

Dear Parents/Carers,

Speech & Language Therapist working in school

During the 2026-2027 school year we will have a Northern Care Alliance Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) working in school to support us in developing children's communication skills.

Some of the work the SaLT will be doing is whole class work (e.g., screening assessments and interventions). This means school will share your child's name and date of birth with the Speech and Language Therapist.

This information will be used to:

- **Compare your child's speech and language skills progress with peers of a similar age.**
- **Demonstrate your child's progress in an end of year report.**

Your child may be seen by the Speech and Language Therapist and participate in group activities.

If you would not like this to happen, please speak to your child's class teacher.

If your child attends Speech and Language Therapy appointments at clinic, please continue to take them to these appointments.

Should you have any questions, please speak to myself or your class teacher.

Kind regards,

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Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC) Screening

What is the TALC?

The **Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC)** is a short screening activity primary aged children.

It helps us understand how well a child understands different types of spoken language and questions.

Some questions are very simple, such as, "What is this?". "Where is the ball?". Other questions need children to think a little more, such as, "What might happen next?", "Why do you think that happened?", "How do you know?".

These questions help us understand how children:

- Talk about their ideas.
- Explain their thinking.
- Make predictions.
- Solve problems.
- Understand information that is not directly stated.
- Link different pieces of information together.

These are important skills for learning in school and for everyday life.

What does the screening look at?

The screening can help us identify children who may need extra support with understanding and using language.

This might include:

- Understanding questions.
- Following instructions.
- Learning and understanding new words.
- Making predictions about what might happen next.
- Working out information that has not been directly stated.
- Understanding stories.
- Explaining why something has happened.
- Solving problems
- Understanding the language used in class.

Language difficulties are not always obvious. A child may hide that they do not understand by copying others, watching for clues, avoiding answering, saying "I don't know" and/or becoming frustrated.

The screening helps us understand whether a child may benefit from extra support.

Why do we screen children?

It helps us understand children's needs

Every child has different strengths. The screening helps staff understand how children learn best and what support may help them in the classroom.

It helps us monitor progress

If children are screened at the beginning and end of a school year, we can compare the results. This helps us understand whether the teaching, support or intervention provided during the year has helped.

It allows support to be offered early

Understanding how a child learns means that useful strategies can be put in place sooner. A screening result does **not** mean that your child has a problem, a learning difficulty or a diagnosis. It simply shows that a particular area may benefit from further support or investigation.

Why might my child be offered support?

If your child is offered a language intervention following the screening, this does not mean that they are “behind” or that there is anything wrong with them. It means that staff have identified an opportunity to strengthen an important skill and help your child feel more confident.

The intervention may support your child to:

- Understanding different types of questions.
- Follow instructions.
- Learn and understand new vocabulary.
- Explain their ideas.
- Understand stories.
- Make predictions.
- Understand cause and effect.
- Solve problems.
- Give reasons for their answers.
- Develop confidence when speaking and learning.

These skills support learning across the curriculum and in everyday conversations.

What might the support involve?

Activities are designed to be enjoyable and engaging. Children may take part in small groups but support is also provided within the classroom as part of ordinarily available inclusive provision.

Support may be through:

- Talking and discussion activities.
- Looking at pictures.
- Listening to stories.
- Games and problem-solving tasks.
- Prediction activities.
- Explaining their ideas and answers.

There is no pass or fail. The aim is to help children develop confidence and language skills at their own pace.

Blank Level 1: Naming and recognising These are the simplest type of questions. They ask a child to identify or name something that they can see or hear. The child does not need to work anything out or make a prediction. Examples: • “Show me the cake.” • “Point to the book.” • “Show me one that is the same.”	Blank Level 2: Describing and identifying These questions require a little more thought. The answer is still based on information the child can see, hear or has just been given. The child may need to describe something, remember information or identify features. Examples: • “What else can the children play on?” • “Who is putting their coat on?” • “Where are they?”
Blank Level 3: Predicting and making connections These questions require the child to think beyond what they can immediately see or what they have just been told. They may need to use information and their own knowledge or experiences to work something out. They might make a prediction, explain a reason or understand something that has not been directly stated. Examples: • “What do you think will happen next?” • “How is the girl feeling?” • “What will the boy say?”	Blank Level 4: Reasoning and problem-solving These are the most complex questions. They require a young person to use information, their own knowledge and reasoning skills. They may need to work out an answer, explain their thinking, give reasons for an opinion or consider different possibilities. The answer is usually not directly stated. The pupil needs to explain how or why they reached their answer. Examples: • “How do you know that Mum is cross?” • “Why are they going to their friends house by car?” • “What could they do to solve the problem?”

Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC-2) Screening

What is the TALC 2?

The **Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC 2)** is a short screening activity for young people aged 11 and over.

It helps us understand how well a young person understands different types of spoken language and questions. In particular, it looks at questions that require them to think beyond information that is immediately visible or directly stated.

For example, there is a difference between answering, “What is this?”, “Why do you think that happened?” and being able to answer, “What might happen next?”, “How do you know?”. The second set of questions requires a young person to:

- Explain their ideas.
- Make predictions.
- Work out information that has not been directly stated.
- Give reasons for their answers.
- Make connections between different pieces of information.

These skills become increasingly important as young people move through high school.

What does the screening look at?

The screening can help us identify young people who may need extra support with some aspects of understanding and using language.

This might include:

- Understanding longer or more complicated questions.
- Following spoken instructions.
- Understanding words or ideas with more than one meaning.
- Making predictions about what might happen next.
- Working out information that has not been directly stated.
- Understanding why or how something has happened.
- Explaining their thinking.
- Connecting different pieces of information.
- Understanding the more complex language used in lessons.

Language difficulties are not always obvious. A young person may hide that they do not understand by copying others, avoiding answering, saying “I don’t know”, becoming frustrated or appearing not to be interested.

Why screen all of Year 7?

Difficulties are not always easy to see

Some young people are very good at hiding when they do not understand. They may copy what other young people are doing or use their general knowledge to work things out, while still finding the language of the task difficult.

It helps the school understand young people's needs

Looking at the results across the whole year group helps the school understand the range of language skills among Year 7 pupils. This helps staff plan teaching and support more effectively.

It helps us monitor progress

If young people are screened at the beginning and end of Year 7, we can compare the results. This helps us understand whether the teaching, support or intervention provided during the year has helped.

It allows support to be offered early

Understanding how a pupil learns means that useful strategies can be put in place sooner.

A screening result does **not** mean that your child has a problem, a learning difficulty or a diagnosis. It simply shows that a particular area may benefit from further support or investigation.

Why might my child be offered support?

If your child is offered a language intervention following the screening, this does not mean that they are “behind” or that there is anything wrong with them. It means that staff have identified an opportunity to strengthen an important skill and help your child feel more confident.

The intervention may support your child to:

- Understand what different questions are asking.
- Follow longer or more complex instructions.
- Learn and understand new vocabulary.
- Explain their ideas.
- Make predictions.
- Work out information that is not directly stated.
- Understand cause and effect.
- Solve problems.
- Give reasons for their answers.
- Understand the language used across different subjects.

These skills support learning across the curriculum as well as everyday communication.

What might the support involve?

The support will be designed for high school pupils. It is intended to feel different from an exam and will not be based on a pass or fail.

Young people may take part in activities involving:

- Discussions, pictures and scenarios.
- Short texts and stories.
- Real-life situations.
- Problem-solving activities.
- Prediction and reasoning.
- Explaining and justifying their answers.

The amount of support can be adapted to suit each young person. The aim is to build confidence and independence gradually, helping young people manage increasingly complex language.

The screening results may also help staff identify suitable targets and plan the right type of support.

Blank Level 1: Naming and recognising These are the simplest type of questions. They ask a child to identify or name something that they can see or hear. The child does not need to work anything out or make a prediction. Examples: • “Show me the red book.” • “Point to the blue pen.” • “Show me one that is the same.”	Blank Level 2: Describing and identifying These questions require a little more thought. The answer is still based on information the child can see, hear or has just been given. The child may need to describe something, remember information or identify features. Examples: • “What is the boy wearing?” • “Who wanted to go to the cinema?” • “Where did he kick the ball?”
Blank Level 3: Predicting and making connections These questions require the child to think beyond what they can immediately see or what they have just been told. They may need to use information and their own knowledge or experiences to work something out. They might make a prediction, explain a reason or understand something that has not been directly stated. Examples: • “What do you think will happen next?” • “How is the girl feeling?” • “What will the boy say?”	Blank Level 4: Reasoning and problem-solving These are the most complex questions. They require a young person to use information, their own knowledge and reasoning skills. They may need to work out an answer, explain their thinking, give reasons for an opinion or consider different possibilities. The answer is usually not directly stated. The pupil needs to explain how or why they reached their answer. Examples: • “How do we know that the boy isn’t ill?” • “Why do you think the girl is worried?” • “What could they do to solve the problem?”



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