



Tips for parents of students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

What are SLCN?

- All children and young people need good speech, language and communication skills in order to access the school curriculum, make good progress and achieve good outcomes from school and from life.
- Speech, language and communication underpins basic literacy skills.
- As well as being integral to literacy and therefore academic success, speech, language and communication skills are also closely linked to pupil behaviour and to their social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. If pupils cannot communicate effectively, they cannot interact with their peers or fully express their feelings.
- Speech and language problems may include lack of fluency, difficulty with pitch, intonation and volume of speech, as well as specific difficulties, such as stammering. Children and young people may have difficulty with non-verbal cues and reading facial expressions, as well as turn-taking and listening.

Practical tips to help develop language and communication skills:

- Encourage reading and discuss what your child has read. Reading can help with improving vocabulary and comprehension.
- Find time to regularly talk about your child's day. Encourage them to tell you what they have learnt at school. Although many Secondary age pupils are reluctant at times to talk about school to their parents, this is a really valuable activity as it will help consolidate your child's learning in school, as well as develop their spoken language and recall skills.
- Encourage your child to regularly talk on the phone, perhaps to a Grandparent or other relative. This again will aid with fluency and communication skills.
- Work with your son/daughter on new vocabulary that they are learning in school. This should be available through their Google classrooms, where their lessons are posted to recap what they have learnt in school.
- Encourage your son/daughter to have short interactions with unfamiliar adults in public. For example, get them to order their own food if you are out for dinner, or encourage them to speak to people in shops if they need help finding something. These small everyday interactions will help to build their confidence with their spoken skills.

Where to find more help and guidance:

- The speech works service have an information page with links to many other organisations that give help and advice to parents. Follow the link below to find their resources page. - <https://www.speechworksservices.co.uk/resources/>
- Thurrock council have a page on their website dedicated to speech and language support for school age children - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/speech-language-and-communication-support-at-school/school-aged-children>