Speech and Language Therapy Assessment Information Guide

Helping you and your child feel informed, prepared and confident about the next step.

What speech and language therapy can help with

Paediatric speech and language therapy supports children to communicate, interact and participate more confidently. It may also support children with eating, drinking and swallowing needs, helping to promote safe feeding and adequate nutrition.

- Understanding and using spoken language
- Speech sounds and being understood by others
- Social communication and interaction
- Expressing needs, choices, ideas and feelings
- Eating, drinking and swallowing, where this is part of the referral

A child-centred assessment

Your child's assessment is tailored to the concerns, developmental history and strengths described in the intake form. The therapist will select the most appropriate formal or informal assessment activities and adapt the session to your child's age, abilities and communication style.

Your next step: Complete the SLT intake form as fully as possible. It helps the therapist plan the right assessment and understand the outcomes that matter to your child and family.

Before the assessment

The information you share beforehand helps us make the appointment purposeful and appropriate for your child.

Complete the intake information

Please include your child's developmental history, communication strengths, the activities they find difficult and any information from nursery, school or other professionals. This information also contributes to the therapist's clinical picture and written assessment findings.

If important new information emerges during the assessment, the therapist may recommend additional testing. We will explain this and any additional cost before arranging further work.

Helping your child know what to expect

You can tell your child that they are coming to meet their speech and language therapist, play games, look at pictures and find out what kind of communicator they are. Older children can be told directly that the therapist is there to understand what feels difficult and help them develop their skills.

- Reassure your child that the assessment is not painful and there are no injections.
- Let them know they only need to try their best.
- Tell them the therapist will be kind, patient and ready to help.
- Bring a familiar toy or preferred item if this may help with transitions.

What to bring

Your child can wear any clothes they find comfortable. Please make sure they have eaten before the assessment, as hunger can affect concentration and performance. They are welcome to bring a drink.

On the day

The session is structured carefully while still feeling supportive, playful and responsive to your child.

Arrival and settling in

Please arrive around five minutes early and check in with reception. Your therapist will meet you in the reception area and help your child settle before the session begins.

Will a parent join?

Parents do not usually join assessments, except for children under 2½ years. This helps the therapist observe the child's communication as independently as possible. You are welcome to wait in reception.

If separating is difficult or the new environment feels daunting, the therapist may invite one parent to join for the first 10-15 minutes. Parents may also be invited into treatment sessions when the therapist wants to demonstrate a strategy or activity.

What happens in an SLT session?

Children may play with toys, games and craft materials while learning and practising new skills. Activities can include following instructions, saying sounds or words, producing sentences, making choices, taking turns and developing conversation skills.

For younger children, or children who find attention and focus difficult, sessions may initially be more child-led and play-based. Older children may take part in a combination of play, table-top activities and structured practice.

Clinical session time: A one-hour appointment includes direct work with your child and time for clinical reflection, notes, parent feedback and preparing the room and equipment.

After the assessment

Your therapist will bring together the assessment activities, clinical observations and information shared by your family and school.

Follow-up SLT sessions

Children often enjoy SLT because play, creativity and meaningful interaction are central to the work. The first few treatment sessions also help the therapist build rapport and make sure your child feels comfortable.

How long will therapy continue?

Every child is different. Unless an EHCP specifies particular provision, we often recommend one-hour sessions once or twice each week for approximately three months. Progress is reviewed after the first block.

The next step may be another therapy block, occasional or review sessions, a home programme or discharge. Some children return for a further block as they mature and communication demands change.

Meet our speech and language therapists

Your child will usually work with the same therapist throughout their treatment block. If cover is needed, we will discuss this with you and arrange it according to availability.



Stephanie



Jessica



Aoife

Questions before your appointment?
Contact our team on 0208 605 2050 or email info@therapy4kids.co.uk. We are happy to help your child feel prepared.

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