



SPEECH, COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE NEEDS/SPCL/SALT

PARENTS GUIDE



WHAT IS SPEECH AND LANGUAGE/SPCL/SALT (Speech and language therapy)?

A difficulty with speech production (expressive language) or understanding speech (receptive language).

Students may struggle in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication.

Learning English as a second language does not mean that there is a problem with the child's speech. If a child has a speech and language difficulty they will experience this in both their home language and when speaking English. A strong foundation in their home language will help your child learn a second language better.

IMPACT OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

Speech and language skills play a crucial role in a learner's school readiness and ability to achieve their educational potential. Evidence shows SLCN impact on literacy, educational attainment, social, emotional and mental health, life chances and employment.

The ability to communicate effectively has significant impact on social interactions and making needs known.

WAYS TO SUPPORT

- Encourage use of language and talking. Insist on them using the correct language and that they ask for things they want rather than just pointing.
- Correct when errors are made in speech (such as grammar/correct word etc) but don't make a fuss – correct and move on. Never ridicule or make fun of the effort.
- When giving instructions make sure that they are clear and chunked into small parts. Repeat instructions using exactly the same language to avoid confusion.
- Avoid long rambling sentences
- Visual prompts - use pictures to support understanding
- Use their name when giving instructions to ensure you have their attention and they are fully focussed to hear what they need to do
- Break tasks down into small parts
- Give extra time for completion of tasks and for them to understand and process the instruction
- Model good language use – repeat back using correct grammatical form
- Model written answers (if they can't say it, they can't write it). Practise saying sentences aloud before writing them down – count the words and draw lines for each word to help them remember
- Teach how to plan and structure ideas. Break down tasks into small parts – what are all the steps we need to do (i.e. what are all the parts needed to us getting dressed?)

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST ROLE

Speech and language Therapists are health professionals who assess and treat children and adults with specific speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) to help them communicate to the best of their ability. They also work with swallowing difficulties (known as dysphagia). They work closely with families and other professionals, including teachers, support staff, nurses and occupational therapists. The core role of a Speech and Language Therapist working in educational settings is to support and enable learners to reach their full communicative and educational potential, removing or reducing the barriers that their SLCN present to their learning. This may involve assessment and then creating a bespoke speech and language plan for school to follow and use targeted intervention. At Eureka we have specialist teaching assistants who ensure all these targets are regularly supported.

Typical development by age 4 and 5 years old

- Listen and follow requests without having to stop what they are doing
- Understand longer instructions
- Understand and answer questions about simple stories with no pictures
- Choose own play mates and play make believe games
- Take turns in longer conversations
- Understand words like "First", "Next" in a sentence
- Understand words such as "above", "below", "between" to describe the position of things
- Use long and detailed sentences (although may make some errors such as using goed for went)
- Talk about things that have already happened or will happen in the future
- Talk about things they imagine or making up words using words like "I think"
- Say most words clearly when they are talking - people who don't know them can understand them all the time. They may still struggle with sounds like th, str or r and make little mistakes like saying "wabbit" for rabbit or "Bow" for blow or "Sketti" for spaghetti
- They talk quite smoothly. They don't repeat the first sounds in words or struggle to get words out.

OTHER RESOURCES

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/help-for-families/ages-and-stages>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/speech-and-language-difficulties>

<https://www.hacw.nhs.uk/childrens-speech-and-language-resources>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

