



What can settings and schools do to help?

Settings and schools can:

- Use the SLCN Pathway as guidance for supporting your child in his/her setting/school.
- Plan support for children and young people with SLCN at a universal, targeted and specialist level.
- Explain the procedures the setting/school will follow to support your child.
- Talk to you and your child and seek your views – you know your child best and your views are invaluable.
- Gather information about your child and how he/she learns best.
- Help you to better understand your child's SLCN.
- Provide suggestions for you to help your child at home (e.g. specific handouts, newsletters and/or refer you to <http://www.afasicengland.org.uk/> and/or www.talkingpoint.org.uk).
- Invite you to attend review meetings to discuss the progress your child is making.
- Involve you and your child in planning and in reviewing your child's progress.
- Support you and your child at transition stages (e.g. from home to nursery, nursery to school, class to class, school to school).
- Ask for your consent before possibly seeking the advice from relevant professionals who visit the setting or school. These professionals will work with you and the setting/school to plan a way forward for your child. This might be a specialist from the health service such as a Speech and Language Therapist or someone from one of the Local Authority Support Services.

SLCN Pathway Tool

The 'Parent/Carer Questionnaire' is intended to be used by settings/schools, to give parents the opportunity to raise any concerns they may have about their child's needs and the provision that is being made for them. This can be found in the 'Whole Setting/School Approach' section of the website within 'Worcestershire Tools'.

Remember:

Parents, more than anyone, know about how their child's difficulties affect their day-to-day lives. You therefore have a very important role to play in working with professionals to help your child. It can seem daunting and confusing at times when there are various people involved with assessing and supporting your child. You may also feel that there is a lot to take in when you first become aware that your child has additional needs. You will want to know that your views are taken into consideration.



Worcestershire SLCN Pathway: Fact Sheet 4.4 What can settings and schools do to help?

Parents can:

SHARE INFORMATION

Parents have unique knowledge about their child. You can:

- Attend appointments and meetings. You may like to bring a friend or relative with you to support you with this
- Share your knowledge about your child with everyone who supports your child. You may want to write things down before attending meetings
- Make sure that we discuss any worries or concerns about how the wider family may be affected
- Make sure all the key people in your child's life are sharing information and working together

LEARN

Parents can become skilled themselves in order to help their child in the most positive way. You can do this by:

- Reading leaflets, books and the internet about your child's difficulties (ask your lead professional for some ideas)
- Asking questions of professionals, making sure things are clearly explained

How can parents help at this stage?

LISTEN

- To advice offered by professionals, and ask questions to find out more
- To other people's views of your child and whether this is the same as your opinion
- To any hints and tips on how to help your child at home
- To what school staff and others are doing, to make sure we are all working in the same way

SUPPORT

Parents can get support for themselves, and also support others, by:

- Attending relevant information/training sessions
- Sharing information
- Attending and contributing to all relevant review meetings/therapy sessions
- Becoming a member of parent support groups
- Supporting other parents, sharing information about similar experiences

See also: *"The Parent's Voice: Advocating for Your Child"* available from: AFASIC www.afasicengland.org.uk

Worcestershire SLCN Pathway: Fact Sheet 4.4 What can settings and schools do to help?

How can I encourage the setting or school to follow the SLCN Pathway?

The Worcestershire SLCN Pathway is intended to be used as guidance for **anyone** supporting the development of children's speech, language and communication skills regardless of where that child receives his or her support. Therefore, it is highly desirable that **everyone** plays a part in using the Pathway. If the setting or school do not appear to be using the SLCN Pathway, it could be that they are not aware of its existence. You could give them information and the website so they can find out more. Also, you may like to talk to your SEN or parent governor in school.

What if I disagree with what the setting/school is suggesting? What can I do then?

Working closely with the child's setting/ school is essential. However, sometimes there may be misunderstandings. If, having expressed your concerns, you disagree or are not happy with what the setting or school is suggesting, you may like to consider contacting SENDIASS for their advice.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20208/special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_information_advice_and_support_service

What happens when outside agencies become involved?

Your child's setting or school may feel they would like to discuss your child with relevant professionals from an outside agency (e.g. someone from the health service such as a Speech and Language Therapist or someone from one of the Local Authority Support Services) who visits the setting or school. The purpose of this discussion is to seek their advice and plan a way forward for your child. It is important to remember that outside agency support should serve primarily to strengthen the setting's or school's own developing provision.

Worcestershire SLCN Pathway: Fact Sheet 4.4

What can settings and schools do to help?

You will want to know what to expect when outside agencies become involved with your child. This could include any or all of the following:

- Liaison with you, your child and other services to ensure effective early support, identification and intervention;
- Individual assessments in order to further identify the strengths and needs of your child (to include parent, child and setting/school views as well as the context in which the learning is taking place);
- Advice about specific strategies, resources or programmes to support your child;
- Advice and/or training for settings/school staff;
- Parent workshops may be arranged;
- Suggestions to help you support your child at home.

For more information visit the 'Targeted and Specialist' pages of the website for a description of outside agency support and what can be expected if agencies become involved.

Will I be involved in my child's assessment and reviews?

Parental involvement: You will be asked by all agencies working with your child to be involved in your child's assessments and reviews as the knowledge you have about your child contributes greatly to meeting your child's needs.

Child involvement: The views of children are sought as part of assessment and review. Where this is difficult because the child is not able to express themselves verbally, alternative methods of communication are used.

How can professionals support parents?

The importance of the parents' role in supporting children's development of speech, language and communication skills cannot be over-emphasised. Professionals can make a big difference by providing parents with appropriate information and advice to support their children. This section includes some suggestions and sources of further information that **ALL** professionals can use.

“The key to helping young children to speak, listen, read, write and socialise better lies in encouraging parents and carers to talk to them more, and to respond to their attempts to communicate. All parents wish to do their best for their children, but often lack the confidence or knowledge to implement powerful parenting practices, such as attentive listening, singing songs, playing rhyming games and sharing books. Parents need to be empowered to recognise their valuable contribution to their child’s ability to make sense of the world, through encouraging communication at every opportunity. They may not know how important (and easy) this is.

Young children are active learners and the pleasure to be gained by both child and adult in simply talking together is undervalued as a vital first step.”

**Early Language Advocacy Kit for Early Years Professionals –
National Literacy Trust**

What can professionals do to support parents?

- Give key messages (see below)
- Make appropriate information and/or leaflets available to parents
- Model good practice by being on the child’s level, making eye contact and being a good listener
- Provide information about sources of help and support in the community

Key message to give to all parents:

‘You are the child’s first and best teacher’

- Use everyday activities to talk about what is going on – children learn by repetition and by seeing and experiencing things for themselves
- Everyday activities can be the best talking times, e.g. travelling time, mealtimes, washing and dressing.
- Make it fun! Play together, e.g. toys, sport, computer games; share stories, e.g. look at books together, talk about TV “soap” characters or people in the news; share music, e.g. songs, rhymes, musical films.
- Listen to your child and give them time to finish talking.
- Speak to your child in the language you know best, it doesn’t have to be English.
- Children who talk don’t get so frustrated – they may be able to tell you why they are cross, upset, or anxious.
- Children who talk well are more likely to acquire good literacy skills.

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What can settings and schools do to help?

What is the key message for parents with a young baby?

Talk to your baby!



Key message to give to parents:

- Babies can communicate from birth. Talk to them from day one and give them time to respond to you.
- Enjoy your baby: having fun is important – for the adult and for the child.
- You don't need any special toys or equipment to develop your baby's communication skills. All you need is the time to talk and respond to their attempts to communicate while sharing and enjoying everyday experiences together.
- Talking to your baby doesn't have to be at a specific time of day but should be part of everyday activities, such as the time when the baby's nappy is changed.
- Talk *with* your baby not *at* them.

For more information: see National Literacy Trust: "Talk to Your Baby" Campaign

www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby



QUICK TIPS from "Talk to Your Baby" www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby

Talk To Your Baby has produced a series of "quick tips" leaflets for parents and practitioners to help children develop good talking and listening skills. **Each sheet is available bilingually in thirteen languages.** Copies can be downloaded and photocopied free of charge. The leaflets include:

- [Say hello to your new baby](#)
- [Dummies and talking](#)
- [Talk to your baby in your own language](#)
- [Making the most of television](#)
- [Talking with your baby](#)
- [Sharing songs and rhymes](#)
- [Sharing books with your baby](#)
- [Playing with your baby](#)

Worcestershire SLCN Pathway: Fact Sheet 4.4

What can settings and schools do to help?

What else can professionals do to support parents and carers?

- Encourage parents to attend the local Children’s Centre, or other Early Years services. A range of activities are available to provide opportunities to develop children’s communication skills and provide support for parents.
- Refer to specialist services, using referral guidelines
- Encourage parents to keep appointments with specialist services, and facilitate this where possible
- Encourage parents to contact existing support groups (see ‘Where can parents go for help?’ on the parents page of the website)



Refer to Talking Point www.talkingpoint.org.uk/talkinglinks for lots of information about SLCN. Talking Point has a section for parents, young people, early years workers, teachers, health visitors, GPs, speech and language therapists.



Tips for Talking Factsheets

These Talking Point factsheets give parents/carers the information they need to check their child is developing, and contain tips for them to support their children’s speech and language.

