



# SEND & Wellbeing Newsletter

Term 1 2024



## Speech & Language at Lower Halstow

It is quite usual for children start school with some speech and language needs. For most this improves naturally through their everyday interactions; others need a little extra support in year R, but usually no longer have difficulties going into year 1; a small minority may need further support as they move through the school. At Lower Halstow, in order to provide early intervention, we do the following:

- **Assess all children upon entry to school using 'Language Link'.**
- **Assess any children with speech difficulties using 'Speech Link'.**
- **Provide individual or group intervention based on gaps identified by the assessment tools.**
- **For children who continue to struggle or make slower progress, we may then refer to our Speech and Language Therapist for a more detailed assessment and this will give us more specific targets to work on.**
- **For older children we may use the 'Junior Language Link' to check for any areas of concern.**

**Mrs Harrington** is the school's Specialist Speech and Language Teaching Assistant. She oversees all the speech and language provision in the school. Her role includes:

- Assessing children's speech and language needs.
- Identifying support programmes or resources needed.
- Carrying out regular group or individual interventions.
- Referring children to Speech Therapy.
- Working alongside the Speech Therapists who visit children in school.
- Advising class teachers and TAs as to how to support children in class.
- Sharing plans with parents and advising as to how they may support their children at home.



**How can parents help with Speech and Language at home?**



Speech and Language UK offer a brilliant 'Progress Checker'. Answer a few questions about your child's difficulties and they will send you advice and resources to help.

<https://progress-checker.speechandlanguage.org.uk/>

The BBC's **TINY HAPPY PEOPLE** website offers amazing ideas for supporting babies, toddlers and young children to develop their language skills and advises on a whole range of issues.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

Limiting screen-time and talking, reading, singing and playing games with your children are the best ways to improve their speech and language skills but if you would like more specific advice please contact Mrs Harrington or Mrs Hunt at the school and we will be happy to help.

## Spotlight on 'Colourful Semantics'

Strategies to support and develop speech and language skills are abundant and ever present in our classrooms at Lower Halstow School, however one strategy that we are developing across the school is '**Colourful Semantics**'. This is a teaching approach that aims to teach children how to build and understand sentence structures. Initially developed by speech therapists to develop spoken language, it works brilliantly as a strategy to support writing, reading comprehension and grammar too.

Colourful Semantics is a system for colour coding sentences according to the role of different words. The aim is that pupils can use colourful semantics to help them build up meaningful, well-structured sentences.

Here is a simple example but there are many creative ways in which teachers use Colourful Semantics in their classrooms.

