



Speech and Language Therapy at Heathlands

At Heathlands we have two Speech and Language Therapy teams. The NHS Speech and Language Therapy team is for students living in Hertfordshire. The Heathlands School Speech and Language Therapy team is for students living outside of Hertfordshire. The Speech and Language Therapy team at Heathlands share the same therapy spaces, resources and all work with Heathlands School staff.

Over time Speech and Language Therapy has transitioned towards considering Deaf student's speech, language and communication needs holistically. Strong communication and language skills (in spoken language and/or sign language) are critical to Deaf students' outcomes for having: positive everyday relationships, experiencing academic success and attainment, independence, good self-esteem, good overall quality of life and well-being.

The people communicating and interacting with students everyday are a critical part of maximising their development and participation in everyday life. This means the Speech and Language Therapy team allocate time to working directly with the child and time to training and supporting people the child spends their days communicating with, including parents/ carers and school staff. By the Speech and Language Therapy team enhancing the communication skills of parents/ carers and school staff, students experience an enriched language and communication environment. This leads to significantly increased opportunities to maximise their speech, language and communication abilities.

Heathlands student's Speech and Language Therapy and support provided is based on assessment and review of their:-

- BSL understanding and use
- Spoken English understanding and use
- Listening levels when using listening equipment and consistency of using this listening equipment
- Learning and participation in lessons
- Access to language across different places including home
- Personal goals and motivation

Each Heathlands student is assessed and reviewed by Speech and Language Therapy individually. A judgement on the amount of therapy each student requires is based on their individual profile of the above factors.

The Speech and Language Therapy team at Heathlands supports students to develop skills in:



- Using and understanding language, in British Sign Language and/or spoken English
- Communication (i.e. gaining attention, initiating interactions, pointing, facial expression, body language)
- Listening with their listening equipment (cochlear implant/s, hearing aid/s and auditory brainstem implants)
- Speech reading of spoken English
- Speech sounds and lip patterns
- Play
- Social understanding and social responses
- Communicating with hearing people unfamiliar to deafness, for example by going to local cafes, shops, train stations within our local community

The Speech and Language Therapy team use a range of interventions to support students in developing speech, language and communication abilities including: Lego Therapy, Shape Coding, Visual Phonics, Word Aware and smiLE Therapy (strategies and measurable interactions in Live English). Heathlands teaching staff embed approaches Visual Phonics, Shape Coding and Word Aware into daily lessons to support Deaf student's understanding and use of spoken and/or written English.

Heathlands students are seen for their 'communication time' with the Speech and Language Therapy team either within their classroom, individually, with a peer, or with a group of students.

The Speech and Language Therapy team work with other professionals to ensure the best outcomes for student's language and communication development, including professionals from: auditory implant centres, Deaf CAMHS, Heathlands SENCO team and pastoral team.

If you have any questions about your child's Speech and Language Therapy, please contact salt@heathlands.herts.sch.uk.