



Making Change Happen, NAPLIC Conference 2018

The Development of Speech, Language and Communication at Hanley Castle High School

Over the last three academic years, Hanley Castle High School and Worcestershire's NHS Speech and Language Therapy Service have worked in partnership to develop provision for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) across the school. Julia Husband, SENCO and Sarah Smith, Speech and Language Therapist have transformed the provision from being non-existent to an outstanding example of best practice, working together to develop provision for individuals and for all students at a universal, targeted and specialist level. The school was '*Highly Commended*' in the Shine A Light Awards in 2017.

Worcestershire's Approach

Since 2011, Worcestershire has adopted The Balanced System^R framework. This framework underpins Worcestershire's SLCN Pathway¹, the Local Offer for SLCN, the provision made available by the speech and language therapy service and the service delivery model in schools and settings.

Leadership

The development work has been fully supported by the school's Senior Leadership Team and leadership within the Speech and Language Therapy Service. SLCN provision has been outlined as part of the school's SEN department's development plan and provision is regularly discussed and evaluated through Governor's meetings. Julia has also outlined improving language and communication across the school, as a performance management target. Both the school's SEN/D Policy and Information Report describe how students with SLCN are identified and supported. Both of these documents are reviewed annually with parents, staff and governors.

¹ www.hacw.nhs.uk/slcncpathway

What happens at Hanley Castle High School?

Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Speech, Language and Communication Framework² is actively used. ✓ The SENCO uses checklists from the Worcestershire SLCN Pathway as well the AFASIC checklists. ✓ The SENCO conducts learning walks and reports findings to Middle Leaders which are then acted upon. ✓ The SENCO and speech and language therapist meet termly to discuss the caseload and other pupils, where there are concerns.
Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An audit for a 'Communication Friendly Environment' has been conducted and strategies to support SLCN are being implemented. ✓ Each classroom has an ever-developing SEN toolkit to support understanding, task management, vocabulary and oral/written narratives. ✓ Teaching/learning support assistants are released to receive regular training on how to best support students with SLCN and compulsory whole staff training is delivered. ✓ Weekly communication tasks are set and challenge cards have been created to motivate and reward students for developing their SLC skills.
Targeted	<p>The following targeted interventions are delivered by trained school staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Narrative intervention³ ✓ Word Aware by Anna Branagan and Stephen Parsons⁴ ✓ Lego Social Skills Intervention ✓ Forbidden Island (social communication skills) ✓ Aspire Sports (social communication skills) ✓ TALKABOUT for Teenagers by Alex Kelly⁵ ✓ Language for Thinking (verbal reasoning skills) by Anna Branagan and Stephen Parsons⁶ ✓ Auditory Memory Skills intervention developed locally by speech and language therapy

² <https://www.slcframework.org.uk/>

³ www.blacksheepress.co.uk

⁴ <http://thinkingtalking.co.uk/>

⁵ <http://alexkelly.biz/>

⁶ <http://thinkingtalking.co.uk/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Break and Lunch Club also runs daily and delivers planned activities to develop social communication skills.
Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Individual Provision Maps and Passports are created in consultation with speech and language therapy, parents and the student. ✓ Training is delivered by speech and language therapy to staff and parents. ✓ A bespoke programme of intervention is delivered for individual students. ✓ Personalised visual resources include key rings, cue cards, vocabulary magnets and labels. ✓ Personalised timetables which may include rest breaks and a bespoke curriculum pathway. ✓ Staff surgeries are held at lunch and after school to discuss individual students' needs and share resources/strategies.

Collaborative Working and Working with Parents

The school also works with a number of other external agencies. The school, agencies and parents meet regularly and agree a holistic plan moving forward for each individual.

A continued focus when developing SLCN provision has been to increase parent involvement. This has been done by:

- ✓ Parent Voice Group - Parents meet termly to learn, discuss and share effective strategies that have worked for their child.
- ✓ Parent Well-being Sessions – offering opportunities for parents to learn new skills and network/socialise with others.
- ✓ Half-termly reports are sent home outlining intervention progress and ways that the skills can be supported at home.
- ✓ An interactive topic vocabulary booklet and subject resources are sent home and are accessible on the website enabling parents to support with pre-teaching.

The SENCO has also introduced regular 'Communication Cafes' where people from the wider community such as police officers and the local WI are invited to socialise with our students to help them develop their communication skills within a wider audience.

Through SENCO network meetings the school is supporting local schools and feeder primary schools to develop their SLCN provision by sharing resources and inviting their teaching assistants to observe good practice.

Impact and Outcomes

The collaborative and innovative approach between Julia and Sarah has enabled the school to introduce and trial new ideas, at times taking risks, in order to provide the best outcomes for students.

Workforce

- ✓ There has been a measurable increase in staff knowledge, skills and confidence as identified by teaching/learning support assistant audits and through the completion of SLCN focussed performance management targets.
- ✓ The SENCO is more confident in identifying and referring students with SLCN and Developmental Language Disorder and implanting ways to best support them in school.
- ✓ Teachers are also using more innovative approaches to support SLCN in lessons. No Pen's Wednesday really encouraged staff to take risks. One teacher has even changed the classroom layout they had used for years to better support students!

Pupil Progress

- ✓ Measurable progress has been made within targeted interventions. Progress is measured through entry and exit tests which is then reviewed six weeks later to check that progress has been sustained.
- ✓ Measurable progress has been made for individual pupils within their language development and access to learning opportunities in school. One student is now in Y12 and is a mentor/champion for other younger students with dysfluency. Another student with severe and complex SLCN recently secured a place on their first choice further education course.
- ✓ The SENCO also delivers additional PSD lessons for small groups of students enabling students with SLCN to talk openly and confidently about sensitive issues.
- ✓ Students with SLCN are more confident communicators.

Feedback

'Hanley Castle High School is an outstanding example of best practice for children with Speech Language and Communication Needs in our county. We are fully supported in our role in school by Julia and her team. The provision has developed significantly over the past three years with the effective impact of interventions and approaches to support children with Developmental Language Disorder and other Speech, Language and Communication Needs. Hanley Castle High School makes things happen for children with Speech Language and Communication Needs and provides highly effective support. The school is used as an example of best practice across Worcestershire.' [Emma Jordan - Children's Speech and Language Therapy Services Service Manager and Language for Learning Manager](#)

'It is a privilege to work with Julia and the Aspire Team. Julia is exceptionally skilled at working with students, staff, parents, and visiting professionals such as myself. She is very clear in outlining students' difficulties in school and very receptive to suggestions regarding possible interventions. I have been impressed by the way she has researched programmes to support learners with a variety of needs and the dedicated way she ensures that these interventions are put in place effectively. It is lovely to be able to reassure parents of children in feeder primary schools that their children's needs will be very carefully assessed and supported.' [Charlie Matthews – Educational Psychologist](#)

'During the last 12 months his self-confidence has increased and he can now confidently speak with people, in a social situation something he has always had particular difficulty with, but more importantly he now interacts with his peers within school.' [Parent](#)



April 2018

For more information, contact us:

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