

Speech and language advice for parents

This leaflet gives advice for parents and carers visiting Children’s Audiology who have concerns with their child’s speech development or who are awaiting a speech therapy assessment.

General advice

- Normal speech development covers a large range of ability, compared to other areas of development.
- Seek advice from your health visitor at yearly development checks.
- Consider your child’s language development in its wider context. For example:
 - Clarity (speaking words clearly) comes later
 - An increase in vocabulary is a positive sign, even if clarity is not good
 - Understanding words is the root of language
- Read about speech development milestones in the ‘Steps to talking’ section on this website): <https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/health-and-development/communication-and-hearing/> (or scan the QR code).
 - You may find the following sections useful:
Babbling and baby talk, basic communication strategies, deafness and hearing loss, English as an additional language, expressive language, grammar, listening and attention at school, social communications, speech sounds, stammering, steps to talking, toddler talk, typical speech sound development, unclear speech.



How to refer your child for speech and language therapy

The Speech and Language Department is offered locally as part of the Children, Young People and Families Service (CYPF). CYPF accept direct referrals from parents. Their website (see link or QR code above) offers information on when to consider a referral. To refer, use the most appropriate email address, depending on where you live:

CYPIT.ADMINREADING@berkshire.nhs.uk (Reading)

CYPIT.ADMINNEWBURY@berkshire.nhs.uk (West Berkshire / Newbury)

CYPIT.ADMINBRWOK@berkshire.nhs.uk (Wokingham)

CYPITBRACKADMIN@berkshire.nhs.uk (Bracknell)

Please include the following information in your email:

- Your child’s name
- Your child’s date of birth
- Your child’s NHS number
- Best contact number
- Your main concerns with regards to your child’s speech development.

Once you've submitted the referral, you will receive a confirmation email including the waiting times and useful links for families to try at home while waiting for an appointment. The first contact will be a phone consultation lasting between 20-40 minutes, followed by a written plan for you to follow at home. If necessary, this may be followed by a face-to-face appointment. Current waiting times for face-to-face appointments can be long. However, the phone consultation provided by Speech and Language Therapy with workshops and further advice (see below) should provide you with useful resources to try with your child in the meantime.

Tips to think about prior to the telephone consultation:

- Write down the number of words your child has
- Get your child back into nursery
- Use the 'Toddler talk' advice on the CYPF website (see links on previous page)

Advice if you are waiting for a face-to-face speech therapy appointment

1. You can attend the **Early Language Development online workshop**:
<https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/speech-and-language-therapy/>
2. Watch the **NHS 'Help your baby learn to talk' video**:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development/play-and-learning/help-your-baby-learn-to-talk/>
3. Once you've had your initial phone consultation, you can **call your named speech and language therapist** (on the written plan), if advice is required.



Contacting us

Audiology Department, Tel: 0118 322 7238

Email: audiology.royalberkshire@nhs.net

Visit: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/wards-and-services/audiology.htm

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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