

The

Link

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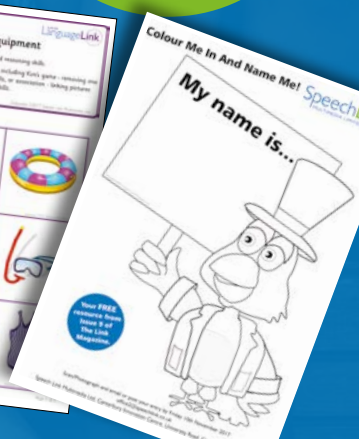
SUPPORTING A CHILD WHO STAMMERS
By The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering

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MAKING LITERACY FUN FOR THE CHILD WITH SLCN

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FREE
resource

Editor's Letter

Welcome back to school and to our latest issue of *The Link* magazine. We have had a very busy summer, preparing for the launch of our new website. It has been so exciting to take our schools' feedback and create the new features they requested. If you want to have a look for yourself, sign up for a week's free trial at www.speechlink.info.

This month's feature article is by Daisy Hope, specialist SLT, from the **Michael Palin Centre for Stammering**. Teachers and TAs work with children who stammer and this article highlights advice to teaching staff drawn from the experience of those children. We have also written our SLCN Glossary to define the terminology within stammering.

We recently met our guest contributor, Cathy Farr, at a local conference, which led us to invite her to explain how she writes a **novel for children with SLCN**. As a teacher and author, Cathy is determined to open the world of fiction to those children struggling to **enjoy literacy**. Read our interview with Cathy about her life with her wonderful wolfhounds at The Link Online.

The mental health of children and young people is a priority in education these days, even more so for those with SLCN. Research shows that they suffer greatly in the

school environment. Scot Greathead SLT outlines what signs teaching staff should look out for and how to support those pupils.

Claire Chambers continues with our regular feature of advice for support staff in the classroom. This month it includes practical tips for teaching pupils to ask for help in the classroom.

This month's issue is packed with **competitions and offers**. Look out for the competition to win a copy of Cathy's novel, *Moon Chase*, together with the accompanying teacher's workbook; a prize draw to win a printed resource pack from our KS2 language support package, Junior Language Link; and finally, a downloadable resource of a cut out and colour image, inviting pupils (and staff!) to name our parrot. He needs a name for his Facebook page.

We post this magazine **FREE** to all UK Primary Schools to provide SENCos and school staff with specialist advice for SLCN in the classroom. Please share this copy with your colleagues in the staffroom. Digital copies of this issue (and previous issues) can be read on our website and you can also buy a subscription from our online shop for additional copies to be posted to your school or home.

www.speechlink.info

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SLCN Glossary

By Heather Stevens, Speech and Language Therapist

Stammer versus Stutter

People often ask speech and language therapists the difference between stammering, stuttering and dysfluency. The answer is... there is no difference. The terms mean the same but stammering is the accepted term in this country to describe speech which is "bumpy" or dysfluent.

Stammering is not an issue that can be addressed without advice and input from your speech and language therapist. We recommend that you get help for any child who stammers as soon as possible.

The longer a child has been stammering the more likely it is that they will continue to stammer. There are a number of therapy techniques that may be used, but it is crucial that everyone at home and at school is giving the same message and is working together to support the child.

There has been a great deal of research into what causes stammering but it remains a complex issue. There are physiological, psychological and environmental

factors that can make a child more vulnerable to developing a stammer. It is well documented that anxiety has a considerable impact on a child's fluency and so it is important to reduce pressure and the speaking demands on them in the classroom.


A stammer can manifest in a number of ways. Our article by guest writer Daisy Hope, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, looks at this in more detail. Read Daisy's article for an insight into the feelings of children who have a stammer.

For our Speech Link users:

if a child shows signs of stammering, we do not recommend working on speech sounds in the classroom.

The screenshot displays a website interface with a navigation bar at the top containing a home icon, 'Speech Link', 'Infant Language', and 'Junior Language' buttons, and a 'Logout' button with an arrow icon. The main heading is 'NEW FEATURES for Speech Link and Language Link'. Below this is a table with four columns: 'Measured Outcomes', 'Pupil Report', 'Supplementary Teaching', and 'Provision Maps'. Each column contains a brief description of a new feature. At the bottom of the interface, there is a thumbs-up icon followed by the text 'ASK FOR A WEEK'S FREE TRIAL' and contact information for the Help Desk.

Measured Outcomes	Pupil Report	Supplementary Teaching	Provision Maps
A holistic view of a child's progress using an expanded range of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teacher engagement ratings parent and pupil views intervention group outcomes supplementary teaching outcomes 	The pupil report now includes all Speech Link and Language Link assessment results and intervention outcomes. Ideal for EHCP evidence and inspection.	A new 'next step' to follow group interventions. The 1-1 precision teaching approach focuses on a particular skill, eg. understanding concepts.	These now show all speech and language interventions AND their impact. Immediate, robust data for senior leaders and inspectors.

 **ASK FOR A WEEK'S FREE TRIAL**
by contacting our Help Desk at office2@speechlink.co.uk or phoning 0333 577 0784



Before therapy

"...it has devil horns on his head it stops me speaking it's like an evil thing. He looks angry that's what I feel if it happens. He has bruises because it's blocking what I'm trying to say. These muscles is because the stammer can be really strong... so strong I can't speak sometimes. Its sharp teeth and spikes is like these pins in my throat sometimes when I stammer."

These pictures were drawn by a child when asked to 'draw his stammer', before and after receiving therapy. They help us understand what it can feel like to have a stammer and show how therapy can help.

By Daisy Hope, Specialist SLT, The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering, London.



Having a child who stammers in your class can be a challenging experience. Why is he stammering one moment and fine the next? Is he putting it on? What should I do about the register?

Children usually start to stammer between the ages of 2 and 5 years old, a time when their language skills are developing rapidly. Around 5% of children start to stammer and around four out of five will overcome

it; some will just naturally grow out of it, and others will stop with early therapy. 1% of children may continue to stammer into adulthood.

When someone stammers you might hear....

- Repetitions of whole, single-syllable words e.g. "and and and"
- Repetitions of sounds e.g. "b-because"
- Stretching out sounds (prolongations) e.g. "lllike"
- Words appearing to 'get stuck' (blocks), where the airflow stops and nothing comes out.

Children can become experts in 'hiding' their stammer. They might avoid talking completely in some situations, say less, or change words in order to appear more fluent. Within the classroom they might pretend they don't know the answer, give very brief answers, not put their hand up, or not volunteer for tasks that involve speaking.

Stammering is different for everyone, and often what other people can see or hear when someone stammers is only the 'tip of the iceberg'. Stammering can affect a child's emotional wellbeing and their ability

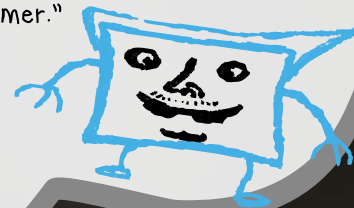


Michael Palin Centre Helpline Available 9-5, Monday to Friday
Call: 0203 316 8100 www.stammeringcentre.org

Supporting a Child who Stammers

After therapy

"This one is smiley because I'm feeling happy.. I used to change the words because it was strong. Now it's weak so it's a lot easier to speak. The first one has big eyes... I was anxious - it has fangs, I was frustrated. Now - it's smiley because it's calmer."



to communicate as they would like. In school, possible challenges include:

- Reading out loud or talking in front of the class or school;
- Answering the register;
- Taking part in fast moving conversations in the playground;
- Being distracted by worries about speech, making it hard to concentrate and learn;
- Being teased or bullied, and;
- Speaking under time pressure.

What else to know...

www.speechlink.info

for the full extended article

Our Stammering Information Programme project asked over 50 children/young people what they wanted teachers to know.

'Top Tips'

- ✓ **We are more than just our stammer.**
"I don't think that the stammer is my main feature, I'm just a normal 18 year old."
- ✓ **There is no link between stammering and intelligence.**
"If the first thing you do is talk funny people sometimes think that you're not as bright."
- ✓ **Certain situations make us stammer more.**
"... it would make me feel more uncomfortable and then that would normally lead to me stammering more."

How to help us

- ✓ **Ask us how you can help**
"I would really like my teachers to come over to me and have a little talk."
- ✓ **Give us time to think and speak.**
"After I've been asked a question if I was given the time to start thinking about the answer and my speech as well it would be very helpful because I could think of some techniques for my speech."
- ✓ **Tell us we're doing ok -, but don't advise us about our speech.**
"I don't really like being told to slow down."
"People tell me to hurry up, I speed up and then stammer more."

Making Literacy Fun for the Child with SLCN

By Cathy Farr

Prompted by a chance meeting with a teenager who admitted that reading was a major struggle because, as she said, 'The words just don't go in', children's fiction author, Cathy Farr, has written two books for that young girl and others like her – books *they* can read.

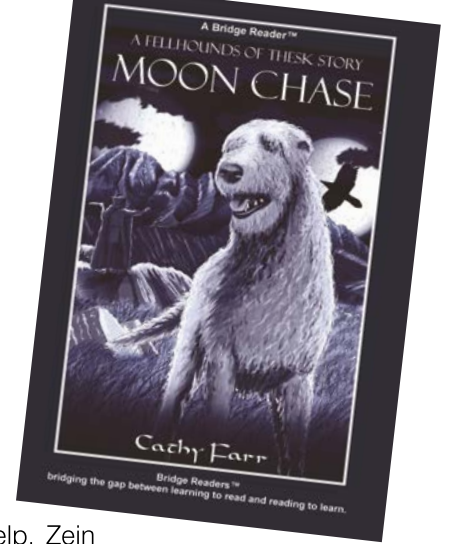
Cathy's original fantasy adventure, *Moon Chase*, tells of a boy wrongly accused of a crime, who sets out to prove his innocence, helped by huge Fellhounds: Cathy's challenge was to tell that same story to weaker readers in an accessible language that wasn't boring, or worse, patronising.

Helped by Afasic speech and language specialist, Zein Pereira, Cathy started by considering questions children ask. You know the ones: in a grisly scene in

Casualty a mangled body lies under a car; 'What happened? Is he dead?' a child will ask. Cathy needed to pre-empt the question by providing the answers in the writing. For example, the original *Moon Chase* describes the neat dispatch of an early foe as '*SNAP! He landed heavily and lay motionless with his head twisted round at an odd angle – the rock still sitting snugly in his sling*'. Now, as we know, all children love morbidity, so the new sentence read: '*He landed with a loud SNAP! and lay on the ground with his head twisted around at a strange angle. He was dead.*'

Cathy cut her original text by a third, introducing simple vignettes and a glossary for challenging words or phrases, e.g. thwacked, bowled me over; she also provided alternatives.

Feedback from Zein also prompted Cathy to compile an accompanying workbook. In Cathy's first draft the very first worksheet leapt from a simple 'fill in the gaps' question straight to a higher-level question, e.g. 'Why is the boy reaching for his crossbow in this picture?' Cathy may have wanted to build-in some learning hurdles, but this one was a whopper!



To help, Zein introduced Cathy to Blanks Levels of Questions, often referred to by SALTs: Level 1 (e.g. What is this?) to Level 4 (e.g. What should he do?). No problem for the average 5 or 6 year old but, as Cathy learnt, any children with speech and language difficulties may struggle.

With another lesson learnt, the second draft featured a far slower progression from Level 1 type questions to Level 4. To avoid derailing a tentative student, lines were added for writing, good font size was selected and questions were simple and singular. Opportunities to re-tell parts of the story or complete a picture from the novel were also included, as too were *Additional Activities* featuring role play, discussion, creative writing and drawing.

The resulting *Bridge Readers* are proving popular with teachers and children, and really do bridge the gap between learning to read and reading to learn.

***Moon Chase* and the sequel, *Moon Crossing*, are priced £7.99. The accompanying Teacher's Workbooks are available as individual downloads or as a complete set. Go to www.bitebooks.co.uk. Discounts for schools apply.**



Read our interview with Cathy at The Link Online

PRIZE DRAW

We have two sets of the novels and teachers' workbooks to give away. Enter our prize draw at www.speechlink.info.

Speech & Language

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Resources

Support speech and language work with our range of PRINTED resources.



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- Schools
- Parents
- SaLTs

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RESOURCES FOR SPEECH WORK

PRINTED

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54 large cards, 2 games.
Improves phonological processing skills by playing games to detect and produce rhyming words.



Pocket Pack – Syllables £12.50+VAT






53 large cards, 3 games. Practise breaking down longer words to understand their meaning and to help find words in a child's vocabulary.



DOWNLOADABLE



Use our NEW printable downloads to build an online library of listening and sound activities. Print on demand to use at home, school or clinic.

Price + vat	Name	No of Sheets	Speech Work
£22	Listening Homework 	36	36 A4 sheets for working on listening and sound discrimination at home. Easy and clear instructions - choose the game and print the sheets.
£25	Minimal Pairs Squares 	39	39 colourful A4 sheets. An indispensable resource for improving phonological processing and sound discrimination.
£10	Sound Squares Blends 	18	A follow-on collection of 18 A4 printable sheets targeting sound blends. Each blend is presented in a range of word positions as appropriate.
£22	Sound Homework 	30	30 colourful A4 sheets for practising sounds in words and sentences. Each game has clear, easy to follow instructions.
£25	Sound Squares 	21	21 A4 printable sheets targeting different phonemes. Each sound is presented in word initial, medial and final positions where appropriate.

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

Poster Pack £12.50+VAT

Create a speech and language friendly classroom with top tips for 'talking' and 'speech'.



Creative Board Game Pack £25+VAT

Encourages collaboration and imagination. 6 colourful A3 board games, dice and counters. Use to reinforce skills learned in speech and language work. Combine with pocket packs or play your games as a reward.



SLCN poster £8+VAT

Supporting Pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, features practical ideas for creating an inclusive classroom at KS2 and beyond.



NEW

RESOURCES FOR LANGUAGE WORK

PRINTED

The Naming Game Pack £20+VAT

4 A3 games, dice and counters in one pack. Easy and harder levels for infant and junior children to practise naming things in categories and develop vocabulary.



Pocket Pack – Associate £12.50+VAT

54 large cards, 2 games. Activities that use association and memory skills to develop a wide vocabulary.



Pocket Pack – Describe £12.50+VAT

56 large cards to help children develop description skills in a structured way. Using 2 cards together, extend the child's ability to compare and contrast by identifying difference and similarities.

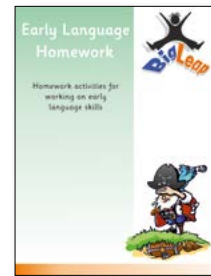


Pocket Pack – Categories £12.50+VAT

53 large cards, 3 games. A range of colourful and amusing pictures for children to sort into different groups. By grouping and sub-grouping, children are encouraged to see the links between them.



DOWNLOADABLE



Early Language Homework £22+VAT

46 A4 sheets to target language skills - listening, visual discrimination, memory, social skills as well as concepts, question words, following instructions and vocabulary.

Language Resources Bundle

Buy all 5 Language Resources and a Creative Board Game Pack

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Complete Resources Bundle - All our resources in one collection

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£220 + VAT

Printed

- 5 Pocket Packs - Rhyme Time, Associate, Categories, Describe, Syllables
- 1 Naming Game Pack
- 1 Creative Board Game Pack
- 1 Poster Pack

Downloadable - New!

- Listening Homework
- Sound Squares
- Sound Squares Blends
- Minimal Pairs Squares
- Sound Homework
- Early Language Homework

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Speech Resources Bundle (with 5% discount)	£145.00	£174.00		
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Printed Resources Bundle (with 5% discount + FREE sticker set)	£114.00	£136.80		
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Printed Downloadable Resources (with 5% discount)	£120.00	£144.00		
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Printed Pocket Pack - Syllables	£12.50	£15.00		
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NEW Downloadable - Sound Squares Blends	£10.00	£12.00		
NEW Downloadable - Minimal Pairs Squares	£25.00	£30.00		
NEW Downloadable - Sound Homework	£22.00	£26.40		
Language Resources				
Printed Pocket Pack - Associate	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Pocket Pack - Categories	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Pocket Pack - Describe	£12.50	£15.00		
Printed Naming Game	£20.00	£24.00		
NEW Downloadable Early Language Homework	£22.00	£26.40		
Classroom Resources				
Printed Creative Board Game Pack	£25.00	£30.00		
Printed Poster Set	£12.50	£15.00		
New SLCN poster	£8.00	£9.60		
UK Postage	£3.50	£4.20		
TOTAL				

Thank you for your order. A free poster pair will be sent with all orders over £150 (excl. VAT).
 Send us this order form and we will email you an invoice. Printed products will be posted on receipt of payment.
 Downloadable resources will be emailed.

From One TA to Another

– Tips of the Trade

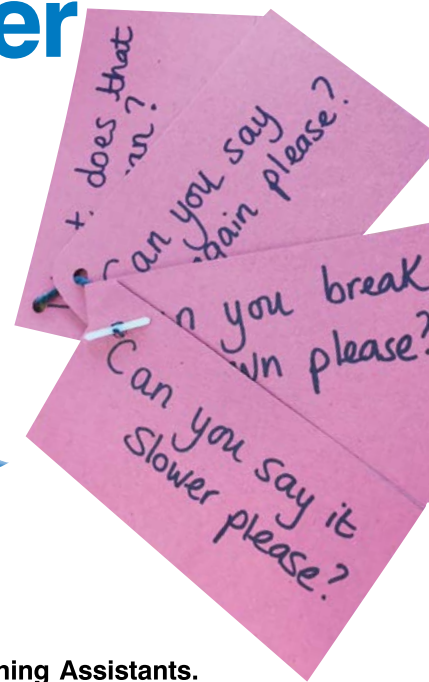
By Claire Chambers, former speech and language TA

Q

What do you call an individual who understands how children develop, is flexible and creative, works as a part of a team, rarely has a lunch break and always knows where the secret glue guns are hidden?

A

A Teaching Assistant! 😄



Welcome back to our regular feature written especially for primary school Teaching Assistants.

This month's 'Tip for the Classroom' is – Asking for Help!

Putting your hand up to answer a question is a big deal. In a meeting or in training sessions, I will avoid putting up my hand in the hope that someone else will ask the question. It is easier to sit and nod with the rest of the group, who appear to be having no difficulty understanding what is being said, than risk looking foolish.

In a class of 30, with the same children putting their hands up, and who are nearly always right, (and don't seem to mind when they're not) **and** who always 'get it', is it any wonder that some children don't let us know when they're struggling? Is it any wonder that they lose focus and some of them start misbehaving?

Have we ever considered that not only do they not want to put their hand up, but they don't know how to say **what** it is they don't understand?

Teachers are excellent at meeting the needs of all the children in the class, but there are still times when an explanation will go 'over the heads' of some of the children.

You can have great fun with your children helping them to work out what it is in a sentence that they are having difficulty understanding.

Ask lots of 'staged' questions to help them identify what bit of the question or instruction they have not understood. Then help them with the question they need to ask to make the meaning clear.

TA: (with hand over mouth mumbling) What is your favourite colour?

Child: Can you make it clearer please?

TA: Point to your humerus.

Child: What does that word mean?

TA: (whispering) Close the door.

Child: Can you say it louder please?

TA: Go to the office, get 3 pens 2 blue 1 red and take them to Mrs Jones and on the way drop a message into Mr Thomas before asking Miss Smith to lend our class her camera.

Child: Can you break it down please?

You can write each question on a card – see above as a prompt and to remind the teacher that they are trying to use strategies to help them. (NB: Encourage the child to say please)



Use Junior Language Link's Help Me Cards in the Concepts and Instructions Group (year 4) to teach these essential strategies.

Next Month: Listening Skills

Let us know what you have been doing this month at school. Do you have any tips that you think others would be able to use? Please contact Claire at office2@speechlink.co.uk



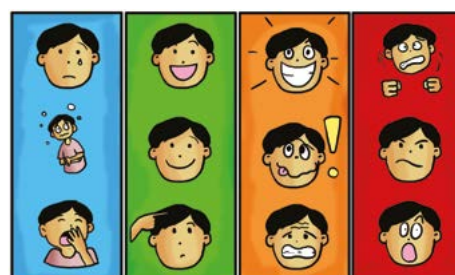
GUARDING THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN WITH SLCN

By Scot Greathead SLT and Dr Rhiannon Yates

There has recently been an increase in coverage within the media about the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children, and with good reason. Recent reports have identified that within each classroom, up to three children are at risk of poor emotional and mental health.

Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs are at a greater risk of experiencing challenges with emotional wellbeing. The impact of these challenges are not only seen in the short term, affecting children's achievement, participation and friendships but, if unrecognised and unsupported, can develop into serious conditions that can have a significant influence

in later life. Indeed, autistic young people recently told researchers that, whilst at school, they lacked confidence, felt depressed, worthless, and were under strain and unable to overcome their difficulties. Many of these young people felt as though these problems were related to the pressure of having to act 'normal' in a 'neurotypical' world.



Read the
interview
with Scot and
Rhiannon at The
Link Online



CREATING A SENSE OF 'BELONGING'



Social support is a protective factor for emotional wellbeing. Therefore, ensuring that all children feel a sense of belonging within classrooms can prevent them from feeling isolated and misunderstood. The quality of child/adult relationships is critical in facilitating inclusion. Adults can structure activities to promote children's collaboration both at work and in play, sensitively model ways to solve disagreements, and acknowledge children's emotional states.

EVERYDAY DISCUSSIONS ABOUT EMOTIONS

Research has shown that children who struggle to learn vocabulary associated with emotions may also have difficulties in recognising and managing how they feel. Whole class strategies like 'The Zones of Regulation' and 'The Incredible 5 Point Scale' can give children opportunities to learn an emotions vocabulary, grade feelings and discuss coping strategies throughout the day. The Danish frequently place highly in child-wellbeing rankings and one approach, 'Klassen Time', allows children to take it in turns to bake a cake each week. This cake is then eaten together whilst discussing classroom challenges, successes and how to be a more supportive community.



WELLBEING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY



Most mental health conditions develop between childhood and adulthood. Teaching teams are well placed to recognise and support those children who might be experiencing difficulties. Classrooms are an ideal place to give children the tools they need to discuss and manage their emotional wellbeing. Adults who employ simple strategies consistently, such as employing a nurturing approach, naming emotions and building peer relationships, can enhance children's emotional resilience.

PROMOTING A SENSE OF 'BELONGING' IN YOUR CLASSROOM

- ✓ Maintaining the wellbeing of staff is important so that they can be 'emotionally available' for children.
- ✓ Give roles of responsibility to help children to feel a valued member of the class community.
- ✓ Teach children to recognise when their peers might be isolated and teach them how to include them in games and class activities.
- ✓ Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs can spend a high proportion of time by themselves or with teaching assistants – create opportunities for playing and working with other children.
- ✓ Foster open and regular conversations about mental and emotional health.



Scot Greathead is an independent Consultant Speech and Language Therapist and Dr Rhiannon Yates is an Educational Psychologist working in Kent. Together they have published research on how to include children in shaping the decisions that influence their lives. The images used in this article are from their resource, "What is my School Like?", which has been designed to help children talk to teachers about their experiences of school.

SpeechTherapyServices.co.uk

School News

Using Language Link Interventions Successfully

By Christine Goode and Amanda Stait, Gladstone Primary School, Barry



Here at Gladstone School we pride ourselves on helping our children achieve all that they can and, with the help of Language Link and Speech Link, we have made that a reality since 2011. With the evidence of improvement shown between each session and in the measured outcomes, this is an invaluable asset to offer to any ESTYN inspector when they visit.

The printable resources for both Speech and Language are amazing and extensive, and sessions are always fun. Each child really enjoys coming with us. The infants are very fond of their tokens or stickers. Sadly, this doesn't work with the juniors but we found that a sweet works wonderfully for all the good sitting, looking, listening

and thinking chants we have before each session.

In Language Link, we have groups of up to four depending on their ability. We feel Language Link is not just a tool to teach children concepts, questioning and reasoning, etc. It actually teaches the child **HOW** to learn and once a child has this there are no limits, they will go from strength to strength. The talk at the end of each session helps us all to understand our strengths and weaknesses and how to move forward. In the juniors, a great deal of this is from their peers within the group. In the infants, we talk about how they may have enjoyed one game and not another. They have to tell us why they did or did not like a session. That way we can assess their understanding.

Over the years we have seen very unconfident speakers turn into wonderfully confident speakers, those children who will not put their hand up in class because they worry that they may not have the correct answer and that they cannot say the words correctly. These children have moved up through the infants to the juniors flourishing year on year. We have had the pleasure of seeing children move from reception to year 6 with the help of Language Link and Speech Link knowing they will now go on to high school feeling more positive about their futures and for that Gladstone Primary School says a big 'Thank You'.

Read about successful Speech Link interventions at The Link Online

FREE Language Link Trial

assessments • interventions • resources • Sign up for 1 week at www.speechlink.info

NEW Afasic App for Parents of Children with SLCN

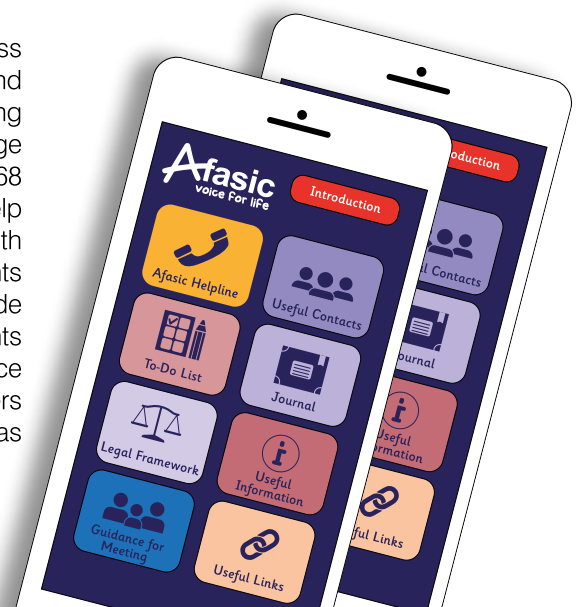
Afasic England have been running very well received self-advocacy workshops for parents across England over the last three years. Following a number of requests Afasic has now produced an App for parents based on the workshop, providing useful information on the legal framework, a glossary of terms, useful links, a journal, and guidance on how to manage meetings.

Whilst aimed at parents who have children with speech and language difficulties it will be useful for other parents who have children with additional needs. It will be available as a free download from

the respective App stores. Search for 'Afasic' in Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Afasic seeks to raise awareness and to create better services and provision for children and young people with speech and language impairments. It was founded in 1968 as a parent-led organisation to help children and young people with speech and language impairments and their families. We provide information and training for parents – and professionals – and produce a range of publications. Members meet in local groups in many areas of the UK.

For more information, go to <http://www.afasic.org/uk/>



FREE Resource



Please help. Ask your children to colour and name our Speech Link parrot. Send us a photo and we'll put our favourites on our website!

Find out more at
www.speechlink.info

Prize Draw

Enter to win one of 3 copies of The Swimming Pool Group resource from Junior Language Link, printed and laminated to give away to the first 3 schools to write to us with their best language group stories of the year. Write to us at office2@speechlink.co.uk.



Meet the team

Darrie Payne
Resources Illustrator



What job did you hope to be doing when you were a child?

I knew I wanted to be an artist since I was a kid. I studied Fine Arts at Dún Laoghaire School of Art in Dublin in the 80s.

What was your first job?

I became involved in the film business creating backdrops and sculptures for the industry.

I painted the scenes of houses on massive canvases which took weeks of work - now it's all CGI which is a different ball game!

The film business sounds very glamorous. Who was the most famous person you have met?

I first met the actor Daniel Day Lewis while painting the backdrop for a street scene for the film 'My Left Foot'. I nearly fell off my ladder a couple of weeks later when he 'walked' into the building and I realised that he didn't have cerebral palsy at all and, as a method actor, he had spent the entire production in a wheelchair with the crew feeding him! What an actor. An Academy Award was totally deserved!

So how did you end up working at Speech Link Multimedia Ltd?

I began illustrating resources for teachers in Ireland. Derry Patterson, my wife's cousin, developed the content and I created the artwork. I was working from home and with six young children that suited me fine.

I have been in the UK since 2010 and alongside working for Speech Link Multimedia Ltd, I play the guitar, carve stone and enjoy being an extra in films - look out for me serving the French King in The Tudors!!!

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LESS printing

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