



Milton Keynes Community Health Services

**The Impact of
Speech and Language Therapy
Service Delivery on
Milton Keynes
BESD and YOT settings**

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Executive summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Research has found that a high proportion of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties – including over 60% of young people who offend - have speech language and communication needs (SLCN). Further, the evidence indicates that SLCN within this population are often unidentified.
- 1.2 Local studies in the BESD provisions and the YOT have replicated these findings. In a sample of young people at the YOT, 88% presented with some degree of SLCN, of whom 54% had severe difficulties. Only one-fifth (21%) had previously been referred for speech and language therapy. Many statements of special educational need do *not* make reference to SLCN, even when the young people have severe levels of need.
- 1.3 In order to deliver a seamless continuum of provision to meet the needs of these vulnerable children with SLCN, each part of the universal, targeted and specialist workforce needs to understand their own and others' responsibilities at each level of provision, and needs the knowledge and skills to carry them out.

Responsibilities and impact

- 2.0 The Speech and Language Therapy Service has responsibilities at all levels of need, from training the workforce at the universal level, to delivering intervention at additional, considerable and intensive levels. This paper shows how the Service has been executing its responsibilities, the positive impact this has had, and gives an indication of the cost savings and value for money this represents. The work at the MK YOT is pioneering and receives national recognition.

Conclusions

- 3.0 An inter-agency workforce strategy is needed in order to address the problem of under-identified and unmet SLC needs, so that together we can not only meet the needs of children and young people in the BESD and YOT settings, but prevent them from arriving there in the first place. The Speech and Language Therapy Service is committed to collaborating in the ongoing development of such a strategy.

**As a result of SLT input
in the BESD and YOT settings....**

**... staff have a better
understanding of the
communication difficulties of
their students**

p. 12, p. 16-17

**... young people are relieved
to find out what their problem
is and how they can be helped**

p. 34

**... the causes of children's
behaviour problems (eg.
autism) are being identified**

p. 21, p. 30

**... young people are attending
and enjoying college courses**

p. 19, p. 30

**... young people are avoiding
unnecessary custodial
sentences**

p. 19-20

**... the young people's
relationships with their family
and peers are improving**

p. 27, p. 30

**... children and young
people's speech language
and communication skills are
getting better**

p. 27, p. 30, p. 34

1. Introduction

Milton Keynes' Community Health Services (MKCHS) Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Service is committed to the vision set out by Milton Keynes Council Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) in their *Inclusion Strategy 2009-11*. Three of the principles from the *Strategy* that relate directly to the work of the SLT Service in the BESD (Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) and YOT (Youth Offending Team) settings are as follows:

- Improved outcomes for vulnerable and under-performing children and young people. This will include outcomes across the ECM agenda ... (*child focus*)
- Increased skills and confidence in mainstream schools and settings to increase their capacity to support vulnerable learners (*workforce focus*)
- A seamless continuum of provision to enable vulnerable children and young people to get the support they need when they need it (*system focus*)

(*Inclusion Strategy 2009-11*, CYPS, Milton Keynes Council, pp.7-8)

Children and young people with speech language and communication needs (SLCN) are classed as 'vulnerable' within the *Inclusion Strategy* only by virtue of their inclusion within the group of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Young people who offend are designated a high priority vulnerable group. A high proportion of young people who offend present with SLCN - a significant number of whom have not previously had their SLCN identified. This aspect of their 'vulnerability' should not be overlooked. In view of the manifest link between SLCN and offending, there is a case for children with SLCN to be considered 'vulnerable' in their own right.

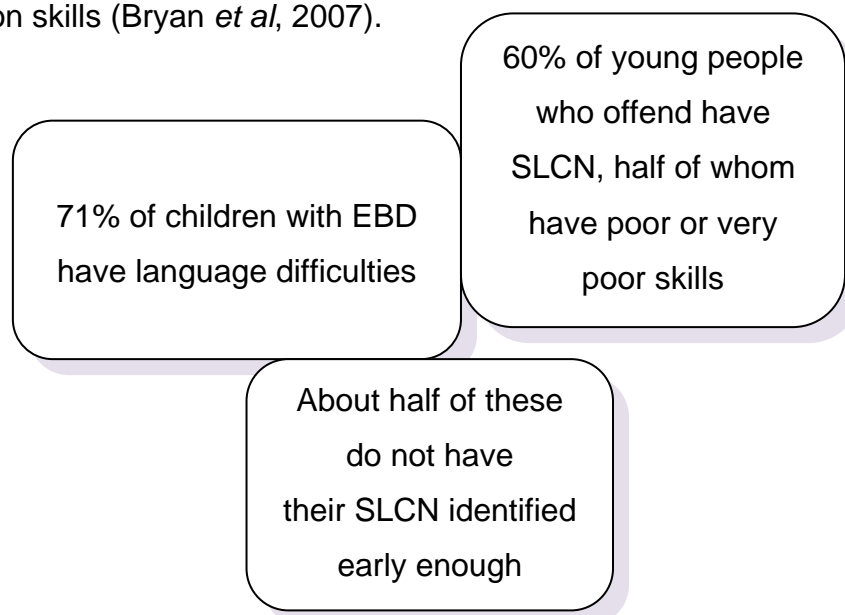
The Speech and Language Therapy Service has been delivering a service to the YOT since December 2008, and to the BESD settings (Gatehouse, Romans Field and the Primary PRU) since April 2010. This report aims to demonstrate the value of SLT input in these settings to contributing to the outcomes defined in the *Inclusion Strategy*, and to improving the children's life chances. The report calls for the ongoing inter-agency development of a workforce strategy that will meet the SLC needs of all children and young people at risk of social exclusion.

1.1. The children and young people in question

There is an increasing body of evidence which indicates that many children and young people who present with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) also have difficulties with speech language and/or communication (SLC). A literature review by Benner *et al.* (2002) reported that 71% of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) were likely to have pragmatic language difficulties¹. Benner *et al.* also found that 64% of children with EBD had expressive language difficulties and 56% had receptive language difficulties.

Furthermore, the body of evidence also suggests that SLCN within this population are often unidentified. Stringer and Lozano (2007) found that in one particular special school for children with EBD, the prevalence of language impairment was 74%, yet fewer than half of these children had been identified by teachers or health professionals. Cohen *et al.* (1998) found that 41% of psychiatrically disturbed children presented with previously unsuspected language difficulties.

The picture is the same for young people who offend. A recent study has found that over 60% of children in the criminal justice system have speech, language and/or communication difficulties, and of these, around half have poor or very poor communication skills (Bryan *et al.*, 2007).



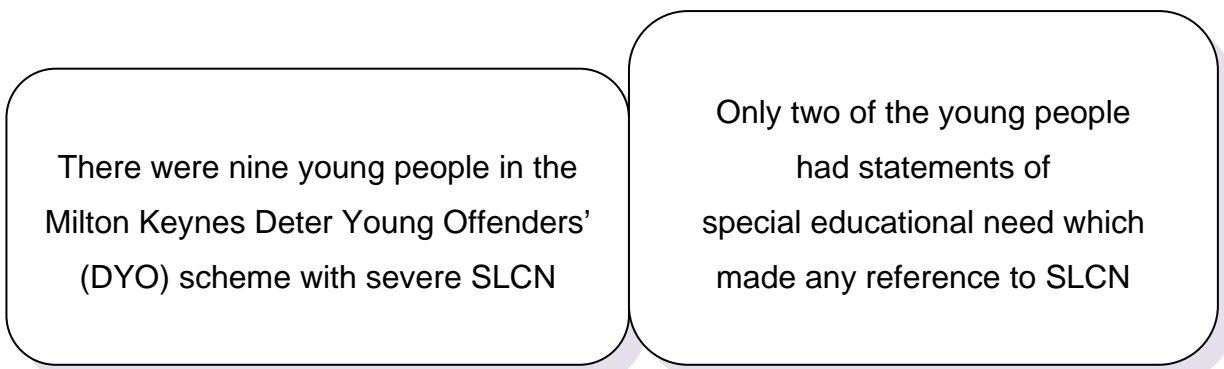
¹Pragmatic language difficulties can be defined as difficulties with the rules related to language use in a social setting eg. speaker-listener relationship, turn-taking, eye contact and/or the way that a person uses their language to express and understand intended rather than literal meaning.

1.2. The local picture

A number of local studies replicate these findings. The SLT Service carried out a needs assessment in the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in 2008/9 (Lanz, 2009), and found that 88% of the young people assessed had a communication disability. Of these, 54% had severe difficulties. Only 21% of those identified had previously been referred for speech and language therapy. Of the young people who were not in employment, education or training (NEET), 100% of those assessed presented with some degree of SLCN, with 50% experiencing severe difficulties.

An analysis of the needs of young people in the local Deter Young Offender (DYO) scheme² (Dutt, 2010), showed that of the twelve who were assessed, nine (75%) had severe speech language and/or communication difficulties. Eight of the twelve had previously been issued with statements of special educational need. Of the seven statements that were available for analysis, only two made any reference to SLCN. A total of five young people (four with severe SLC difficulties; one with moderate difficulties) had statements where their SLCN had not been identified at all during the statutory assessment process.

A similar local study in January 2009 showed that, on the basis of their presenting profile³, over 80% of children placed at Romans Field School and the Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) warranted further in-depth speech, language and communication assessment (Rutter, 2009).



² Deter Young Offender scheme is a multi-agency approach to reducing re-offending in young people assessed as posing the highest risk of causing serious harm to others and likelihood of re-offending.

³ie. where children presented with one or more of the following: obvious language difficulties; literacy difficulties; discrepancy between performance on verbal tasks vs visual/practical tasks; short term memory difficulties e.g. weak digit span; inappropriate social skills; undergoing multi-agency diagnostic assessments

The nature of speech, language and communication difficulties

“The term speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) encompasses a wide range of difficulties related to all aspects of communication in children and young people. These can include difficulties with fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what others say, and using language socially.

Approximately 50% of children and young people in some socio-economically disadvantaged populations have speech and language skills that are significantly lower than those of other children of the same age. These children need access to early years provision which is specifically designed to meet their language learning needs and they may also benefit from specific targeted intervention at key points in their development.

Approximately 7% of five year olds entering school in England – nearly 40,000 children in 2007 – have significant difficulties with speech and/or language. These children are likely to need specialist and/or targeted intervention at key points in their development.

Approximately 1% of five year olds entering school in England – more than 5,500 children in 2007 – have the most severe and complex SLCN. They may not understand much of what is said to them, they may have very little spoken language and they are likely to be completely unintelligible when they start school. These children often need to use alternative and augmentative means of communication. This group is likely to have a long-term need for specialist help, in school and beyond.

SLCN may be a child’s primary educational need. Primary SLCN include specific difficulties of which there is often no obvious cause. In contrast, secondary SLCN are associated with other difficulties that the child may be experiencing such as autism, cerebral palsy, hearing loss or more general learning difficulties. The number of children and young people with secondary SLCN is almost impossible to quantify separately from the primary SLCN group. However, meeting their SLCN should be considered as part of their overall package of care.”

The Bercow Review, 2008

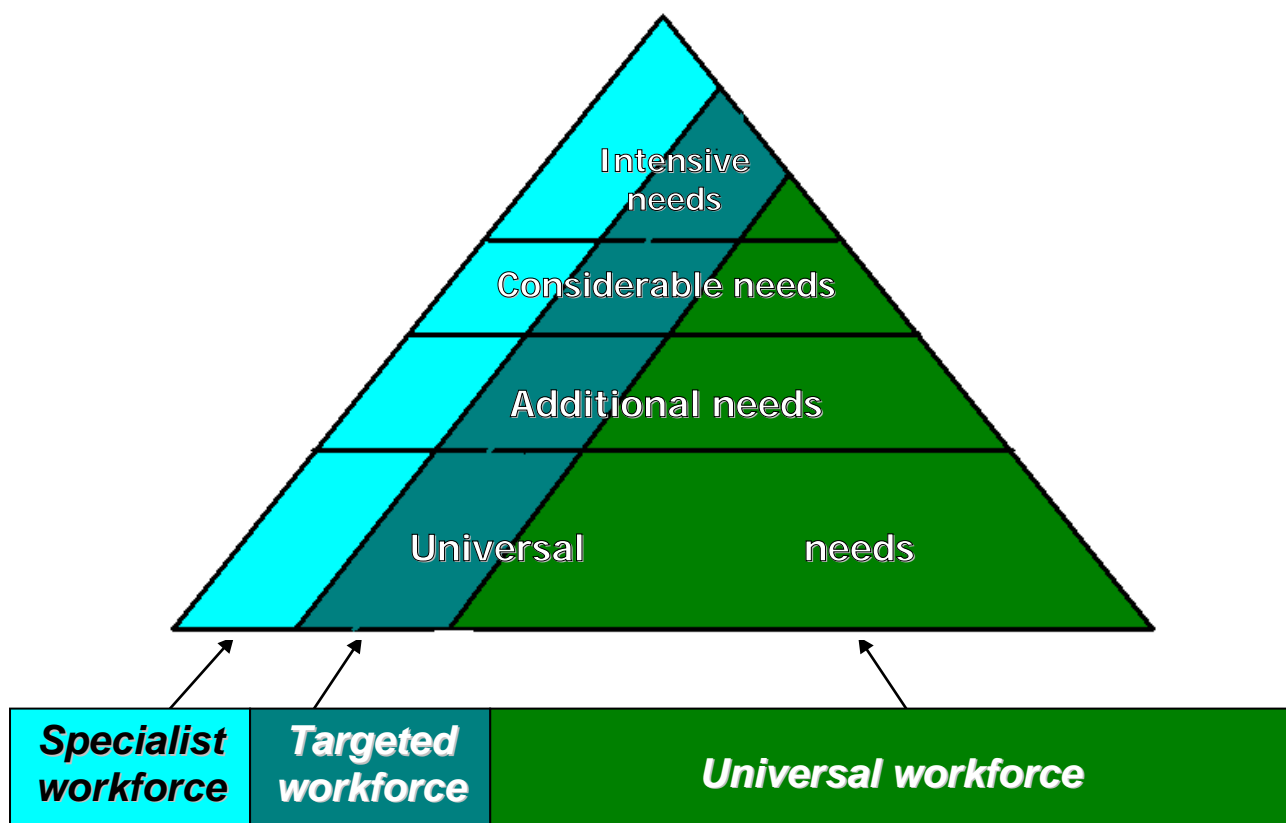
Difficulties with speech language and communication are potentially life-long. It is not always realistic to expect change in the child/young persons’ skills *per se*, just as one would not expect a blind child to learn to see. Removing barriers to accessing the environment (education, social inclusion, employment) is as important for these children as trying to improve their skills, thereby facilitating engagement and progress.

1.3. A whole system approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable children and young people

The *Inclusion Strategy* aspires to ‘... a seamless continuum of provision...’ which will enable vulnerable children and young people to get the support they need when they need it. It describes a staged response – Universal, Additional, Considerable and Intensive - which aims to deliver that continuum of provision. In order for such a continuum to work effectively, each part of the workforce needs to understand what their own and others’ responsibilities are at each level of provision, and needs the knowledge and skills to carry out those responsibilities.

Figure 1 aims to represent the concept that all sections of the workforce have responsibilities at all levels of need, but that the balance of responsibility changes as needs become more specific.

Fig. 1. The balance of responsibilities within the workforce in relation to level of need – the ‘workforce pyramid’



In order to meet the *Inclusion Strategy's* aspirations, each section of the workforce has responsibilities in the areas of

1. **Identification** – of the children and young people who need support
2. **Seamless provision** – awareness and delivery of the continuum of support
3. **Intervention** – in the right form, by the right people, at the right time
4. **Monitoring** – to ensure these activities are improving outcomes

For a specialist service such as Speech and Language Therapy, the responsibilities at each level are set out in the following pages.

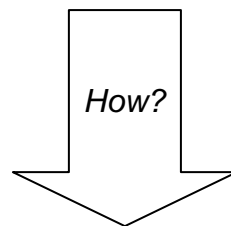
2. Responsibilities and impact of the Speech and Language Therapy Service

2.1. Universal level

2.1.1. Identification

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

That the universal workforce⁴ has the knowledge and skills to identify children and young people presenting with (or at risk of presenting with) SLCN



Through identifying and addressing universal workforce training needs

⁴ For the purpose of this document, the *universal workforce* is defined as any staff working in mainstream schools, early years settings, special provision, the Connexions service and social care, ie. any staff not part of an outside agency such as SENDIS, the Educational Psychology Service, Area SENCOs or Speech and Language Therapy.

What are we doing to achieve this?

Work in the YOT

The Speech and Language Therapists allocated to the Youth Offending Team (YOT) have carried out training with the staff in the YOT to increase their awareness of how to recognise SLCN. In addition, when the therapists delivered similar training in October 2010 to the wider children's workforce (Connexions; youth workers; PlayLeaders), 60% of the audience who gave feedback reported increased confidence in identifying children with SLCN. The following comments were typical:

"I have more clues what to look for. I will talk about (this) with my team and consider this much more as a factor before deciding actions/sanctions."

(Youth worker)

"(I am) ...more aware of what lies behind these difficulties... I will now take these into consideration when I am with my young people and when others are asking/telling me about their behaviours..."

(Connexions worker)

"Better knowledge, never been explained before."

(Youth worker)

"Whilst the topic wasn't new for most people, I think it helped people to think about addressing the basics first, rather than assuming it is something more complicated."

(LA Officer, Children and Young People's Services)

Work in the BESD provisions

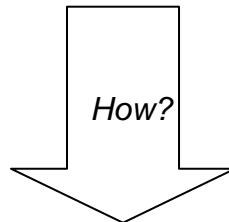
Therapists in the BESD provisions have been developing the skills of the staff in this area through offering meetings to discuss individual children prior to referral. This has given an opportunity for the SLT to alert staff to behaviours which could be indicative of SLCN, to recommend useful strategies and to advise on whether there is a need for further assessment.

[Universal level cont...]

2.1.2 Seamless provision

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

- a) That the universal workforce has the knowledge and skills to involve the targeted and/or specialist workforce at the right time
- b) That the universal workforce has knowledge of the provision available from targeted and specialist services



*Through supporting the workforce in the use of
an SLCN descriptors and responses tool*

What are we doing to achieve this?

The Speech and Language Therapy Service is working in collaboration with partners in the Local Authority, mainstream schools, early years settings and specialist provisions* to develop an SLCN descriptors and responses tool. This tool is an interagency framework, which describes a child's SLC profile and the responses required from each section of the workforce to meet their needs. It is being designed to be applicable from Early Years to 19, across mainstream and specialist settings (such as the BESD settings and the Youth Offending Team), and is due for launch in September 2011.

*The interagency Bercow Working Party 'Just Do It' group

What long-term benefits will this bring?

For the universal workforce –

An understanding of its own responsibilities in offering universally communication-supportive environments for children and young people
Greater clarity over where, how and when to seek support for children
Increased confidence in the transparency of the system
More efficient use of resources

For the targeted and specialist workforce –

Targeted and specialist resources redirected from children who need only universal support, to those who need higher levels of support
Reduced duplication of effort

For the children and their parents –

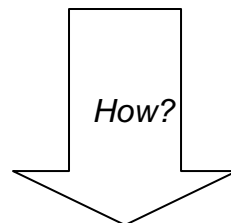
The right kind of support at the right time, leading to improved outcomes
An environment where the workforce is confident in its own decision making
Increased confidence in the transparency of the system

[Universal level cont...]

2.1.3 Intervention

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

That the universal workforce has the knowledge and skills
to offer intervention which will meet
the universal SLC needs of children and young people



*Through supporting the universal workforce to develop
universally communication-supportive environments and
teaching practice*

*Through training/coaching the universal workforce
in universal support strategies⁵*

⁵ NB Children who have additional, considerable and/or intensive SLC needs also derive benefit from universally communication-supportive environments, teaching practice and support strategies

What are we doing to achieve this?

Work in the BESD provisions

The therapists visiting the BESD settings have supported the settings' leadership teams in developing a whole-school approach to becoming 'communication-supportive' environments. Audits⁶ have been carried out to identify current good practice within the settings, as well as those areas which would benefit from further development. Improvement plans have been devised and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Following a training session in universal support strategies at Gatehouse School, feedback indicated that the staff who attended had found the training 'useful', 'very useful' and/or 'excellent', and all those present felt that there were practical suggestions to be implemented in the school. The following comments were received:

"I liked the fact it helped me to think first and foremost about how I approach talking to the boys. Also it helped me to change the way I approach behaviour management."

"(I learnt about...) ...identification and characteristics of language, communication. How difficult communication can be for EBD students."

"(I will try...) ... getting young people to repeat instructions in their own words to check understanding."

Work in the YOT

Similar positive outcomes are evident at the YOT. The case examples on p. 17 demonstrate some of the impact on YOT staff practice as a result of the training by the SLTs.

⁶Sourced from the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) and I-CAN's *Primary Talk* materials

**Case examples: Impact of SLT training
in universal support strategies for the workforce
at the Milton Keynes YOT**

Sept 2010 – A YOT officer reported her observations of an interaction between a young person and a police officer. The police officer was not aware of the young person's low language/learning levels, or their inability to operate a mobile phone, and thus was struggling to communicate with the young person. The YOT officer intervened to facilitate this communication, based on her increased understanding of why this interaction was difficult for the young person.

Oct 2010 – One of the senior YOT officers reported that her raised awareness of SLCN has completely changed her way of thinking when working with young people. She is now constantly monitoring her own language, and observing and monitoring others, eg. in court, she now asks for a pause in proceedings in order to rephrase and explain information to the young people.

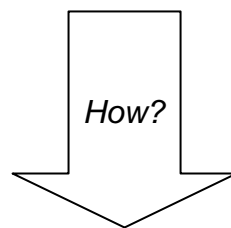
Nov 2010 – The YOT Court Business Support Officer requested SLT advice about a young person's understanding of time. The officer had given the young person a first appointment, but was now questioning herself as to whether the young person understood the vocabulary she was using, eg. *fortnight*. This understanding would be essential if the young person was to demonstrate compliance with the Order. The Support Officer reported that she would now adapt her practice.

2.2 Additional, Considerable and Intensive levels

2.2.1 Identification I

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

That when decisions are being made regarding a child or young person's placement, their SLC needs are accurately identified in the context of their other needs, enabling informed decisions to be made



Through contribution to interagency assessment

What are we doing to achieve this?

Work in the YOT

In the context of the Criminal Justice System, decisions are made about whether to place a young person in custody. The magistrates' decisions are informed by pre-sentencing reports from those working with the young people. The YOT staff regularly include information from the SLTs' assessments in their pre-sentencing reports, which has been instrumental in preventing young people going into custody. For example, in a case heard in Sept 2010, the court took account of evidence from the SLT report that the young person had severe language needs; that at the age of 17 years, he had the language levels of a 7 year-old. As a result, he was given a Youth Rehabilitation Order rather than a custodial sentence.

The rate of custodial sentencing for young people at the Milton Keynes YOT reduced from 7.1% in the first quarter of 2009/10 to 1.9% in the last quarter of that year. The rate has been maintained at 1.5% for the first three quarters of 2010/11. One of the Operational Managers at the YOT sees the inclusion of SLT assessment findings in pre-sentencing reports as a significant factor in bringing about this reduction. The cost saving to the public purse in such cases is significant, as the example cited by the Audit Commission report *Youth Justice (2004)* shows (*Fig. 2, p. 20*).

The involvement of the SLT has also had an impact on the NEET (not in employment, education or training) status of some of the young people. For example, in the case of LB, behavioural problems in college had resulted in the termination of his attendance. The YOT officer requested that the college refer to the SLT's recommendations regarding appropriate support strategies, and he was readmitted to the course. Milton Keynes College has now begun to ask the YOT officers for information about the young people's SLCN, and initial indications are that this is improving the young people's attendance.

Fig. 2: The cost to society: Case example from the Audit Commission Youth Justice report (2004)

'James' is a real example of a young person with both SEN and SLCN, whose total cost to society so far has been **£153,687**. This has included two custodial sentences before reaching 16 years of age.

James did not receive assessment or intervention from an SLT. The SLT assessment and report provides the opportunity for the court to access crucial information about the young person's difficulties. In the absence of this information the young person's behaviour and actions may be viewed and dealt with significantly differently.

"Some magistrates have more difficulty than others in effectively engaging with young defendants, with **61%** of those surveyed saying they have **some or a lot of difficulty** in getting young people to **engage in discussion**. This can influence the way in which young people are perceived by the court, which can have important consequences."

".. if a young person is **inarticulate, inhibited or lacks understanding**, which is not uncommon among teenagers, this may lead to **misunderstandings** and even the passing of an **inappropriate sentence**."

"**80%** of magistrates surveyed said that the attitude and demeanour of a young person influences their sentencing decision to **some** or a **great extent**."

"James's story is not exceptional. Many young people in the youth justice system have similar backgrounds and experiences. If a ... saving of £140,000 were made on just one in ten of the young people sentenced to custody each year ... more than **£100 million** would be saved to public services."

Youth Justice - Audit Commission (2004)

Work in the BESD provisions

All of the children at Gatehouse and Romans Field have statements of special educational need, and most at the Primary PRU either already have statements or are undergoing statutory assessment. The therapists in the settings contribute regularly to inter-disciplinary review meetings to ensure that the children's SLC needs are accurately identified in the context of their other needs, enabling informed decisions over placement to be made.

The complex nature of the children's needs, and the challenges of engaging them in formal assessment, means that a picture of their needs has to be built up over time, through detailed observations. This ongoing relationship in many cases leads to the establishment of trust between the young people and the therapists, which often results in the opportunity to undertake more formal assessment.

Children on the autistic spectrum (ASD) often present with challenging behaviours when their needs have not been identified and/or addressed. At least nine of the children at Romans Field and the Primary PRU have undergone an ASD diagnostic assessment⁷ since April 2010, involving Paediatrician, Clinical Psychologist and SLT. While for most, this has meant that their ASD has now been recognised, for some it has meant that previously suspected ASD has been ruled out – which is just as important when considering how to best meet the child's needs.

One child at Romans Field had previously undergone an ASD assessment. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) had ruled out ASD in favour of a diagnosis of attachment disorder. The SLT was reluctant to dismiss ASD, and undertook further assessment to make the case for re-examination. The child's ASD has now been recognised alongside attachment disorder. Programmes to address attachment disorder were not successful, whereas an understanding of the child's ASD has had a significant positive impact on his management by parents and school, and is influencing the choice of appropriate secondary school placement. The SLT is currently making a similar case for re-examination for another child.

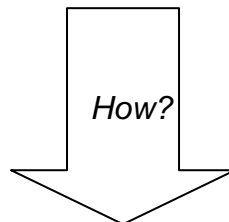
⁷ An ASD assessment is a detailed process, requiring (on average) 14 hours of an SLT's time in each case, for assessment, reporting and meeting with other professionals.

[Additional, Considerable and Intensive levels cont...]

2.2.2 Identification II

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

That a child or young person's speech, language and communication needs,
as well as targets and strategies to meet those needs,
are accurately identified
(in the context of their other learning needs)



*Through contribution to assessment,
report writing and intervention planning*

What are we doing to achieve this?

Work in the BESD provisions and the YOT

BESD and YOT therapists write reports on all the children for whom SLT involvement has been requested, detailing the findings from their assessment, and recommendations regarding the most appropriate level and form of intervention. The end of year feedback (June 2010) from Romans Field cited 'clear, precise reports' as something the school had valued from the SLT service.

The therapists make suggestions for tailoring the support available to meet the specific needs of each child/young person. These range from making recommendations for practical ways to differentiate the curriculum, to making suggestions for programmes/resources for use with individuals/small groups. Inter-disciplinary working and joint problem-solving is essential, as evidence in the example from Gatehouse shows (see Case example, p. 24).

There is increasing evidence that staff in these settings are using the SLTs' recommendations and advice to include SLC targets in Individual Education/Learning Plans (IEP/ILPs).

Work in the YOT

Reports from the therapists are routinely available to YOT staff to inform their intervention planning. In addition, SLT reports have been forwarded to barristers to help them prepare for young people to be seen in Crown Court. YOT therapists' assessment findings have also been used to make the case for a court intermediary to support a young person at Crown Court.

**Case example: Joint problem-solving at Gatehouse School
to meet a young person's SLCN**

Student J was seen by the SLT in May for observation and individual assessment. He was in the inclusion / nurture house for individual support, as he was not able to mix with other students. A period of time (four days out of five) at a mainstream school to reintegrate J was unsuccessful, and he returned to The Gatehouse School full-time from September. After a lengthy period of absence, he is now taught with his year-group. This followed a meeting with the Art Therapist, Nurture House staff and the SLT, where it became clear that nurture was perhaps not the best approach for him.

At the PSP (Pastoral Support Programme) meeting, the SLT proposed that J might benefit from a social skills group at another mainstream school, and the SLT arranged with key personnel for this to be set up.

The value of this approach is recognised by the Head Teacher of the school, who rated the advice, strategies and resources recommended by the SLT as 5/5 ('very useful') and cited this as an example:

"Setting up social skills integration into mainstream school for students with S & L difficulties."

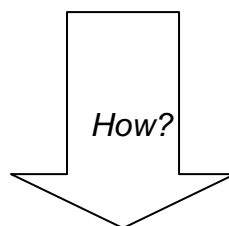
(End of year feedback, July 2010)

[Additional, Considerable and Intensive levels cont...]

2.2.3 Intervention I

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure

That the universal workforce
(working in collaboration with targeted and specialist services)
has the knowledge and skills to offer intervention
that will meet the additional and/or considerable and/or intensive
SLC needs of children and young people



*Through training/coaching the universal workforce
in support strategies to address
additional and/or considerable and/or intensive needs,
where this is required*

What are we doing to achieve this?

The SLT service offers training and coaching/modelling packages to develop the knowledge and skills of the universal workforce in specific SLCN support strategies. The purpose of the coaching/modelling packages is to transfer skills and knowledge to the professionals and/or carers working on a daily basis with the child, in order to increase their ability to maximise the child's level of functioning. The current range of speech, language and communication areas covered by coaching/modelling packages is given in Appendix I.

Work in the BESD provisions

There are many children at the Primary PRU who present with pragmatic language difficulties. (These difficulties are characteristic of, but not exclusive to, autism.) Training for the staff in recognising and supporting children with these difficulties is planned for the forthcoming term. The staff are also being coached in the implementation of a technique called Social Stories™, which aims to facilitate social awareness and understanding for people on the autistic spectrum.

Work in the YOT

A recent report by the Prison Reform Trust, *Seen and Heard* (2010), advocates that youth justice programmes and activities should take account of the young person's support needs, with specialist staff available to be involved in the delivery of such activities when required. *Seen and Heard* also highlights the fact that fewer than five of the 89 YOTs sampled had a speech and language therapist available to them. Milton Keynes YOT - in collaboration with MKCHS Speech and Language Therapy Service - is one of the pioneers in this field. The work that has been developed there, both in training the wider workforce and in delivering intervention, is nationally recognised as best practice (see case examples on p. 27 and p. 30). The SLTs at the YOT are currently delivering presentations about their work across the country, as part of the approved pool of trainers in The Communication Trust's *Youth Justice Training Programme* for YOT staff. They are also involved in a national project co-ordinated by the professional body - the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists – aimed at gathering and disseminating information about successful models of SLT service delivery in YOTs.

**Case examples: Coaching the workforce at the Milton Keynes YOT
in support strategies to address
additional and/or considerable and/or intensive SLC needs**

Jake is a young person with low self-esteem, who has a very short attention span and communication difficulties. The YOT officer and the SLT undertook a joint intervention session with Jake, aimed at helping him consider issues around his self-esteem. The SLT adapted the session to take account of Jake's short attention span and communication difficulties. Feedback from the officer indicated that he thought the session had gone very well, and is looking forward to arranging a follow-up session.

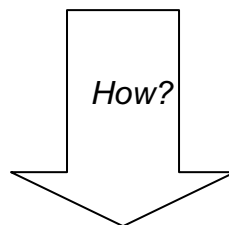
Neil is a young person with social communication disorder, who finds it difficult to inhibit his anger towards his parent. A YOT officer approached the SLT for advice in supporting Neil with the next steps of his anger management programme. The SLT suggested a Social Stories™ approach, which aims to improve the young person's understanding of events and social interactions, the perspectives of those involved, and the things they can try to do to respond. The YOT officer and the therapist jointly supported Neil in writing a Social Story. The following week, the officer reported that Neil had remembered to use the story, and that there had been no negative reactions to his parent in the past week. He said that Neil had seemed *'very positive and more mature this week'*.

[Additional, Considerable and Intensive levels cont...]

2.2.4 Intervention II

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to

Deliver packages of intervention,
where the child's additional and/or considerable and/or intensive
SLC needs can only be met through the direct involvement of a
speech and language therapist
(working in collaboration with universal and targeted services)



*Through offering time-limited⁸ packages of intervention,
linked to outcome measurement*

⁸ 'Time-limited' refers to the practice of offering packages with specified end-dates, at which time the outcome of the package will be reviewed, and decisions made over whether a further package will be offered. In theory, if a further package is always considered appropriate, there is no limit to the number of packages which could be offered.

What are we doing to achieve this?

The SLT service has a range of direct intervention packages available, across various areas of speech, language and/or communication need. The standard packages which have been developed by the Service can be found in Appendix I. The therapists also design bespoke packages when necessary.

These packages are never offered in isolation, but always in collaboration with teaching and/or YOT staff, so that the young person's learning can be embedded into their everyday context through daily follow-up from the universal workforce.

An example of a package of intervention offered by the SLT at the YOT, and the associated outcomes, is given on p. 30.

Case example: Mark – Oral comprehension & vocabulary package

Background Information

YOT officer raised significant concerns because of Mark's poor attendance for appointments. Mark was at risk of being in **breach and returning to court**. He 'mumbled' and presented with low self esteem, having to rely on his grandmother for time keeping.

April 2010 - SLT assessment: Mark has poor understanding of time concepts, weak vocabulary knowledge, slow processing of information and poor memory for detail.

SLT Intervention Targets

To improve Mark's understanding of units of time, of concepts related to time and his ability to use a calendar. (Initially, he was unable to give the current date and had poor understanding of how dates were related.)

To develop listening comprehension, ie. the ability to listen to short passages and answer questions related to them

To develop strategies to support understanding, eg. asking for clarification

To improve vocabulary knowledge

After two one-to-one SLT sessions

(at a cost of approx. £160, including preparation, liaison & paperwork):

Mark feeds back that he can now '**understand some words**'. In particular, he is pleased to now understand the meaning of 'e.g.'. He also says '**I can be responsible for my own times to come in**'. He is very positive about setting himself the goal of taking responsibility for his time-keeping, now that he has some understanding of the calendar. Following the discussion he requests another copy of the schedule to keep on the wall.

May 2010 The YOT officer reports that Mark **attended the session punctually** and was **proud** of the fact that he had achieved this without the support of his grandmother. Mark was very **positive** about the involvement of the SLT.

June 2010 – Youth Offender Panel Review Meeting

Mark **attends punctually** and is **able to contribute verbally**, maintaining **good eye contact**.

Sept 2010 – The YOT officer and Connexions staff report **continued punctual attendance**. Mark has **started a college course** and is **attending independently**. He is **enjoying college** and **making friends**.

Oct 2010 – Final panel meeting. Very positive comments by panel members.

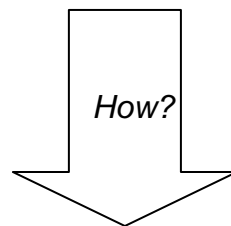
End of Order.

2.3 All levels

2.3.1 Identification, seamless provision and intervention

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure that

Universal services are aware of their own responsibilities
at each of the levels of need



*Through supporting the workforce in the use of
an SLCN descriptors and responses tool*

What are we doing to achieve this?

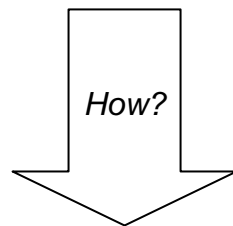
See Section 2.1.2.

[All levels cont...]

2.3.2 Monitoring

The Speech and Language Therapy Service - working in collaboration with other appropriate services - has a responsibility to ensure that

Standards for identifying and meeting the SLC needs
of children and young people
are being maintained at all levels of the workforce pyramid
and that these are linked with improved outcomes



Through throughput and outcomes monitoring

*Through audit of the use of
an SLCN descriptors and responses tool*

*Through audit of the
communication-supportive status of settings*

What we doing to achieve this?

MKCHS Speech and Language Therapy Service has a well-established system for monitoring therapy outcomes linked to specific interventions (packages of care). Alongside this, we are committed to working with our interagency partners to gather and analyse data:

At the level of the individual/family

IEP/ILP outcomes

Measures of engagement – eg. attendance

National Curriculum levels

NEET data (relating to children not in education, employment or training)

Re-offending data

Sentencing patterns

Satisfaction

At the level of the setting

Audits of communication-supportive practice

Evaluations of whole-setting training needs

Impact of training

Satisfaction

At a systems level

Numbers of children presenting at each level of need (population needs assessment)

The degree of multi-disciplinary involvement with young people (with a view to eliminating unnecessary overlap)

Once the SLCN descriptors and responses tool is established, we would hope to undertake quality assurance exercises, to ensure workforce competence in levelling children accurately, and in offering intervention appropriate to their needs.

As a Service, we are committed to sharing datasets with our inter-agency partners, in order for us all to better understand the scope and needs of the SLCN population. This is a practice advocated by Professor Geoff Lindsay (Lindsay, in press), the principal investigator of the Government's *Better Communication Research Programme*.

**Case examples: Improved outcomes
for children/young people at Milton Keynes YOT**

Improved speech language and communication skills

Amit understood his own difficulties better following SLT assessment. This led to increased engagement with programmes, and developments in his confidence and language functioning. This has been formally demonstrated through an improvement in his scores on standardised assessments.

**Increased engagement and
improved self-esteem and self-efficacy**

'We had Sam's final panel yesterday and he discussed his hopes of going to college in September. The panel suggested that your SLT report could be passed on to college staff so they can help Sam – are you happy for me to forward that? Sam was fine with it and said how he had felt so much better after your assessment, knowing there is a problem and things he can do about it.'

Feedback from YOT officer

At least one young person, Roland, has requested further SLT sessions, as *'it helps me understand what they say in Court'*.

3 Conclusions

It is clear that delivery by the Speech and Language Therapy Service to the BESD and YOT settings is impacting positively on the accurate identification of children and young people with SLCN, and on appropriate intervention, at all levels of need. The SLT Service has a key role in facilitating seamless provision and in monitoring outcomes. The pioneering work in the YOT is nationally recognised as best practice.

This report has demonstrated the SLT Service's ongoing contribution to

“...improved outcomes for vulnerable and under-performing children and young people...

...increased skills and confidence in mainstream schools and settings to increase their capacity to support vulnerable learners...

...a seamless continuum of provision to enable vulnerable children and young people to get the support they need when they need it...”

(Inclusion Strategy 2009-11, Children and Young People's Services, Milton Keynes Council, p.7-8)

There is also evidence of the cost savings that can be made (pp. 19-20), and the value for money that is characteristic of speech and language therapy (p. 30).

However, it is also clear that more work needs to be done in terms of enabling the universal workforce to identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SLCN. There are still too many young people with BESD and who offend whose SLCN have gone unidentified, and even when other special needs have been described through the statutory assessment process, speech language and communication have been overlooked (see Deter Young Offenders study, p. 7.)

Work has already begun to address the development needs of the universal workforce, through the inter-agency development of an SLCN descriptors and responses tool. The Milton Keynes Speech and Language Therapy Service looks forward to ongoing strategic and operational collaboration with our inter-agency partners, so that together we can develop a workforce strategy which will not only meet the needs of children and young people in the BESD and YOT settings, but will prevent them from arriving there in the first place.

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Appendix I

Current Speech and Language Therapy Service Coaching/Modelling Packages:

1. Attention and listening skills
2. Adult-child interaction
3. Play skills
4. Phonological skills
5. Vocabulary / concepts / semantic organisation
6. Sentence building
7. Questioning
8. Narrative / recounting / reporting skills
9. Verbal reasoning
10. Oral / reading comprehension: key info / literal / inference
11. Conversation / pragmatic skills
12. Social understanding
13. Visual structure
14. Curriculum access / study skills / memory
15. Dysfluency
16. Signing

Current Speech and Language Therapy Direct Intervention Packages:

1. Early Language
2. Higher Level Language
3. Narrative
4. Verbal Reasoning
5. Vocabulary/Semantic
6. Phonological Skills
7. Social Skills
8. Curriculum Access
9. Transition to Secondary School

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