



"Children who find
communication hard find life hard"
Gascoigne, M.T. (ed). (2012)

Language Launchpad Report

May 2025



RCSLT
NORTHERN
IRELAND



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1. Acknowledgements

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Northern Ireland (RCSLT NI) would like to thank the Department of Education for funding the innovative *Language Launchpad*. This has showcased what can be achieved by collaboration between the Department of Education, the Department of Health, our health and education colleagues, the voluntary and community sector and our families working together for the benefit of our children.



Department of
Education
www.education-ni.gov.uk



FNResearch
Information - Knowledge - Clarity



Key Partners of Language Launchpad

1. Department of Education

The Department's primary statutory duty is to promote the education of the people of Northern Ireland and to ensure the effective implementation of education policy. The Department's main statutory areas of responsibility are 0-4 provision, primary, postprimary and special education and the youth service.

The Department is accountable through its Minister to the Assembly for the effective delivery of its statutory functions and for the effective use of the public funds for which it is responsible. It is supported in delivering its functions by a range of Arm's Length Bodies, each of which is accountable to the Department.

Every CHILD is the Department's Corporate Plan for the period 2023-28 and is available at corporate and business planning.

2. Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Northern Ireland

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is the professional body for speech and language therapists in the UK. As well as providing leadership and setting professional standards, the RCSLT facilitates and promotes research into the field of speech and language therapy, promotes better education and training of speech and language therapists, and provides its members and the public with information about speech and language therapy.

3. Help Kids Talk

Help Kids Talk is an award-winning and evidence-informed project within the Early Intervention Lisburn partnership including Resurgam Trust, SEHSCT and Barnardo's NI as lead partners. The Help Kids Talk vision is that **"everyone will work together to help kids talk"**.

The project is a community-wide initiative and aims to ensure everyone who has any responsibility for a child prioritises speech, language, and communication development. This project results in a positive impact across all areas of a child's life including educational attainment, mental health and wellbeing, social relationships, and employability later in life.

4. Resurgam Development Trust

The Resurgam Development Trust is a community owned and led organisation of over 1,000 members including 40 member groups and 8 social enterprises. The Trust aims to provide employment opportunities, address inequalities in health and education and help to deliver better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

5. FN Research

FN Research is an award-winning, leading market and social research consultancy based in Northern Ireland. Since 2011, it has provided data-driven insights for businesses, organisations, and government bodies.

Their research delivers clear, actionable intelligence, empowering organisations to make informed, strategic decisions in a competitive landscape through insights, knowledge, and understanding of human needs and behaviour. FN Research specialises in both quantitative and qualitative research, including surveys, focus groups, and in-depth interviews

6. Language Launchpad 2024/2025 steering group representatives:

- Public Health Agency
- RCSLT NI
- Help Kids Talk
- Early Intervention Lisburn
- Resurgam Development Trust
- South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

With special thanks to: Everyone who took the time to complete the Language Launchpad survey, without you the outcomes would not have been possible.

Also further thanks all the children, young people and their families, speech and language therapists, Sure Start and focus group participants who have contributed to the development and creation of the Language Launchpad resources.

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Northern Ireland would like to express our gratitude to expert members Dr Val Brooks and Stephen Parsons for their valuable contribution to the bitesize video resources.

In this report where we mention SLCN we are referring to Speech, Language and Communication Needs. Where we mention SLC, we are referring to Speech, Language and Communication.

2. Executive Summary

The importance and impact of speech, language and communication on all aspects of a child's life are well evidenced and accepted. The RCSLT NI highlighted the increasing numbers of children needing speech and language support in Northern Ireland in our 2024 report *We are the Village* and our concerns regarding the capacity of speech and language therapists to provide the necessary supports. As a result, the Department of Education funded our proposal to work with the statutory and voluntary community partnership Help Kids Talk to develop universal approaches to support the speech, language and communication development of our babies and young children in the early years. Language Launchpad was born.

Language Launchpad has offered the opportunity to hear from all those in Northern Ireland who parent, care for or work with babies, children and young people in any capacity. The fantastic response to the survey further demonstrates the increasing needs and desire for services and resources across the board. Hearing the voices of those who care for young children with speech, language and communication needs has been crucial to ensure the resources produced as part of this project are relevant and effective in supporting the needs of those working in the early years sector and indeed of parents and carers.

In section 4, our survey results show that almost half of the respondents were parents and carers of which 45% were concerned about their child's speech, language and communication development. Only 33% of parents (who had concerns about their child's communication) felt supported by professionals with over half acknowledging that communication difficulties have had a

negative impact on their own mental health. Regarding the wider impacts for the baby, child or young person, we observe almost universal agreement amongst the medical, health and social care professionals that speech, language and communication needs impact upon a child's education, emotional health and wellbeing, behaviour, friendships and play skills.

In line with the findings from our 2024 report *We are the Village*, 91% of practitioners working or volunteering with children note seeing an increase in the numbers of children with speech, language and communication needs. This figure rose to 96% for Speech and Language Therapists who were also surveyed and asked about the increase in need. 98% of practitioners working with children also report an increase in the complexity of these needs and worryingly, only 42% of them agree that young children are ready to enter their setting, meaning less than half of children attending can readily engage in the curriculum and /or activities offered.

The report highlights significant gaps in awareness of support for early communication development. Only half of parents know where to access help or training for their child's speech, language and communication needs. Additionally, 73% of practitioners working with young children report a need for more support and resources.

Section 5 of the report highlights a significant increase in uptake of the Help Kids Talk Basic Awareness and Level 1 training among parents and professionals across Northern Ireland. In response to survey findings, Help Kids Talk also developed a suite of resources, including bitesize videos, printable checklists and information sheets, to support those working

with babies and young children. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with encouraging suggestions for future use of the materials.

We know the lifetime economic costs of unsupported language needs in UK children are estimated to be around £330 million (Pro Bono Economics, 2021). Early intervention is not a luxury, it is critical to give our babies and children the best start in life and must be prioritised at the highest level. We have a duty to collectively advocate for communication as a fundamental right, which if not supported impinges on a child or young person's ability to thrive in life (Macrae, 2025). Speech and language therapists have a vital role in supporting children to realise their potential, given the serious implications of not addressing them.

Essentially, we must ensure that there is both an effective and sustainable speech and language therapy workforce and a skilled early years workforce in Northern Ireland to adequately meet the increasing needs of our children and young people without delay.



Ruth Sedgewick
Head of NI
RCSLT



Did you know?

Over 10% of children and young people in the UK have some form of long-term communication need which impacts on their daily life (Norbury et al, 2017).

3. Background of Language Launchpad

The RCSLT NI's early years report *We are the Village* was published in April 2024. This report details the importance of speech, language and communication in our children and young people and highlights the impact with research statistics across a range of areas. We surveyed early years practitioners and community paediatricians who indicated that they had seen not only an increase in numbers of children with SLCN, but also in the complexity of need. The graphics below are taken from the 2024 report.

INCREASE IN NEED

Early Years Providers

90%

have seen an increase in the number of children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs.



Community Paediatricians

91%

have seen an increase in the number of children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs.



COMPLEXITY OF NEED

EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS

88%

have seen an increase in the complexity of SLCN

COMMUNITY PAEDIATRICIANS

95%

have seen an increase in the complexity of SLCN



COMPLEXITY OF NEED

96%

of community paediatricians reported an increase in referrals to the **Autism Assessment Clinic**



70%

of community paediatricians reported an increase in referrals to the **Child Development Clinic**

Language Launchpad has been funded by the Department of Education Northern Ireland. It was a short-term project which took place from September 2024 to March 2025 in partnership with Help Kids Talk, with a primary focus on the early years (0- 5 years).

The aims of Language Launchpad were to:

- To gain a better understanding of what the Northern Ireland childcare sector, pre-school educators, youth organisations, the voluntary and community sector and parents want and need in relation to speech, language and communication training and further support.

Did you know?

A two-year-old's language development can strongly predict their reading skills on entry into school, as well as their later attainment (Snowling et al., 2011).

- To promote the well-established and evidence-informed, universal training programmes from Help Kids Talk, which will have a wider, regional reach demonstrated by increased uptake from the childcare, pre-school sector and parents.
- To co-produce and test relevant and engaging bitesize programmes based on the information from speech and language therapists, parents and childcare/ pre-school partners.

To achieve our objectives:

The RCSLT commissioned FN Research to create an online survey to prevent biased interpretation of data and independent reporting of results. Whilst Language Launchpad focused on 0–5-year-olds, the survey itself covered the full age range of 0–19 years. It was coproduced with a wide range of stakeholders that included parents, childminders, early years staff, social workers, teachers, classroom assistants, speech and language therapists, sports coaches and youth leaders.

Methodology

The project was conducted via an online survey facilitated by FN Research. FN Research designed the questionnaire based on input from the RCSLT NI.

The RCSLT NI provided the respondents contacts through a series of their established networks. FN Research hosted the survey, analysed the data, and reported on the findings

The survey was disseminated to a wide range of stakeholders as four individual surveys, with the target audiences being:

1. Parents/Carers
2. Early Years Practitioners
3. Health, Social Care and Medical Professions
4. Speech and Language Therapists

Creswell and Creswell (2017) suggest between 10 and 50 participants as a sufficient number of participants for qualitative research. Our aim was to have a minimum of 50 respondents from each survey. Chang et al (2006) and Patton (2002) indicated that this sample size is adequate to review the phenomenon and research questions therefore increasing the validity and confidence interval of the data collected and allowing for assertions from the findings.

Additional Information

The questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The survey was open from 10th December 2024 to 6th January 2025.

Number of respondents (N) = 1089 surveys in total were completed.

The survey was conducted across Northern Ireland; a questionnaire link was provided to RCSLT NI, who passed it on to a series of their networks and contacts.

All activities within the project were conducted within the MRS Code of Conduct and guidelines.

Where the results indicated the need for further exploration, we held focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the issues raised. These included one for parents and one for public health nurses.

Upon circulation of the survey, we also shared the links to the free speech, language and communication development training provided by Help Kids Talk. As part of this project, we also had the ability to deliver some face-to-face training to larger groups. We monitored and compared the uptake from the same timeframe in the previous year.

From the results of the survey and focus groups, Help Kids Talk created resources to meet the needs identified by the stakeholders.

Further focus groups were held to coproduce and review the resources.

4. Survey Results

The survey had a total response rate of 1089, of this the breakdown of respondents was:

- Parents/Carers (N=473)
- Practitioners* (N=487)
- Health, Social Care and Medical Staff (N=55)
- Speech and Language Therapists (N=74)

*This included teachers, classroom assistants, community volunteers, early years staff etc
Respondents were spread across all Health and Social Care Trust regions and Council areas.

Did you know?

24-month-old children with larger oral vocabularies displayed greater reading and mathematics achievement, increased behavioural self-regulation, and fewer externalizing and internalizing behaviours at school entry (Morgan et al., 2016).



Parent Survey Key Results



45%

believed that
their children
had SLCN

of these...

26%

were worried
about 3–4
year-olds

34%

were worried
about
P1/P2

65%

were concerned
about 1 child

35%

were concerned about
2 or more children

11%

of families were
bilingual (speak
2 languages)

2%

families were
multilingual (speak
more than 2 languages)

Key presenting concerns for parents

	Early Years	Overall
Autism	51%	51%
Difficulties with spoken language	37%	31%
Speech Sound Disorder/Unclear Speech	27%	29%
Developmental Language Disorder	27%	22%
Difficulties with understanding language	20%	19%

Biggest areas of concern specifically relating to SLCN

Area of Concern	Early Years	Overall
Speech Sounds (unclear speech)	69%	63%
Social Interaction (ability to mix with others)	55%	53%
Attention and Listening Skills	50%	51%
Spoken Language (using words)	53%	46%
Understanding what others say	31%	30%

Who had parents raised concerns with?

Professional	Early Years	Overall
Health Visitor	81%	61%
Class Teacher (Primary)	20%	54%
Class Teacher/ Leader (Nursery School) / Pre-School Education Setting	60%	48%
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) / Learning Support Coordinator (LSC)	27%	44%
General Practitioner (GP)	28%	32%

59%

of children were currently under care of a Health and Social Care Trust SLT

17%

of children were on waiting list for a Health and Social Care Trust SLT

16%

of children were currently under the care of a private SLT

13%

of children were on waiting list for private SLT

Parents who had concerns indicated that their child was waiting on assessment or had received assessment from the following statutory services:

Assessment	Waiting for Assessment	Known to Service
Autism	29%	27%
ADHD	15%	9%
Child Development Clinic	13%	27%
Educational Psychology	10%	50%

Did you know?

Expressive vocabulary at age 16 months predicts academic achievement 10 years later and at 30 months it predicts achievement in school-leaving exams age 15-16 years (Bleses et al., 2016).

Overview of Parent Feedback on Speech, Language, and Communication (SLC) Development

The survey aimed to assess parent perspectives on their children's speech, language, and communication (SLC) development, with a particular focus on identifying areas of support and concern. Parents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements related to their children's SLC development. Responses were categorized into three groups: "Agreement by all parents," "Agreement by parents with concerns," and "Disagreement by parents with concerns."

Key Findings:

1. Understanding and Communication:

- **"My children understand me":** A high percentage of parents (89%) reported agreement, with 78% of parents expressing agreement even if they had concerns. Only 9% disagreed, indicating that most parents feel their children can understand them.
- **"I can work out what my children are trying to tell me":** Similarly, 84% of parents agreed with this statement, though 12% of parents with concerns disagreed, highlighting a gap in understanding for some families.

2. Developmental Milestones:

- **"They are meeting their developmental milestones":** This statement received mixed feedback, with only 68% of parents in total agreeing. A significant proportion, 47%, disagreed, with 37% of parents with concerns still agreeing. This suggests that developmental progress may be a source of concern for a considerable number of families.

3. Support Networks:

- **"I am well supported by family and friends":** A majority (75%) of parents agreed with this statement, with 65% of parents with concerns still feeling well-supported. However, 17% of parents disagreed, indicating that not all families feel they have adequate social support.
- **"I know where to access support and training":** Only 51% of parents agreed, with a significant 28% disagreeing, particularly among those with concerns. This highlights a need for more accessible information and resources related to support services.

4. Friendship and Social Skills:

- **"My children can make friends":** While 71% of parents overall agreed, the responses show a marked difference among parents with concerns, as only 46% of them felt their children could make friends, compared to 31% who disagreed.

Did you know?

Literacy difficulties are more prevalent in children with speech, language and communication needs (Drockell and Howell, 2015)

5. Behaviour Management:

- **“I can manage my children’s behaviour”**: A majority (76%) of parents agreed, but 16% disagreed, indicating that behaviour management may be an area requiring additional support for some families. Among parents with concerns, 58% agreed, suggesting that behaviour is a notable challenge for those who are more concerned about their children’s SLC development.

6. Developmental Knowledge:

- **“I know what stage of development my children should be at”**: 76% of parents agreed with this statement, with 11% disagreeing. Among parents with concerns, 70% still felt they had a good understanding of their children’s developmental stage.

7. Balancing Family Life:

- **“I can manage appointments and family life in relation to my children”**: 61% of parents agreed, with 66% of those with concerns still expressing confidence in managing this balance. However, 14% disagreed, indicating that time management and scheduling related to SLC appointments may pose challenges for some families.

8. Access to Professionals and Services:

- **“The time taken to be seen by relevant professionals has impacted on SLC development”**: A concerning 40% of parents agreed, with 65% of parents with concerns acknowledging delays in professional support, which appears to be a significant factor affecting SLC development for these families.
- **“I feel supported by professionals”**: Only 42% of parents agreed, with a notable 35% disagreeing. Among those with concerns, 33% felt supported by professionals, highlighting that professional support is a critical area for improvement.

9. Mental Health and Stress:

- **“I feel my mental health has been impacted by my children’s difficulties”**: 33% of parents agreed with a significantly higher 55% of parents with concerns agreeing. This indicates that many parents are experiencing considerable stress, which may have an impact on their mental health.
- **“My children have been seen by professionals in a timely manner”**: Only 31% of parents agreed, and 57% disagreed, particularly among parents with concerns. This suggests significant delays in access to professional care, which may exacerbate challenges related to their children’s SLC development.

Summary of findings

The data indicates that while a majority of parents report positive experiences with their children's SLC development, significant concerns remain, particularly regarding timely access to professional support and mental health impacts. The delay in receiving professional services is particularly pronounced, with many parents indicating that it has hindered their children's progress. Additionally, while most parents feel they can communicate with their children, the ability to manage behaviours, support social skills development and balance family life is of concern for some families.

Question	Agreement by all parents	Agreement by parents with concerns
Do you feel the main care/education setting your child(ren) attend, supports the SLC development of all children?	72%	59%
Do you feel the main care/education setting understand your child(ren)'s SLC needs?	73%	56%
Do the main care/education setting provide activities and strategies to support your child(ren) with their specific SLC needs?	53%	56%

Did you know?

In English and Maths GCSEs, 9.8% of pupils with SLCN achieve pass grades vs 42.4% of their peers
(Department of Education England, 2020)



Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities Among Children with SLCN

The findings indicate a notable disparity in participation in extra-curricular and afterschool activities among children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) compared to their peers.

Only 24% of children whose parents had concerns regarding SLCN had engaged in sports clubs or activity coaching within the past six months, compared to 36% of children overall. Similarly, 24% of children with suspected or identified SLCN participated in after-school activities delivered in school, compared to 33% of children without such concerns.

Participation in summer schemes also showed a slight decline among children with SLCN concerns (27%) compared to their peers (29%). A higher proportion of children with SLCN did not take part in any activities at all—34% compared to 25% of the general child population.

In addition to lower participation rates, parental feedback highlighted significant concerns about the adequacy of support in these settings. Only 38% of parents/carers felt that extra-curricular providers had a good understanding of their child’s SLCN, and just 32% believed that providers were capable of supporting their child’s needs appropriately.

There was a consistent view among parents and carers that staff working across extra-curricular, educational, and private settings would benefit from broader and more comprehensive training on SLCN. This suggests a need for improved awareness, targeted training, and inclusive practices to ensure equitable access and support for all children, particularly those with communication challenges.

45% of parents/carers had attended SLCN training.

The top 3 areas of training attended:

- Parent training provided by the Health and Social Care Trust
- Makaton Training
- Training provided by the voluntary and community sector

70% of parents/carers (who had not attended SLCN training) were not aware of SLCN training that was available to them.

70% of parents/carers (who had concerns about their child’s SLCN) indicated that they would like access to programmes that focus on SLCN, this increased to 74% in the Early Years age range.

We asked parents/carers to indicate what specific training areas that they feel they would like support in:

General advice	15%
Use of phonics	6%
Supporting speech	5%
Knowledge of developmental milestones	5%

We asked parents to indicate from a list of SLCN developmental areas in which they would like further support.

Area of Support	Early Years	Overall
Social communication	55%	53%
Speech sound disorder	46%	43%
Understanding language	38%	34%
Spoken language	34%	34%

We asked parents who stated that they had concerns regarding SLCN to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

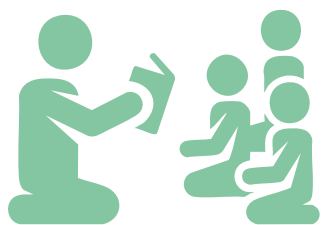
Statement	Agreement
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their ability to socialise	86%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their education	87%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their friendships	84%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their emotional health and well-being	80%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their behaviour	81%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on play skills	74%

Did you know?

Children with speech, language and communication needs in the preschool, early and primary years are approximately twice as likely to develop social, emotional, and mental health difficulties as children with typical language development when followed up between 2 – 12 years (Yew & O'Kearney, 2013).

Practitioner Survey Key Results

This survey was open to a wide range of practitioners, the top 5 respondent groups were:



30%
Mainstream Primary
School Teacher

12%
Nursery Teachers

11%
Playgroup Leaders

9%
Early Years
Practitioners

8%
Childminders

50%
worked with pre-
school aged children

48%
of respondents
had over 20 years'
experience of working
in the sector

60%
indicated
that they
had bilingual
children in their
settings

9%
indicated
that they had
multilingual
children in their
settings

88%
had concerns
about the SLC
development of
children in their
settings

In the Early Years settings, 37% were worried about the SLC development of 21-40% of their children and 15% were concerned about 41-60%.

45% were concerned about the pre-school age, with 30% having worries about Primary 1 and 2 ages.

Key presenting concerns for practitioners:

Area of Concern	Early Years	Overall
Attention and Listening Skills	91%	89%
Speech Sounds (unclear speech)	88%	88%
Social Interaction (ability to mix with others)	69%	68%
Spoken Language (using words)	59%	54%
Understanding what others say	60%	53%

91%

felt that there was an increase in children
presenting with SLCN over the past 5
years

89%

felt that there was an increase in the overall
complexity of children's SLCN over
the past 5 years

Who practitioners have linked in with regarding concerns over a child's SLCN:

Parent/Carer	82%
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) / Learning Support Coordinator (LSC)	67%
Health and Social Care Trust SLT	58%
Educational Psychologist	54%
RISE NI	49%
Education Authority SEN Early Years Service	34%

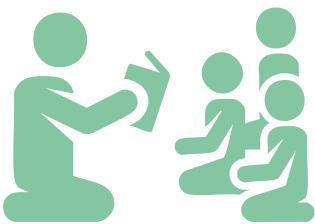
55% of Early Years practitioners had accessed or enquired about private SLT therapy for their settings.

We asked practitioners how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements regarding the overall SLC development of the children in their setting.

Statement	Agreement by all Respondents
I feel well supported by the senior leadership team	72%
I know where to access support and training	66%
Supporting speech, language and communication needs can impact on my ability to fully carry out my role	64%
I feel I can manage/adapt my workload	49%
I feel I am well supported by professionals to help children	42%
My mental health has been impacted by managing the children's speech, language and communication needs	29%

We then asked practitioners to review the following statements in relation to the children in their setting. The results are for most or all of the children.

Statement	Agreement by all Respondents
The children understand me	84%
I am able to manage the children’s behaviours	79%
I am able to work out what the children are trying to tell me	76%
The children can make/maintain friendships	62%
The children are meeting their developmental milestones	57%
The children entering my setting are ready to engage in the curriculum/activities offered	42%
The children are seen by the relevant professionals in a timely manner	15%



71%
felt confident in understanding the specific SLCN of the children

60%
felt confident in supporting the specific SLC development of all children

72%
felt confident in providing activities and strategies to support children with specific SLCN.

However, the self-identified areas which impacted on their ability to provide the appropriate activities or strategies were:

Time	80%
Resources	71%
Funding	62%
Staff	54%
Knowledge	52%

Did you know?

Children with vocabulary difficulties at age five are three times more likely to have mental health problems in adulthood (Law et al., 2009).



22%

felt that parents are empowered to support children with SLCN

20%

indicated that parents had a good understanding of SLCN

82% of Early Years Practitioners had engaged in SLCN training. The top 3 areas of training attended:

- RISE NI
- Makaton/Signing
- Elklan (speech and language therapy approach)

69% of practitioners were not aware of SLCN training that was available to them.

73% of practitioners indicated that they would like access to programmes that focus on SLCN

We asked practitioners to indicate what specific training areas that they feel they would like support in:

Training on supporting communication and how to support according to age	17%
SLT Training/Support	17%
Specific/detailed training on speech and language acquisition and specific strategies	12%
Makaton/Signing Training	9%

We asked practitioners to indicate from a list of SLC developmental areas which would like further support in:

Speech Sound Disorder/Unclear Speech/Childhood Apraxia of Speech	70%
Social Communication	62%
Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)	57%
Understanding Language (understanding what others say)	47%
Spoken Language (using words)	40%

We asked all practitioners to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

Statement	Agreement by all respondents
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their education	98%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their emotional health and wellbeing	97%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their behaviour	95%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their friendships	96%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their ability to socialise	96%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on play skills	92%

Did you know?

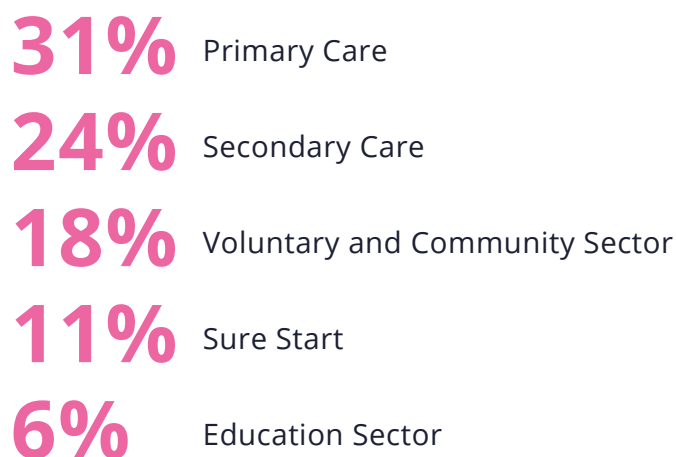
The early years set the stage for a child's later development, forming either sturdy or fragile foundations upon which all other learning and development is built.

(Shonkoff and Phillips, 2020).



Health, Social Care and Medical Professionals Key Results

This survey was open to a wide range of Health, Social Care and Medical professionals, the top 5 respondent settings were:



- 29% of respondents had over 20 years' experience of working in the sector
- 49% worked across the paediatric age range (0-18 years)
- 38% predominately worked with pre-school children
- 84% had concerns about the SLC development of pre-school children

Key presenting concerns for Health, Social Care and Medical Professionals:

Area of Concern	
Speech Sounds (unclear speech)	78%
Non-Speaking	75%
Attention and Listening Skills	73%
Social Interaction (ability to mix with others)	69%
Spoken Language (using words)	62%

We then asked Health, Social Care and Medical professionals to review the following statements in relation to the children they see. The results are for **most or all of the children**.

Statement	All Respondents
The children understand me	66%
I am able to manage the children's behaviours	64%
I am able to work out what the children are trying to tell me	53%
The children are meeting their developmental milestones	47%
The children are seen by the relevant professionals in a timely manner	19%



76%

felt that there was an increase in children presenting with SLCN over the past 5 years

73%

felt that there was an increase in the overall severity of children's SLCN over the past 5 years

86%

felt that there was an increase in the overall complexity of children's SLCN over the past 5 years

51% of staff had engaged in SLCN training. The top 3 areas of training attended:

- General SLC Training
- Hanen (speech and language therapy approach)
- Makaton

70% stated that training in SLCN would be beneficial

We asked staff to indicate what specific training areas that they feel they would like support in:

General advice/training on supporting communication needs	31%
How to support parents (including while they wait for professional input)	24%
Developmental Milestones	15%
Detailed/Specific Training (not generic)	15%

We asked all health, social care and medical professionals to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

Statement	Agreement by all respondents
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their emotional health and well-being	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their education	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their behaviour	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their friendships	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their ability to socialise	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on play skills	95%

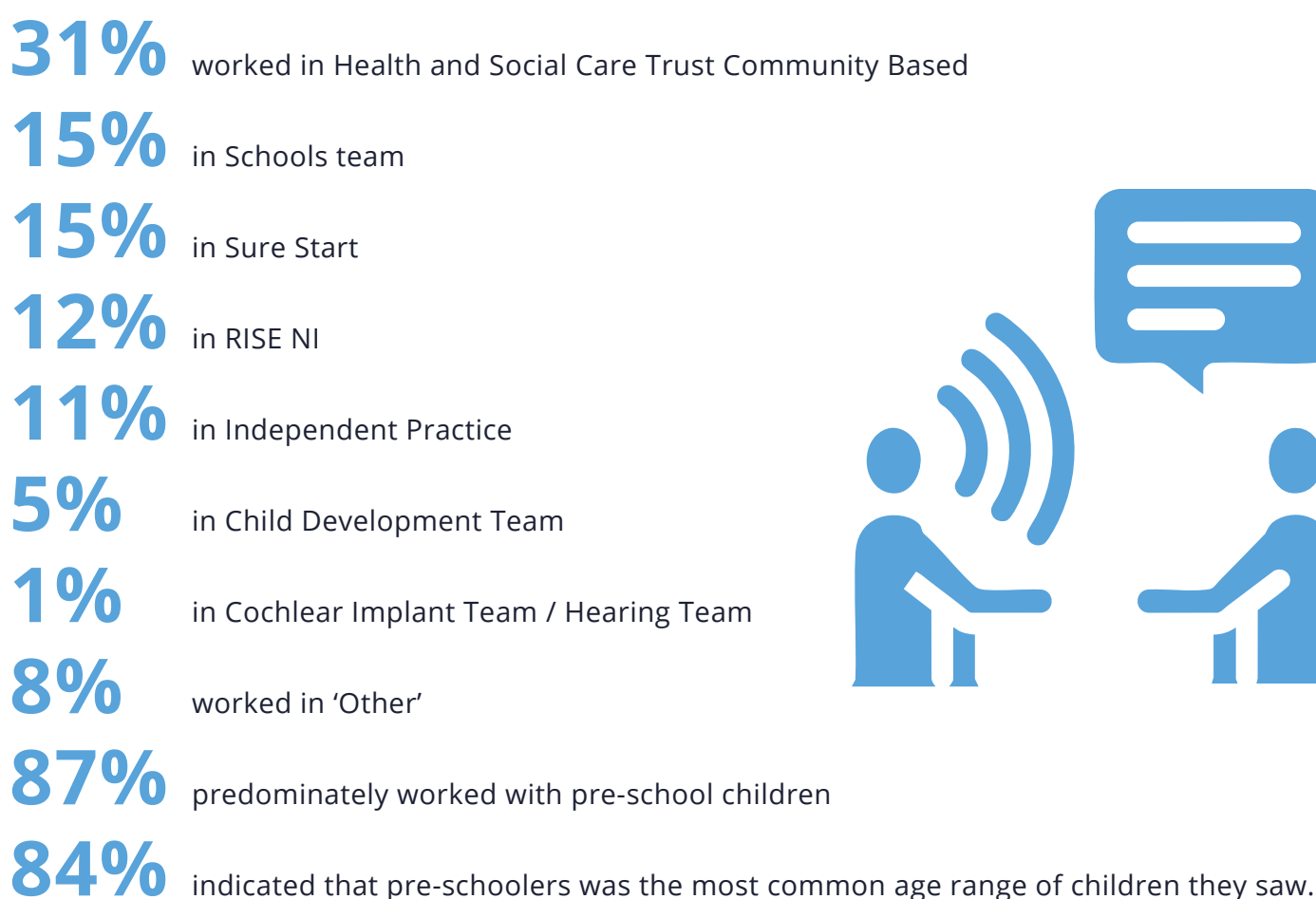
Did you know?

81% of children with emotional behavioural disorders have significant language difficulties (Hollo et al., 2014).

Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) Survey Key Results

This survey gathered background information on the SLT, their views on SLC development over the last few years as well as the perceived training needs of parents, professionals and themselves. As experts in speech, language and communication, it was important to include the views of SLTs, especially in relation to the training needs of parents and professionals.

Main role:



Key presenting areas of concern:

Attention and Listening Skills	74%
Receptive Language	73%
Social Interaction	69%
Expressive Language	66%
Non-Speaking	61%

100% agreed that there is a need for universal training in SLCN for parents and professionals

SLTs identified the following key universal training areas for:

Parents

General Advice	64%
Play	35%
Developmental Milestones	24%
Speech Sound Advice	23%
Language Development	20%

Professionals

General Advice	60%
Language Development	23%
Speech Sound Advice	20%
Developmental Milestones	15%
Using Visuals	15%



96%

felt that there was an increase in children presenting with SLCN over the past 5 years

98%

felt that there was an increase in the overall severity of children's SLCN over the past 5 years

98%

felt that there was an increase in the overall complexity of children's SLCN over the past 5 years

We asked all SLTs to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

Statement	Agreement by all Respondents
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their education	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their friendships	100%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their emotional health and well-being	99%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their behaviour	99%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on their ability to socialise	96%
Children's speech, language and communication needs impact on play skills	88%

Did you know?

People with speech, language and communication needs are six times more likely to experience clinical levels of anxiety and three times more likely to have clinical depression (Conti-Ramsden and Botting, 2008).



Comparative Analysis of the 4 Surveys

We completed a comparative analysis of the 4 datasets regarding the impact of SLCN on children's development. The main insights are as follows:

Broad Agreement on Core Areas

Across all groups, there is strong recognition that SLCN affects education, emotional health, behaviour, and friendships. These areas are consistently acknowledged as critical to a child's development. **Health, Social Care and Medical Professionals** and **SLTs** show the highest levels of agreement across all areas, reflecting their holistic understanding of the interconnected nature of SLCN and its broad impact on children's lives.

Variations in Perspective

Despite widespread agreement, **Parents Concerned About SLCN** tend to show slightly lower levels of agreement compared to professionals. This could reflect a narrower focus on more immediate and visible challenges, such as education and behaviour, that parents may find more pressing. The lower agreement on play skills (74%) suggests that parents may not always recognise the impact of communication difficulties on play, which is foundational for both learning and social interaction.

Significance of Play Skills

The lower agreement on play skills (particularly from parents) reinforces the need to ensure understanding of the significance of play in child development. Play is essential for cognitive, social, and emotional growth, and communication is key to engaging in meaningful play. This finding suggests the need for more targeted education and support to help parents understand how communication challenges can affect play, an area that contributes to many other developmental domains.

Holistic View from Health and Social Care Professionals

The 100% agreement from **Health, Social Care and Medical Professionals** across all core areas of development highlights their broad and holistic understanding of SLCN. Their expertise allows them to see how communication difficulties can influence a child's emotional health, social skills, behaviour, and educational outcomes, often in interconnected ways.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis across all four datasets reveals a consistent understanding of the significant impact of speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) on children's holistic development. **Health, Social Care and Medical Professionals** and **Speech and Language Therapists** show the highest levels of agreement across all areas, reflecting a comprehensive and interconnected view of child development. **Parents Concerned About SLCN** tend to focus more on the more immediate challenges, such as academic performance and behaviour, and show slightly lower agreement on the impact of SLCN on emotional health, play, and socialisation.

These findings suggest that there is a need for continued education and support for parents to help them recognise the full scope of challenges faced by children with SLCN, particularly in areas like play and socialisation. The high levels of agreement from practitioners and professionals underscore the importance of integrated, early interventions that address the full spectrum of developmental needs for children with communication difficulties



Did you know?

Children with speech, language and communication needs are at higher risk of expulsion from school, particularly secondary education, and less likely to advance to further education.
(Clegg et al., 2009)

The detailed survey report can be found by scanning the QR Code here

[Policy and campaigns in Northern Ireland | RCSLT](#)



5. Outcomes of Language Launchpad

One of the key deliverables was to promote the universal training offered by Help Kids Talk in Basic Awareness and Level 1 on speech, language and communication development. All courses are delivered by a speech and language therapist and have been co-designed and developed in partnership with representatives from all sectors. Parents and young people with lived experience have also been consulted to ensure the training is informative and relevant.

Basic Awareness

A 1 hour long training session where Help Kids Talk link their 12 key messages, one for each month of the year, to KCA's 'Five to Thrive' building blocks'. Recognising the link between infant mental health, brain development and speech, language and communication skills. They also share tips for supporting children's language development in daily activities and routines.

Level 1

A 2 hour long training session where Help Kids Talk explore the developmental milestones for speech, language and communication. It shares activities and strategies to support children at different ages and stages and explains when onward referral is appropriate. All who attend the Level 1 training receive a detailed Level 1 training manual.

Uptake of Training

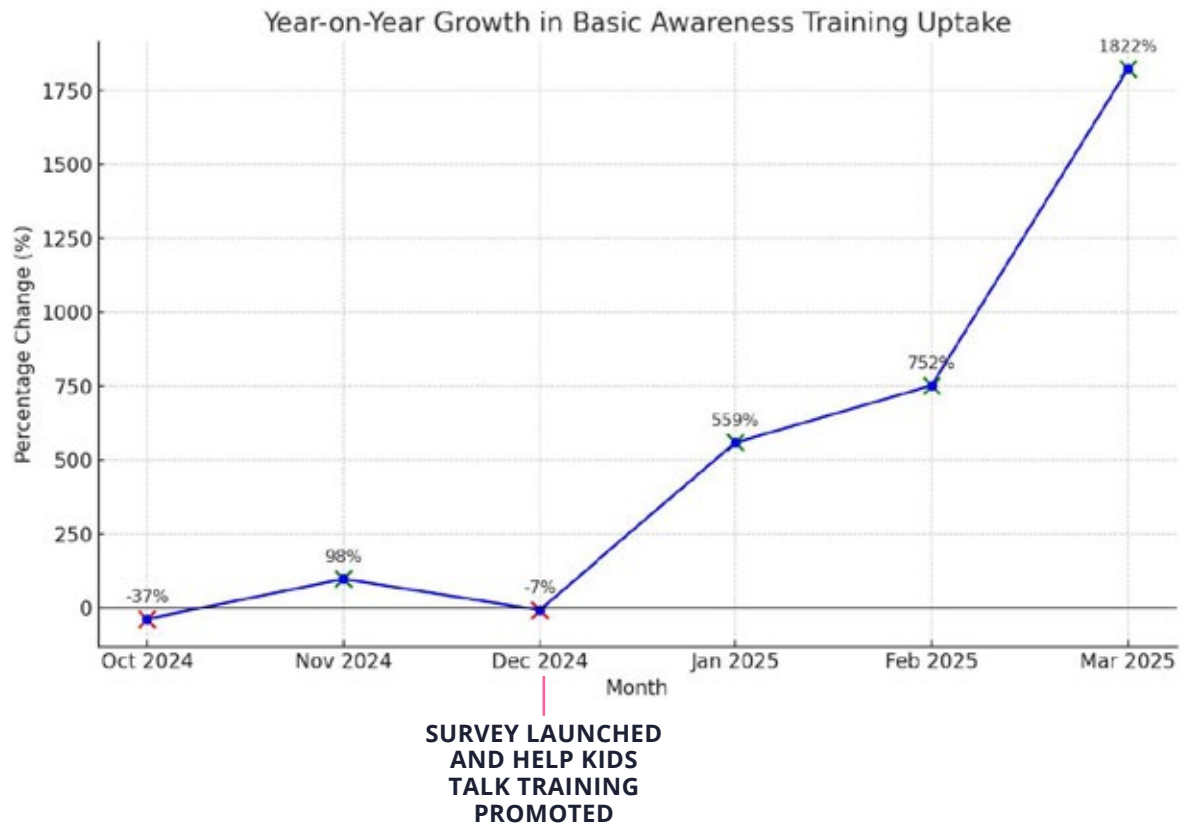
Links to book the training were sent out with the Language Launchpad survey in December 2024 with the option for larger groups to request face to face training.

Basic Awareness Training

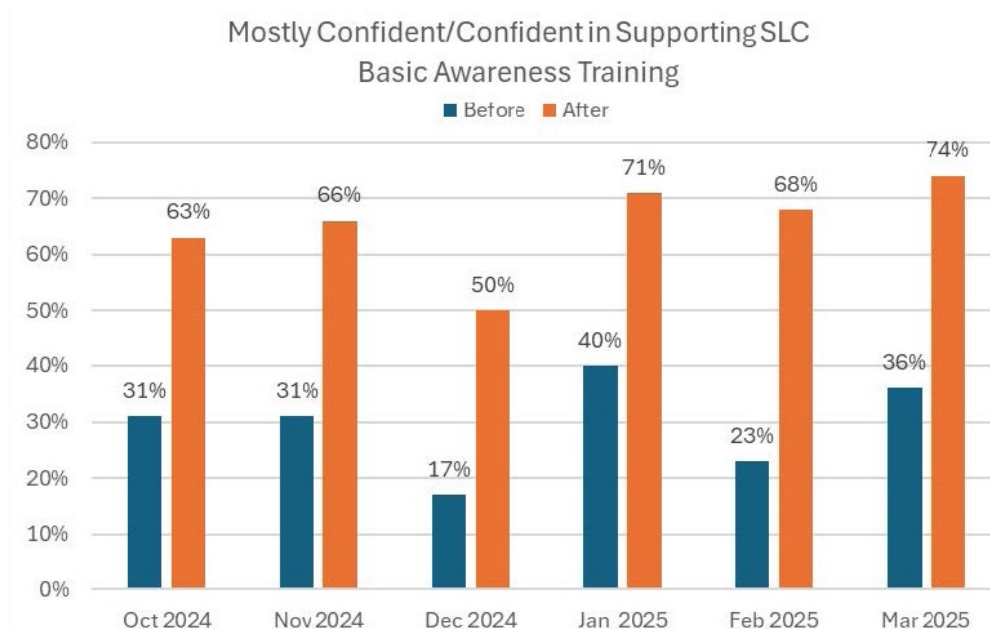
The table below shows the increased uptake for the Basic Awareness training:

Did you know?

Up to 60% of young people in the youth justice estate have communication difficulties with 46-47% of these in the poor or very poor range. Many of these individuals have experienced poverty and adverse childhood experiences (Bryan et al., 2007).

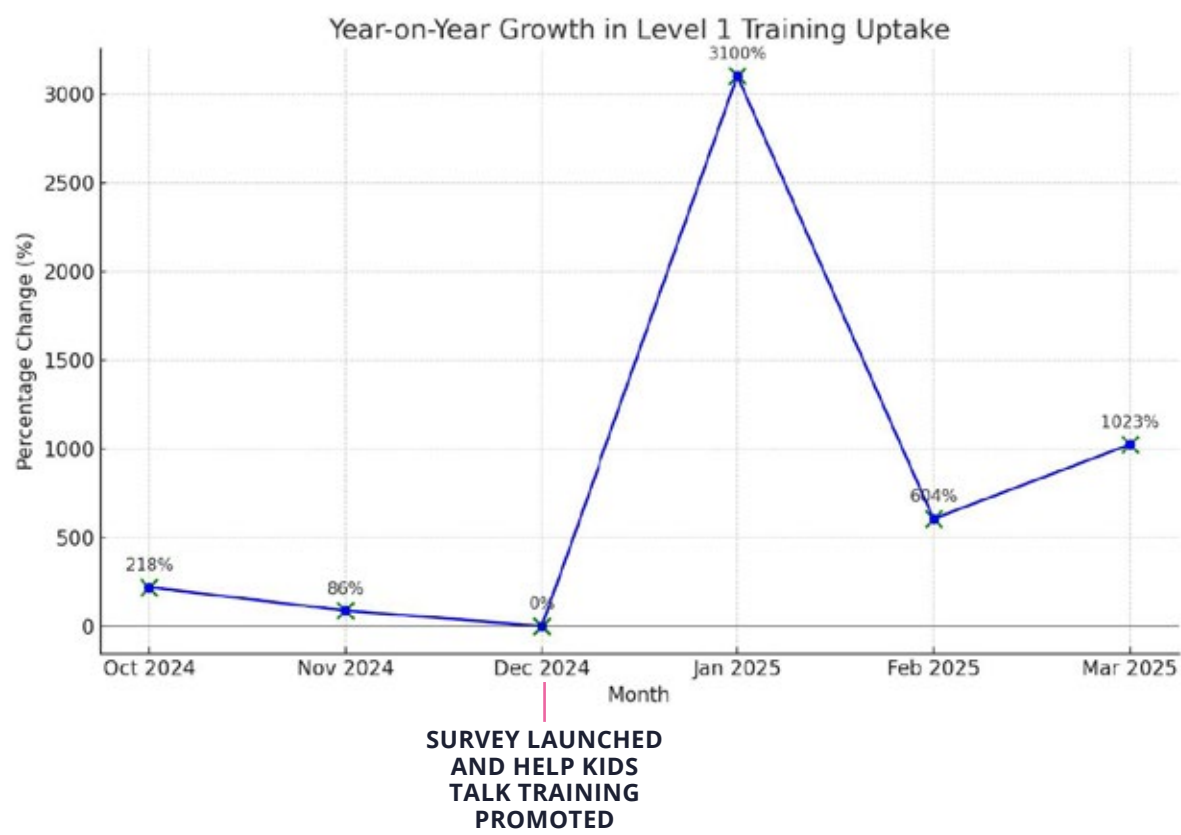


Further evaluation looked at how confident people were in SLCN before and after the training:

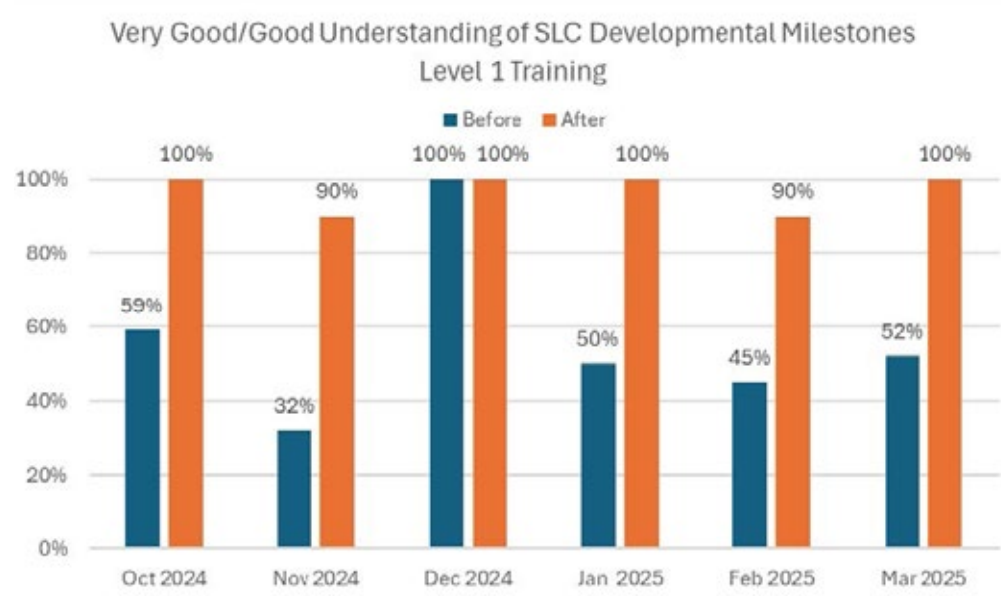


Level 1 Training

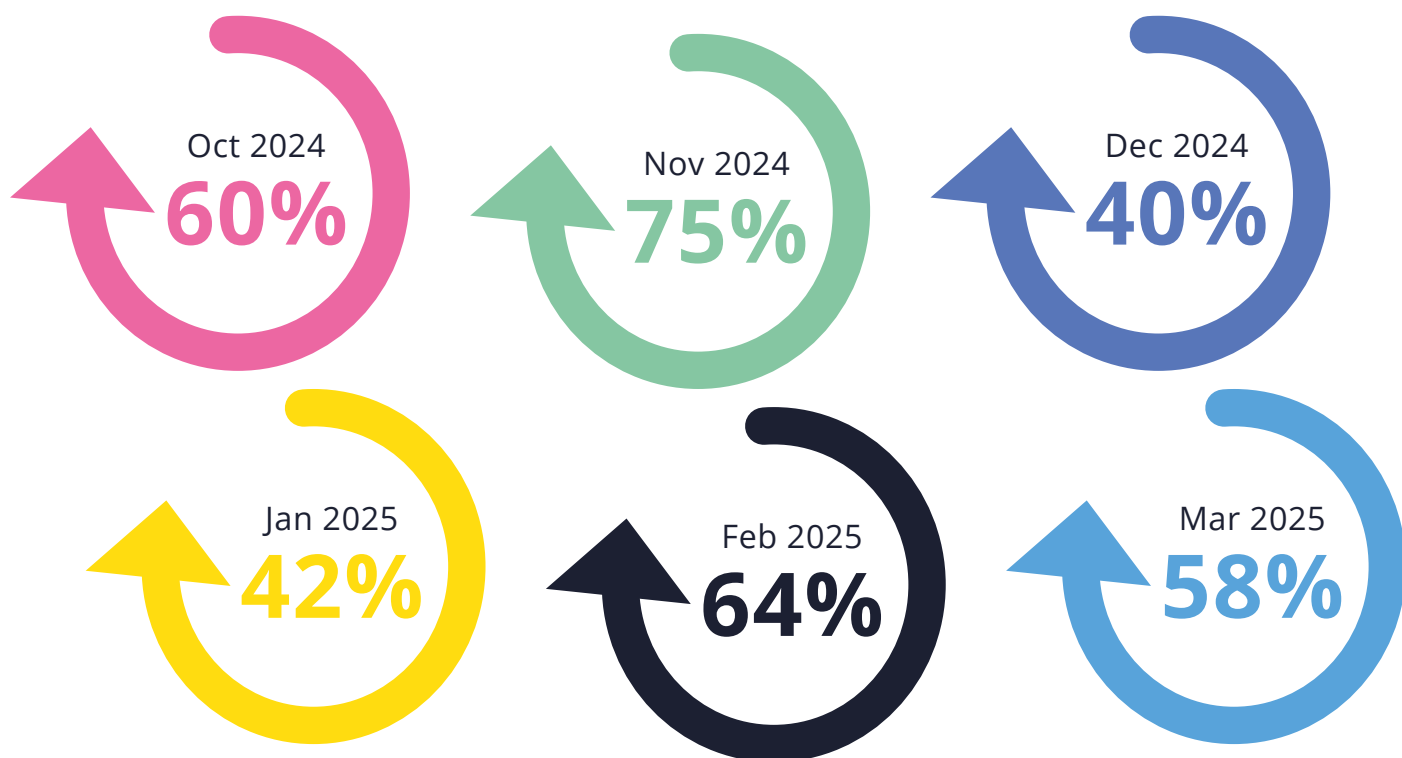
The table below shows the increased uptake for the Level 1 training:



Further evaluation looked at how confident participants were in SLCN before and after the training:



Percentage of people who will change their practice as a result of the Level 1 training:



Alongside the significant increase in uptake of the Help Kids Talk training, there has been a notable improvement in confidence levels of parents, carers and practitioners in supporting the SLC development of children through advice and strategies where relevant.

Within the timeframe of the project over 150 organisations have availed of the training either online or face to face. This has included statutory bodies in health and education, voluntary and community sector organisations, regional colleges and the universities.

Creation of Resources

After the survey closed the data was analysed by FN Research and the initial findings were discussed with the Language Launchpad steering group representatives. It was agreed to hold further focus groups for parents and health visitors to gain a deeper understanding into the areas of concern raised in the survey.

Methodology

This element of the project was conducted via online focus groups moderated by RCSLT NI and reported on by FN Research.

There were 2 groups, each lasting 90 minutes. They were amongst:

- Health Visitors
- Parents of children under 5 with SLCN

Health Visitor Focus Group Summary: 5 February 2025

Participants: 5 Health Visitors, recruited via RCSLT NI network.

Purpose: To evaluate knowledge, practices, and challenges related to identifying and supporting children with Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN).

The following summarises the discussion -

1. Identification of SLCN

- **Confidence and Approach:** Health visitors were generally confident in spotting SLCN, often using play-based assessments and developmental milestones (e.g. 50+ words, 2-word phrases by age 2). However, assessments were inconsistent, with no standardised screening tool in use.

“Do you have any standardised screeners?”

“No, there’s nothing... there used to be something years ago, but nothing now.”

- **Challenges:** Dummy use, shyness, and mood affected observations. Reliance on parent reports—especially in non-English-speaking homes—introduced variability and potential inaccuracy.

2. Supporting Families

- **Informal Guidance:** Advice was general and self-directed (e.g. floor play, bedtime stories, use of community resources like libraries and Sure Start).
- **Waiting Gaps:** Lack of structured support during SLT waiting times left families with limited interim help.

“The gap in speech and language services between referral and assessment is huge. There’s really no intervention beyond what parents are able to do themselves.”

- **Parental Engagement:** Mixed. Some parents were proactive; others could be dismissive or misinformed about developmental norms.

Did you know?

Children with speech, language and communication needs have a lower quality of life at age 9, in comparison with their peers (Eadie et al., 2018).



3. Referrals to Speech and Language Therapy

- **Experience-Led Judgement:** Decisions to refer were based on overall child development, not just speech.
- **Barriers:** Potential parental resistance and long speech and language therapy waiting times (up to 15+ months) hindered early intervention. Health visitors stressed the importance of early waiting list placement.
- **New Initiatives:** One trust had introduced a proactive Early Intervention scheme via nursery-linked health visitors which was working well.

4. Shifts in Child Development Trends

- **Increased Screen Use:** Digital engagement often replaced direct play, reducing verbal interaction. Fewer homes displayed books and toys.

"I asked about building blocks during a two-year assessment, and the parent pulled out a tablet where the child had been using a swipe to play with blocks"

- **Parental Time Constraints:** Full-time work and other responsibilities could reduce face to face playtime and communication.
- **Rising Neurodiversity Queries:** More parents queried if their child was autistic, but health visitors lacked training on how to address these issues.
- **English as an Additional Language:** Assessments were complicated by language barriers; families often relied on digital content to expose children to English.

5. Training and Resource Needs

- **Training Gaps:** More in-depth and follow-up SLT training was needed, particularly requested around neurodiversity and gestalt language processing.
- **Resource Priorities:**
 - Standardised screening tool for consistency.
 - Digital tools/apps to help parents track development.
 - Printed, parent-friendly visual resources.
 - Structured interim supports to give parents while waiting for speech and language therapy input.
 - Multilingual and culturally appropriate materials.

Parent Focus Group Summary:

6 February 2025

Participants: 5 parents, recruited via the Language Launchpad survey co-operation question.

Focus: To explore parents' understanding, experiences, and challenges related to Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN).

The following summarises the discussion.

1. Parental Knowledge of SLCN

- **Understanding Varied Widely:** Some parents were informed due to past experience or professional backgrounds, while others felt unprepared and only became aware of milestones through online searches.

"I didn't really know about speech milestones until I started googling and worrying myself."

- **Persistent Myths:** Many delayed seeking help due to the common belief that "boys develop later."

"By age two, I knew there was a delay... the response was often, 'He's a boy, it'll come.'"

- **Inconsistent Professional Advice:** Mixed guidance from health visitors led to confusion and delays, prompting some families to turn to private therapy.

2. Supporting Children with SLCN

- **Self-Directed Learning:** Parents relied heavily on social media and influencers like Miss Rachel and Meaningful Speech for guidance.

- **Gestalt Language Awareness:** Online content helped some parents recognise less typical development styles.

- **Group Activities:** Many parents were hesitant to enrol children in clubs due to fears about understanding instructions or fitting in.

"I worry he won't understand what's going on, and that it'll affect his confidence or mental health."

- **Social Anxiety and Judgement:** Concerns about stigma from other parents were common.

"You feel like other parents are judging... I keep him in a bubble."

3. Barriers to Support

- **Age Restrictions:** Some were told children under three couldn't be referred, leading to critical delays.

"We've been left in limbo. I ended up paying privately."

- **Long Wait Times:** Families often waited over a year, with private options used out of necessity.
- **Lack of Transparency:** Navigating SLT pathways was confusing and inconsistent.
- **Parental Advocacy:** Those who self-referred accessed support sooner.

4. Impact on Family Life

- **Emotional Strain:** Parents described daily stress due to communication challenges.

"I walk on eggshells every day."

- **Limited Childcare Confidence:** Many struggled to leave their child with others.

"It makes it hard to ever get a break."

- **Effect on Siblings:** Parents felt guilty about reduced time for other children.

"His sister doesn't get the attention she deserves."

- **No Respite:** Many hadn't had a break in years due to care demands.

"It's exhausting. There's just no break."

5. Training, Resources, and Support Needs

- **Need for Practical Tools:** Parents wanted clearer guidance on using visuals like picture boards.

"How many pictures should I include? Should I use photos or symbols?"

- **Barriers to Makaton:** Courses were hard to find and poorly signposted.
- **Low Awareness of DLD:** Most hadn't heard of Developmental Language Disorder until diagnosis.

"Even now, I'm not sure how to explain it to others."

- **Confidence-Building Resources Needed:** Parents sought tools that support both communication and self-esteem.

The final objective of Language Launchpad was to create relevant resources to support a variety of stakeholders, based on the insights gathered from the survey. While the resources are primarily designed for the early years, they can also be beneficial for older children who face specific challenges in the targeted area.

The steering group identified the most common needs and areas where expert Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) were available to collaborate in co-creating the resources. The collected data will inform future initiatives if additional funding becomes available.

Several of the identified themes are covered in the Basic Awareness and Level 1 training offered by Help Kids Talk. All identified and requested areas for training or support were carefully considered.

As part of Language Launchpad, Help Kids Talk has developed a set of free resources for parents, carers, practitioners, and professionals in health, social care, and medical fields, as well as anyone involved in supporting children. These resources are designed to enhance awareness and understanding, offering practical strategies that empower everyone involved to benefit the child.

Two focus groups, including parents and practitioners, were conducted to review the resources. Their feedback was invaluable in shaping the content, ensuring the resources met their intended purpose. The response to the information checklists, advice sheets, and videos was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing excitement and offering creative ideas for how they could be used to support children's SLC development.

The following bitesize sessions and resources have been developed:

- Attention and Listening (9 bitesize sessions)
- Gesture and Signing (7 bitesize sessions)
- Language Acquisition (1 bitesize session)
- Narratives of Resilience (1 bitesize session)
- Nursery Rhymes (6 bitesize sessions)
- Parent/Carer Adult/Child Interaction (1 bitesize session)
- Professional Adult/Child Interaction (1 bitesize session)
- Stammering (10 bitesize sessions)
- Stories and Books (1 bitesize session)

The bitesize sessions are very short films for parents, carers and practitioners as they support the speech, language and communication development of babies, children and young people. Many of the participants in the bitesize sessions share from their own lived experience and offer us great insights, tips and advice.

Advice sheets in:

- Adult/Child interaction
- Attention and listening
- Building a communication rich environment
- Unclear speech
- Using visual supports
- Using your home language (for bi-lingual or multi-lingual families)

Checklists for:

- Checklist for Adult/Child interaction
- Checklist for attention and listening
- Checklist for creating a communication rich environment
- Checklist for unclear speech

Visual Schedule Resources:

- First/ then board
- First/ then/ next board
- Visual Schedule and images for whole class (in nurseries and in schools)
- Visual Schedule for individual use in school or at home.
- Write on/ wipe off schedules for children to get ready to leave the house in the morning
- Write on/ wipe off schedules for children when they get home from nursery or childminders
- Write on/ wipe off schedules for children when they get home from school
- Write on/ wipe off schedules to get ready for bed.

Help Kids Talk will promote and signpost participants to the resources within their Basic Awareness and Level 1 training. Help Kids Talk produce an annual report card and will continue to monitor the uptake of training as well as the number of views for the bitesize videos.



Did you know?

Babbling is a strong predictor of later language use
(Laing and Bergelson, 2020)



Conclusion

Findings from the survey around the increasing numbers of children with SLCN, as well as the rise in the complexity of need are consistent with findings from the RCSLT's 2024 report. Data from the Department of Education further demonstrates this with increasing numbers of children on the SEN register under the umbrella SLCN (Appendix 2). Further information gathered from the focus groups provides insight into the need to ensure that Speech and Language Therapy services across Northern Ireland are adequately resourced to enable equitable access and offerings for all who need it.

We are delighted that Language Launchpad has fulfilled all its objectives including gathering the opinions of those who have or work with babies, children and young people across Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the significant increase in uptake of the Help Kids Talk training provides hope that both parents and professionals will continue to feel more empowered in supporting SLCN in their homes and settings. Finally, a wide range of excellent resources have been developed, which we believe will be of lasting benefit to all for many years to come.

To access the Basic Awareness, Level One and the resources – please scan here.



[Help Kids Talk | NI | Lisburn | Speech and Language NI](#)

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7. Appendix 1

Policy Context for Language Launchpad

Language Launchpad aligns strongly with the Northern Ireland legislative requirements, frameworks, and reports above by having a strong focus on supporting the speech, language and communication development of all children. For those children who have additional speech, language and communication needs, and indeed Special Educational Needs (SEN), Language Launchpad have created a number of new resources for parents/carers and practitioners to support children.

Language Launchpad promotes early intervention through universal training and resources designed to meet the greatest needs of our population. Additionally, Language Launchpad directly contributes to creating a more communication inclusive and supportive environment for children and young people in Northern Ireland, in line with the goals of the listed frameworks and legislation.

Legislation, frameworks and independent reviews/reports

The following list is not exhaustive.

NI Legislation:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act NI 2016
- The Children's Services Cooperation Act (NI) 2015
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- European Convention on Human Rights 1953
- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- The Education (NI) Order 1996 which is underpinned by the:
 - Education (SEN) Regulations 2005; and
 - The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of SEN and supplement
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO)
- SENDIST Regulations (NI) 2005
- Education (NI) Order 1998
- Education (NI) Order 1996

Policy Documents:

- SEN Reform Agenda and Delivery Plan 2025-2030
- Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030
- Making Life Better – A WHOLE System Framework for Public Health 2013-2023
- Every Child DE Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- Healthy Child, Healthy Future
- Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework
- SBNI Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Health Framework (Draft – due for consultation)
- Infant Mental Health Plan 2016 (updated framework is due to be launched)
- Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031
- UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines
- Health and Wellbeing 2026 – Delivering Together
- RAISE Summary Background 2024
- Early Learning and Childcare Measures 2024-2025
- Bright Start
- Childminders and Day Care Minimum Standards

Independent Reviews/Reports:

- NICCY Too Little, Too Late 2020
- Independent Review of Education 2023
- DE Review of Childcare services in NI 2023
- RCLST NI We Are The Village 2024

8. Appendix 2

SLCN Data

Speech and Language UK reports that teachers estimate there are 1.9 million children who are behind with their talking/ understanding words. This is the highest number ever recorded and equates to 20% of the school population or 1 in 5 children (2023).

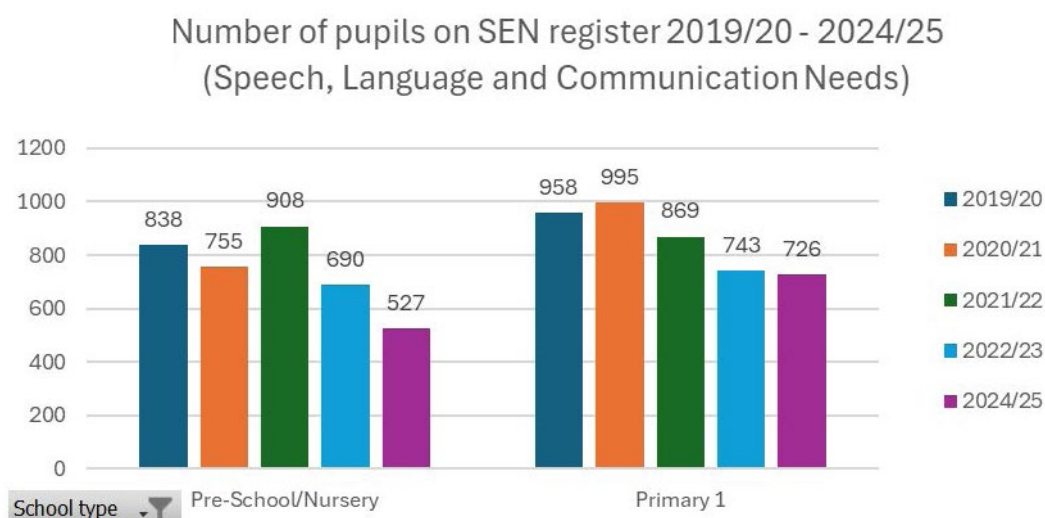
A recently published report “Lost for Words” conducted by GL Assessment (2025) which looked at speech, language and communication highlighted that:

- Half of teachers think up to 20% of their students have speech and language issues and further third think up to 40% do.
- Almost all think the problem has worsened in the past 5 years.
- Half say problems become apparent as soon as children start school.
- Nearly half think it is easy to mistake speech and language issues for maths and literacy problems.
- A similar portion believe that people, wrongly, assume that these issues mainly affect disadvantaged children.
- Almost all teachers think parents do not understand the link between oracy and literacy or how the decline in children’s communication skills has made teaching more difficult.

These findings are reflected in the survey data and reinforced by the Department of Education Northern Ireland data.

Northern Ireland SLCN Data

Overarching Category (First Identification):



NB: No data available for 2023/2024 due to action short of strike

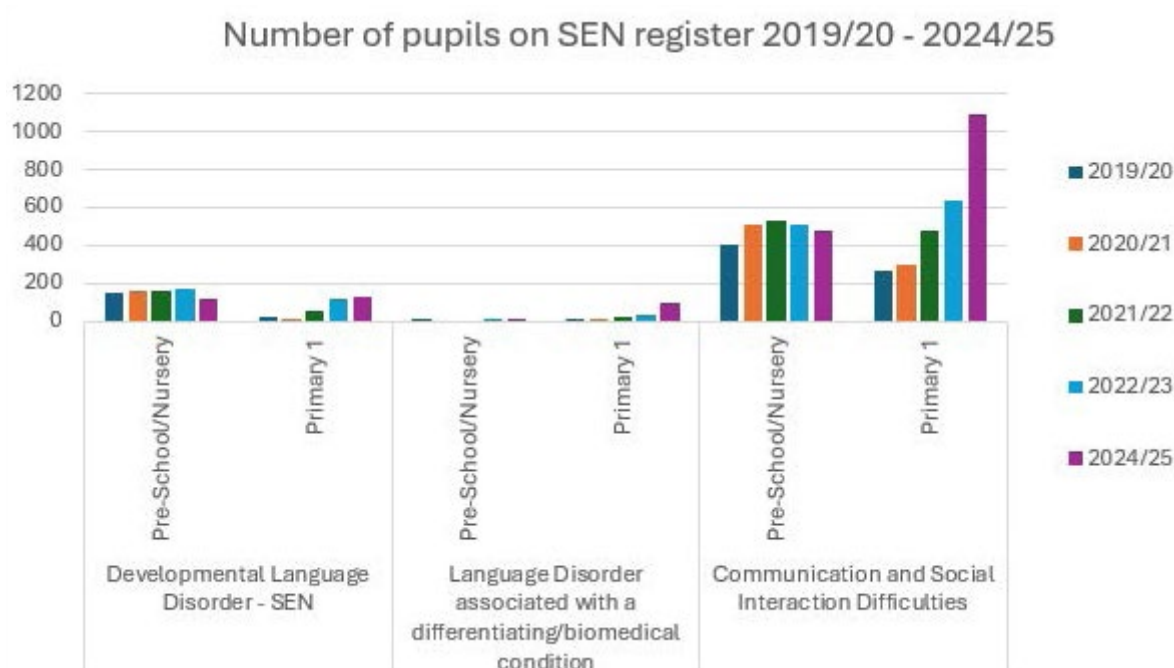
In Pre-School/Nursery and Primary 1, the number of pupils initially identified with general SLCN rose sharply between 2019/20 and 2021/22 (e.g., 838 to 908 in Pre-School/Nursery, and 958 to 995 in Primary 1).

After 2021/22, numbers decline, 690 (Pre-School/Nursery) and 869 (Primary 1) in 2022/23, and 527 and 726, respectively, in 2024/25

As per table 2, this drop suggest that children are being assessed and reclassified into specific categories, not necessarily that fewer children have needs.

Specifically identified SLCN are recorded under 3 headings within the SEN register, and this shows the following increase in need for all pupils since 2019.

Movement into Specific Categories (After Assessment):



NB: No data available for 2023/2024 due to action short of strike

Did you know?

Children in care experience speech, language and communication needs, although, these are often overlooked and not acted on compared to the emotional difficulties these children face, despite the prevalence rates being similar - at 26% and 24% respectively. (Chambers et al., 2010).

The graphs show growing numbers across all three specific SLCN categories, particularly from 2021/22 onwards.

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) - SEN:

Small but steady increases across years in both Preschool/Nursery and Primary 1.

Language Disorder associated with a Differentiating/Biomedical Condition:

Lower overall numbers, but again, a slight upwards trend.

Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties:

This category shows the biggest increase, especially in Primary 1.

By 2024/25, there's a sharp jump, indicating either better recognition/diagnosis (e.g., for autism, social communication disorders) or a genuine increase in needs.

The initial surge in SLCN numbers around 2019/20–2021/22 points to increased early identification efforts.

The subsequent decrease in SLCN is expected and positive, showing that children are progressing through the system and being more accurately identified.

The significant rise in Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties suggests a strong trend toward recognising social communication issues early.

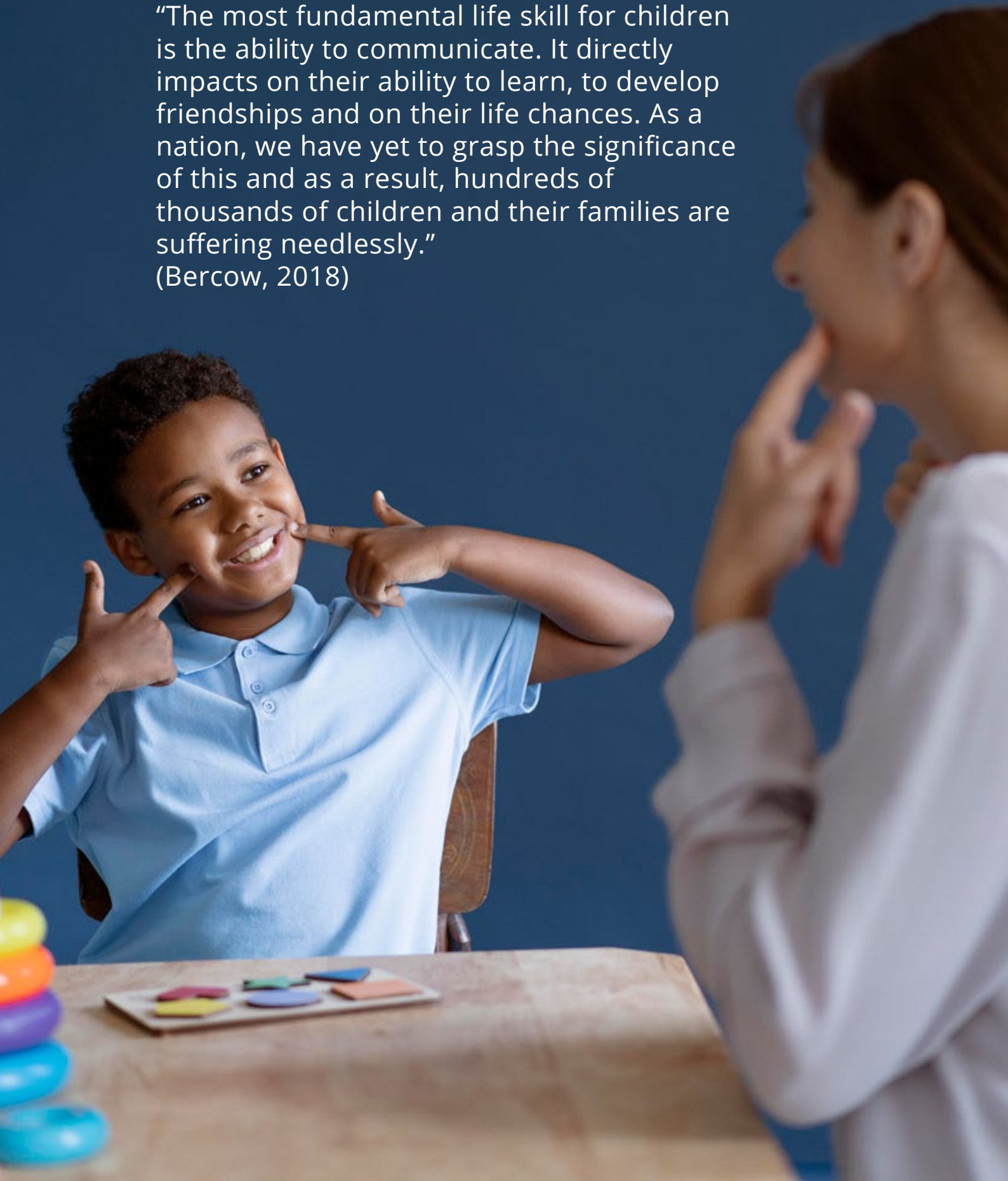
This data does not show that needs are decreasing; rather, it suggests that needs are being better identified and specified over time.

Summary:

The data demonstrates a clear upward trend in the identification of Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) among pupils across Northern Ireland schools since 2019. While the number of pupils recorded under the overarching SLCN category initially increased, more recent decreases reflect appropriate reclassification following formal assessment into specific categories: Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) - SEN, Language Disorder associated with a differentiating or biomedical condition and Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties. This movement is a growing recognition of complex communication needs, rather than a reduction in overall need.

Did you know?

“The most fundamental life skill for children is the ability to communicate. It directly impacts on their ability to learn, to develop friendships and on their life chances. As a nation, we have yet to grasp the significance of this and as a result, hundreds of thousands of children and their families are suffering needlessly.”
(Bercow, 2018)



9. Appendix 3

Resource Guide

Identified Area of Need	Available Resources
Attention and Listening	Level 1 Attention and Listening advice sheet Attention and Listening checklist Attention and Listening Bitesize
Autism	Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules Gesture and Sign Bitesize
Developmental Milestones	Level 1 Training
Difficulties understanding language	Level 1 Training Communication rich environment advice sheet Communication rich environment checklist Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules
Difficulties with spoken language	Level 1 Training Adult/Child Interaction advice sheet Adult/Child Interaction checklist Gesture and Sign Bitesize Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules
General Advice	Basic Awareness Level 1 Training
How to support parents (for professionals)	Level 1 Training All advice sheets All checklists Visual schedules Bitesize sessions
Makaton/Signing	Gesture and Sign Bitesize

Non-Speaking	Basic awareness Level 1 training Gesture and Sign Bitesize Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules
Play	Basic Awareness Level 1 Training Adult/Child Interaction advice sheet Adult/Child Interaction checklist
SLT Training/Support	Basic Awareness Level 1 Training All resources
Social Communication Social Interaction	Level 1 Training Adult/Child Interaction advice sheet Adult/Child Interaction checklist Nursery Rhyme Bitesize
Specific/detailed training on speech and language acquisition	Level 1 Training
Speech Sound Disorder / Unclear speech	Level 1 Training Unclear speech advice sheet Unclear speech checklist
Speech Training	Basic Awareness Level 1 Training
Understanding what others say	Level 1 Training Communication rich environment advice sheet Communication rich environment checklist Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules Using your home language advice sheet
Use of Phonics	Nursery Rhyme Bitesize Stories and Books Bitesize
Using Visuals	Visual support advice sheet Visual support checklist Visual schedules



The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is the professional body for speech and language therapists in the UK. As well as providing leadership and setting professional standards, the RCSLT facilitates and promotes research into the field of speech and language therapy, promotes better education and training of speech and language therapists, and provides its members and the public with information about speech and language therapy.

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