

Who uses the service?

Speech and Language Therapists work with children and young people, their families/carers and other professionals when difficulties with communication are identified.

There is an **open referral** policy. This means that anyone, including parents, can request an assessment. Whoever has parental responsibility must have been consulted and given consent for referral.

What is a Speech and Language Therapy Assessment for?

An assessment of a child or young person's communication allows a therapist to get to know the child and his/her family or carers, understand their concerns and discuss whether the Speech and Language Therapy service can help.

What happens at assessment?

Parents will be invited to bring their child to a clinic appointment for an initial assessment.

This may include:

- an interview with parents/carers to gather relevant background information
- conversation with the child or young person
- an observation of play/interaction/general behaviour
- specific tasks where the therapist may provide toys or materials for the child or young person to demonstrate particular skills

Parents should feel able to ask questions at any point during the assessment.

How long does an assessment take?

The therapist will probably spend about an hour at the initial appointment but this may vary.

Sometimes recommendations can be made after one appointment, sometimes further appointments are needed.

Often the therapist will decide to visit the child or young person at home or nursery/school as part of the assessment.

What does Speech and Language Therapy offer after assessment?

If it is decided that there is a need for Speech and Language Therapy, then the therapist will discuss with the family what will happen next.

The service may be delivered in a number of ways;

- Information, advice and guidance for parents.
Parents may be invited to attend an information session explaining what the Speech and Language Therapy Service can offer
- Work with others who support the child or young person in different settings, e.g. playgroup, nursery, school, college
- Individual or group therapy sessions