

The Link

ISSUE 10 2018

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A Strategic Partnership in Early Years

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By the British Stammering Association

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Editor's Letter

We are almost half way through the year and here in the office it feels, as always, as if each year passes more and more quickly. Six months after the launch of our new website, our Speech Link and Language Link users have moved on from assessment to intervention. Over 130,000 assessments have been completed and schools are working on an amazing 7,200 language groups.

Many of our readers work in schools where **social mobility** is a key issue. We all know that **children with SLCN** face an uphill struggle but that outcomes can be improved with early identification and intervention. Speech Link Multimedia Ltd works with over 3,500 primary schools who use our packages for just this reason. But what can be done **BEFORE** a child begins school? The SLTs from Clarity (TEC) Ltd write about the successful strategic partnership created in Derby City, an opportunity area, to improve the early years educational outcomes of children with SLCN.

Shelley Parkin, SLT, recently joined our research and development team and comes to us with many stories of her time as a school-based SLT. We have encouraged her to write down her experiences for *The Link* magazine and online blog and her case study on **Social Skills** is her first article for us.

www.speechlink.info

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magazine by writing to us at
office2@speechlink.co.uk





A Day in the Life of an SLT

School Stories: Social Skills

By Shelley Parkin, Speech
and Language Therapist

Lauren, in Year 2, was getting into trouble in class. She had recently been given a diagnosis of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and her class teacher and TA needed some support in managing some of her behaviours.

Lauren didn't really see what the problem was, or how her behaviour affected others. She needed clear, unambiguous guidance on what was expected, a chance to practise these behaviours with an adult and in a small group, and a motivating reward system to keep her on track.

We started by introducing a **reward chart**, where Lauren earned smiley faces when she demonstrated positive behaviours. These added up to a daily reward, such as some computer time or extra time in the playground. This gave her a personal goal to work towards, rather than having to complete adult-led tasks just because the teacher asked, which she had found difficult before.

We also introduced a laminated **task planner** that could be written on and wiped clean again. The planner provided three simple steps for completing a learning task for structured work in the classroom. Once the task was completed, the planner provided an opportunity to factor in a reward. Lauren knew what the task involved and what to expect once the task was completed. Crossing off each step as it was complete avoided a major issue for Lauren, who never knew how long she had to keep working on a particular task. It felt like forever to her, and so she often avoided the task altogether!

Lauren also needed opportunities to **practise her social skills** 1:1 with an adult, who would explain what behaviour was expected in a situation, and why it was important. Lauren was then able to practise the skill in a small group with her classmates. This provided Lauren with a 'safe' environment in which to develop her social interaction skills, before being expected to generalise these new behaviours in a whole class situation.

In the small group, Lauren also had the opportunity to **practise her problem-solving skills**. Previous assessment had shown that this was a difficult area for her. Working on this in a group environment gave Lauren the opportunity to hear how her classmates might tackle a problem, consider the alternatives and to see a situation from another's perspective.

Lauren will probably continue to need some adult support while she is in primary school, particularly as the learning tasks become more demanding, and play and interaction with peers becomes more language-based and socially complex. Implementing some simple supports, however, have helped Lauren to begin navigating school-life more independently.

Read Shelley's
Interview
online at www.speechlink.info





Read the
Interview with Jo
and Bibiana at
The Link Online -
www.speechlink.info

SLCN AND SOCIAL MOBILITY:

Derby City's Early Years Strategy to Support Children with SLCN

By Jo Flanagan and Bibiana Wigley, SLTs at Clarity (TEC) Ltd, Derby



Several reports have been published recently which outline the shape and scale of services needed in the future to meet the growing numbers of children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), particularly in areas of social disadvantage. They call for services to think creatively about how to tackle this extensive public health challenge across large geographical local areas. The reports call for the children's workforce to look beyond their own silos and create a rich network of partnership working, shared

data and tools to find all children at risk of delay early and ensure that children receive evidence based supports and interventions as soon as possible in their early years. Many research studies have now made the link between poor language development and later academic, mental health and behavioural issues in children and young people's lives.

Derby City has above average numbers of children and families living in poverty, and above average numbers of children who are EAL. The demographic of Derby has

changed dramatically and we have a much more diverse language base within families and communities. The combination of these risk factors means that Derby is an area with high numbers of children with language delay. Our team noticed that there was a strong social gradient in terms of need, and found that in the most socially deprived wards of the city, 80-90% of children were coming in to early years settings at two or three years of age with language delay.

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Clarity (TEC) Ltd was established in 2013. We passionately believe that by developing the workforce and enabling parents, no child will have unidentified speech, language and communication difficulties and will have access to the right support at the right time.

www.claritytec.co.uk

Interesting reading to support this article;

- Early Language Development - Education Endowment Foundation
- Language as a child wellbeing indicator - Early Intervention Foundation
- Talking About a Generation. Current Policy, Evidence and Practice for Speech, Language and Communication - The Communication Trust

**CLICKETY BOOKS
PRIZE DRAW**
See Page 15

A strategic partnership working to improve educational outcomes for children with speech and language delay in early years

Five years ago, we began to work with Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) early years childcare settings (private day nurseries, playgroups and childminders) to address this challenge in partnership with the Early Years Improvement Team in Derby City. The Early Years team comprises of early years teachers and specialised practitioners from local PVI settings who each lead on key areas of support, eg. quality first early years pedagogy, safeguarding, maths development.

With the team, we developed a method of support which looked at a 'systems' approach within the PVI settings. Rather than immediately training early years practitioners about how to assess and support children with language delay, we centrally trained and coached the setting Leaders and Managers at site visits about how to self-evaluate their speech, language and communication provision. We looked at 5 key areas;

- the effectiveness of the communication **environment**,
- what their **workforce** knew about speech, language and communication needs and how to support them,
- the assessment tools they could use to **identify** SLCN early,
- the evidence based **interventions** that can accelerate children's language development,
- how to support **parents** to create a language rich home learning environment.

All managers also received a two day training course about speech sound development and its links to early letters and sounds phonics development in conjunction with an early years teacher from the team. Settings were trained to spot speech sound disorders for referral to the NHS Speech and Language Therapy service and advised to pass on their ongoing concerns about children's delayed speech sound difficulties at transition to Reception classes in primary schools. Most primary schools in Derby use the Speech Link and Infant Language Link packages. Anne Ayre from Clickety Books was also available at a half day follow up session to

advise about suitable books for children with each of the different delayed speech sound patterns that the managers identified from the training.

When we began this focussed work with the Early Years Improvement Team, 54% of the settings were judged good to outstanding by Ofsted. Now the figure is around 93%. If you looked at the Good Level of Development (GLD) four years ago, it was about 43%. And it is now about 68%. We know that about 70% of pre-school children in Derby attend a PVI setting rather than the foundation units attached to schools. The GLD for children at age 5 years has risen significantly in Derby because of the work of the team in Derby.

Written reports about the impact of our work have fed into our new Derby Opportunity Area delivery plan. We sincerely hope that we can drive this forward to look at City-wide initiatives across health, education and the voluntary sectors to develop prevention messages, identification of need early and cross sector use of universal and targeted provision using evidence based supports and interventions including Speech Link and Language Link.

Budget Ideas & Offers

USE YOUR UNDERSPEND FOR SLCN

By Jo Chessum, SENCO

With funding cuts having a significant impact on pretty much every decision schools have to make, it is more important than ever to think carefully about spending wisely and getting the most out of every valuable penny. It is worth remembering that children with any type of

SEN can experience co-occurring difficulties with communication, interaction, vocabulary development or understanding of language. So maybe the best use of any left-over budget is to boost your school's resources for supporting children with speech and language difficulties ... And don't forget, there

is substantial evidence linking social disadvantage and language delay so why not think about combining any leftover Pupil Premium funding with those few last pounds of your SEN budget? These can be found in the resources catalogue and in our online shop at www.speechlink.info

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£10

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£££

£20-£50

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£££

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£12.50+VAT

54 large cards, 2 games.

Improves phonological processing skills by playing games to detect and produce rhyming words.



Pocket Pack – Syllables

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53 large cards, 3 games. Practise breaking down longer words to understand their meaning and to help find words in a child's vocabulary.



DOWNLOADABLE



Use our NEW printable downloads to build an online library of listening and sound activities. Print on demand to use at home, school or clinic.

Price + vat	Name	No of Sheets	Speech Work
£22	Listening Homework	36	36 A4 sheets for working on listening and sound discrimination at home. Easy and clear instructions - choose the game and print the sheets.
£25	Minimal Pairs Squares	39	39 colourful A4 sheets. An indispensable resource for improving phonological processing and sound discrimination.
£10	Sound Squares Blends	18	A follow-on collection of 18 A4 printable sheets targeting sound blends. Each blend is presented in a range of word positions as appropriate.
£22	Sound Homework	30	30 colourful A4 sheets for practising sounds in words and sentences. Each game has clear, easy to follow instructions.
£25	Sound Squares	21	21 A4 printable sheets targeting different phonemes. Each sound is presented in word initial, medial and final positions where appropriate.

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

Poster Pack

£12.50+VAT

Create a speech and language friendly classroom with top tips for 'talking' and 'speech'.



Creative Board Game Pack

£25+VAT

Encourages collaboration and imagination. 6 colourful A3 board games, dice and counters. Use to reinforce skills learned in speech and language work. Combine with pocket packs or play your games as a reward.



SLCN poster

£8+VAT

Supporting Pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, features practical ideas for creating an inclusive classroom at KS2 and beyond.



NEW

RESOURCES FOR LANGUAGE WORK

PRINTED

The Naming Game Pack £20+VAT

4 A3 games, dice and counters in one pack. Easy and harder levels for infant and junior children to practise naming things in categories and develop vocabulary.



Pocket Pack – Associate £12.50+VAT

54 large cards, 2 games. Activities that use association and memory skills to develop a wide vocabulary.



Pocket Pack – Describe £12.50+VAT

56 large cards to help children develop description skills in a structured way. Using 2 cards together, extend the child's ability to compare and contrast by identifying difference and similarities.

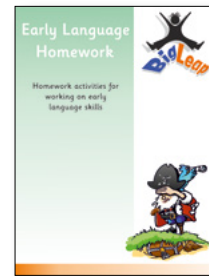


Pocket Pack – Categories £12.50+VAT

53 large cards, 3 games. A range of colourful and amusing pictures for children to sort into different groups. By grouping and sub-grouping, children are encouraged to see the links between them.



DOWNLOADABLE



Early Language Homework £22+VAT

46 A4 sheets to target language skills - listening, visual discrimination, memory, social skills as well as concepts, question words, following instructions and vocabulary.

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£220 + VAT

Printed

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- 1 Naming Game Pack
- 1 Creative Board Game Pack
- 1 Poster Pack

Downloadable - New!

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- Sound Squares
- Sound Squares Blends
- Minimal Pairs Squares
- Sound Homework
- Early Language Homework

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- 1 Creative Board Game Pack
- 1 Naming Game
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Downloadable pdf - Sound Squares Blends	£10.00	£12.00		
Downloadable pdf - Minimal Pairs Squares	£25.00	£30.00		
Downloadable pdf - Sound Homework	£22.00	£26.40		
Language Resources				
Printed Pocket Pack - Associate	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Pocket Pack - Categories	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Pocket Pack - Describe	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Naming Game	£20.00	£24.00		
Downloadable pdf - Early Language Homework	£22.00	£26.40		
Classroom Resources				
Printed Creative Board Game Pack	£25.00	£30.00		
Printed Poster Set	£12.50	£15.00		
NEW SLCN poster	£8.00	£9.60		
NEW Sticker pack (free P&P)	£7.20	£8.64		
UK Postage	£3.50	£4.20		

TOTAL

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SLCN Glossary



Are You Talking About Who I'm Talking About?

By Susan McMackin, SLT

'Specific Language Impaired', 'Language Learning Disabled', 'Language Disordered', 'Communication Impaired' ... and Children with 'Speech Language and Communication Needs' (SLCN) are only some of the terms used by professionals across disciplines (i.e. Psychology, Education, Allied Health like Speech Language Therapy, Paediatric Medicine, and Psychiatry) to refer to a cohort of children presenting with the same profile of impairment.

The confusion about both the criteria and terminology for these children has affected access to services and hindered research in the field. At the heart of the debate lies a lack of agreement about whether **environmental factors** like low levels of parental education or poverty, etc. or **biomedical conditions** such as hearing loss, autism spectrum disorder, brain injury or general learning difficulties amongst others are included or excluded from the classification. But thanks to the multidisciplinary panel CATALISE we've got there ... finally a consensus has been reached!!

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) refers to children with language difficulties which create obstacles to learning and communicating in everyday life and are unlikely to 'catch up' spontaneously AND where the condition is **NOT associated with other biomedical conditions**.

Let's look more closely at this group. DLD diagnosis includes:

- 1) **Low to Average IQ:** Traditionally normal range non-verbal IQ has been part of the criteria for diagnosis for this group, but as it is not supported by research evidence this is no longer the case.
- 2) **Neurodevelopmental Disorders:** presenting language difficulties related to attention, behaviour, motor skills, literacy, speech, executive function or adaptive behaviour can still be classified as DLD.
- 3) **Environmental Risk Factors:** presenting language difficulties associated with poverty, family history, low level parental education, neglect/abuse, problems before/at birth can still be classified as DLD

Language Disorder Associated with is used where a child has language problems associated with a **biomedical conditions** (as above) the term used is Encompassing both the *Language Disorder and Developmental Language Disorder* is the broad term Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) which refers to all children with speech, language and communication needs for any reason.

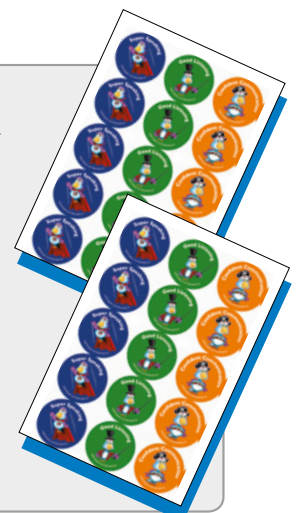
The issue of classification is about clarity! Clear communication will help raise the profile for this group, attract more research and ultimately help resolve the fundamental questions about who should receive intervention and *which* interventions work ... To this end, we owe it to children to be clear.

For the complete SLCN Glossary, go to The Link Online at www.speechlink.info.

THE LINK ONLINE SLCN Insights straight to your mailbox



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STAMMERING & EDUCATION

By Cherry Hughes, Education Officer, The British Stammering Association

As long as support is provided for children and young people who stammer, they can and do achieve their potential. Stammering need not hold them back!

About 1 in 20 pre-school children are likely to stammer and early intervention does offer the best chance of recovery so that by school age an estimated 1 in 80 will stammer, reducing in adulthood to 1 in 100. We know from parents and speech and language therapists

that parents of school-age children may become very anxious and concerned when their child has been diagnosed with stammering in spite of the reassurance that the SLT is likely to have offered. Often the main reason for this concern is parents' awareness that many school staff do not have training in support strategies for stammering and are not always confident in how to respond to the child's needs in oral work.

Since the Bercow report of 2007,

there has been more emphasis on speech, language and communication needs in schools and more training is available to staff but it is taking time to raise awareness. As stammering is a low incidence speech impairment, staff may not be aware of the situation until it is brought to their attention by the parents. Recent legislation on special educational needs and disability (SEND), that places parents and children at the centre



PARENTS

- Parents' information about stammering in education from pre-school to secondary
www.stammering.org/expertparent
- How to navigate SENDCOP
www.stammering.org/SEND
- BSA survey for parents about SENDCOP
www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Send_Stammering

EDUCATION SETTINGS

- **Training**
www.stammering.org/earlyyears
www.stammeringineducation.net
Information for primary and secondary pupils
- **Research**
Behavioural, emotional and social development of children who stutter. McAllister, Jan. Journal of Fluency Disorders 50 (2016) 23-32
- **Bullying**
www.stammering.org/speaking-out/articles/stammering-children-are-still-bullied

of any discussion about support, can help to make a real impact and improve school responses to stammering. Both staff and parents can take advantage of the **BSA online resources**. Staff can also use our **online training resources** that demonstrate specific strategies for stammering within the context of a whole-school communication policy which benefits all pupils and enhances the High Quality teaching that the special educational needs and disability code of practice (SENDCOP) requires.

Why support in education is so essential

We know that stammering can lead to significant difficulties at school when a pupil feels staff do not understand the speech problem – this often leads to underachievement and, in the worst cases, alienation from school and disciplinary issues. Parents report how even quite young

children are becoming anxious about speaking situations in class and with friends so they became reluctant to speak and make social relationships. Teasing and bullying of children who stammer is regrettably common and this exacerbates the problems. When negative thoughts and patterns of behaviour continue into adolescence and young adulthood, social anxiety is likely to develop and opportunities for interaction diminish leading to isolation and mental health problems. Additionally, some parents report difficulties within the family when other siblings feel so much emotional energy is concentrated on the child who stammers.

The benefits of support in education

Support allows the pupil to take part in the oral activities which are the basis of all learning as adaptations can be planned and these encourage self-confidence in

speech management. Support can continue throughout the school career and during employment, **as long as it is requested**, for stammering is regarded as a disability when it has continued for some time and affects normal activities. Strategies of support are simple and can be life-changing for the child or young person who stammers, allowing them to achieve the best outcomes for their aspirations and to go on to live their lives as they would wish!





From One TA to Another

Supporting Staff Wellbeing

By Claire Chambers, speech and language TA

Scot Greathead's article in The Link issue 9 mentions the importance of the 'wellbeing of staff so that they can be emotionally available for children.' This got me thinking.....

In order to support the wellbeing of our children and our work colleagues we need primarily to look after our own wellbeing at school.

The job is like no other – to do it well you will give far more than will ever be reflected in your pay. Often we have our own children and all that being a parent/carer brings with it. Running half empty is something we're all familiar by the end of term, which isn't ideal, but if you are feeling like this just a few days into term, you need to address it.

This is easier said than done and of course everyone has to cope with

many different difficulties in their personal life which are not easy to leave at the school gate.

I had a think about things that either worked for me at my last school, or I wish I'd tried:

- Eat as well as you can – offer to sit in the lunch hall in exchange for a free meal once a week
- Take up any opportunities of supervision or counselling that are offered by your school
- Take your break – chat with colleagues – share your concerns
- Leave the site for 10 minutes if possible, eg. go to the shops, have a walk, eat your lunch outside
- Write down your feelings – try not to let them build up
- Explain to your teacher/SENCO that things are too much. Ask for an

admin period - explain how this will benefit you and the school

- Don't volunteer for everything
- Suggest ideas for personal development
- Ideas for a yoga group or other activity that the school might support
- Be mindful of colleagues' wellbeing also
- Try not to feel resentful or frustrated by another colleague – it's how you choose to react that makes you how you feel
- Be professional – don't share your negative feelings on social media.

Please let us know of any tips that you have used to manage stress and your mental health in order to support your pupils and other colleagues.



SAM COLLINS' TOP TIPS FROM SCHOOLWELL

Supporting children with speech and language difficulties is a highly demanding role. Keep an eye your own wellbeing with these simple tips

- ✓ Take a break; even 2 minutes will improve your focus when you return.
- ✓ Celebrate successes, however small.
- ✓ Accentuate the positive!



Visit schoolwell.co.uk for wellbeing support

School News

Speech Boosting Stories by Clickety Books

Sound loaded stories are a fun and effective way to support children with delayed speech sounds. Children love sound play – it's fun! And it helps develop their ability to recognise and say speech sounds in different words. This is important for both clear speech and phonological awareness.

These stories ideally have a systematic concentration of a given sound target, or targets, in a range of different words and vowel contexts. They provide multiple opportunities for children to hear and practise saying words with target phonemes. An enjoyable and interactive storyline

is highly motivating and makes it easy for children to anticipate what happens next and join in when they hear it again.

Anne Ayre,
SLT at Clickety Books
www.clicketybooks.co.uk



PRIZE DRAW

We have two Clickety Books to give away. Enter our prize draw at www.speechlink.info.

Meet the team



Heather Stevens
SLT - Training Coordinator

I've been involved with Speech Link Multimedia Limited from the very beginning. I was working as an NHS speech and language therapist in Kent at the time the initial project was being carried out in schools in the county. When I started working for the company there were just 5 of us in the team who moved into our first office in Canterbury in 2007. In those days the reports were generated manually and my job was to input data and to proof read all of the reports before they were packed up and posted to the schools.

Thankfully things have moved on a bit since then!!!

Gradually my role in training evolved and I now act as coordinator for our training programmes. I've enjoyed travelling the country giving information about our new website to users. It's so much easier to present the new site because everything sits together in a much more logical way. I'm also enjoying moving forward with developing our webinar training.

Over the years much has changed in my work and my personal life. My "Speech Link family" has been there for me through good times and bad and I really value their friendship and support.

When I'm not at work I enjoy gardening and cryptic crosswords. My favourite activity is one I have come to relatively recently – being

a granny to Noah who is about to be three. I've loved watching (forensically!!) his speech and language skills develop and he's given me lots of material to use for anecdotes when training. I look forward to him mastering the /gr/ consonant blend so that I become a granny rather than a fanny!!!

Surprising fact about me that people may not know... in 2015 I fulfilled a bucket list wish and went with my lifelong best friend to Glastonbury... 'dancing on the ceiling' with Lionel Ritchie and 'seeing for miles' with The Who. That's my generation!

If I were to give one tip to schools it would be to always remember the 10 second rule – give children time to think about what you've asked and to plan their response.

