



<b>DAWN HOUSE SCHOOL – STAFF HANDBOOK</b>	
<b>Policy Title: Speech &amp; Language Therapy</b>	
<b>Section: S</b>	<b>Policy No: S.10</b>
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<b>Name of Originator: AR</b>	<b>Designation: Head of Therapy</b>

## **Introduction**

All pupils at Dawn House School have significant speech and/or language and communication needs (SLCN), some of which may not be immediately apparent. All of the pupils have some degree of comprehension difficulties, which may affect their access to the curriculum, particularly as the demands become increasingly complex and abstract. Some of the pupils have numeracy and literacy difficulties. Many of the pupils have additional difficulties and these may be social, emotional and/or behavioural, cognitive, sensory, eating and drinking etc. Increasingly, pupils have SLCN as their main area of difficulty within a more complex disorder or syndrome e.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Landau Kleffner Syndrome. Some pupils have alternative or augmentative means of communication and some may have eating and drinking difficulties. Their strengths and weaknesses are individual and within one class or year group the pupils will show different levels of communicative ability.

Specific external advice, from a translator, will be sought for children whose first language is not English.

## **Aims**

To work collaboratively within a range of functional situations so that pupils develop their speech, language, communication, learning and thinking skills in order that they are able to access the curriculum, become independent communicators and learners and feel confident in a range of social situations.

## **Objectives**

SLTs will

- Work collaboratively as a key member of a multi-disciplinary core team for either KS2, KS3, KS4, KS5 usually in one specified class or year group. However, this may change according to the number of students in each key stage.
- Work within this team to ensure that to the best of their ability, pupils will:
  - Be able to express needs and ideas
    - Give instructions and retell events
    - Speak intelligibly

- Use augmentative or alternative methods of communication (AAC) if necessary e.g. Makaton signing, AAC devices.
    - Be able to follow and join in discussion and conversation.
  - Develop effective literacy skills
    - Develop phonological awareness skills for literacy and vocabulary.
  - Understand spoken and written language
    - Understand a range of vocabulary, concepts and syntax.
  - Interact successfully with peers and adults
    - Understand and use social rules and conventions
    - Develop interaction skills necessary for group membership
    - Develop play and imagination
    - Recognise, understand and express emotions in themselves and others
  - Access the curriculum at Dawn House School
    - Understand a range of vocabulary, concepts and syntax within the curriculum
    - Be able to follow class work, both oral and written after differentiation
    - Develop the ability to work independently.
  - Develop awareness of their strengths and weaknesses
    - In language and learning
    - Take responsibility for their own communication
    - Develop strategies for dealing with a range of difficulties e.g. memory, interaction, communication, processing, emotional, behaviour, eating and drinking.
  - Competently eat and drink. (see Dysphagia Policy)
  - Develop independence and organisational skills.
- Advise, liaise or consult with other staff members, parents and – if appropriate – other establishments through outreach and partnerships.
- Assess, devise, implement, evaluate and report on appropriate interventions and means of communication as part of external requirements such as EHCP's.
- Participate in the pre-admission assessment process.
- Take a key role in the Annual Review/EHCP process, setting and evaluating realistic targets.
- Be involved in developing and delivering training to parents, staff groups within school and, if appropriate, to other schools/colleges.
- Provide SLT student placements.
- Actively contribute to the whole school community.
- Be active in the continuing professional development of themselves, the team and the school.

## **Assessment**

SLT's assess pupil's speech, language and communication skills as part of the multi-disciplinary team at Dawn House at various times:

- Pre-admission for school placement through the Assessment service.
- Regular on-going formative assessment for planning and evaluation of individual programmes: termly for therapy targets, more frequently as part of intervention and yearly for Annual Reviews/EHCP's when appropriate.
- As part of the annual review/EHCP process (there is no requirement to carry out formal, informal assessment at this point as a therapy report is written at the end of the year)
- At other times if specifically requested by external agencies, as part of the EHCP process or if a pupil's communication needs change.

A range of formal and informal assessment techniques are used appropriate to the situation, pupil and purpose.

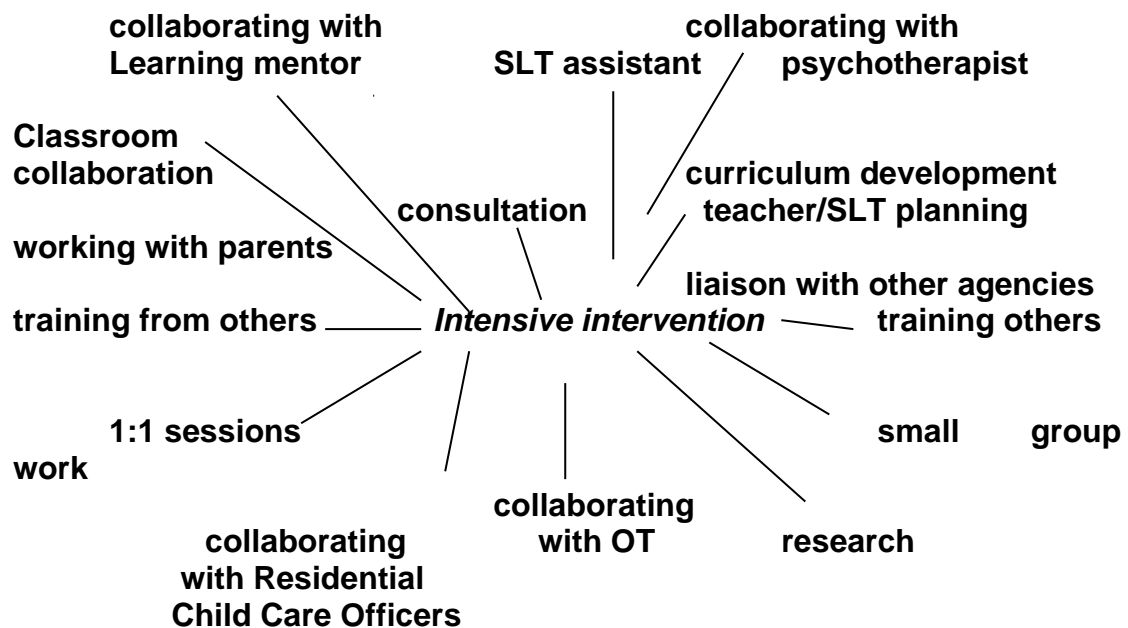
More information about SLT assessment at Dawn House is detailed in the SLT Assessment Policy.

## **Implementation of the Speech and Language Therapy Provision**

### *Approach*

At Dawn House there are 5 Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs), covering one or more class or year groups – this is their defined 'caseload'. All SLT's are registered members of RCSLT and registered with HCPC. The staffing structure allows for a Head of Therapy, 2 Senior SLTs, 1 main grade SLT and 2 newly qualified SLTs. There is also a SLT Assistants who work across identified key stages in school and Sixth Form.

All pupils at Dawn House have an EHCP reflecting that they have SLCN. Pupils at the school receive intensive intervention for their SLCN based on their EHCP outcomes, which reflect their individual needs, and may take a variety of forms:-



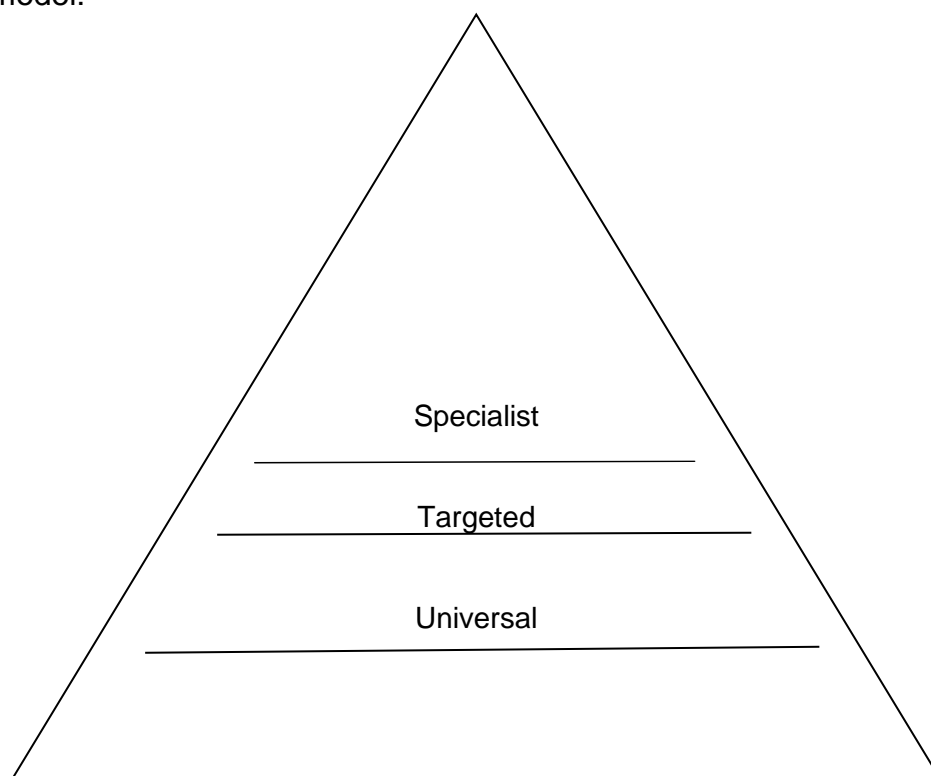
The model of therapy at Dawn House is collaborative and curriculum based. SLTs, SLT assistants, OTs and OT assistants work within this model, to meet pupil needs. They work in different ways, in a range of functional settings; through shared planning, delivery and evaluation of the curriculum (including extended curriculum), joint assessment and report writing, curriculum development, discussion and consultation, training, individual and small group sessions. This list is not exhaustive.

Collaborative working is a dynamic process, and as such is continually changing and evolving. Importantly:

- It describes how two or more professionals plan to work together through the curriculum - thereby meeting two or more sets of targets.
- The professionals working through this model *share* responsibility for learning, communication and behaviour in the classroom, playground, residences etc.
- Each professional should have a clear role, in which they feel confident and purposeful.
- Collaborative working takes *many different forms* and so will look different at different times, dependent on:
  - the subject/lesson content
  - the skills to be learnt/practised
  - individual pupil needs
  - the personalities in the partnership
  - how new the partnership is
  - the relative experience and strengths of professionals
  - preferred styles of collaboration.

To ensure that individual needs are being met, the following points need to be taken into consideration.

- Many of the pupils' language and communication needs can be met through the curriculum (including extended curriculum) when there is effective collaboration and shared use of lesson time.
- There is a need for flexibility to allow for a range of different intervention types throughout all curriculum areas whether they are core, foundation or examination subjects.  
Examples are: regular intensive 1:1 sessions in and out of the classroom if required, small group work focusing on particular skills or strategies, consultation with residential care officers about self-care etc.
- Direct 1:1 therapy may not always be appropriate for individual pupils.
- Withdrawal from the curriculum lessons should be carefully monitored, agreed with the teacher and its impact on curriculum access minimised by careful selection and rotation of subjects. Any concerns relating to withdrawal for one-to-one or small group work should be discussed with the Head of Therapy in the first instance.
- At different stages in a pupil's time at Dawn House School they will need different amounts and type of therapeutic intervention. Therapy in the primary department may be more intensive and skills-based, whereas higher up the school it may be more strategy orientated.
- Therapy type and amount is based on individual needs. The level of intervention for an individual is based on the following prioritisation model:



- More individualised intervention may be needed for a range of specific needs, which include speech work, AAC assessment, teaching and practice, assessment, specific targeted work, motor skills, sensory integration, play sessions, specific 'programmes' e.g. Touch Type Read and Spell (TTRS), Read, Write, Inc.
- Programmes are regularly reviewed for individual pupils; they do not run for prolonged and ever-lasting periods of time and are evaluated using SMART targets.
- 'Blocks' of intervention, whether in the classroom or out of it, are clearly defined and focus on specific objectives. These are then evaluated at the end of the 'block' of intervention.

A by-product of successful collaboration is role interchange and shared two-way staff development; therefore it is not necessary for SLTs to be in all lessons. However, shared responsibility and involvement is essential and in this way a consistent approach for meeting the needs of pupils with SLCN should be developed across the physical, social, language and learning environments that Dawn House provides.

### **Evaluation, recording and reporting**

Intervention at Dawn House is regularly monitored, evaluated and reviewed. Outcomes are measured in a range of ways:

- Termly quantitative and qualitative evaluation of individual targets.
- Standardised assessments.
- Informal and on-line assessment.
- Pupil feedback: comments, using structured formats and rating scales etc.
- Observation of individual and group sessions.
- Peer review and team meetings.
- Appraisal system.
- Regular supervision.
- Whole school discussion.
- Moderation of record-keeping.
- Whole school record-keeping systems

Intervention is recorded in line with RCSLT standards. Information about school systems can be found in the 'Planning, Recording and Evaluating Policy'. Documentation and recording shall be in line with RCLST guidelines, the school policy and within the requirements of GDPR and the Data Protection Act.

This is audited on a yearly basis as part of the Therapy Team Audit process.

## **Training and Development**

Depending on their experience, SLTs may be involved in:

- Developing, planning and delivering training, both internally and externally. Some of this may be as part of I CAN's strategy/3 year plan.
- Outward-facing projects as part of the school's specialist status.
- Research.

## **SLT Assistant**

The SLTA at Dawn House School works with pupils and staff in a range of different ways. The SLTA receive training on SLCN, the educational setting and a range of intervention approaches. There are on-going training opportunities within school as outlined below. SLTA's also receive regular professional support and supervision.

All SLTs assign themselves SLTA time, they liaise regularly so that assistant then work increasingly autonomously but remain under the direction of a designated SLT. SLTA work across the school, activities include:

- Working directly with individual pupils.
- Working with groups of pupils.
- Carrying out specific programmes as directed by an SLT.
- Planning a series of sessions based on advice from an SLT.
- Preparing resources for sessions, or for SLTs.
- Organising, storing and logging equipment.
- Supporting pupils in class sessions under the direction of an SLT.
- Running lunchtime activities.

The SLTA is part of the SLT and Teaching Assistant team, and have wider duties including lunchtime, break time and before school supervision.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

There are opportunities in and out of school for on-going professional development. This is realised in some regular development activities:

- Professional support and supervision.
- Therapy departmental meetings (at least half termly) – agenda posted in advance
  - Including peer review
  - Journal review
  - Feedback from courses.
- Shared staff meetings.
- Whole school INSET days.
- The school subscribes to a number of professional journals relating to SLT and education.
- Discussion with colleagues and professional visitors.

- SLT student placements.

In addition to these regular activities, the school's 'Staff Development Policy' encourages staff to apply for external courses and other training opportunities.

All CPD activities are then shared with relevant colleagues in school. CPD logs are kept and updated regularly.