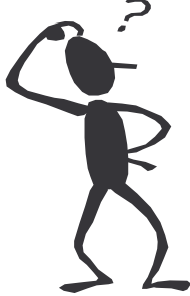

SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY – SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Who uses the service?

Anyone of any age who has a communication difficulty. Speech & Language Therapists involve families, carers and professionals.

What is a Speech & Language Therapy Assessment for?

An assessment of current communication skills, allows the therapist to determine the nature of the communication difficulties. It lets the therapist get to know the child and his/her family or carers. Having identified strengths and needs in communication, the assessment allows the therapist to discuss with the family whether Speech & Language Therapy can help.

How are children referred for assessment?

Speech & Language Therapy has an OPEN REFERRAL policy. This means that anyone, including parents, can request an assessment. However, whoever has parental responsibility must have been consulted and they must have agreed to the request.

Does the therapist come to see you, or do you come to see the therapist?

Both, a Speech & Language Therapist may come out to visit you or you may be invited to come to a clinic appointment.

What happens during an assessment?

- ◆ a therapist meets the child
- ◆ the people who know the child can be consulted
- ◆ the therapist gets to know and understand the child's needs and circumstances
- ◆ the therapist has an opportunity to learn the needs and circumstances of the people the child communicates with: family, friends, carers, teachers, other therapists etc
- ◆ the therapist has an opportunity to share how and why communication difficulties occur, and what situations cause them to be more or less of a problem.

The therapist will be looking at :

- HOW the child communicates.
- WHAT they communicate about.
- WHO they communicate with.
- WHY they communicate, and in what situations it is easier or more difficult for communication to be successful.

The assessment may include:

- the taking of a case history to gather background information and personal details.
- observations of play/leisure/interaction/general behaviour.
- specific tasks where the therapist may provide toys or materials for the child to demonstrate particular skills.

Throughout the assessment, there is ongoing explanation and discussion. Parents should feel able to ask questions at any point.

How long does an assessment visit take?

The therapist will probably want to spend about an hour but this may vary.

Does an assessment only take one visit?

Sometimes recommendations can be made after one visit, sometimes further visits are needed.

What does Speech & Language Therapy offer following an assessment?

If, after the assessment, it is decided that there is a need for Speech & Language Therapy, then the therapist will:

i) along with parents, select an appropriate and realistic aim to be achieved in the short term

and

ii) discuss and/or give an indication of long term needs, and possible future provision of Speech & Language Therapy.

Strategies to meet Speech & Language Therapy needs include:

- periods or blocks of therapy as appropriate
- individual and/or group therapy
- information and guidance for parents
- focus on important settings/routines in the child's life e.g. home/playgroup/nursery/school

Contact the service for more information **Tel: 01463 253623**