

The Early Years Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Service recently completed a pilot to improve the waiting times for children in this service. The pilot has been a success, however, it was based around children entering the service from approximately 28 months (usually following their 2 year Health Visitor check). As you know, the Health Visiting teams are now completing their checks earlier and this is usually too early for children to enter the SLT service. The Integrated 2 Year Review Guidance document has suggested that HV provide advice for parents if a concern is raised signposting to the Top Techniques document (<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/resources/top-techniques-poster>) and then to follow up with parents in 3 months and refer in at that point if there is no improvement.

If you have concerns about a child under 28 months who has speech and language difficulties only (no developmental concerns, no social communication concerns or pre-existing medical diagnosis) but is otherwise developmentally age appropriate, then please discuss this with your EYCA, offer advice and strategies to parents or suggest parents speak to their HV to discuss their concerns. Review the progress that the child is making using the appropriate strategies at home and in the setting using the West Sussex Speech and Language Monitoring Tool (https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/2645/inc_sl_mon_tool.pdf). You can also contact the Speech and Language Setting Support (SaLSS) team by phone/email:

sc-tr.SaLSSWorthing@nhs.net
sc-tr.SaLSSChichester@nhs.net
sc-tr.SaLSSCrawley@nhs.net
sc-tr.SaLSSMidSussex@nhs.net

Tel: (01273) 696011 x 6131
Tel: (01273) 696011 x 5108
Tel: (01403) 227000 x 7165
Tel: (01403) 227000 x 7165

Ideally we would like to see children referred to us from 28 months onward. The SLT service is always happy to discuss any referral and the setting should contact their local EY SLT clinic to do this if there is further information which may be sensitive to put in a referral form.

This does not impact children who are being supported by the Speech and Language Therapists at Child Development Centres.