged pupils:

- **Collaborative working**

Speech, language and communication do not develop in a vacuum. Development occurs within the context of family, education, community and interpersonal interaction. It is important, therefore that pupils with SLCN are supported in family, school and community contexts. Where speech and language therapy provision is in place, it needs to consider the functional impact of pupils’ SLCN and work to support not only their underlying impairment, but also their ability to participate in school, at home and in the community. To support pupils effectively, therefore, it is important that speech and language therapists work within appropriate multi-agency teams and that parents are involved fully in provision⁴⁹. Collaboration by practitioners and parents is seen as being fundamental for effective management of pupils with SLCN⁵⁰.

*The value of multi-disciplinary assessment, that includes observation in the classroom AND playground, can’t be understated. It is so vitally important to get a whole picture.*⁵¹

However, there is evidence of a lack of shared understanding between education, health, schools and parents, which can have a negative impact on meeting the pupils’ needs^{52 53}.

For collaboration to work to best support the communication development of children with SLCN:

- Pupils need to have their needs understood, to be consulted and involved in decisions concerning them and to have an advocate within their learning environment⁵⁴
- Teachers need to feel supported in developing the necessary knowledge and skills to work with pupils with SLCN⁵⁵
- Parents need to feel the needs of their child are being understood and provided for⁵⁶, and

⁴⁹ Gascoigne, M. (2006) Supporting Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs within Integrated Children’s Services RCSLT Position Paper London

⁵⁰ Wright, J.A. (1992) Collaboration between Teachers and Speech Therapists with Language Impaired Children in Fletcher P. and Hall D. (Eds) (1992) Specific Speech and Language Disorders in Children Whurr Publishers

⁵¹ Johnson, S. (Parent) www.ican.org.uk/TalkingPoint/Themes/Assessment

⁵² Lindsay, G. and Dockrell, J. (2002) Meeting the Needs of Children with Speech and Communication Needs: a critical perspective on inclusion and collaboration Child Language Teaching and Therapy 18, (2), 92-101

⁵³ Barron, I., Holmes, R., MacLure, M. and Runswick-Cole, K. (2007) Primary Schools and Other Agencies (Primary Review Research Survey 8/2) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

⁵⁴ Tierney, P. (2005) The peer relationships of children with specific speech and language impairment MSC dissertation, Sheffield University Library

⁵⁵ Dockrell, J.E. and Lindsay, G. (2001) Children with Specific Speech and Language Difficulties: the teachers’ perspectives Oxford Review of Education 27, 369–394

- SALTs need to understand the school community, curricular demands and family context.

Evidence identifies that collaboration is most effective and pupils with SLCN make most progress when the following elements are in place⁵⁷:

- Parents are informed and involved
- Professionals involved have a clear understanding of each other's roles
- Therapists take account of educational context
- Teachers understand the importance of language to the whole curriculum
- Schools support therapists' involvement, and
- Systems within the schools reflect and support the collaboration⁵⁸.

However, collaboration at practice level is not enough. All evidence suggests that collaboration should take place at all levels from strategic planning at service level, through to practitioner level⁵⁹.

- **Workforce development**

Effective intervention means ensuring people who are working with pupils feel equipped to do so. Providing training so that the workforce is able to identify children with SLCN and work with colleagues and relevant professionals to meet pupils' needs of all children is essential. Studies have shown that although teachers are often aware of the importance of communication and concerned about levels of children's language, many express their anxiety and lack of knowledge in being able to support them. A recent investigation into levels of teacher knowledge about SLCN and development showed that over 60 per cent lacked confidence in their ability to meet pupils' needs⁶⁰. Teachers have reported a lack of confidence both in assessing the spoken language of their pupils and in implementing strategies to support the development of communication skills, particularly when pupils have difficulties⁶¹.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slc/primary/teacher-confidence

Concern has also been expressed over the growing number of teaching assistants (TA) working with pupils with SEN, without a similar increase in

⁵⁶ Dockrell, J.E. and Lindsay, G. (2004) Whose Job Is It? Parents' Concerns about the Needs of their Children with Language Problems *Journal of Special Education* Vol. 37, 2004

⁵⁷ 3 Law, J. et al (2001) Provision for Children with Speech and Language Needs in England and Wales: facilitating communication between education and health services DfEE

⁵⁸ Roulstone, S., Owen, R. and French, L. (2005) Speech and Language Therapy and the Knowles Edge Standards Fund Project: An Evaluation of the Service Provided to a Cluster of Primary Schools *British Journal of Special Education* v32 n2 p78-85 June 2005 Pages 8

⁵⁹ Law, J. et al (2000) Provision for Children with Speech and Language Needs in England and Wales: facilitating communication between education and health services DfEE

⁶⁰ Sadler, J. (2005) Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs of the Mainstream Teachers of Children with a Pre-school Diagnosis of Speech/Language Impairment *Child Language Teaching and Therapy* Volume 21, 2

⁶¹ Select Committee on Education and Skills Third Report 200

expertise⁶². There is evidence that training support staff and teachers in aspects of speech, language and communication can result in improved adult skill and enhanced pupil outcomes.⁶³ Training where different professionals learn together has been identified as the most effective for changing teacher behaviours and has the greatest impact on learners⁶⁴.

- **Communication supportive environments**

General good practice strategies to support pupils with SLCN in 'communication supportive' environments may include:

- An audit of the environment^{65 66 67*}
- Knowledge of language development, language levels of pupils and the language demands in the environment⁶⁸
- Adapting adult language so it is not a barrier to learning or communication
- Facilitating opportunities for children to interact and use language in different situations, with different people at an appropriate level^{69 70 71}
- Creating an ethos where it is acceptable not to know and teaching children how to monitor their own understanding.⁷² Research suggests that raising children's awareness of how to interact productively leads to more inclusive activity and to individual learning gains⁷³
- Raising pupils' awareness of their strengths and needs^{74 75} is an important principle for children with SLCN
- Ensuring pupils can participate and be involved in decision making concerning them, and
- Careful planning and information sharing between staff at times of transition.

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/slcn/primary/environment

*Audit of school practice and ways of creating a communication friendly environment are discussed in a separate unit.

⁶² Inclusion: does it matter where pupils are taught? (2006) Ofsted

⁶³ 6 Gardner, H. (2006) Training Others in the Art of Therapy for Speech Sound Disorders: An Interactional Approach Child Language Teaching and Therapy 22; 1

⁶⁴ Cordingley, P. (2003) The impact of collaborative CPD on classroom teaching and learning

⁶⁵ www.ican.org Link given is broken.

⁶⁶ www.can.org Link given is broken.

⁶⁷ Primary National Strategy; Speaking, Listening, Learning: working with children who have special educational needs

⁶⁸ Martin, D. and Miller, C. (1999) Language and the Curriculum David Fulton Publishers

⁶⁹ www.inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/charter.htm

⁷⁰ Primary National Strategy; Speaking, Listening, Learning: working with children who have special educational needs

⁷¹ 9 Howe, C. and Mercer, N. (2007) Children's Social Development, Peer Interaction and Classroom Learning (Primary Review Research Survey 2/1b) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

⁷² Johnson, M. Functional Language in the Classroom (Manchester Metropolitan University)

⁷³ Howe, C. and Mercer, N. (2007) Children's Social Development, Peer Interaction and Classroom Learning (Primary Review Research Survey 2/1b) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

⁷⁴ Goswami, U. and Bryant, P. (2007) Children's Cognitive Development and Learning (Primary Review Research Survey 2/1a) Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education

⁷⁵ Jones, D. (2007) Speaking, listening, planning and assessing: the teacher's role in developing metacognitive awareness Speaking, Listening, Early Child Development and Care Volume 177, Issue 6 & 7 August 2007, pages 569–579

- **Specialist interventions**

Creating a communication supportive environment is beneficial for all pupils. However, there is a continued need for highly skilled direct interventions delivered by appropriately experienced professionals, where necessary⁷⁶.

A number of specific interventions targeting different elements of speech, language and communication with primary aged children have provided evidence of effectiveness. Examples include:

- School based interventions, which have facilitated changes in approaches used by teaching staff and in children's language^{77 78 79}
- Phonological awareness training⁸⁰, targeting the speech-processing deficit, to effect an efficient system-wide change⁸¹
- Strategies for teaching receptive vocabulary⁸², word-finding training⁸³ and grammar⁸⁴
- Developing narrative skills in children with delayed language⁸⁵, teaching story grammar knowledge⁸⁶ and boosting story comprehension⁸⁷
- Developing language repair skills^{88 89} and conversational skills
- Intervention for children with pragmatic language impairment^{90 91}

⁷⁶ Law, J., Lindsay, G., Peacey, N., Gascoigne, M., Soloff, N., Radford, J. and Band, S. (2002) Consultation as a Model for Providing Speech and Language Therapy in Schools: a panacea or one step too far? CLTT 18, 145–163.

⁷⁷ Roulstone, S., Owen, R. and French, L. (2005) Speech and Language Therapy and the Knowles Edge Standards Fund Project: An Evaluation of the Service Provided to a Cluster of Primary Schools British Journal of Special Education 2005, 32, 2, June, 78-85

⁷⁸ Wren, Y., Roulstone, S., Parkhouse, J. and Hall, B. (2001) A model for a mainstream school-based speech and language therapy service Child Language Teaching & Therapy Vol 17(2), Jun 2001. pp. 107-126

⁷⁹ Boyle, J.E. and Forbes, J.A. (2007) A randomised controlled trial and economic evaluation of direct versus indirect and individual versus group modes of speech and language therapy for children with primary language impairment Health Technology Assessment 2007 Jul; 11(25):1-158

⁸⁰ Gillon, G.T. (2000) The Efficacy of Phonological Awareness Intervention for Children with Spoken Language Impairment Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools 2000, 31, 2, Apr, 126-141

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- Teaching reading comprehension, for pupils with language difficulties⁹², and
- Developing communication skills with pupils excluded or at risk of exclusion⁹³.

Wave 2 and wave 3 interactions are discussed in more detail in different units.

TASK 1 – AUDITING STAFF SKILLS

The Communication Trust⁹⁴ emphasises the importance of developing the school workforce to develop and support communication for all pupils.

The Trust has developed the Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF), which is a competency-based framework, enabling those working with pupils to identify the skills and knowledge they have and those which they need to develop in order to support the communication of all children, including those with SLCN.

The Communication Trust has also developed *Communication Help Point*, a website to support the children’s workforce in understanding SLCN. A number of relevant resources are available to support staff in understanding speaking and listening skills, and implementing strategies within the classroom.

- [The Inclusion Development Programme \(IDP\)](#) which supports professional development in schools for children with SLCN
- I CAN’s *Primary Talk* programme, which supports systemic change within schools to support the communication skills of all pupils, pupils with delayed language to ‘catch up’ and pupils with long-term communication needs to work to their potential.

Spend some time familiarising yourself with these resources.

Staff training and development need to be part of a school’s long-term strategic planning and developing the school workforce can have significant resource implications. In partnership with the SENCO and with the agreement of the school’s senior leadership team, use the SLCF to audit the training needs of a group of school staff. Use your local knowledge and *Communication Help Point* to put together a strategy for ensuring that your school workforce has the skills it needs to meet the needs of pupils with SLCN. Make sure that your plan contains success criteria, which will help you to evaluate and review the success of the programme.

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