

## **The Core Offer for Children and Young People with Speech, Language and Communication Needs in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

**The speech and language therapy service in Cambridgeshire provides evidence-based support for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). The service also provides evidence-based support for children with dysphagia (difficulties with swallowing and/or chewing.)**

We operate an 'Individualised Package of Support' (IPoS) model which means that the child or young person will have an intervention plan that will deliver appropriate, evidence-based intervention according to their needs. This will be in the form of one or several episodes of care. At the point at which outcomes have been achieved or effective interventions are in place to support the child's needs, we will end care with our service. Schools and settings are advised that they can speak to us again should satisfactory progress not be made or if needs change. A new episode of care will be opened when new advice is needed.

We work in collaboration with parents and other professionals as a multiagency team to provide the most appropriate support for the person with SLCN and/or eating and drinking difficulties.

### **Our Team**

We are a team of Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered speech and language therapists, supported by assistants, working across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in three main geographical areas:

- Cambridge and Ely
- Huntingdon and fenland
- Peterborough

### **We provide services to:**

Children and young people aged 0 – 18 years (end of year 13) with a range of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) including:

- Speech sound difficulties (that affect clarity/intelligibility)
- Understanding of spoken language (receptive language or comprehension)
- Using words and talking in sentences (expressive language and communication)
- Stammering or stuttering (dysfluency)
- Voice difficulties (e.g., hoarseness)
- Eating and drinking difficulties.

### **How to access Speech and Language Therapy**

We operate an open referral system which is usually from educational settings, Early Support or direct from parents via completion of a Welcome Questionnaire. Paper referrals from other routes will be triaged by an experienced speech and language therapist, who will decide whether to accept the referral. If in doubt, we will contact the referrer for more information.

### **Making a referral**

<https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services-cambridgeshire/specialist-services/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy/at-school/how-to-refer>

- For pre-school children - Attending an Early Advice Session, following parental referral via a Welcome Questionnaire (available on our website).
- For school age children – please talk to your child's educational setting for guidance. They will speak to their link therapist about support needed.

**There are many children who have speech, language and communication needs. Not all these need to have direct intervention from a speech and language therapist. We work with parents, schools and early years settings to meet these needs.**

**Referrals for children with the following difficulties are likely to have their needs met in the home, early years or educational setting:**

- Mild speech delay as measured against the expected speech for their age.
- Mild language delay as measured against the expected language for their age
- Children with EAL who do not have difficulty in their first language
- Where attention and listening is the primary difficulty
- Children who have been seen by the speech and language therapy service, whose needs have not changed since the previous intervention so appropriate support remains in place.
- Children who present with social communication difficulties but with language skills within the expected range.
- Children diagnosed with global developmental delay or learning difficulties where expressive language is progressing in line with rest of development and learning.

**Whilst the SLT may be able to offer signposting and advice about the following difficulties, support from another agency may be more appropriate:**

- Where behaviour is the primary difficulty
- Where sensory difficulties are the primary concern
- Selective Mutism as this is an anxiety disorder
- Dyslexia

### **How we assess**

We may *informally* assess using observation and appropriate activities or may use *formal*, standardised assessments when appropriate. This will take place at a specified time and will be discussed with your therapist at the first appointment.

Decisions about intervention are made on an individual basis according to the child/young person's strengths and difficulties and the likely outcome of therapy.

### **Clinical intervention we provide**

If a child is identified as having significant SLCN, an episode of care will be planned to meet the current needs. We will discuss this with you following the assessment. This will consist of one or more of the following:

- Advice only
- Advice, demonstration sessions for parents/ setting/school staff.
- Group interventions. These may be set up in school and then continued by school staff or run in clinic
- Individual therapy sessions
- Training for parents and/or educational settings to deliver an intervention

Once the appropriate support is in place or sufficient progress made, the episode of care will be closed.

### **Where we see children and their families**

Most often:

- Education settings
- Early Years settings
- Clinics

Less often:

- At home
- In hospital

Further information along with activities and ideas to support speech, language and communication development can be found on our website.

<https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services-cambridgeshire/specialist-services/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy>