The role and impact of speech and language therapy provision in Sure Start in Northern Ireland

(antenatal to school-entry)
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Background

This document has been developed in partnership with speech and language therapists (SLTs) who are members of the RCSLT Sure Start clinical excellence network (CEN). While recognising that everyone makes a contribution in supporting and developing speech, language and communication for children attending Sure Start projects, the CEN SLTs met to scope their own role and impact in delivering against Sure Start outcomes. Since the original scoping work was undertaken, there has been a restructuring of SLT services, and a new strategic approach to service delivery is currently being agreed. It is hoped that this document may be of use in providing impact descriptors and an evidence base as a reference point for the CEN Sure Start SLTs.

This document provides examples of speech and language therapy provision in Sure Start projects and also highlights the importance of everyone working together to deliver improved speech, language and communication outcomes for children in socially disadvantaged areas. We hope that this work will be a useful tool for SLTs working in Sure Start projects, and for the wider speech and language therapy profession working in early years.

The document focuses upon the individual and team contribution that SLTs make in delivering Sure Start speech, language and communication outcomes. It sets out who SLTs work with, the kinds of work that they do and the impact that speech and language therapy should make. It also sets out how speech and language therapy supports the delivery of the Sure Start outcomes when working within a Sure Start team, and references how these impacts and outcomes can or are being measured.

The vision

For every child to start school having the best possible speech, language and communication skills to help them make friends, enjoy learning and reach their full potential.

How will we achieve this?

This vision can be achieved by SLTs working in an effective and dynamic partnership with parents, the Sure Start workforce, other early years professionals and the wider community. This partnership recognises the unique contributions of everyone involved in supporting and developing children’s speech, language and communication in the early years.
Working together, we can…

- Ensure that children have the underpinning skills that are necessary for acquiring good speech, language and communication.
- Empower parents and caregivers by giving them the tools and knowledge to maximise the development of their child’s speech and language skills at home.
- Provide an optimum communication environment for children in Sure Start centres by working with the early years workforce to support children in acquiring good speech, language and communication skills.
- Work with the wider community by developing and sharing public health messages that raise awareness of the importance of good speech, language and communication skills and how they can be supported.

What is Sure Start?

Sure Start is a government programme which provides a range of support services for parents and children under the age of four who live in disadvantaged areas across Northern Ireland. It aims to support parents from pregnancy and to give children the best start in life. Sure Start work is focused on six high-level outcomes to ensure children are:

- Being healthy
- Enjoying learning and achieving
- Living in safety and with stability
- Living in a society that respects their rights
- Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing
- Contributing positively to community and society

What is a speech and language delay?

“A wide variety of terms is used to describe the skills of children who are slow to start speaking. Language delay is probably the most common term for young children, but we also hear the term ‘late talker’ being used. If difficulties persist, the terms ‘language impairment’, ‘specific language impairment’ or ‘developmental language disorder’ are used. A distinction is sometimes drawn between language delay and speech delay or even communication delay, although not always clearly. Most recently the term ‘speech, language and communication needs’ (SLCN) has been adopted after the Bercow Report to describe the whole range of children whose communication skills are affected across childhood.”

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The policy context

There has been an increasing policy focus on early intervention in Northern Ireland recently, and, as a result, a number of cross-agency initiatives have been developed to concentrate resources on delivering better outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. These policies have been operationalised in projects such as Sure Start, The Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP).

All of these projects are outcomes-focused and increasingly recognise the importance that speech, language and communication plays in delivering the best outcomes for a child’s social, emotional and educational development.

Other countries in the UK have been equally aware of the importance that speech and language skills play in a child’s overall development. In 2014, Ofsted revised its framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)\(^2\) and continues to place a strong emphasis on “communication and language as one of three prime areas considered to be crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive”. They define the early learning goals under communication and language as follows:

- **Listening and attention:** children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events, and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
- **Understanding:** children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
- **Speaking:** children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners’ needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Across the UK, Save the Children Fund has also focused on the importance of early language skills for developing later literacy skills. Save the Children’s ‘Read On. Get On’ campaign is a national initiative that highlights that literacy skills are underpinned by early speech and language development.

“Since children’s early language skills have a strong influence on their language and literacy throughout childhood, we are also working to ensure that every five-year old is achieving good early language development by 2020.”\(^3\)

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The local evidence of the need for early speech, language and communication support

Speech, language and communication difficulties affect more children and young people in Northern Ireland than any other single condition, and are core impairments for many children with a learning, physical or sensory disability. Seven per cent of all children (two in every classroom) have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), rising to more than 50% of children from socially disadvantaged communities.

Recent studies in Northern Ireland (referenced below) support the findings that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are failing to reach expected standards in speech, language and communication by school entry.

- 1997: ‘Language Matters’, a study in Twinbrook and Poleglass, evidenced a preschool prevalence of 60% speech and language difficulties, 42% of whom required referral to a speech and language therapy service.
- 2009: A study in the Colin area, using standardised assessment tools, highlighted that 41% of children entering primary one (P1) had speech, language and communication difficulties (Coulter, Halligan and Jordan, 2009).
- 2013: The Colin study was replicated in the Downpatrick area and evidenced 46% of P1 children with speech and language difficulties requiring intervention.
- 2014: A study in the Lisburn area evidenced that boys in deprived areas of Lisburn were three times more likely to have speech and language difficulties than those in non-deprived areas.
- 2014: ‘Now you’re talking Fermanagh’ found that 57% of nursery school children had speech and language difficulties. These were preschool children from the four most-deprived wards after the introduction of Sure Start, and who were not in receipt of any early intervention programmes.

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The role and impact of speech and language therapy

This section demonstrates the link between speech and language therapy activity and the six high-level Sure Start outcomes (mentioned on page 5) by describing the impact that speech and language therapy provision has upon the child, the parent/caregiver, the Sure Start workforce and the wider community. It describes:

- who SLTs work with;
- what they do; and
- when they do it (SLT activity by age of child).

Speech and language therapy activity is set out into four main themes: screening, training, intervention; and public health messaging, and details existing data collection and external evidence sources that can evidence some of the interventions and outcomes.

Who do SLTs work with?

The child

Parents and caregivers

Sure Start/early years workforce

The wider community

The child

SLTs working in Sure Start report that children involved in Sure Start projects reflect the general population in terms of the nature of their speech and language difficulties but not in terms of the prevalence of these difficulties.

The majority of children typically have speech and language difficulties that may not be permanent but may improve by developing their pre-language skills such as attention, listening and imitation skills, and by providing a rich language and communication environment at home and in their play groups. Other children may be identified who have additional learning needs and more complex communication difficulties. These children and their families may need more-specialist speech and language therapy interventions and support.
Parents and caregivers/the family and home

Recent research has evidenced the importance of a rich home learning environment for the development of speech and language skills. Hart and Risley\(^7\) evidenced that “the number of words directed towards a child over a given year ranged from 11 million in the ‘professional’ families to three million in the ‘welfare’ families”. This pattern was reflected in parenting style and in the amount of encouraging feedback that the children had experienced, and also in the non-verbal IQ and tested vocabulary scores that they achieved.

SLTs work with parents and families to optimise the home learning environment by developing parent/grandparent/carer understanding of speech, language and communication development and how to promote it. They may also develop a parent’s specialist skills and knowledge for children who have a persistent SLCN. This might be by introducing alternative and augmented communication strategies, such as Makaton, TEACCH or the Picture Exchange Communication system (PECS), for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder or a learning disability.

Sure Start/early years workforce

“Speech and language therapists provide training to the wider workforce as an integral part of their role, as outcomes for children are improved when the whole workforce can contribute to care pathways.”\(^8\) SLTs work with early years practitioners, including Sure Start staff, to help them identify children with speech and language delay or disorders, and in developing their specialist skills to support those children with persistent SLCN. SLTs also work alongside early years staff to optimise the learning environment by developing their understanding of speech, language and communication and how to promote it.

The wider community

SLTs work in the wider community by raising awareness of how to promote good speech and language development, how to signpost parents to sources of information on speech, language and communication development and how to contact speech and language therapy services when they have concerns. They also contribute to the wider public health agenda by promoting health and wellbeing for people with communication difficulties.

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What do SLTs do?

The child

All children
Training others to develop a supportive and enriching speech, language and communication environment

Children with persistent SLCN
Screening and identification, specialist interventions and referral

Children with transient SLCN
Interventions to develop core speech, language and communication skills

Parents and caregivers/the family and home

All parents and caregivers
Training to optimise the home learning environment for speech, language and communication development

Parents of children with persistent SLCN
Identification and referral and training to develop parents’ specialist skills to support children with long-term SLCN

Parents of children with transient SLCN
Training to develop parents’ understanding of how speech, language and communication develops and how to promote it
Sure Start/early years workforce

**All Sure Start project team**
- Training to develop understanding of how speech, language and communication develops
- Training staff to optimise the Sure Start learning environment for speech, language and communication

**Key Sure Start staff**
- Training to develop specialist skills in supporting children with short- and long-term SLCN

The wider community

**General public**
- Public health messaging to raise awareness of the importance of speech and language development
- Public health messaging to provide information on how to promote good speech, language and communication

**Targeted public**
- Public health messaging to provide information on how to access information/SLT support for children with SLCN
When SLTs work (ages and stages)

The tables on pages 11 to 29 demonstrate the link between speech and language therapy activities and Sure Start outcomes under the following themes:

- Screening
- Training
- Interventions
- Public health messaging

And under the following age groups:

- Antenatal
- 0–18 months
- 18 months – 2 years
- 2–3 years
- 3–4 years

The tables also provide the link to the Sure Start outcomes as below:

- Being healthy
- Enjoying learning and achieving
- Living in safety and with stability
- Living in a society which respects their rights
- Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing
- Contributing positively to community and society
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in antenatal services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Existing screening tools are carried out with parents and results analysed</td>
<td>• Child&lt;br&gt;• Early identification ensures appropriate interventions and strategies that will address long-term health and education inequalities for the child&lt;br&gt;• Parents/carers&lt;br&gt;• Hard-to-reach parents get access to early speech, language and communication (SLC) support and advice&lt;br&gt;• Parents are supported in understanding the needs of their children and can start to identify and contribute to strategies that support SLC development in the home&lt;br&gt;• Wider workforce&lt;br&gt;• The wider workforce is using reliable and validated information regarding the specific needs of the family&lt;br&gt;• Local community (public health)&lt;br&gt;• The results of the screening processes can be used to build a picture of the wider public health needs of the population and inform wider government initiatives to support SLC at a regional and national level</td>
<td>• Being healthy&lt;br&gt;• Enjoying learning and achieving&lt;br&gt;• Living in safety with stability&lt;br&gt;• Living in a society which respects their rights&lt;br&gt;• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing&lt;br&gt;• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parents at risk are identified, and appropriate support mechanisms are put in place</td>
<td>• Parents are supported in understanding the needs of their children and can start to identify and contribute to strategies that support SLC development in the home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SLTs communicate with the wider workforce regarding the needs of the parents and children that have been identified</td>
<td>• The wider workforce is using reliable and validated information regarding the specific needs of the family</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Screening
**The role and impact of speech and language therapy in antenatal services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SLTs provide training in...&lt;br&gt;• Speech, language and communication (SLC)&lt;br&gt;• Baby sign language&lt;br&gt;• Nurturing and social and emotional wellbeing of the parents&lt;br&gt;• The 'Solihull programme'&lt;br&gt;• At community events, eg Parents' Week Fair</td>
<td>• Child&lt;br&gt;• High-risk children are better supported in their home environment&lt;br&gt;• Children experience greater early attachment with both parents&lt;br&gt;• Parents/carers&lt;br&gt;• Hard-to-reach parents get access to early public health messaging&lt;br&gt;• Wider workforce&lt;br&gt;• Wider workforce is able to identify children/parents who need additional support re SLC&lt;br&gt;• Local community (public health)&lt;br&gt;• The diversity in the population is reflected appropriately in the numbers accessing services&lt;br&gt;• There is a local culture that values parents talking to their babies</td>
<td>• Being healthy&lt;br&gt;• Enjoying learning and achieving&lt;br&gt;• Living in safety with stability&lt;br&gt;• Living in a society which respects their rights&lt;br&gt;• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing&lt;br&gt;• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Babysign [www.babysign.co.uk/](http://www.babysign.co.uk/)

The Solihull programme available from [solihullapproachparenting.com/](http://solihullapproachparenting.com/)
### The role and impact of speech and language therapy in antenatal services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • SLTs deliver public health, speech, language and communication (SLC) and weaning messages through local area partnerships – and campaigns, eg 2 Rhymes by 2 | • Child  
• The child is more likely to benefit from good communication environments and closer attachment to caregivers  
• The diversity in the population is reflected appropriately in the numbers accessing services  
• Parents/carers  
• Hard-to-reach parents get access to early public health messaging  
• Parents are better equipped to provide good communication environments  
• Wider workforce  
• Staff embed key messages into their practice so that they provide positive role models in this area  
• Local community (public health)  
• Establishing a local culture that understands the importance of SLC and values parents talking to their babies | • Being healthy  
• Enjoying learning and achieving  
• Living in safety with stability  
• Living in a society which respects their rights  
• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing  
• Contributing positively to community and society |

**Public health messaging**

- Sure Start SLT provides information to all local early years settings

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[Diagram showing flow of information from Activity to Impact to Sure Start outcomes]
### The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 0–18 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Links are made with existing screening/surveillance systems within core health services and Sure Start services, eg:</td>
<td>• Child</td>
<td>• Being healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health visiting</td>
<td>• Children at risk of feeding difficulties are identified and supported</td>
<td>• Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social work</td>
<td>• Early identification ensures appropriate interventions and strategies that will address long-term health (and education) inequalities for the child</td>
<td>• Living in safety with stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Audiology</td>
<td>• Parents/carers</td>
<td>• Living in a society which respects their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hard-to-reach parents get access to early speech, language and communication (SLC) support and advice</td>
<td>• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents feel supported in understanding the needs of their children and can start to identify and contribute to strategies that support SLC development in the home</td>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wider workforce</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The wider workforce is using reliable and validated information regarding the specific needs of the family</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local community (public health)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The results of the screening processes can be used to build a picture of the wider public health needs of the population and inform wider government initiatives to support SLC at a regional and national level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Screening**

- Being healthy
- Enjoying learning and achieving
- Living in safety with stability
- Living in a society which respects their rights
- Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing
- Contributing positively to community and society
### The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 0–18 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training to staff and parents on feeding and weaning</td>
<td>• <strong>Child</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Children at risk of feeding difficulties are identified and supported&lt;br&gt;• Better health outcomes due to quality of diet; fewer children with prolonged use of bottle&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Parents/Carers</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Parents have increased confidence re feeding and weaning&lt;br&gt;• Parents are equipped to bond with their baby and to foster early communication skills&lt;br&gt;• Parents feel supported in understanding the needs of their children and can start to identify and contribute to strategies that support SLC development in the home&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Wider workforce</strong>&lt;br&gt;• All staff are competent and confident in giving consistent key messages regarding the development of SLC, eg:&lt;br&gt;  • Parent-child interaction&lt;br&gt;  • Wise use of screens&lt;br&gt;  • Bottle/dummy use&lt;br&gt;  • Weaning&lt;br&gt;• Staff are more aware of the increased vulnerability of children with SLCN&lt;br&gt;• Staff are confident in knowing when to consider SLC as a risk factor&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Local community (public health)</strong>&lt;br&gt;There is consistency of key messages regarding bottle and dummy use in the community</td>
<td>• <strong>Being healthy</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Enjoying learning and achieving&lt;br&gt;• Living in safety with stability&lt;br&gt;• Living in a society which respects their rights&lt;br&gt;• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing&lt;br&gt;• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training in speech, language and communication (SLC) development (published programmes and bespoke)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training re nurturing social and emotional wellbeing of the parents and child (based on Solihull approach)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training to staff regarding the vulnerability of children with SLCN</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 0–18 months

### Interventions

**Activity**
- In the 0-18-month population, direct face-to-face intervention should be minimal
- Parent programmes, eg:
  - Hanen You Make The Difference (YMTD)
  - Weaning programme
  - Nurture programme
- Provide input to parent groups through one-off sessions and/or regular presence
- Provide targeted messages for particular groups, eg:
  - Weaning
  - Rhymes
- Carry out assessment of individual child as necessary and liaison with others as required, eg:
  - Health visitors
  - Child development clinic
  - Social worker
  - Audiology

**Impact**
- **Child**
  - All children enjoy enriched communicative environments at home and in early years settings
  - All children experience positive early attachment
  - High-risk children are identified and supported
- **Parents/carers**
  - Parents are equipped to bond with their baby and to foster early communication skills
  - Parents feel supported in understanding the needs of their children and can start to identify and contribute to strategies that support speech, language and communication (SLC) development in the home
  - **Wider workforce**
    - Staff have a thorough understanding of the foundation for early SLC development (including pre-verbal stage)
    - Staff are providing appropriate language models
    - Staff are aware of the process for early identification and referral to SLT
- **Local community (public health)**
  - There is consistency of key messages regarding bottle and dummy use in the community
  - There is a local culture that values parents talking to their babies

**Sure Start outcomes**
- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
# The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 0–18 months

## Activity

- SLTs deliver public health, speech, language and communication (SLC) and weaning messages through local area partnerships – campaigns, eg 2 Rhymes by 2
- Sure Start SLT provides information to all local early years settings
- SLTs participate in local community events, eg Parents' Week Fair

## Impact

### Child
- The diversity in the population is reflected appropriately in the numbers accessing services

### Parents/carers
- Hard-to-reach parents get access to early public health messaging
- Parents are equipped and supported so they can bond with their baby and foster early communication skills

### Wider workforce
- Staff embed key messages into their practice so that they provide positive role models in this area
- Staff have a thorough understanding of the foundation for early SLC development, and are confident about delivering and supporting key SLC messages

### Local community (public health)
- There is a local culture that understands the importance of SLC, and values parents talking to their babies
- Discourse in the local community changes to reflect key messages which support SLC development, eg time parents spend on mobile phones; use of library

## Sure Start outcomes

- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
# The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 18 months – 2 years

### Activity

- SLT links with existing child health surveillance systems and other professionals to identify at-risk children
- SLT carries out informal play based screening for child who cannot cooperate for formal screening tool
- Formal screening tool, eg Wellcomm Toolkit (home/centre/group-based)
- Differential diagnosis of children with speech, language and communication needs
- Assessment of child’s communication environment, eg home/Sure Start centre/early years settings

### Impact

- **Child**
  - Earlier identification and intervention for child with SLCN, including further assessment, signposting and onward referrals
  - All children enjoy enriched speech, language and communication (SLC) environments at home and in early years settings
- **Parents/carers**
  - Increased awareness of and information on early SLC development and milestones
  - Increased skills in supporting their own child’s SLCN
- **Wider workforce**
  - Increased skills in supporting the child’s SLCN
  - Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN
- **Local community (public health)**
  - The results of the screening processes can be used to build a picture of the wider public health needs of the population and inform wider government initiatives to support SLC at a regional and national level

### Sure Start outcomes

- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 18 months – 2 years

Activity
- General in-service training for staff within the Sure Start team
- Bespoke training session for parents on development of speech, language and communication (SLC) skills
- Delivering accredited recognised training courses, eg: Hanen YMTD, It Takes Two To Talk (ITTTT)
  - Elklan Speech and language Support for 0-3s)
  - Elklan Let's talk with Under 5s

Impact
- **Child**
  - Earlier identification and intervention for child with SLCN, including further assessment, signposting and onward referrals
  - All children enjoy enriched SLC environments at home and in early years settings
- **Parents/carers**
  - Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern
  - Parents recognise their key role as their child’s first educator
- **Wider workforce**
  - Increased skills in supporting the child’s SLCN; staff are providing appropriate language models
  - Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN; staff are aware of typical and atypical SLC development
- **Local community (public health)**
  - Increased awareness of referral pathway/process for accessing SLT
  - Increased awareness of the benefits of early intervention
  - There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business

Sure Start outcomes
- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
The role and Impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 18 months – 2 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In the 18 month – 2 year population, direct face-to-face intervention should be minimal</td>
<td><strong>Child</strong>&lt;br&gt;• All children enjoy enriched speech, language and communication (SLC) environments at home and in early years settings&lt;br&gt;<strong>Parents/carers</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern&lt;br&gt;• Increased skills in supporting their own child’s SLCN&lt;br&gt;<strong>Wider workforce</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN&lt;br&gt;• Staff are more aware of typical and atypical development and strategies to support children’s SLC&lt;br&gt;<strong>Local community (public health)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Increased awareness of referral pathway/process for accessing SLT&lt;br&gt;• Increased awareness of the benefits of early intervention&lt;br&gt;• There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business</td>
<td>• Being healthy&lt;br&gt;• Enjoying learning and achieving&lt;br&gt;• Living in safety with stability&lt;br&gt;• Living in a society which respects their rights&lt;br&gt;• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing&lt;br&gt;• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Assessment of individual child as necessary and liaison with others as required, eg:<br>• Health visitors<br>• Child development clinic<br>• Social worker<br>• Audiology | **Parents/carers**<br>• Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern<br>• Increased skills in supporting their own child’s SLCN<br>**Wider workforce**<br>• Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN<br>• Staff are more aware of typical and atypical development and strategies to support children’s SLC<br>**Local community (public health)**<br>• Increased awareness of referral pathway/process for accessing SLT<br>• Increased awareness of the benefits of early intervention<br>• There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business | **Interventions**

- In the 18 month – 2 year population, direct face-to-face intervention should be minimal
- Assessment of individual child as necessary and liaison with others as required, eg:
  - Health visitors
  - Child development clinic
  - Social worker
  - Audiology
- General advice to staff/parents

**Sure Start outcomes**
- Being healthy
- Enjoying learning and achieving
- Living in safety with stability
- Living in a society which respects their rights
- Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing
- Contributing positively to community and society
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 18 months – 2 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Writing articles on speech, language and communication (SLC) development</td>
<td>• Child</td>
<td>• Being healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sure Start project on social media, eg Facebook</td>
<td>• All children enjoy enriched SLC environments at home, in early years settings and in the community</td>
<td>• Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sure Start quarterly newsletter</td>
<td>• Parents/carers</td>
<td>• Living in safety with stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PHA leaflets, eg Healthy child, healthy future</td>
<td>• Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern</td>
<td>• Living in a society which respects their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advice sheets and strategies, eg Elklan leaflets</td>
<td>• Increased skills in supporting their own child’s SLCN</td>
<td>• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hosting special events, eg: • Storytelling • Ditch the dummy • Chatterbox Challenge</td>
<td>• Wider workforce</td>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Signposting to good-quality web-based support, eg Talking Point</td>
<td>• Increased skills in supporting the child’s SLCN</td>
<td>• Staff are providing appropriate language models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff are aware of typical and atypical SLC development</td>
<td>• Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long term specific SLCN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local community (public health)</td>
<td>• Staff are aware of typical and atypical SLC development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discourse in the local community changes to reflect key messages that support SLC development, eg time parents spend on mobile phones; use of library</td>
<td>• There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public health messaging

- Sure Start outcomes
  - Being healthy
  - Enjoying learning and achieving
  - Living in safety with stability
  - Living in a society which respects their rights
  - Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing
  - Contributing positively to community and society
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 2–3 years

**Activity**

- Informal screening carried out by SLTs, SLT assistants
- Programme for Two Year Olds (P2YO)
- Formal screening tools used, eg: CLEAR, PLS, Derbyshire language scheme
- Informal tools used, such as Wellcomm or bespoke speech and language therapy tools and speech and language therapy clinical observation and recording
- SLT acts upon reports of concern from parent and creche staff, family support workers, bilingual workers, Sure Start staff (HV, Toybox), day care and private nursery staff, and gives tailored advice

**Impact**

- **Child**
  - Earlier identification and support for children with SLCN, including further assessment and onwards referral
- **Parents/carers**
  - Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern
  - Parents are better able to support their child’s SLCN
- **Wider workforce**
  - Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN; staff are aware of typical and atypical speech, language and communication (SLC) development
- **Local community (public health)**
  - There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business
  - The results of the screening processes can be used to build a picture of the wider public health needs of the population and inform wider government initiatives to support SLC at a regional and national level

**Sure Start outcomes**

- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training in speech, language and communication (SLC) development to both parents/carers and other groups, eg: &lt;br&gt; • Sure Start staff &lt;br&gt; • Homestart volunteers and other voluntary or statutory agencies</td>
<td>• Child &lt;br&gt; • Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in early years setting &lt;br&gt; • Improvement in the child’s educational attainment and social skills &lt;br&gt; • The key SLCN are identified and this will inform decision-making for management of SLCN if identified</td>
<td>• Being healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SLTs provide accredited and evidence-based training, eg: &lt;br&gt; • Elklan &lt;br&gt; • Hanen &lt;br&gt; • Makaton &lt;br&gt; • ICAN and bespoke training</td>
<td>• Parents/carers &lt;br&gt; • Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern &lt;br&gt; • Parents are better able to support their child’s SLCN</td>
<td>• Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wider workforce &lt;br&gt; • Staff have been empowered to identify speech and language concerns and know how to access advice &lt;br&gt; • Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment &lt;br&gt; • Staff have a greater understanding of the role they play in meeting a child’s SLCN</td>
<td>• Local community (public health) &lt;br&gt; • There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business</td>
<td>• Living in safety with stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Living in a society which respects their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 2–3 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interpret results of specific screening and investigate further as required</td>
<td>• Child</td>
<td>• Being healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Undertake research, quality assurance and audit of speech and language services, including the development of care pathways and protocols</td>
<td>• Child benefits from earlier referral to other services (eg community paediatrics, core SLT)</td>
<td>• Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide specific and specialist advice/support to meet child’s individual needs including language development, dysfluency, voice, phonology, and advise re management of children with complex needs and hearing impairment</td>
<td>• Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in early years setting</td>
<td>• Living in safety with stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide specialist SLT-led language group interventions to target specific needs in the areas of attention and listening, expressive and receptive language, parent and child interaction, attachment and play, and social communication</td>
<td>• Child receives the appropriate intervention specific to their needs</td>
<td>• Living in a society which respects their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liaise with health, education and voluntary agencies to develop care pathways and protocols for children with SLCN</td>
<td>• Parents/carer</td>
<td>• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop resource materials to help parents, early years workers and other professionals develop language skills of children with SLCN, eg language boxes, Wee Talk packs</td>
<td>• Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern</td>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support transition to playgroup/nursery post-Programme for Two Year Old (P2YO)</td>
<td>• Wider workforce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff have been empowered to identify speech and language concerns and know how to access advice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Staff have a greater understanding of the role they play in meeting a child’s SLCN</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local community (public health)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business</td>
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</table>
### The role and Impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 2–3 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Hosting of events (eg Chatterbox Challenge, shopping centre leaflets (eg Talking Point)</td>
<td>- <strong>Child</strong>&lt;br&gt;Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in early years setting&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Parents/carers</strong>&lt;br&gt;Parents can easily access accurate and evidence-based information regarding speech, language and communication (SLC) development&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Signposting to relevant events enables parents and others to be more aware of services available to them and their child</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>Being healthy</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Providing speech and language therapy workshops for general Sure Start staff</td>
<td><strong>Wider workforce</strong>&lt;br&gt;Staff can easily access accurate and evidence-based information regarding SLC development&lt;br&gt;- Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment</td>
<td>- <strong>Living in safety with stability</strong>&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Living in a society which respects their rights</strong>&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hosting awareness-raising campaigns, eg Ditch the Dummy, 2 Rhymes by 2</td>
<td><strong>Local community (public health)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Discourse in the local community changes to reflect key messages that support SLC development, eg time parents spend on mobile phones; use of library</td>
<td>- <strong>Contributing positively to community and society</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hosting programmes, eg Rhyme Time, Bookstart programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Producing and disseminating resources, eg I Can, Sparkle Box, Nursery Rhymes, Chatterpacks, home play materials</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Signpost to recognised websites like ICAN, National Literacy Trust, Talking Point, Words for Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Signpost families to community groups such as Rhyme Time in libraries, and local community groups such as Talking to our Babies, which also have similar public health messages to promote</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Public health messaging**

- Activity: Hosting of events (eg Chatterbox Challenge, shopping centre leaflets (eg Talking Point)<br>- Providing speech and language therapy workshops for general Sure Start staff<br>- Hosting awareness-raising campaigns, eg Ditch the Dummy, 2 Rhymes by 2<br>- Hosting programmes, eg Rhyme Time, Bookstart programmes<br>- Producing and disseminating resources, eg I Can, Sparkle Box, Nursery Rhymes, Chatterpacks, home play materials<br>- Signpost to recognised websites like ICAN, National Literacy Trust, Talking Point, Words for Life<br>- Signpost families to community groups such as Rhyme Time in libraries, and local community groups such as Talking to our Babies, which also have similar public health messages to promote
## The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 3–4 years

**Activity**
- Informal screening carried out by SLTs/SLT assistants
- Formal screening tools used, eg: CLEAR, PLS, Derbyshire language scheme
- Informal tools used, such as Wellcomm or bespoke speech and language therapy tools, and speech and language therapy clinical observation and recording
- SLT acts upon reports of concern from parent and creche staff, family support workers, bilingual workers, Sure Start staff (HV, Toybox), day care and private nursery staff, and gives tailored advice

**Impact**
- **Child**
  - Earlier identification and support for children with SLCN, including further assessment and onwards referral
  - **Parents/careers**
    - Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern
    - Parents are better able to support their child’s SLCN
  - **Wider workforce**
    - Increased skills in identifying and supporting children with long-term specific SLCN
    - Staff are aware of typical and atypical speech, language and communication (SLC) development
  - **Local community (public health)**
    - There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business
    - The results of the screening processes can be used to build a picture of the wider public health needs of the population and inform wider government initiatives to support SLC at a regional and national level

**Sure Start outcomes**
- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 3–4 years

### Activity
- Provide training in speech, language and communication (SLC) development to both parents/carers and other groups, eg:
  - Sure Start staff
  - Homestart volunteers and other voluntary or statutory agencies
- SLTs provide accredited and evidence-based training, eg:
  - Elklan Speech and language Support for 3-5s
  - Hanen
  - Makaton
  - ICAN and bespoke training
  - Solihull approach

### Impact
- **Child**
  - Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in early years settings
  - Children have skills necessary to access the curriculum when they start school, ie 'school readiness'; improvement in their educational attainment and social skills
  - The key SLCN are identified and this will inform decision-making for management of SLCN if identified
- **Parents/carers**
  - Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern
  - Parents are better able to support their child’s SLCN
- **Wider workforce**
  - Staff have been empowered to identify speech and language concerns and know how to access advice
  - Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment
  - Staff have a greater understanding of the role they play in meeting a child’s SLCN
- **Local community (public health)**
  - There is a culture of SLC development being everyone’s business

### Sure Start outcomes
- **Being healthy**
- **Enjoying learning and achieving**
- **Living in safety with stability**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights**
- **Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing**
- **Contributing positively to community and society**

---

**Training**
### Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interpret results of specific screening and investgate further as required</td>
<td>• Child&lt;br&gt;  - Child benefits from earlier referral to other services (eg community paediatrics, core SLT)&lt;br&gt;  - Child is prepared for change of education setting&lt;br&gt;  - Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in education setting&lt;br&gt;  - Child receives the appropriate intervention specific to their needs</td>
<td>• Being healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supporting transition into nursery or playgroup</td>
<td>• Parents/carer&lt;br&gt;  - Increased knowledge and awareness of normal speech and language development and cause for concern&lt;br&gt;  - Parents are better able to support their child’s specific SLCN</td>
<td>• Enjoying learning and achieving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Undertake research, quality assurance and audit of speech and language services including the development of care pathways and protocols</td>
<td>• Wider workforce&lt;br&gt;  - Staff have been empowered to identify speech and language concerns and know how to access advice&lt;br&gt;  - Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment&lt;br&gt;  - Staff have a greater understanding of the role they play in meeting a child’s SLCN</td>
<td>• Living in safety with stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide specific and specialist advice/support to meet child’s individual needs including language development, dysfluency, voice, phonology and advise re management of children with complex needs and hearing impairment</td>
<td>• Local community (public health)&lt;br&gt;  - There is a culture of speech, language and communication (SLC) development being everyone’s business&lt;br&gt;  - Improved access to specialist SLT support/advice</td>
<td>• Living in a society which respects their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide specialist SLT-led language group interventions to target specific needs in the areas of attention and listening, expressive and receptive language, parent and child interaction, attachment, and play and social communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liaise with health, education and voluntary agencies to develop care pathways and protocols for children with SLCN</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contributing positively to community and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop resource materials to help parents, early years workers and other professionals develop language skills of children with SLCN, eg language boxes, Wee Talk packs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support transition to playgroup/nursery post-Programme for Two Year Old (P2YO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The role and impact of speech and language therapy in services for children aged 3–4 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sure Start outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Hosting of events, eg Chatterbox Challenge, distributing leaflets in shopping centres, eg Talking Point website | • Child  
  • Child experiences more-positive communication-friendly language-enriched environment at home and in early years setting | • Being healthy                                       |
| • Providing SLT workshops for general Sure Start staff                  | • Parents/carers  
  • Parents can easily access accurate and evidence-based information regarding speech, language and communication (SLC) development | • Enjoying learning and achieving                        |
| • Hosting awareness-raising campaigns, eg Ditch the Dummy, 2 Rhymes by 2 | • Signposting to relevant events enables parents and others to be more aware of services available to them and the child | • Living in safety with stability                        |
| • Hosting programmes, eg Rhyme Time, Bookstart programmes              | • Wider workforce  
  • Staff can easily access accurate and evidence-based information regarding SLC development | • Living in a society which respects their rights          |
| • Producing and disseminating resources, eg I Can, Sparkle Box, Nursery Rhymes, Chatterpacks, home play materials  | • Staff have increased confidence in creating a communication-rich environment                     | • Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing      |
| • Signpost to recognised websites like ICAN, National Literacy Trust, Talking Point, Words for Life                  | • Local community (public health)  
  • Discourse in the local community changes to reflect key messages that support SLC development, eg time parents spend on mobile phones; use of library | • Contributing positively to community and society       |
| • Signpost families to community groups such as Rhyme Time in library, local community groups such as Talking to our Babies, which also have similar public health messages to promote |                                                                                                     |                                                          |
Data sources

The following table suggests data sets currently being collected, which may provide useful benchmarking information for use as outcome indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Percentage of children with SLCN against normal population (7-10% vs 50% in deprived communities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Percentage of population accessing Sure Start services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) data sets– cypsp.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sure Start Play including parental questionnaires and evaluations of speech and language service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of children on child protection register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• WellComm and informal and formal SLC screening results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Universal screening info from the Healthy Child, Healthy Future programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Statistics for referrals to core SLT services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Statistics for referrals to other health and social care services, Sure Start services and community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individual and family case studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sure Start staff evaluation of SLT service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sure Start Play records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitoring of children on entry and exit to programme for two year olds (PFTYO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bottle and dummy use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quantity and severity of referrals to core SLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of parents/Sure Start staff/early years staff attending training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of parents/Sure Start staff/early years staff obtaining certification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLT interventions and public health messaging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Language development of children on entry into nursery school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Statistics for referrals to core SLT services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of transition reports completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of home visits completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of direct child contacts, e.g., to provide individual advice or programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of parent contacts to provide specific advice or programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of libraries by children aged under 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellcomm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure Start Language Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRISC (Bristol Surveillance of Children’s Communication)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **REEL**  
(Receptive Expressive Emergent Language assessment) | Birth – 3 years | Speech and language therapist | Parental report Observation | YES US data only | Validated against the *Developmental Assessment of Young Children*, the *Early Language Milestone Scale - Second Edition*, and the *Cognitive Abilities Test - Second Edition* | Not known. | NO | Assessment information/results only | Can be repeated | Could not find UK supplier £56 for manual |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **WILSTAAR**  
(Ward Infant Language Screening Test Assessment Acceleration & Remediation) | 8–10 months | Health visitor undertakes initial screen, at risk followed up by speech and language therapy | Parental report Observation | Between 8 and 10 months | NO | No evidence of validity studies, but linked with the REEL (see above) | Not known | YES | Prescribed programme for infants identified at risk following screen | Not in print in recent years |
| **Universal Assessment of Neurodevelopment** | One-off assessment at 30 months | Health visitors | Parental report Picture stimuli | At 30 months | NO | Ongoing validity studies, based in Glasgow University | Sensitivity at 87% and specificity at 67% in predicting ongoing difficulties | NO | Indicator of future need/risk only | NO | Used as a predictor of future neuro-developmental difficulties 1 to 2 years later | Items available separately from different sources, rather than as pack |
| **The Communication** Series for 3 – Education, Observation | Anytime between 3 | NO | No evidence of | No | Information can help | Can be repeated, but | £29.99 for 3-year |
| Trust’s Speech, Language and Communication Progression tools | 18-year olds | childcare staff | Test questions | years and 18 years | validity studies | evidence | staff to group children by ability. No integral intervention | no direct comparison between scores | screening tool | £101.97 for pack of all 4-18 year screening tools |
## External evidence sources

These references provide an evidence base for the speech and language therapy interventions included in this document. They are listed according to the activity headings and are also referenced by application to age group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Antenatal</th>
<th>0–18 months</th>
<th>18 months – 2 years</th>
<th>2–3 years</th>
<th>3–4 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Screening</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seager E &amp; Abbot-Smith K. Can early years professionals determine which preschoolers have comprehension delays? A comparison of two screening tools. <em>Child Language Teaching and Therapy</em> 2016; 33 (1): 67-79. Available from: journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0265659016650977 Early years staff can accurately assess the language comprehension of 2-year-olds if provided with a tool that gives specific instructions on administration, but current frequently used procedures (EYFS:UCCS) are not fit for this purpose. The WellComm had good-to-acceptable levels of sensitivity and specificity, and significantly correlated with the Preschool Language Scale.</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>• Berkman ND, et al. <em>Screening for speech and language delays and disorders in children age 5 years or younger: a systematic review for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force</em>. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2015. Available from: <a href="http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305674">www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305674</a> Studies examining the ASQ in children ages 2 years, 3.5 years and 4.5 years reported comparably low sensitivity at all three ages (ranging from 50% to 59%), and better specificity for the 2- and 3.5-year-old samples (95% and 92%) than for the older sample (79% and 83%). Comparisons indicated that sensitivity and specificity of the toddler and preschool CDI versions were fairly close, suggesting that the CDI is robust in its ability to detect a language delay across the toddler and preschool years.</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>• Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health. <em>Screening tools compared to parental concern for identifying speech and language delays in preschool children: a review of the diagnostic accuracy</em>. Ottowa: CADTH, 2013. Available from: <a href="http://www.cadth.ca/screening-tools-compared-parental-concern-identifying-speech-and-language-delays-preschool-children">www.cadth.ca/screening-tools-compared-parental-concern-identifying-speech-and-language-delays-preschool-children</a> No health technology assessments, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, randomised controlled trials or non-randomised studies were identified regarding the effectiveness of screening tools compared to parents’ expressions of concern to detect speech and language delays in preschool children.</td>
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<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Antenatal</td>
<td>0–18 months</td>
<td>18 months – 2 years</td>
<td>2–3 years</td>
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<td>Four language screening instruments for children under 36 months of age: the Early Language Milestone Scale (ELM Scale-2; Coplan, 1993), The Capute Scales: Cognitive Adaptive Test/Clinical Linguistic and Auditory Milestone Scale (CAT/CLAMS; Accardo &amp; Capute, 2005), the Language Development Survey (LDS; Rescorla, 1989), and the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventories (CDI; Fenson et al, 1994) Researchers and practitioners should carefully consider how language screening tools relate to the population they work with. Each tool in this review has drawbacks in terms of sample characteristics, gold standard comparison tools or lack of data on sensitivity and specificity. Despite these concerns, the tools that were identified can, and should, be useful for a variety of reasons.</td>
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<td>Training</td>
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<td>Brief SLT training for early childhood educators can lead to increased use of some interaction strategies that help children’s communication skills develop.</td>
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<td>• Nottinghamshire Sure Start Children’s Centres ‘Home Talk’ service: supporting two-year-olds with delayed language skills and their parents/carers. Available from: tinyurl.com/hjs674a</td>
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<td>A parent-implemented intervention for two-year-old children with delayed language development involving a series of home visits by a children centre worker. Health visitors identified the children and the speech and language therapy service provided the training. This intervention was evaluated with 16 families before the intervention, immediately after and at four-month follow-up, by measuring expressive vocabulary, pragmatics and parental stress. Twelve of the children’s language skills developed at an accelerated rate and had caught up with age expectations by three years of age. Five were identified as having SLCN and were referred to specialist services.</td>
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<td>Evidence</td>
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<td>• The Learning Language and Loving It programme increased early years practitioners’ use of abstract language and the frequency of children’s verbal responses to this abstract language in a book-sharing activity.</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>• Elklan - Communication Friendly Settings. The Communication Trust, 2017. Available at: <a href="http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/projects/what-works-training/training-database/elklan-communication-friendly-settings/">www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/projects/what-works-training/training-database/elklan-communication-friendly-settings/</a> [Please note: you need to register to view this page]</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>• Elklan A key component of <em>Talking Matters</em> was the accredited ‘Speech and Language Support for 0-3s’ course. file:///C:/Users/alisonmccullough/Downloads/Final_Elklan_Evaluation_Report_2017_University_of_Sheffield.pdf</td>
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<td>Evidence</td>
<td>SLT interventions</td>
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<td><strong>General references</strong></td>
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<td>• Fuller A. Speech and language therapy in Sure Start Local Programmes: a survey-based analysis of practice and innovation. <em>International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders</em> 2010; 45(2): 182- 203.</td>
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