



Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

Oxford Craniofacial Unit

# Speech and Language Therapy

Information for patients



Our Speech and Language Therapy team provides a specialist service for children and adults who have complex difficulties with communication, or with eating, drinking and swallowing.

Currently only specialist craniofacial units in the UK have specialist Speech and Language Therapists who work with this dedicated caseload.

Children with craniofacial conditions are seen for assessments as part of the multidisciplinary craniofacial team.

**The Speech and Language Therapy team works with other specialties within the Oxford Craniofacial Unit, the hospital and external agencies, including:**

- GPs
- paediatricians
- other medical personnel
- schools (teachers, SENCO, assistants)
- educational and clinical psychologists
- portage workers
- teachers for hearing impaired children.

We are also actively involved in research and clinical audit projects, and share our findings in journal publications and through education and training.

A Speech and Language Therapist will be present at your child's multidisciplinary clinic appointment, where you will have the opportunity to ask any team member questions about their specialist area of care. Sometimes we may offer a separate appointment with one of our team alongside clinic (or at another time) to provide a more in-depth consultation.

**We offer children language assessments at key stages in their care, including:**

- pre-operatively
- between 18 months and 2 years of age
- between 3 and 4 years of age
- between 6 and 7 years of age.

We also offer speech, language and feeding assessments at any time when a clinical need arises during the course of a patient's care.

Some families have questions relating to their child's speech, language, communication or feeding development. A telephone consultation can be arranged by appointment to discuss questions in greater detail if required.

## Your child's Speech and Language Therapy assessment session

Sometimes the Speech and Language Therapist will conduct a joint assessment with another professional, such as a Psychologist.

Assessment sessions usually last between 30 minutes and one hour. The Therapist will usually start by talking to you about your child's early history and development, and gathering some information about your perspective on your child's development.

If appropriate, the Speech and Language Therapist may also ask your child their opinion on their feeding, speech, language and communication. The assessment session is designed to identify areas of strength, and areas where your child may need some extra help.

A feeding assessment may include observation of your child eating and drinking. The Speech and Language Therapist may trial some different textures or ways of eating and drinking. The Speech and Language Therapist may ask a series of questions and refer you to local services if necessary.

A speech, language and communication assessment may be informal and play-based, and designed to look at the way your child understands language, how well they are talking, and which sounds they are able to use in their speech.

Sometimes the Speech and Language Therapist will carry out a 'formal' assessment. This means they work with your child using a number of published assessments, many of which are standardised. The Speech and Language Therapist will then provide you some feedback about your child's communication and any recommendations they may have (including whether referral to local Speech and Language Therapy services is indicated).

We will then usually provide you with a report summarising the results of the assessment.

## Contact us

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If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

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