

# Patient information

## Integrated Community Paediatric Services

# Children's Community Speech and Language Therapy

## Who are we?

- A team of qualified speech and language therapists (SLTs) who are registered with the Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC) and carry out a wide range of continuing professional development each year.
- Speech and language therapy assistants who work closely with the SLTs.

## What do we do?

- Our team support children and young people who have speech, language or communication needs. We also work with some children and young people who have difficulties with eating and drinking.
- We provide assessment, therapy and advice.
- We work closely with therapy partners - those people who support the child/young person's communication at home and at nursery or school – e.g. parents/carers, teachers and classroom support staff, key workers and SENCOs. Working with the people around a child/young person helps to maximise the benefit of therapy.
- We also work closely with other professionals (e.g. paediatricians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists) who may be involved in their care.

We offer face to face sessions as well as assessment and therapy sessions via MS Teams. We offer training via MS Teams and other training platforms such as Totara.

We aim to communicate clearly, giving advice that can be easily understood. We are committed to making our service as accessible as possible and we welcome discussion with therapy partners about how we can support them to access and get the best from our services.

## Who do we see?

Children and young people, from birth to 19 years of age, who have differences or difficulties with their speech, language, communication or feeding. This may include:

- unclear speech that affects how easily they can be understood.
- differences in how their spoken language is developing
- difficulties understanding what people say to them
- difficulties with swallowing
- experiencing stammering
- voice difficulties, following assessment by Ear, Nose and Throat.

## **Who do we not see?**

Children and young people:

- Who are learning English as an additional language (EAL), when their skills in their first language are age appropriate.
- With written language difficulties where there are no other speech and/or language difficulties.
- With selective mutism or anxiety about talking, unless there is evidence of other speech and/or language difficulties.
- With social communication differences, unless there is a specific speech and/or language difficulty.
- Children/young people with a sensory feeding difficulty with no physical cause are not seen for therapy but can access an assessment.

## **How long will my child wait to be seen?**

An experienced therapist will look at your child/young person's referral to decide if they will benefit from our assessment and support. If they don't think speech and language therapy is needed, they will write to the person who referred the child/young person and let them know why. This could be because more information is required or more intervention needs to take place before specialist treatment is needed e.g., they need to be seen by another professional.

We aim to see all children/young people for an initial assessment within 18 weeks of receipt of a successful referral.

## **Where will my child be seen?**

Appointments are offered in a variety of settings across the county – we will explain the options available to you when your appointment is made. Appointments might be in a clinic, in mainstream/specialist education settings, or at home.

To help us to communicate with you we have an SMS Text Messaging and Email service available. To use this, we require your consent. Please ensure that we always have your correct contact details.

## **What will happen at the first appointment?**

An adult with parental responsibility is expected to attend the appointment. We will check parent/carer consent for assessment and treatment at all stages of a child/young person's involvement with the service. Students may be working in the

department, fully supervised by senior staff. Your consent will always be sought in advance if a student will be involved in your child's care.

We will assess your child/young person's speech, language, and communication (or feeding) skills.

Assessment of communication may include:

- Playing with your child and/or watching you and your child play together. This allows us to gather lots of information about their communication.
- Gathering information from you / from other therapy partners (with your consent) about your child's communication in other environments.
- Use of more formal screening assessments.

For feeding assessments we may ask parents to provide appropriate food and drink as needed or observe a mealtime at school/home.

### **After the assessment:**

We will discuss the outcome of the assessment and agree a management plan. This will be shared with you in a report and can be sent to anyone involved in your child/young person's care.

### **Policy for missed appointments:**

We understand that occasions arise where attending appointments is not possible. We ask that you contact the service as early as possible to cancel or rearrange appointments. If you do not attend a planned session and you have not notified us within 24 hours, we may discharge your child back to the referrer.

### **Contact Us:**

**Child Health Centre, Bury St Edmunds: 01284 741732**

**St Helen's House, Ipswich 01473 321225. [childrensslt.icps@wsh.nhs.uk](mailto:childrensslt.icps@wsh.nhs.uk)**

Further information on our services can be found on our website: [www.wsh.nhs.uk/icps](http://www.wsh.nhs.uk/icps)

If you have any queries or concerns with any aspect of your child's care that cannot be resolved with your clinician please contact the team as above and ask to speak to the service lead.

[If you feel unable to discuss your concerns in this way please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service \(PALS\).](#)

Email: [PALS@wsh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@wsh.nhs.uk) Tel: **0800 917 9673 or 01284 712555** (24hr answerphone)

Formal complaints should be directed to The Patient Experience Team, West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

### **Clinical research**

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email [info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk](mailto:info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk). This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

### **Accessibility**

If you require this leaflet in a different format, please contact the patient advice and liaison service on 01284 712555 or email [PALS@wsh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@wsh.nhs.uk)

**If you would like any information regarding access to our Trust services and facilities, please visit the website for Accessible: <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>**

