SLCNPathway

Identification of Need (Primary Age)

**This checklist can be used to gather information
about the child and help identify the specific area of SLCN**

Name of Pupil:	Date:

Speech (clarity and fluency)

How do I know if a pupil is having difficulties with speech clarity and fluency?	please tick as appropriate ✓
Speech clarity	
• Can be difficult to understand, especially to people who do not know them well and especially if talking about something out of context. (You might find that you 'tune in' over time and find the child easier to understand)	
They might: • miss out part of a word – a sound, group of sounds or syllable; • substitute one sound for another • not use some sounds at all • have difficulties using some sounds.	
They may not be able to: • hear the difference between some speech sounds • segment words for reading and spelling • count out syllables in words • relate phonemes to graphemes.	
• They may produce some unusual sounds that don't sound 'English'.	
Speech fluency	
• They may lengthen some sounds, e.g. 'mmmmmmmummy.' • Repeat sounds or parts of words, e.g. 'pppplease', or 'mum, mum, mum mummy.' • Get stuck with a word so that no sound comes when they are attempting to speak. • They might show tension in their face when trying to speak. • They may develop other movements, like blinking. • Some try to hide their difficulties by avoiding speaking in certain situations or they might change what they were going to say mid-sentence to avoid a difficult word, e.g. 'I went to g...g.. g.... nanas at the weekend.' 'For more information on stammering go to: www.stammering.org.	
Additional comments:	

Expressive Language (speaking)

How do I know if a pupil is having difficulties with speaking/expressive language?	please tick as appropriate ✓
• You might notice they have a **poorer vocabulary** than their peers – they don't use or know as many words.	
• Their language may sound **'immature'** compared with other children their age, e.g. 'That big boy not got coat'.	
• They may **miss out the small parts of a sentence,** that carry less meaning like 'the', 'is/was' 'and', • e.g. 'Floppy (was) running (in the) garden (and) he jumped in (the) mud (and) he (is) dirty.'	
• Echolalia: the child may **repeat words** or phrases heard without understanding – this may be either delayed or immediate.	
• They may **miss off the endings** of words like 'ing', 'ed', or 's', e.g. 'I walk(ed) to the park with my friend(s).'	
• They may produce sentences that have words in the **wrong order.**	
• They may have **difficulty telling their news and/or sequencing** their ideas and thoughts in a logical way.	
• They may **use very general words** like 'get', 'make', or 'thing' a lot where a more specific word would be appropriate, e.g. 'My mum got me one of them things you got there.'	
• They may **use the wrong words** for things for example they might use a word that is related in meaning, e.g. apple instead of pear or a made-up word, e.g. grasscutterer instead of lawnmower or a word that sounds similar, e.g. microphone for microscope.	
• Because of the way in which they 'store' new words, some children may **not be able to 'find' words** they know quite well. They may have that 'tip of the tongue' experience we all have where you know a word, but just can't think of it. In conversation, you can see them using lots of 'um, err,' hesitations, gestures, talking around words, rehearsing or starting sentences again or using a similar word instead, e.g. 'You know that thing we saw in the zoo, the um, the err, um… that thing what lives in the desert, you know the em… oh... it's got humps – um – well it spat at Chloe!	
• They might be okay with putting a fairly simple sentence together, but **struggle to organise longer strings of information**, e.g. if telling you news – they might not put things into context, say who was there or where they were, instead just launch into what happened. For example. 'The best thing about it was when they climbed up to the top of the tent thing and then they had to swing across and catch her – yeh, because could see really well at the front 'cos my mum bought the tickets ages ago and we got really good seats, and gran came instead and my two brothers, but my dad couldn't come 'cos he had to work.'	
• Children who have expressive language difficulties are very likely to have **difficulties with literacy.** The same problems they have with spoken sentences will be evident in a child's written attempts at sentences.	
• Children with expressive difficulties are often very aware of their difficulties which can impact on **self-esteem.** You may notice that they become withdrawn and do not initiate speaking in class, or they become frustrated, resulting in **behavioural difficulties.**	
• They may rely on **learned social phrases**, which they use a lot.	
Additional comments:	

Receptive Language (understanding)

How do I know if a pupil is having difficulties with understanding language?	please tick as appropriate ✓
Poor listening skills, especially when part of a large group or listening for a long time – they may find it difficult to sit still and may fidget at story time or when listening to whole-class information/instructions.	
Poor concentration, with verbal tasks, though they might show better concentration with non-verbal activities, e.g. building, crafts, jigsaws.	
When you ask them a question they might give you an answer that does not directly relate to what you have said, or appear to be **answering** a different question. They may respond with silence.	
They may understand short, simple sentences, 'Ashley, get a pencil' but **struggle with longer sentences**, 'Ashley, how many times do I need to tell you to go and get that pencil you need to finish your picture and sit down?' and more complex sentences, 'Ashley, can you go and find one of the long red pencils from the rectangular box, behind the rulers on the bottom shelf of the store cupboard?'	
You might notice they are one of the last **children to follow classroom instructions.** You might notice them looking around at the other children so that they know what to do.	
They may frequently **ask you to repeat** things you have said.	
More able children with receptive language difficulties may **use all the non-verbal clues** they can to understand what is happening. They may pick up on routine quickly, but have difficulties with instructions that fall outside this.	
They may set off to follow an instruction, only to **come back without having done the task** – they often can't hold the information long enough to remember what to do.	
In activities that involve a lot of talking, like class discussions, they may be **quiet and not join in**, or they may join in but give inappropriate answers.	
They may show disruptive **behaviour**, or become quiet and withdrawn. Some children mess around or become the 'class clown' – sometimes it is easier to be thought of as funny by your peers, than 'thick'!	
They may appear to "**tune out**" or become "lost in their own world" frequently.	
They may not **understand 'wh' questions**, and respond incorrectly to them. For example, if you ask the question, 'When are you going on holiday?' they might answer, 'Seaside'.	
They may **echo** back language to you without understanding it – e.g. How many wives did King Henry VIII have?	
Often their **expressive language** is poor also, so they talk in shorter sentences and know fewer words than their peers**.**	
For children who have **difficulties processing information**, you can often see them rehearsing or repeating what you have said to help them remember.	
They may have **difficulty in being specific** with their language although they are are able to get the point across.	
They may have difficulty in understanding **abstract concepts** including those around time and money, and are better with concrete aspects on language- in other words those concepts that have visual imagery attached.	
Their **interactive and imaginative play may be poorly developed**. They may play better with real objects (e.g. cars) than 'pretend' objects (e.g. a brick for a car). They may have difficulty with or	

even avoid playing with other children. They may seem unable to keep up with the play of other children, particularly when this is very imaginative or involves role-playing.

Additional comments:

Social/Functional Use of Language

How do I know if a pupil is having difficulties with social/functional communication?	please tick as appropriate ✓
Poor eye contact – this might mean not looking in the appropriate way when speaking or listening – they might stare or look past you.	
Turn taking is difficult, both in conversations and in other activities.	
They may find it difficult to follow **social rules,** e.g. they may stand too close when they are talking, be over-familiar or say what they think without taking into account how others may feel, or they may not know how to speak to different people in different ways.	
They may find it difficult to understand **non-literal language** such as jokes, idioms or metaphors, which they take literally, e.g. they may not understand instructions such as, 'Fold your arms' or, 'James, you need a rocket behind you to get you working.'	
They may respond to 'Can/could you...' questions literally, as they don't understand the **implied meaning**, e.g. 'James, can you shut the door?' – James responds with 'Yes' without carrying out the actions.	
They may **change topic frequently** in a conversation, or talk a lot about what they are interested in with little awareness or acknowledgement of what the listener needs – it can feel like these children are talking 'at' rather than 'to' or 'with' you.	
They may find it difficult to understand the meaning behind facial expressions**, body language** or tone of voice and may not understand some of the words relating to feelings, particularly the more subtle ones, such as curious or bored.	
They may not use much **expression** in their face or tone of voice.	
You may notice that they have difficulties **playing with other children** or forming friendships with them.	
They may tend to talk about the **same topic of conversation** over and over again, even when others make it clear they are not interested.	
They may have **difficulty in making logical links** between events. Given a scenario, they may be unable to predict what might happen next or to deduce the previous event.	

Additional comments:

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