



# COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

## Advice for starting school

Referrals to Speech and Language Therapy should be made if you notice:

3 ½ - 4 years

- Child not readily using three to four word phrases.
- Child not using many different speech sounds which is affecting intelligibility.
- Child consistently misses beginning or end sounds such as 'ea' for tea or 'ma' for man.
- Child not understanding basic concepts such as big/little, on/under
- Child not understanding question words such as who, where, what

4-5 years

- Speech not easily understood except by immediate family.
- Child consistently omits consonants from the start or end of words.
- Child does not use f or s sounds at all
- Child confuses t/k sounds and d/g sounds e.g. 'tar' for car.

Any age

- Child is stammering
- Child shows selective mutism
- Child has mild or moderate hearing loss and the child isn't making expected progress despite appropriate strategies being in place.

Current wait times for first appointments post referral are around 77 weeks. If you have concerns, then it is best to act ASAP. Speak to Nursery or contact Mrs Stamp (Early Language Lead).

Please note: If you miss an appointment you will get put back to the start of the list.



### Do you speak a different language at home?

Amazing! Research tells us that maintaining at least 2 languages is actually an advantage for later academic achievement. It is a common myth that you should only speak to children in the language that they will be taught in at school. **It is important to speak to your child in your dominant home language.**

### What can you do at home to support language development?

- **Play** Small world play and role play are especially brilliant for developing language skills.
- **Read** One of the best ways to develop language is to share books with your child. Talk about what you can see, explain new vocabulary etc.
- **Model** If a child says something incorrectly, do not draw attention to it but repeat the sentence back, modelling how to say it correctly.
- **Question** ...but not too much! Give children time to think and answer. The suggested amount of time to wait is 10 seconds!



Sherwood Primary School  
Early language Lead  
**Mrs Stamp**  
[eyfs@sherwood.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:eyfs@sherwood.lancs.sch.uk)