Priority area four: Supporting pupils with SLCN

Why is this priority area important?

It can be difficult to spot children and young people's speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and teachers report they are often not too confident in knowing how best to support these pupils. Often we can see poor literacy skills, difficulties with aspects of learning, or even poor behaviour, though it can be poor language that is the foundation of these difficulties.

We know a lot about what works to support SLCN; the new What Works database can help practitioners find the right evidence-based interventions and specialists can advise on the most appropriate strategies. Pupils themselves tell us that what makes a huge difference to them is when the adults around them understand the nature of their difficulties.

How does this link to the 2014 SEND Code of Practice?

The Commitment gives schools the resources and guidance to develop both the policy and practice to deliver support to pupils with SLCN.

What are the principles we are trying to achieve?

- We're all watching out for children with SLCN.
- We're checking out what we are doing already for pupils with SLCN.
- We're working towards best ways to support pupils with SLCN.

The four actions for supporting pupils with SLCN - Choose one of the actions for this area:

Our action (What are we going to do?)	Our aim (Why are we doing it?)	To help you fulfil your commitment
4.1 Raise awareness of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) by disseminating factsheets on SLCN to all staff.	We know about SLCN.	• Share copies of Don't Get Me Wrong with your staff team. • Use and share these free downloads from Elklan - Practical activities to support listening and attention, Helpful hints for unclear speech, Practical strategies to help children understand describing words. • Watch The Way We Talk video on The Communication Trust website that shows what life can be like for young people with SLCN. • Discuss with the whole staff team about what simple changes could be made outside of the classroom to support pupils with SLCN in their day to day school lives
4.2 Use identification guidance, tools and checklists in our classrooms.	We watch out for pupils with SLCN.	• Share and circulate the Universally Speaking publications with your staff. • Display the milestone posters (primary / secondary) in the staff room or workrooms. • Read the guidance on early identification and why it's important.
4.3 Collate the interventions across school or through the SEN department that we are usingto support pupils with speech, language and communication needs.	We capture what we do and what else we might want to do	• Arrange a forum to discuss the interventions you are using to support children with SLCN. • Complete a matrix showing what interventions are being used, how and why. Look them up on the What Works database. • Discuss these at a staff meeting and identify areas where you may want further information / support.
4.4 Read guidance on commissioning specialist speech and language support and discuss your actions as a leadership team.	We recognise the role of speech and language therapy support.	• Read the What Works commissioning guidance and the report on schools as commissioners by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. • Discuss and agree your school's approach to commissioning speech and language therapy support.