



Why do we have speech and language therapy at ISP?

Research has shown that young people with social emotional and behavioural difficulties are also very likely to have communication problems. Unfortunately these communication problems are often undetected. Therefore, one of our main aims is to identify any communication needs in the young people in our care, through thorough, multidisciplinary assessment of their communication skills.

Language and communication skills are needed to interact (negotiate, debate), to develop self-awareness, to learn (they are the basis of reading and writing skills), to reflect, to problem solve and to manage emotions.

Communication skills are key to all of the Every Child Matters outcomes; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well being.

If a young person has limited communication skills it can be difficult for them to behave and interact well:

- They may not understand what others say.
- They may have difficulty expressing their ideas in a way that others can understand.
- They may not be able to use words to label and manage their emotions.
- They may be unsure of the 'invisible' rules of conversation and interaction.
- They may fail to interpret the meaning conveyed by the speaker's body language/ facial expression.

All of these lead to considerable anxiety and frustration and are often misinterpreted as behavioural issues.

We aim to teach communication skills through:

- Providing individual work on communication skills where necessary.
- Delivering group work on social communication skills .
- Promoting speaking and listening skills across the curriculum.
- Supporting primary and secondary schools in meeting the communication needs of ISP students in mainstream education.
- Offering training in language/communication to carers and education staff.

As Communication difficulties affect every part of a young person's life, we work in partnership with carers, education staff, and social workers as well as the young people themselves to set targets and develop their communication skills.

What others think of our work:

There is a strong focus on developing students' speaking and listening skills, so that they can understand and apply the vocabulary of each subject and become confident communicators and self-advocates. The exceptional collaborative work of speech and language therapists makes a significant contribution in this (Ofsted 2007)

ISP integrates the very effective contribution of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the speech and language therapists and the educational psychologist into its practice very successfully; 'Speech and language therapists make an excellent contribution to this (the quality of the curriculum) and by taking the lead in social communication sessions' (Ofsted 2006)

'I learnt new emotion words.' (student)

'Lots of insight into reasons why some of the children may be confused, aggressive and frustrated.' (course participant)