



Speech and Language Therapy at the St Marylebone CE Bridge School

This document provides information about the following areas of the St Marylebone CE Bridge School Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) service.

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Our mission

We aim to provide every young person the help they need on their path to becoming young adults capable of accessing employment, community and health services. Supporting the students to achieve their full potential academically forms one part of this. Likewise, we prioritise functional communication skills, problem solving skills, resilience and self-awareness as we recognise the importance of these for our students' future wellbeing.

To help achieve our aim, we undertake to provide evidence-based practice of the highest quality, within the context of recommendations from the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and standards from the Health and Care Professions Council.

Ways of Working

The SaLT Service adopts a **whole school approach** to supporting and developing students' speech, language and communication skills. Speech and Language Therapy is central to the students' school experience. The SaLT Service operates mostly at a **universal level**, ensuring the whole school environment is communication friendly and maximising each child's speech, language and communication potential. This is an effective way of helping our young people access education and create opportunities for them to develop their communication skills across the school day.

Speech therapists also work directly with individuals or small groups of children when specific needs are identified.

Below we outline the different types of input which the service provides:

Assessment: Each child is given a full assessment at the beginning of Key Stage 3 (year 7) and Key stage 4 (year 10) in order to determine the most effective way to support every student and set targets for the duration of the key stage. All new students receive a full assessment and additional assessments are used when appropriate. Therapists use a combination of discussion with the child, formal language measures, discussion with a parent and observations across contexts to create a detailed understanding of each child's individual speech, language and communication profile. Assessment is used to identify strategies to ensure every child can access lessons. This information is shared with teaching staff so they are empowered to adapt the curriculum according to each child's needs. Assessment results are also analysed and used to identify and prioritise individualised communication targets.

Communication Plans: At the beginning of each Key Stage speech and language therapists write a detailed plan for each child which outlines their annual and end-of-key-stage targets and how these will be achieved. These documents are used to prioritise intervention. Progression towards targets is monitored on a regular basis.

Reports: Speech and language therapy assessment reports are written for each child after a full assessment. These outline the child's individual strengths and needs, strategies to support them and recommendations for future intervention. Progress reports are written for students in Year 8, Year 9 and Year 11 detailing their progress towards their targets and any change in recommendations or needs. Assessment and progress reports are shared with parents and the Local Authority annually.

Annual Reviews: Speech and Language Therapists play a central role in each child's Annual Review process, and contribute to the formation of end of key-stage targets.

Training: Speech and Language Therapists work closely with school staff to ensure our school adopts a high-quality communication friendly environment. Therapists share specialist knowledge with staff through an ongoing communication-focussed staff training programme to enable access to meaningful learning for students.

Communication lessons: Therapists deliver weekly sessions to groups of 4-7 students. The curriculum includes speaking and listening skills, vocabulary, emotional regulation, problem solving, understanding language disorder and functional communication skills such as preparing for job interviews.

Joint planning: The curriculum is jointly planned by teachers and therapists and, where appropriate, delivered collaboratively by teachers and therapists. This enables teachers to deliver a highly adapted curriculum to suit the individual needs of the learners and maximise progress.

Targeted Support: Where students require more intensive intervention, Speech and Language Therapists work with students individually and in small groups on specific target areas. These sessions can target areas including attention and listening skills, social interaction and friendship skills, functional communication skills, language for learning, independent learning skills, emotional understanding and self-regulation skills and awareness of communication strengths and needs. Intervention is tailored to be student centred and student views are central to the planning and carrying out of intervention. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their communication programmes and are supported to identify target areas for intervention based on their own experience.

Post-intervention summary reports are shared with the family, which outline their progression towards targets and relevant strategies for families to use at home.

Measuring progress: Speaking and listening skills are monitored and assessed by the therapy team throughout the year. These scores are used to monitor the students' speaking and listening progress similarly to other curriculum subjects. Therapy Outcome Measures are also used three times a year to holistically assess every child's level of impairment, activity, participation and wellbeing. This information is used to track progress and prioritise any child who may need extra support from the SaLT service.

Family-centred approach: Parent input is highly valued and feedback is much appreciated by the therapy team. Therapists work closely with parents through regular contact and parent meetings. The therapy team are closely involved with parent workshops to discuss speech

and language provision for individual students and to offer tailored advice and support to parents.

Evidence-based practice: Termly journal clubs are run by the therapy team. These are attended by a range of professionals, including teaching staff, speech and language therapists and support staff. Journal clubs are used to both analyse existing methods and introduce new and innovative school-wide practices. Speech and language therapists attend regular training for continuous professional development ensuring best practice is maintained.

Interventions offered by the SaLT Service

At St Marylebone CE Bridge School, the Speech and Language Therapy team offer a wide range of specialist interventions to support students to develop their communication skills. Interventions are planned and tailored according to the individual needs of our students. Below is a summary of the main interventions we currently deliver and the communication skills that they target.

Shape Coding – understanding and use of language

A visual system that uses shapes and colours to teach grammar and supports students to learn rules about how words and sentences fit together. This is taught to all students by the therapy team and is embedded in teaching throughout the school.

Zones of Regulation – emotional regulation

A programme that supports students to develop understanding of their feelings by categorising emotional states into 4 zones. Students develop strategies to regulate their own feelings. This enables them to optimise learning by staying in the calm alert state that is needed for effective learning.

Understanding Me – self-awareness/self-acceptance

A programme designed to support teenagers with communication difficulties to develop insight into their own personal communication difficulties and what that means for them. Students develop awareness of their own strengths and needs across a range of areas. This supports them to better understand themselves as unique individuals and develop the ability to recognise and access the support they require in life.

Being me – self-awareness/self-acceptance

A programme designed to support teenagers with Autism Spectrum Condition to develop insight into their strengths and needs and what having autism means for them. The students are supported to recognise and access the support they require.

Talkabout – social skills

A social skills resource programme that uses games, activities and discussions to target a range of social understanding topics including friendships, relationships, self-esteem and self-awareness.

Lego Therapy – social skills

A small group social communication programme that uses building lego models as a tool for developing a range of social skills such as negotiation, turn taking, listening, asking for clarification and team work.

Social Stories – social understanding

Individualised 'stories' are written for students to support them to understand specific aspects of social interaction or behaviour that they are finding difficult. A social story will use words and pictures to describe why people react in a particular way, how a student's behaviour affects other people and reminds them how to interact with others in a more successful way.

Comic Strip Conversations – social understanding

A 'comic strip' of simple pictures is drawn with a student of a difficult social situation they have experienced. The comic strip is used to support social understanding by helping students to reflect on a situation and how others are thinking and feeling.

Vocabulary Intervention – vocabulary skills

A programme that supports students to develop their ability to learn and use new vocabulary. The programme teaches the students strategies to support themselves when they come across a word they don't know.

Narrative Intervention – narrative/storytelling skills

This programme breaks down and teaches the required ingredients needed for interesting narratives. This supports students' literacy skills and also enables them to tell stories about their own lives more effectively.

Functional Problem Solving – problem solving strategies

This intervention supports students to understand problems in life, and follow the stages required to successfully solve simple-complex problems.

smiLE Therapy (strategies and measurable interaction in Live English)

A structured, functional intervention that teaches students how to communicate effectively with people unfamiliar with their needs, in a variety of everyday life situations. Students learn the skills required to communicate effectively in specific social situations e.g. in a shop, when meeting work experience supervisors, when requesting items from an office etc. Students are filmed before therapy carrying out a specific communication task. Post-therapy the student is filmed again on a similar task to see whether new skills have been learnt.

Individualised programmes

In addition to the interventions outlined above, the therapy team also create customised therapy programmes to meet individual students' communication needs and help them reach their self-identified goals. Individualised programmes may target any aspect of SLCN, behaviour or wellbeing.

Examples of Therapeutic Input

To help give a flavour of the different types of experiences our students have with the SaLT Service we have included two case studies that provide a brief overview of the type of input the student's received and the impact it has had on them. They have been anonymised to protect confidentiality.

Case Study 1

Year 10 Student

Attended St Marylebone CE Bridge School since September 2013

Primary need: Autism Spectrum Condition & Language Disorder

Context: The student's statement of special educational needs described significant difficulties with attention and listening, social communication and language. At the end of year six, the student was described by a Specialist Autism Outreach Teacher as "not following the teacher led session" and "not looking at the interactive whiteboard". He was described as having "no interaction with the other pupils in the classroom" and "covered his ears and shouted when the classroom became loud or the task became too demanding". The student's year 7 speech and language therapy assessment report (dated 07.11.2013) described him as having "severe expressive language difficulties and impaired social interaction skills." The report also noted that the student found it "difficult to manage his

emotions in the classroom environment.” Student was reported by staff members to hide under tables, shout loudly or run away if he felt uncomfortable or frustrated.

Universal input: weekly communication lessons, environmental adaptations, joint planning with teachers and whole-staff training programmes.

Direct Input: Over 4 academic years, the student received the following direct support from the SMBS Speech and Language Therapy Service:

- Confidence building sessions
- Vocabulary intervention programme
- Social communication/emotional regulation programme
- Lego therapy
- Emotional intelligence sessions

Impact: The student’s latest speech and language therapy assessment report describes him as being able to “maintain positive friendships with his peers” and “better able to tolerate his peers and becomes upset less often.”

The student’s History Teacher fed-back that the “student now participates a lot more in lessons”, and “has made many friends and learnt to be calm and assertive in social situations that he used to find challenging.”

The student’s Science Teacher reports improvements in his “ability to interact appropriately in social situations...Now he has friends who he will have basic conversations with, explaining his interests and asking for help when he needs it.” Furthermore, the student “will volunteer answers and will put in some effort even when he is not interested in the topic.”

The student’s Therapy Outcome Measure (TOM) scores have risen for participation, activity and wellbeing since this measure was introduced in September 2015.

When asked if he talked to his friends in year 7, the student said “Not that much”. The student recently fed-back that now he “always talk to friends, play with friends” and said speech and language therapy has helped him to know “how to speak loudly and clearly” and “what to do if I want to get a job”.

Summary: The feedback from the student, teaching staff, speech and language therapy reports and assessment data indicates significant improvements in the student’s social communication, attention and listening and emotional regulation skills. The data suggests demonstrates that he is engaging in more frequent and quality social interactions, accessing more lesson content and better able to manage his emotions. Overall, the input provided by the SMBS Speech and Language Therapy Service has had a positive impact on the student, and has contributed effectively to his transition to adulthood.

Case Study 2

Year 7 student

Attended St Marylebone CE Bridge School since September 2016

Primary Need: Social and Emotional Difficulties

This student's statement detailed difficulties managing social situations and regulating emotions appropriately which was leading to lots of emotional outbursts. During their first two terms at school the student was observed to have difficulties coping with a variety of emotional triggers such as losing a game. This was leading to frequent emotional outbursts, difficulties sustaining relationships and difficulties controlling behaviour. All of these factors were leading to reduced wellbeing and less time in the calm alert state needed to maximize academic learning.

Universal input: Staff were trained by SaLT service on how to use specific scripts to develop emotional resilience and how to respond to the student using individualised behaviour support strategies.

Direct input: The student was seen individually for 10 sessions to develop knowledge and understanding around emotional regulation and how our behaviour influences other people's thoughts and feelings about us. Together the student and therapist developed an individualised "toolbox" of strategies for the student to use to manage his emotions and behaviour in a more socially appropriate and expected way.

Impact: The student said that the intervention "helped me know how to manage my feelings". School staff noticed the student was better able to cope with emotional triggers, quicker to regulate and cope with negative feelings and was accessing almost all of the lessons in a calm alert state. School staff said they felt more confident knowing how to support the student in lessons and break times. Behaviour incidences dropped significantly from terms 2 and 3 to terms 4 and 5. The student's wellbeing increased.

Summary: Collaborative working between therapists and school staff enabled a consistent approach across the school day. Universal and direct input from the SaLT Service has been successful in improving student wellbeing and supporting the student to access the curriculum.

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How to find out more

If you want to find out more about the SaLT Service please contact us via the school office and we will be happy to schedule a meeting or phone call. Contact details and additional information about the school can be found on the school website:

www.stmarylebonebridgeschool.com