



Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

Leeds Community Healthcare

Parent/carer forum: Tuesday 13th October 10-12:30

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What is speech and language therapy?

Helping children communicate, learn, make friends and enjoy everyday life.

Talking & Communication

- Expressing wants, needs and feelings
- Developing speech and vocabulary

Understanding

- Following instructions
- Understanding language at home and school

Making Connections

- Playing with others
- Building friendships and social skills

Learning

- Participating in lessons
- Asking questions and sharing ideas

Independence

- Making choices
- Solving everyday problems

Eating & Drinking

- Supporting safe and enjoyable mealtimes



How we can help

We work together with families to support children and young people to thrive.

Assessment & Goal Setting

Understanding your child's strengths and areas of need, then agreeing goals together.

Advice & Support

Practical ideas and strategies for speech, language, communication and swallowing needs.

Parent & Carer Workshops

Learning alongside other families and building confidence.

Therapy Sessions

Individual or group support tailored to your child's needs.

Working Together

Collaborating with schools, nurseries and other professionals involved with your child.

What We Aim To Achieve Together

Better Understanding

Helping you understand your child's communication or swallowing needs.

New Skills

Giving you practical strategies you can use every day at home.

Greater Confidence

Supporting you to feel confident helping your child communicate, learn and participate in daily life.

Service Pathways

We offer different services depending on your child's age and needs.

 **Pre-School Clinics (Ages 2½ to School Start)**

 **Mainstream School Pathway (School-Age Children)**

 **Specific Speech Disorder Service**

 **Stammering Support Service**

 **Feeding and Swallowing Team (Dysphagia)**

 **School Age Learning & Dysphagia Team**

 **Deaf and Hearing Impairment Team**

 **Communication Aid Service**

 **Down Syndrome Pathway**

 **Complex Developmental Assessment (ICAN)**

 **Complex Communication & Autism Assessment (ICAN)**

 **Parent Training**

A day in the life of an SLT



Making a referral to CSLT

We have an **open referral system**, making it easy to access support when you have concerns about your child's communication.

A referral can be made by:



Parents and carers



GPs



0-19 Public Health Integrated Nurse Practitioners



Childcare workers and nursery staff



Teachers



SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators)



Before You Refer

Many children benefit from support strategies that can be used at home or in their educational setting.

Before making a referral, we recommend visiting our **Parents and Carers** webpages where you'll find:

- ✓ Information about speech, language and communication development
 - ✓ Practical activities to try at home
 - ✓ Helpful advice and resources
 - ✓ Guidance on when specialist support may be needed

Our referral guidelines will help you decide if they need to be referred

- [Children speech and language therapy referral guidelines](#)
- [Children speech and language therapy referral form](#)

Children's Speech and Language Therapy Website and Toolkit

- [Speech and language therapy - Leeds Community Healthcare](#)

Accessibility & Language

Accessibility and language tool guide

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Speech and language therapy

We work with families, children, young people and some adults with speech, language and communication and/or with eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties. Explore the links below to find the right service and get the support you need.



Questions?

Experts at hand: What is it?

Experts at Hand was developed as part of the **Government's SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) reforms**, which aim to improve support for children and young people with additional needs and make mainstream education more inclusive. It aims to:

- ✅ **Provide support earlier**, helping children and young people before difficulties become more significant.
- 🏠 **Bring specialists into education settings**, including Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Specialist Teachers to ensure a holistic approach.
- 🔍 **Focus on need, not diagnosis**, ensuring children can access support based on their individual needs rather than waiting for a formal diagnosis.
- 🌈 **Promote inclusive education**, helping nurseries, schools and colleges support more children successfully within mainstream settings.
- 🤝 **Strengthen partnership working** between families, education staff and health professionals.

Experts at hand: What is it?

💡 What does this mean for families?

Through Experts at Hand, specialist advice and support can be provided within children's learning environment, helping staff and families work together to develop practical strategies that support learning, communication, independence and wellbeing.

Enabling those working with children to access specialist services in a timely manner, and increase confidence and capacity to implement first line support and strategies,

Key Takeaway

📢 **Experts at Hand is part of SEND reform and is designed to provide the right support, at the right time, in the place where children learn every day, helping them to achieve the best possible outcomes.**

Experts at hand:

How can Speech and Language Therapy help?

- **Early Identification**
 - Spot concerns sooner
 - Support referrals for NHS assessment
-  **Communication Support**
 - Help children who find it difficult to talk, listen or understand
-  **Staff Advice**
 - Strategies for teachers and support staff
-  **Communication-Friendly Classrooms**
 - Inclusive learning environments
-  **Training & Coaching**
 - Building staff confidence and skills
-  **Family Support**
 - Activities and ideas to use at home
-  **Small Group Activities**
 - Targeted support for children needing extra help

★ **Right Support • Right Time • Right Place**

Experts at Hand

What does this mean for families?

 Benefits for Children & Families	 EHCPs & Specialist Support
Children can get help sooner through earlier identification and support.	EHCPs remain unchanged. Experts at Hand does not replace Education, Health and Care Plans.
Support can happen where children learn every day, such as schools and nurseries	Specialist Speech and Language Therapy services remain available for children and young people who need them.
Families, schools and health services can work together more closely around a child's needs.	Children already receiving specialist support will continue to access the services they require.
More children can receive support without waiting for a diagnosis, helping them access help when concerns arise.	Experts at Hand provides additional support within education settings, helping more children get support earlier.

Experts at hand: How the Speech and Language Therapy Service is getting ready.

We are getting ready to introduce **Experts at Hand** in education settings across the area. Settings will be able to choose from a **menu of support**, helping them select the options that best meet the needs of their children, staff and wider school community.

Speech and Language Therapists will work alongside each setting to:

- ✓ Identify priorities together
- ✓ Understand the needs of children and staff
- ✓ Agree a plan of support
- ✓ Review progress and next steps

Building the Service Together

Experts at Hand is a **new service**, and we will be recruiting specialist team members to help deliver it. While the team grows, we will provide support that benefits **all schools and education settings**, including:

- 🎓 Training
- 💡 Classroom Strategies
- 📚 Resources
- 💬 Advice & Guidance
- 🔍 Earlier Identification



Experts at hand: Menu for settings

Experts at Hand - Support for Mainstream Schools and Settings

Helping children communicate, learn and thrive

The Leeds Children's Speech and Language Therapy Expert at Hand service provides timely advice, guidance and practical support to help schools identify and meet speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) earlier, without requiring a diagnosis or referral to specialist therapy services. The service works alongside school staff to build confidence, develop inclusive practice and support children in their everyday learning environment.

What Expert at Hand Is	What Expert at Hand Is Not
✓ Early help and advice ✓ Collaborative problem solving ✓ Support delivered alongside school staff ✓ Time-limited specialist input ✓ Capacity building for school teams ✓ Observation and recommendation of strategies ✓ Training, coaching and modelling ✓ Support based on need rather than diagnosis ✓ Bespoke support for settings ✓ NHS SLT's with access to clinical systems	✗ A replacement for specialist Speech and Language Therapy ✗ A diagnostic assessment service ✗ An EHCP assessment service ✗ Long-term direct therapy ✗ A replacement for statutory provision ✗ A service requiring a diagnosis before support can be accessed The national guidance makes clear that Experts at Hand will complement existing services and statutory support rather than replace them.



How do you feel families
might be best supported
through the experts at
hand approach?

Where to find out more

- Contact us at lcht.cslt@nhs.net or 0113 8433650
- Find out more about CSLT on our website: [Speech and language therapy - Leeds Community Healthcare](#)
- Further information about experts at hand; [Experts at Hand: developing and delivering the offer in year 1 - GOV.UK](#)