

Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC)



2025/26 Training Brochure

For early years staff, school staff, and parents/carers in
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.



Contents

Our Training Approach	02
The Balanced System Model	03
Booking & Training Guidelines	04
Speech Language and Communication – The Basics	05
Word Aware: Teaching vocabulary, across the day, across the curriculum	06
Elklan 0-3	07
Elklan 3-5	08
Concept Cat in Small Groups	09
Running a Language Group	10
Language for Thinking	11
Useful Links	12



Training Approach

The SEND and AP Change Programme have funded the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) pathway across LLR, and enabled the Children's Speech and Language Therapy Team and local authority partners to offer robust training programmes for practitioners, education partners and parents **at no cost**.

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) offer a specialist Speech and Language Therapy Service (SaLT). We work in partnership with children, young people, their families and education/early years professionals who provide universal and targeted support to maximise speech, language and communication (SLC) outcomes for children, young people and their families.

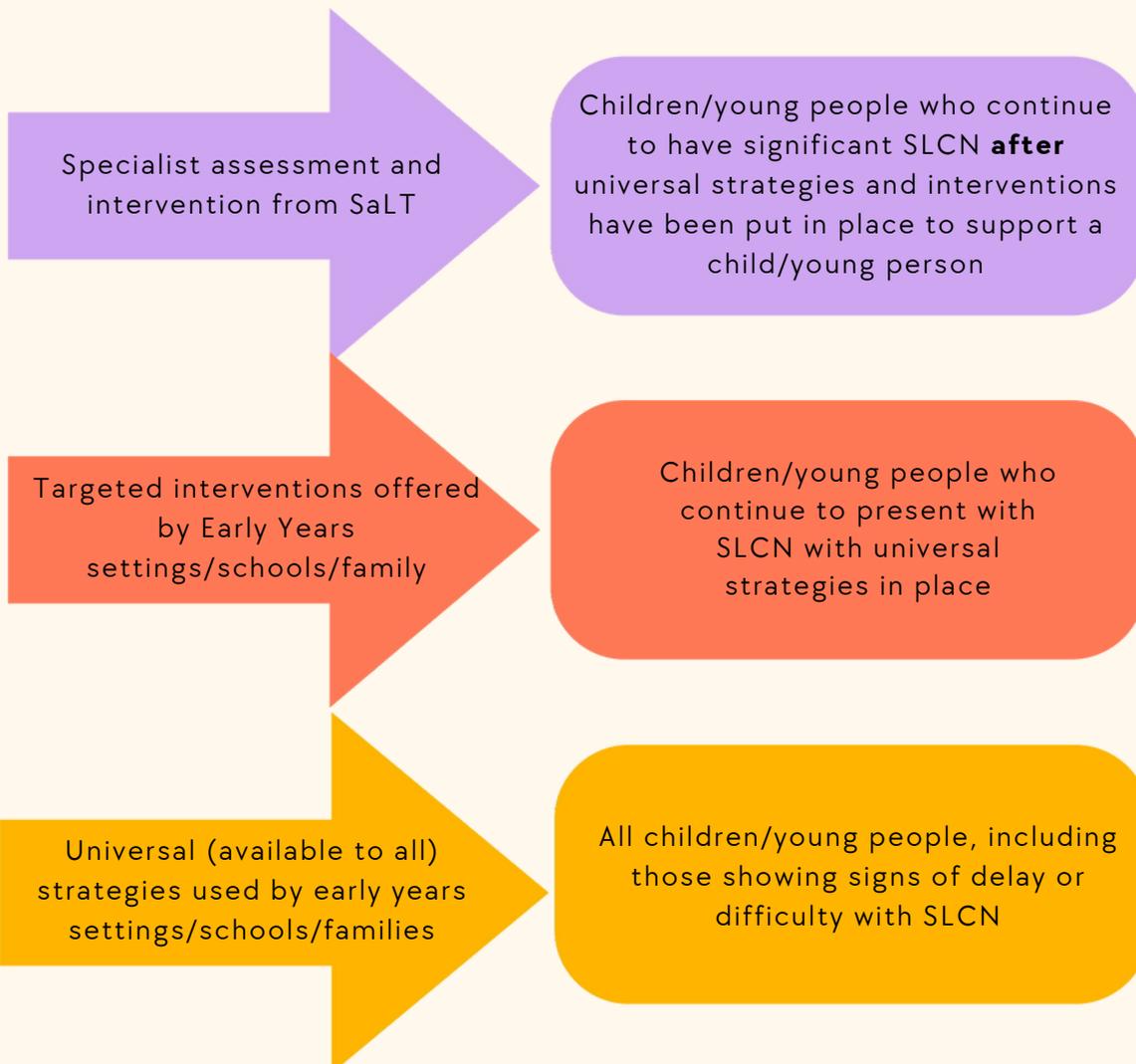
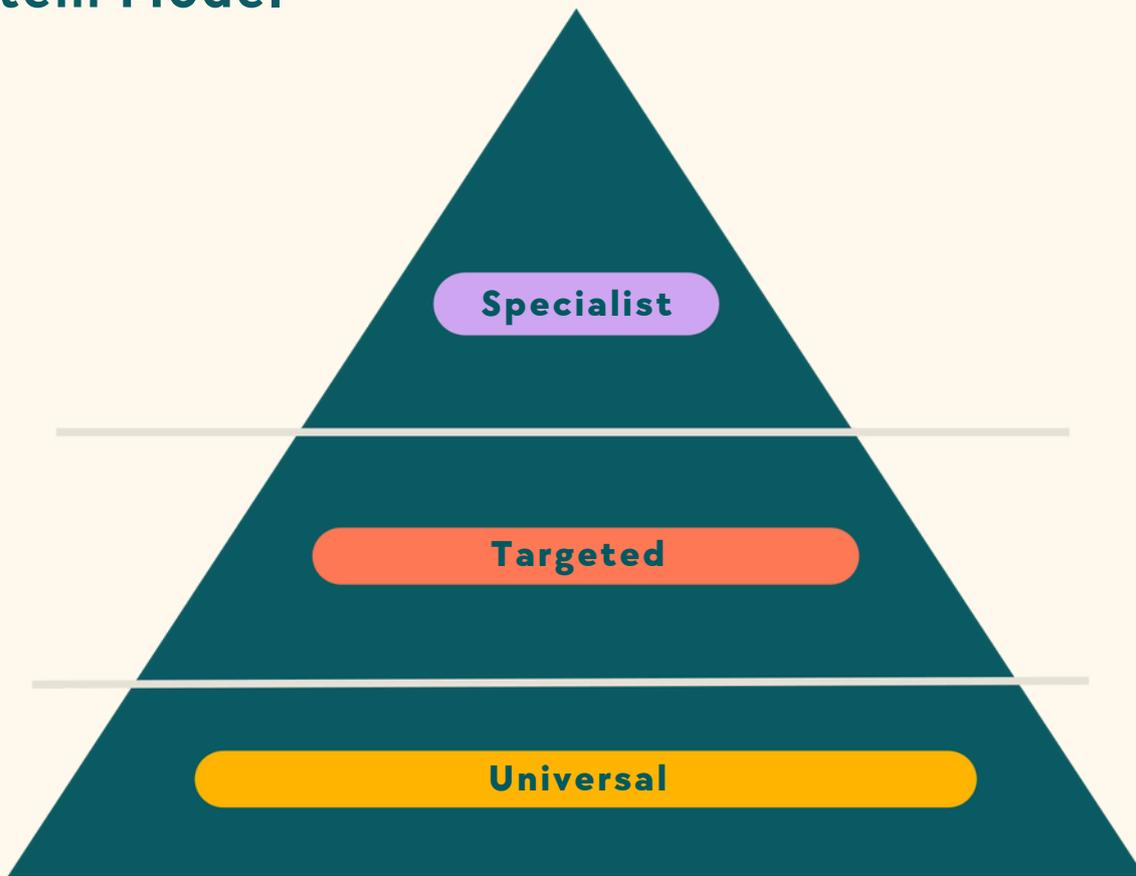
Our Speech and Language Therapy service works within the context of a *balanced system*, which is a nationally recognised model for supporting speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) for all children and young people. It's essence is in collaborative working, where all adults working with children and young people feel confident and empowered to put strategies and activities into practice, all day, every day.

The training offer detailed in this brochure aims to empower early years practitioners, school staff and families to implement environmental approaches and deliver targeted intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people's SLC across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR).

Woven into all our training is a compassionate approach to supporting your professional development and advocating for children, young people and their families.

There is a variety of universal and targeted training offered, through a range of platforms. Please see more information on the following pages. Follow instructions to sign up and be build your skills.

The Balanced System Model



Booking and Training Guidelines

Our 2025-2026 training is delivered in three formats: pre-recorded sessions (available anytime), live virtual sessions, and in-person sessions. Please review your course confirmation to see which format applies to your specific training. Note that delivery methods may change due to circumstances beyond our control.

Privacy and GDPR for Virtual Live Training

- Your name and email address may be visible to everyone else in the training session.
- If you have concerns about this, we suggest you set up a new email account for the purpose of accessing training – this could simply be your name @gmail/hotmail.
- If Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust Therapy course tutors wish to video or take screen shots of training for future training or promotional purposes, your consent will be gained ahead of time. You can change your mind about your consent at any time.
- Participants should not record any training that they participate in, as this will be considered a breach of privacy.
- Participants may take screenshots of training material relevant to their training and for their own use if they seek permission from training facilitators.
- Content should not be shared via social media.
- Pictures of other participants should not be taken nor shared via social media nor email
- <https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/privacy-policy/>

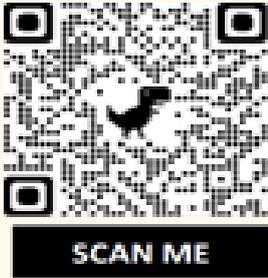
Technical Guidelines for Virtual Live Training

- To get the most out of your live, virtual training, we recommend the following: Use a laptop, or PC with a webcam rather than a mobile phone.
- You will be unable to access any of our virtual live sessions without a webcam/built in camera.
- Check that your device is up to date and has a good internet connection – try having a video chat with a friend or colleague ahead of time.
- Check that you can hear and be heard by others – some people find that using headphones works better than the inbuilt speakers. Try this out by making a short video call to a friend or colleague.
- Please keep your camera on. We know this is a different way of training, but just like when we are in the same room at school, we want to be able to see your face during the session (technical difficulties aside).
- You may want to blur your background or be against a plain wall, as others will be able to see into your home or place of work.
- Check your lighting. It is recommended that you face the light or a window, rather than have the light behind you.
- Please keep your microphone on mute when you are not talking – this helps improve the sound quality for everyone by minimising feedback.
- If you are struggling to find a way into the conversation, use the chat function or raise your hand button

Speech Language and Communication: The Basics

Access

To access this training please use the QR code below and then use the password BASICS



Target Audience

Early Years & School Staff

Location

Pre-recorded online training via MyGuidance

Duration

40 minutes

Tier of Training:

Universal

About the course

An introduction to what we mean by 'speech', 'language' and 'communication', and details about:

- how communication can break down
- how to recognise a child or young person who has speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

The course provides:

- Foundation SLCN knowledge for early career practitioners.
- A practical 'knowledge refresher' for experienced practitioners and leaders.
- An ideal format for group CPD or staff meetings to initiate or re-invigorate reflection in recognising children with SLCN in your school, setting or in your care.
- The course will take approximately 40 minutes to complete, including opportunities for reflection and group discussion.

Trauma-informed values are woven into this course. It is underpinned by a compassionate approach to supporting your professional development and advocates compassion for children, young people and their families.

Run by:

Written and recorded by the speech and language therapy team.

Suitable for:

This course has been developed for everyone who works with children and young people of all ages in the education, health and care sectors.

It is suitable for (but not exclusive to):

- Senior leaders and managers
- SENCOs and Lead Teachers
- Class/EY Teachers
- School support staff
- Early Years practitioners
- Alternative Provision staff
- CAMHS inpatient service staff
- Children's residential home staff

Word Aware:

Teaching vocabulary, across the day, across the curriculum

Date & Time

Tuesday 3rd March 2026
9:00am - 16:00pm

Target Audience

Early Years and School Staff
(Leadership recommended)

Access

To book a place on this course use the QR code below



<https://forms.office.com/e/qUnq5mrfdN>

Location

Glenfield Parish Council
Park House
Stamford Street
Leicester
LE3 8DL

Tier of Training:

Universal

About the course

Word Aware is a structured whole-school framework for promoting the vocabulary development of all children. It is of particular value to pupils who start school at a disadvantage. The course is a fast-paced, fun and interactive workshop style day. You will explore how vocabulary develops and leave the day with lots of practical ideas on how to develop vocabulary in your school.

There is an option for Early Years Leads and SEND Support staff, who have attended the whole day, to attend a follow-up (online) session focusing on Word Aware in the Early Years.

Your school will need copies of the relevant "Word Aware" books in order to access and download the resources as linked below:

- Parsons, S. & Branagan, A. (2021); Word Aware 1: Teaching vocabulary across the day, across the curriculum (2nd Edition). Routledge
- Parsons, S. & Branagan, A. (2016); Word Aware 2: Teaching Vocabulary in the Early Years. Routledge.

Suitable for:

This course is predominantly targeted at the primary school workforce (EYFS and National Curriculum) but also has wide application for secondary schools. It is highly recommended for Designated Specialist Provisions specialising in speech, language and communication (both primary and secondary).

We strongly recommend that at least one attendee from your school or provision is a Senior Leader, a SENCO or Curriculum Lead who can drive the approach forward, strategically. Attending in pairs can help with planning and implementing the approach;

- Senior leaders
- SENCOs and Lead Teachers
- Speech, Language and Communication Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) Leads
- Class Teachers
- School support staff

Run by:

Accredited wordaware trainer.

+ Early Years Twilight

Date & Time

Target Audience

Practitioners who have attended full day

Location

Online via MSTeams

Access

Confirmation of place will be given following attendance at initial training.

Elklan (0-3)

This course is run over 3 intensive days within a 10 week period. For accreditation, delegates are expected to submit a short, written learning log weekly online.

Date & Time

Tuesday 20th January 2026
Wednesday 11th February 2026
Wednesday 11th March 2026
9:00am - 16:30pm

Location

Glenfield Parish Council
Park House
Stamford Street
Leicester
LE3 8DL

Access

Please be aware that this course offer will be first come, first served due to anticipated high demand. To book onto this course please use this QR code:

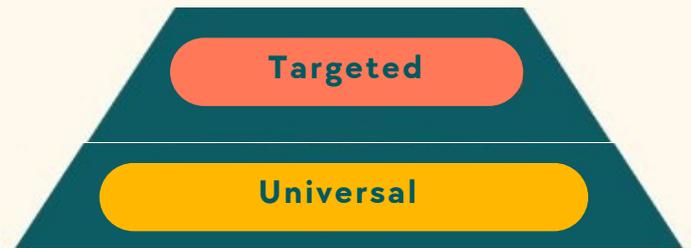
Target Audience

Education Staff



<https://forms.office.com/e/n2XSXWMa0u>

Tier of Training:



About the course

A practical training course for those working with children aged 0-3, providing you with practical advice and strategies which are easy to implement in your early years setting to support the children, parents and families with their:

- Interaction and nonverbal communication
- Listening and attention
- Understanding of language
- Developing vocabulary and spoken language
- Speech development

Accreditation for the first year will be funded by the SENDAP change programme.

Suitable for:

This course is suitable for anyone working in an Education , with children between 0-3 years old. This includes; SENCOs, Class Teachers Teaching / Learning / SEN Support Assistants. SENCOs are welcome to attend to facilitate their role in identifying pupils who need additional support, coordinating interventions, and developing staff training.

Run by:

Accredited ELKLAN trainer - Speech & Language Therapist

Elklan (3-5)

This course is run over 3 intensive days within a 10 week period. For accreditation, delegates are expected to submit a short, written learning log weekly online.

Date, Time & Location

Wednesday 7 th January 2026	NSPCC - 3 Gilmour Close, Leicester, LE4 1ER
Wednesday 11 th February 2026	NSPCC - 3 Gilmour Close, Leicester, LE4 1ER
Wednesday 18 th March 2026	Glenfield Parish Council, Stamford Street, Leicester, LE3 8DL

9:00am - 16:30pm

Access

Please be aware that this course offer will be first come, first served due to anticipated high demand. To book onto this course please use this QR code:

Target Audience

Education Staff



<https://forms.office.com/e/MfaywDKf5G>

Tier of Training:



About the course

A course for those of you working with children aged 3-5 years. It provides information & strategies to develop the communication skills of all young children but especially those with speech, language & communication needs. It links research on early language development with best practice to give you up to date theoretical knowledge and practical tools to promote and extend communication. It will provide practical strategies and innovative ideas wherever you work.

What does this course teach?

- What is communication?
- Communication Friendly Settings, Adult-child interaction and working with families
- Listening, looking and understanding spoken language
- Promoting the development of vocabulary
- Modifying adults' speech to help a child understand language
- The Blank Language Scheme (or Language for Thinking)
- The language journey - Developing expressive language skills
- Play for language
- Supporting children with unclear speech and developing phonological awareness skills
- Management of stammering, sharing information with parents and course reflection

Accreditation for the first year will be funded by the SENDAP change programme.

Suitable for:

This course is suitable for anyone working in an early years setting, with children aged 3-5, including Early Years Practitioners, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants. SENCOs are welcome to attend to facilitate their role in identifying children who need additional support, coordinating interventions, and developing staff training.

Run by:

Speech & Language Therapist

Concept Cat in Small Groups

Date & Time

Tuesday 27th January 2026
13.30pm-3pm

Target Audience

Early Years Settings & School (EYFS) Staff

Access

To access this course please use the QR code:



<https://forms.office.com/e/qTYcqgneUf>

Location

Online via Zoom/MSTeams

Tiers of Training:



About the course

Early vocabulary development impacts on later educational attainment across the curriculum. Concept Cat is a tried and tested universal approach to supporting vocabulary development for all children across a class or setting in the Early Years through stories and play. Developed by the Word Aware/Concept Cat authors for our local ELSEC service, this course explores how to apply the Concept Cat approach in small focus groups to support children with emerging language needs at a targeted level.

This online course provides:

- An overview of how Concept Cat can support children's vocabulary for learning
- Details of how to put focused Concept Cat groups in place alongside universal support
- An understanding of everyone's role in supporting vocabulary development in the Early Years

Linked Resource:

- Branagan, A. & Parsons, S. (2025); Concept Cat: Teaching Concepts in the Early Years. Routledge.

Suitable for:

All staff have a role to play in supporting vocabulary development. This course will help Early Years settings and schools to coordinate and deliver the Concept Cat approach.

- SENCOs / EY SENCOs / SEN Lead Practitioners
- Early Years teachers
- Speech, Language Communication Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) staff
- School support staff (EYFS and SEN Support)
- Early Years practitioners

Run by:

Accredited trainer.

Running a Language Group

Date & Time

Wednesday 28th January 2026
09:00am - 11:30am

OR

Tuesday 12th May 2026
09:30am - 12:00pm

Access

Please be aware that this course offer will be first come, first served due to anticipated high demand. To book onto this course please use the QR code below.



<https://forms.office.com/e/BLupSa0aq2>

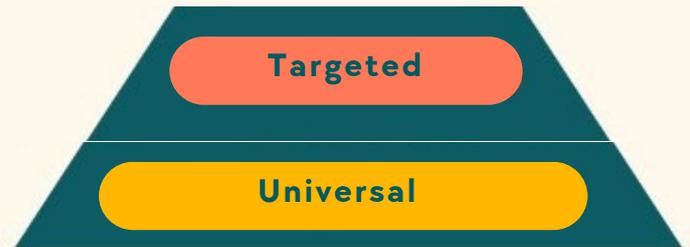
Location

Glenfield Parish Council
Stamford Street
Leicester
LE3 8DL

Target Audience

Early Years Settings & School Staff

Tier of Training:



About the course

This training helps School Support Staff and Early Years Practitioners to confidently plan and run language group interventions to support language development.

We will walk you through every step, from getting the environment right and measuring baseline skills all the way through to planning group sessions, running the group and measuring progress. The session will be particularly useful if you are preparing to implement targeted language and communication interventions such as:

- Early language groups (including ELSEC's own Linking Language and Building Language)
- Vocabulary groups (Including ELSEC's Learning Words: Word Aware 3)
- Narrative or story telling groups (Including ELSEC's Story Telling)
- Social Communication groups

SENCOs and SEN Lead Practitioners are encouraged to attend to facilitate their leadership role in identifying pupils who need additional support, coordinating interventions and supporting staff.

Suitable for:

This course has been developed for School Support Staff and Early Years Practitioners who deliver targeted language interventions (and the SEN Leads who support them).

- School support staff
- New-to-role Speech and Language Designated Specialist Provision (DSP)
- Early Years practitioners
- SENCOs / EY SENCOs / SEN Lead Practitioners

Run by:

Speech and Language Therapists.

Language for Thinking

Date & Time

Tuesday 27th January 2026
9am-12pm

Target Audience

School Support Staff

Access

Please be aware that this course offer will be first come, first served due to anticipated high demand.

To book onto this course please use this QR code:



<https://forms.office.com/e/gtv4Dp2nBR>

Location

Online via MS Teams

Tier of Training:

Targeted

About the course

- A practical training session to show school support staff how to run a 'Language for Thinking' small group intervention for pupils with language and literacy needs (age 4-11).
- Teachers can also use Language for Thinking with whole classes as the basis of a literacy lesson (age 4-7).
- A significant proportion of children find it difficult to understand the complex questions of the classroom. They may be able to understand simple and direct language, but when required to 'read between the lines' they struggle. Language for Thinking helps develop children's language from the 'here and now' to the 'how and why' (verbal reasoning).
- You will leave the workshop with a clear idea of how to use this intervention to support the children and young people you work with.
- Your school will need a copy of the "Language for Thinking" book in order to access and download the intervention resources.

Linked Resource:

- Parsons, S. & Branagan, A. (2016); Language for Thinking: A Structured approach for young children: The Colour Edition (2nd Edition). Routledge.

Suitable for:

The course is designed for school support staff who deliver small group language interventions. It can also facilitate SENCOs' intervention planning and teachers' literacy lesson planning.

- School support staff
- SENCOs
- English Leads
- Speech and Language Designated Specialist Provision (DSP)
- Class Teachers

Run by:

Accredited trainer.

Useful Links

Speech, Language and Communication Toolkits

For Education Settings:

- Information about identifying communication needs, including screening tools.
- Universal advice for creating a communication friendly environment.
- Advice, signposting and activities for delivering targeted support for all areas of communication.
- Guidance for seeking specialist support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service and how to write a referral.



Early Years Toolkit- for children aged 0-5.

<https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/leicestershire/services/specialist-support/speech-language-and-communication-toolkit-for-early-years-settings/>



School Aged Toolkit- for children aged 4-11.

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/grownups/healthy-communication/speech-language-and-communication-toolkit-for-school-aged-children/>

For Parents and Carers:

- Advice for supporting language development from 0-11.
- Information about the different areas of speech, language and communication and how they develop.
- Information about how speech, language and communication can be impacted by factors such as screen time and dummy use.
- Signposting to resources, organisations and charities.
- Animations to deliver key messages.



Parent/ Carer Toolkit- for children aged 0-11.

<https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/grownups/healthy-communication/speech-language-and-communication-toolkit-for-parents/>

Animations

To learn more about speech, language and communication, please watch our series of animations. Each video is less than 2 minutes.

An Introduction to Speech, Language and Communication

What is speech, language and communication?



The Communication Tree



The Different Areas of Communication

Understanding Language



Speech



Stammering



Top Tips

Teaching and Pre-Teaching Vocabulary



Using Visual Supports



How to Run an Intervention Group



Other Useful Information

Screen Time



Moving to Secondary School



Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC)

2025 Training Brochure

For early years staff, school staff, and parents/carers
in Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

