



## **Working Together Agreement**

### **BCHC Speech and Language Therapy and School**

This document details information to allow successful collaboration between NHS Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) and school, working within the Balanced System® framework. It should be signed by the Link SaLT and a member of the school team. It can be shared with other relevant professionals e.g. Independent SaLT, PSS, CAT, etc.

#### **What is the Balanced System®?**

The Balanced System® framework is a way of making sure that in a school or local area, the right provisions are available for parents, carers, and professionals to help children and young people develop their speech, language and communication (SLC). The framework is organised in five outcome-led strands (family support, environment, workforce, identification, intervention) across three levels of support (universal, targeted, specialist). All of these are important to get the whole system working at its best.

For more information, please see: [www.thebalancedsystem.org](http://www.thebalancedsystem.org)

#### **How does the BCHC NHS SaLT service work for school age children and young people?**

- SaLT support for school age children and young people is primarily delivered in school.
- Link SaLTs are allocated a set number of days across an academic year to work with schools to develop and deliver provision to support children's speech, language and communication.
- Link SaLTs work with schools to develop universal, targeted, and specialist offers with collaboration, planning and delivery.
- Children may need to wait for specific SaLT assessment and intervention if required but should be accessing school-led universal and targeted support while they wait.
- The SaLT service requires referrals for all children to be discussed. This is so that children can be supported effectively within the Balanced System®.
- The Link SaLT will work with children and teaching teams from Reception upwards. If a school has concerns regarding nursery-aged children, they will need to follow the Early Years referral process:

[www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-slt-referrals](http://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-slt-referrals)

**Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Zero Tolerance of Bullying or Harassment**



BCHC NHS foundation Trust is committed to ensuring good practices so that the services provided are fair and accessible to everyone. As an inclusive employer, BCHC will also promote equality for staff, ensuring everyone gets the dignity and respect they deserve and that their differences are celebrated. BCHC are committed to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation, which challenges racist behaviours and actively works to oppose racial prejudice. In addition, there is zero tolerance of any form of intimidation or harassment. BCHC understands that these values are shared by colleagues in Education and the Local Authority.

The Speech and Language Therapy Service will:	Agreement/Actions:
<p>Allocate time to a Link SaLT to work with the school for a set number of days per academic year. The School Age Coordinator will e-mail the school at the start of Autumn term to advise how many days have been allocated to the Link SaLT to work with the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A day comprises of 7.5 hours which will be delivered flexibly according to the working pattern and needs of the Link SaLT, the children, their families, and the school.</li> <li>• The Link SaLT will agree dates to come into school with the SENCO (or equivalent) at the start of each term.</li> <li>• The Link SaLT will organise their working day and agree with the SENCO (or equivalent) what time will be spent in school and what time will be spent off site completing clinical admin (e.g. phone calls, report writing, preparing intervention / training materials).</li> <li>• Best endeavours will be made to make up time lost due to unplanned staff absence (e.g. short-term sickness) but may not be possible all of the time.</li> </ul> <p>There is no additional capacity within the SaLT service to cover long term staff sickness, maternity leave, vacancy or other circumstances beyond the control of the service, therefore it may not always be possible for a Link SaLT to provide the full number of allocated days in an academic year. There is no additional capacity to carry visits over to a new academic year.</p>	
<p>Provide staff who are suitably qualified and trained and whose skills are kept up to date with developing evidence based practice. All staff have DBS clearance and are registered with</p>	



<p>the regulating body HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council). The Link SaLT will provide proof of ID and DBS (in the form of a letter) during the initial visit to the school. School are able to photocopy these.</p>	
<p>Ensure all staff are receiving regular clinical supervision and are adhering to the standards stipulated by HCPC. Staff have a number of obligations to meet including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keeping full and contemporaneous records on children who have an open referral to the service. These must be completed promptly after providing care, with a maximum timescale of 24 hours.</li> <li>- Taking all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to children, parents/carers and colleagues. This may involve attending a Child Protection / Child in Need meeting or time to liaise and share information with relevant professionals.</li> </ul>	
<p>Work with the setting SENCO (or equivalent) to complete the <i>Whole School Communication Plan</i> in the autumn term to discuss the provision in school at a universal, targeted and specialist level across the 5 strands of the Balanced System®: identification, intervention, environment, workforce, family support. Areas of focus and associated actions will be agreed by the Link SaLT and SENCO (or equivalent) to allow outcomes to be met and reported on.</p> <p>The Link SaLT's work may include any of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the setting to implement Ordinarily Available Guidance  <a href="https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Ordinarily-Available-Guidance.pdf">https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Ordinarily-Available-Guidance.pdf</a></li> <li>• Discussions with teachers around universal strategies as part of a Quality First Teaching approach</li> <li>• Developing and delivering training to enhance the school's universal/targeted offer</li> <li>• Offering targeted or universal support to parents via coffee mornings, workshops, etc.</li> <li>• Follow up planning meetings with SENCo (or equivalent)</li> <li>• Establishing and monitoring school-led targeted intervention groups</li> <li>• Classroom observations and audits</li> </ul>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison with parent/carers and setting staff about specific children, including involving them in assessment and therapy</li> <li>• Specialist assessment and therapy</li> <li>• Clinical report and note writing</li> <li>• Demonstration of activities and resources to identified setting staff and parents/carers.</li> </ul>	
Attend at least one Multi-Agency Planning (MAP) meeting per academic year as part of their allocated time for the school.	
Provide placements for SaLT students. SaLT students are closely supervised and add value to the service provided.	
Complete a risk assessment regarding the setting indicating any risks related to security, moving and handling, health and safety, specific children etc. BCHC staff reserve the right to withdraw from a session and rebook based on their personal assessment of risk on a case-by-case basis.	
<p>Write a short report containing a summary and recommendations/targets at a clinically appropriate time for the child, their family and school. Reports will be written within a 2 week timeframe following the last contact for the child, unless the Link SaLT is waiting until their next allocated day for the school to complete the report. The Link SaLT will inform the school when the report will be received by.</p> <p>Link SaLTs may write a more detailed report on request of the school where needed, e.g. to support with an application of a SEN Support Provision Plan (SSPP) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment.</p> <p>Link SaLTs will securely e-mail SENCOs reports they have written to share with school staff. The SaLT administrative team will be asked by the Link SaLT to send reports to parents/carers.</p>	



<p>Complete assessment and reports for new EHCP requests within 6 weeks of the service receiving the request. Link SaLTs must prioritise time within their allocation for a school to complete a SaLT assessment and write a report.</p> <p>The Link SaLT will work with pupils with EHCPs if they have capacity to do so and it is clinically appropriate for the child, however the SaLT service are not commissioned to deliver provision within EHCPs.</p> <p>The Link SaLT will advise on what other aspects of the Link SaLT's work and the school's local offer are likely to support the provision detailed.</p>	
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<b>The School / Setting will:</b>	<b>Agreement/Actions:</b>
Ensure verbal consent from a child's parent/carer is obtained, and a SaLT consent form completed and shared with the Link SaLT before a pupil is discussed. The consent form should include the child's NHS number where possible.	
Provide an <i>Information for Parents</i> letter to parents/carers of children referred.	
Ensure the Link SaLT is made aware of any children who display challenging behaviours or who have a risk assessment in place regarding their behaviour, and ensure they are advised about specific behaviour management strategies or are supervised by a member of school staff who can implement these strategies.	
Protect one hour for planning meetings (in the Autumn term and then by agreement) with the SaLT to plan the provision and bring information on school/setting training needs, safeguarding updates, and upcoming MAP meetings.	



Ensure the SaLT receives an induction and tour of the school/setting, including information about their safeguarding procedures and protocols.	
Share safeguarding information about children known to/being referred to SaLT.	
Contact the Link SaLT if they are unable to accommodate them on a planned visit (e.g. because of a school trip or a room is unavailable). With notice, the Link SaLT may be able to offer a rescheduled visit if capacity allows.	
Meet with the Link SaLT to discuss children referred to SaLT, as per the SaLT pathway.	
Identify the training needs of staff and ensure staff have allocated time to engage in CPD relevant to identifying and supporting children with SLCN. Dates to be planned in conjunction with the SaLT and scheduled into the school calendar.	
Facilitate opportunities for SaLT to liaise with class teachers, teaching assistants, and other professionals; working as a team to ensure support for children is effective and tailored to their needs.	
Establish whole school systems to supporting SLCN, e.g. TA-led targeted groups ensuring appropriate staff, timetabling and tracking/monitoring of progress.	
Share new information relevant to a child promptly, and to have established communication routes to support this (e.g. circulation of written reports and safeguarding updates). If support within school changes (e.g. change of 1:1 TA, the child moves into a new class), it is the school's responsibility to ensure information to support their SLCN is passed on to the appropriate school staff.	
Allocate an appropriate space for the Link SaLT to meet and work with children and parents/carers. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quiet space to assess and deliver intervention with children</li> <li>• A private space to make confidential phone calls to parents</li> </ul>	



Support the Link SaLT to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have free movement around the school</li> <li>- access school Wifi (where possible)</li> <li>- have access to a school photocopier (where possible)</li> <li>- include relevant support staff (e.g. teaching assistant) in sessions</li> </ul> This facilitates communication with school staff, the ability to share resources and intervention strategies, and efficient working	
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<b>Further Support</b>	
<b>School Age Coordinator</b> Most queries can be managed by the Link SaLT allocated to a school. On occasions school may wish to discuss matters with the School Age Coordinator (SACO) for the school's locality. The SACO's role is to manage the staff and the SaLT service within the schools in their locality. The SACO for the school's locality will make contact with the school's SENCO (or equivalent) in the Autumn term.	SACo Contact details:
<b>SaLT Advice Line</b> School staff and parents/carers can call the SaLT Advice line to access advice and support.	0121 466 6231 Monday – Friday: 9am – 4pm
<b>BCHC Children's SaLT website</b> For further information about the service, and for videos with strategies and advice, please see our website	<a href="http://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-slt">www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/childrens-slt</a>

<b>Confirmation of Agreement</b>	
SENCO Name:	Speech and Language Therapist Name:



Signed:	Signed:
Date:	Date:

DRAFT