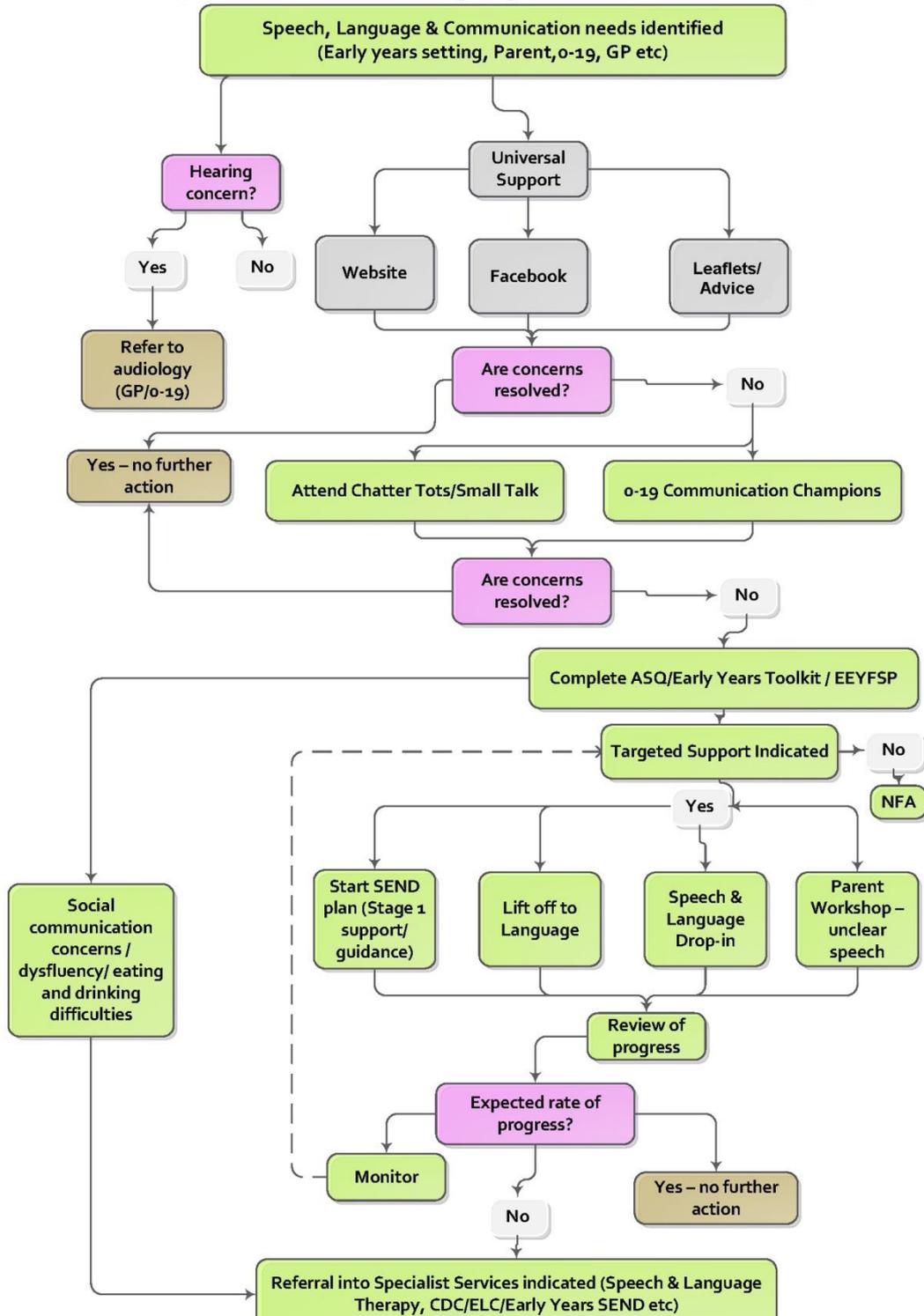




Early Years Speech & Language Pre-Referral Pathway



Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Early Years Communication and Language Pathway - Supporting Information

Important information

Please note you do not need to go through each service and stage on the pathway. The universal services provide a good solid foundation for all children whichever pathway they take.

Audiology service – If a practitioner identifies a communication and language delay, they are asked to consider if the child may have any hearing difficulties. Health professionals such as the child's GP or Health Visitor can refer to the service, who will assess the child's hearing and then decide the relevant pathway for support. Early years practitioners should liaise with the child's health visitor for the results of the hearing screening.

Universal offer of support

Online resources: Speech and Language Therapy website and Facebook page – Useful source of information for parents and professionals - www.childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk Facebook page can be accessed by searching 'Children's Speech and Language Therapy in Luton and Bedfordshire' within the Facebook website/app.

Leaflets/Advice: Leaflets and advice can be sought from your local Children's Centre or 0-19 team i.e. 10 top tips to talking, dummies good or bad etc. A leaflet will be sent to all children turning 18 months old explaining what to expect at 18 months, some ideas to try and advice on what to do if parents are concerned.

Chattertots/Small Talk - A structured programme of group sessions aimed at improving communication skills, for parents and children. Families receive advice strategies to use with their child and information to support the home learning environment. This group is designed to support families and their children with emerging communication and language needs with a focus on 2 year olds. Parents can register their interest by calling their local children's centre, all sessions are booking only and parents will be contacted to confirm their place.

0-19 team Communication Champions- Nursery nurses working within the 0-19 team, who have received further training from the Speech and Language Therapy team to allow them to offer advice to families when there is a concern regarding communication development. To access advice from the champions contact 0-19 SPA

Targeted offer of support

Assessment tools:

1. The **Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)** includes questions regarding communication and language and is used by health visitors and nursery nurses to assess a child's development in conjunction with the parents.
2. The **Early Years Foundation Stage Framework** is an assessment tool used by Early Years practitioners and will assess communication and language development.
3. **Early Years Communication and Language Toolkit** is a tool to help practitioners to think about a child's language development and identify the specific areas that there may be delay using the Building Blocks of Communication and Language checklist. The screening tool provides a forensic review of the child's communication and language skills and assists in decision making for practitioners. To access the toolkit, visit www.childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Plan – An Early Years setting may wish to start a SEND plan to record the concerns that may affect the child's development and how they plan to support the child whilst they are in setting. The SEND plan ensures that effective provision is put into place to remove or reduce any barriers to learning. At stage one, it is expected that high quality support from the setting will support the child's individual needs at this first stage of the plan. Plans are reviewed termly in an 'assess – plan – do – review' approach.

Lift off to Language - A six week group intervention delivered by trained Early Years settings to provide support to children who are identified as needing additional support with their developing communication skills. Training is provided by the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) team and practitioners receive a quality visit before being signed off as accredited Lift off to Language practitioners. To access training, contact ccs.beds.childrens.slt.training@nhs.net

Drop In – Early intervention drop ins run by a Speech and Language Therapist within an existing children's centre stay and play session. The therapist is available to talk to families within the session about their concerns. Drop in is suitable for children when there are early concerns, if a practitioner is unsure if a formal SALT referral is needed, or if a family may find it difficult accessing formal SALT services. Contact your local children's centre for details of upcoming drop in sessions.

Parent workshop – Helping Children with Unclear Speech – A one and a half hour workshop for parents on early speech sound development. Offers advice, support and ideas for parents to use to support their child's speech sound development. Email ccs.beds.childrens.slt.training@nhs.net for details of future workshops.

Specialist Support services

Speech and Language Therapy Community Team

The SALT Community service works from local Health Centres and offers support for children 0-16 with communication needs. This may include difficulties in social communication, understanding language, using language, speech sounds, dysfluency (stammering) and difficulties with voice quality. The therapists and support practitioners work in a range of settings, including preschools and schools, aiming to support the child to communicate functionally in their daily life. This includes working with the child, their carers, education staff and others involved in the child's life. For further information and referral details, visit www.childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk

Speech and Language Therapy Special Needs Team

The SALT team based at the Edwin Lobo Centre and the Child Development Centre work with children under five who may have wider developmental needs. They also offer a specialist service for children with swallowing, eating and drinking difficulties. The therapists and support practitioners work in a range of settings, including hospitals and preschools, aiming to support the child to communicate functionally in their daily life. This includes working with the child, their carers, education staff and others involved in the child's life. For further information and referral details, visit www.childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk

Multi-Disciplinary Assessment

An appointment with a paediatrician and other linked professionals, often including a Speech and Language Therapist, held at the Edwin Lobo Centre or Child Development Centre. The Multi-disciplinary assessment (MDA) facilitates a full assessment of the child's skills when there are wider developmental concerns, including social communication concerns. The child will be seen by all professionals and an assessment reports and plan of support will be generated. For further information contact Edwin Lobo Centre 01582 700300 (Luton and South Bedfordshire) or Child Development Centre 01234 310278 (Bedford and North Bedfordshire)

Early Years SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Team / Early Years Support Team

A service made up of Early Years Teachers and Specialist Practitioners who work closely to support children under 5 who have additional needs that may affect their development and educational progress. The support includes advice and assessment of needs.