

Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC)



2026/27 Training Brochure

For early years settings, schools and services across
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.



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Training Approach

The SEND and AP Change Programme have funded the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) pathway across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). This has enabled the Children's Speech and Language Therapy Team and local authority partners to offer robust training programmes for practitioners and education partners **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.

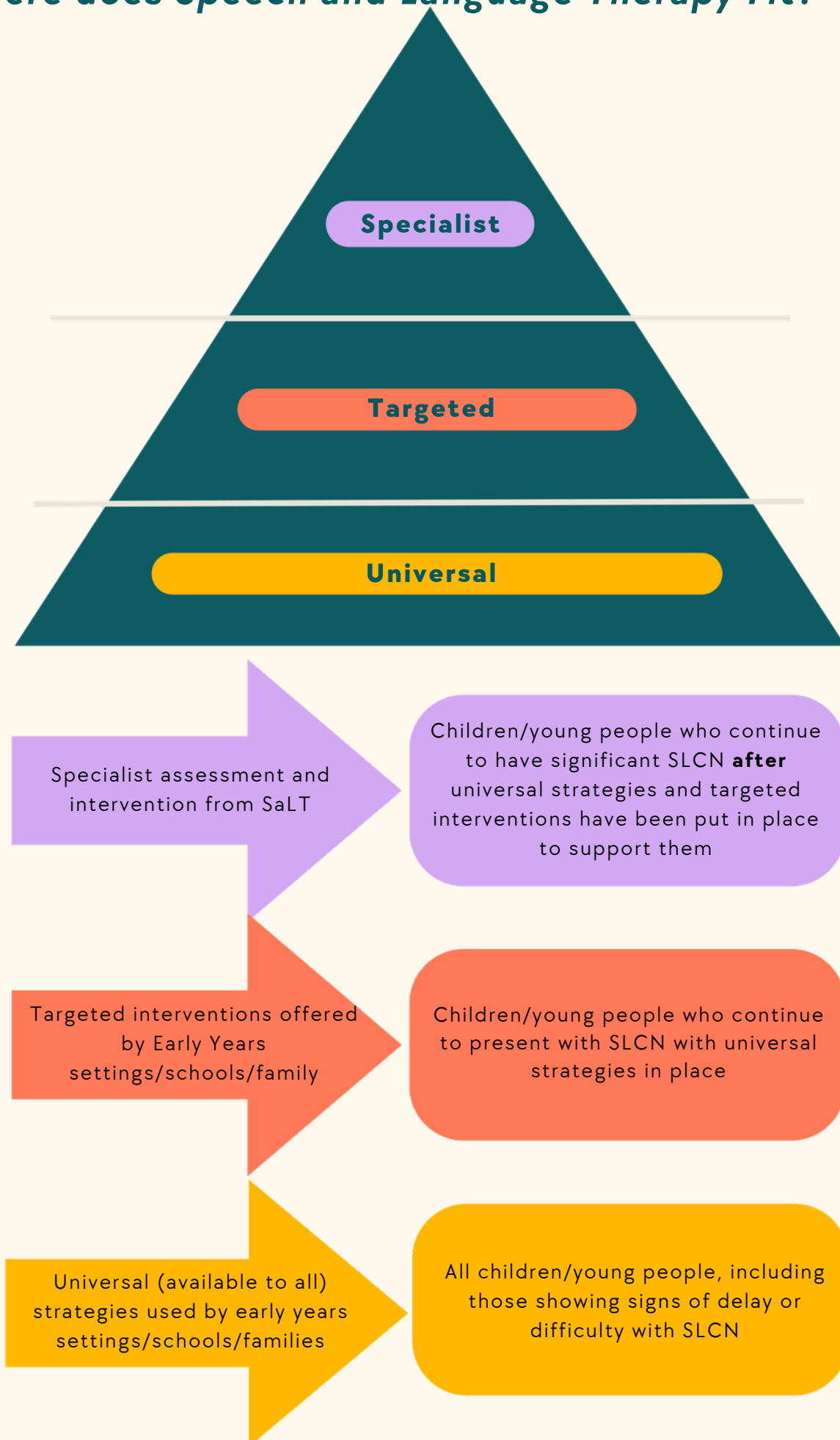
Our Speech and Language Therapy service works within the context of a *balanced system*, which is a nationally recognised framework for supporting speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) for all children and young people. Its essence is in collaborative working, where all adults working with 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 and school practitioners to implement environmental approaches and deliver targeted intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people's SLC across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

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 that has been developed in collaboration with the ELSEC speech and language therapy team and local authority colleagues across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. These are available in a range of formats.

The Balanced System Model: *Where does Speech and Language Therapy Fit?*



Booking and Training Guidelines

Our 2026-2027 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 can connect with you more successfully if we can see you (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

Access anytime. Use the QR code/link and access code below:



[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Access code:

BASICS

Target Audience

Early Years & School Staff

Location

Recorded online training
[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Duration

40 minutes

Tier of Training:



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 on 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

Communication Friendly Environments: Everyone's Included

Access

Access anytime. Use the QR code/link and access codes below:



[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Full Course Access Code:
Available Autumn 2026

Early Years Access Code:
CFE-EY123

Target Audience

Whole schools and settings
Services for children and young people

Location

Recorded online training
[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Duration

Full Course: 4+ hours
Early Years: 45-60 minutes

Tier of Training:



About these courses:

This course duo is unique in its integrated approach to helping you develop your universal provision for ALL children. The content has been created collaboratively by specialists from our local NHS service and our local authorities of Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland.

Designed for whole team, in-service training, these courses combine taught content and groupwork to promote shared reflection and planning.

Your team will reflect on how communication-friendly environments can maximise inclusion for ALL children. Together you will explore how to:

- Optimise communication and learning by adaptating physical spaces
- Create opportunities for good quality communication
- Cultivate a compassionate, multi-sensory and vocabulary-rich approach
- Adopt universal strategies to promote high quality interactions.

There are two routes through the training:

Option 1: The full course (Available Autumn 2026)

The full course provides an INSET day (or 4 staff meetings) for schools and other services for children and young people. The format is ideal for:

- Initiating or re-invigorating reflection on your universal SEND provision
- Sharing and celebrating your existing good practice
- A SEND provision 'starter kit' for early career practitioners AND a practical 'knowledge refresher' for experienced practitioners and leaders
- Supporting leaders to plan and sustain an inclusive learning environment

Option 2: The Early Years course

A quick-access session to suit the needs of early years settings.

Trauma informed values are woven into these courses. They are underpinned by a compassionate approach to supporting your professional development and advocate compassion for children, young people and their families.

Suitable for:

This training 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
- Support staff
- Early Years practitioners
- Alternative Provision staff
- CAMHS inpatient teams
- Children's residential teams

Run by:

Created and recorded by the children's speech and language therapy team in collaboration with specialist teachers across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Running a Language Group

Date & Time

Tuesday 15th September 2026
9.30am-12pm

Target Audience

School / Early Years Support Staff
SEN Leads

Tier of Training:

Access

Booking is required.
Please use the QR code
or link below.



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

Location

Glenfield Parish Council
Stamford Street
Leicester
LE3 8DL



About the course

This training will help School Support Staff and Early Years Practitioners to confidently plan and run language group interventions to support children's 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. We highlight a range of available language interventions, who they will help and how to find out more. The session will be particularly useful if you are preparing to run targeted language and communication interventions such as:

- Early language interventions (including ELSEC's own Linking Language and Building Language)
- Vocabulary groups (Including Word Aware 3 or Concept Cat focus groups)
- Structured language groups (such as Colourful Semantics or Language for Thinking)
- Narrative language groups (Including ELSEC's 'Story Telling' intervention)
- 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 staff in Specialist SLCN Provisions
- Early Years practitioners
- SENCOs / EY SENCOs / SEN Lead Practitioners

Run by:

Speech and Language Therapists.

Concept Cat in Small Groups

Date & Time

Tuesday 29th September 2026
1.30pm-3.00pm

Target Audience

Early Years Settings
School (EYFS/SEND) Teams

Tiers of Training:

Access

Booking is required.
Please use the QR code
or link below:



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

Location

Online - MS Teams



About the course

Concept Cat is an inclusive and evidence-based approach to support the vocabulary development of ALL children across an Early Years setting or class. It teaches important early concept vocabulary through stories, songs and play-based learning. This training session was developed and adapted by the Concept Cat authors for our local ELSEC service. You will explore how to apply the Concept Cat approach in small focus groups (alongside the whole class approach) to provide extra help for children with identified language needs. Concept Cat is an Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) Promising Programme.

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:

- Concept Cat: Teaching Concepts in the Early Years (2025) By Anna Branagan & Stephen Parsons

Suitable for:

All staff have a role to play in supporting vocabulary development so it is advisable for staff from the same setting to attend together (e.g. SENCO and member of support staff). This course will help Early Years settings and schools to coordinate and deliver the Concept Cat approach.

- SENCOs / EY SENCOs / SEND Lead practitioners
- Early Years teachers
- Early Years practitioners
- School support staff (EYFS and SEND Support)

Run by:

Accredited trainer.

Language for Thinking

Date & Time

Tuesday 29th September 2026
9.00am-12pm

Target Audience

School Support Staff & SENCOs

Tier of Training:

Access

Booking is required.
Please use the QR code
or link below.



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

Location

Online - MSTeams



About the course

- A practical training session to show school support staff how to run the '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 training with a clear idea of how to use this intervention to support the children and young people you work with.
- Your school will need the "Language for Thinking" book in order to access and download the intervention resources.

Linked Resource:

Language for Thinking: A Structured approach for young children (2016) By Stephen Parsons & Anna Branagan

Suitable for:

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

- School support staff
- SENCOs
- English Leads
- Class Teachers
- Specialist SLCN Provision staff

Run by:

Accredited trainer.

Colourful Semantics

Access

Access anytime. Use the QR code/link and access code below:



[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Access code:
CS123

Target Audience

Early Years & School Staff

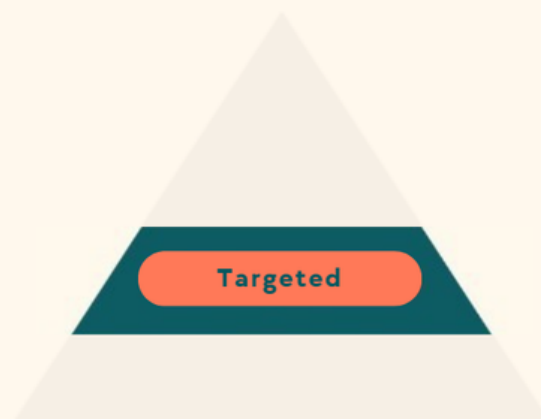
Location

Recorded online training via
[Guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk](https://guidance.leicspart.nhs.uk)

Duration

1 hour in total
(Recommendation:
access in small steps)

Tier of Training:



About the course

A guide to using Colourful Semantics to extend children's language. This can be applied in small group and individual interventions for targeted pupils and also within whole-class teaching to maximise inclusion of children with language and communication needs.

This training will provide you with step-by-step, practical guidance to get started. It links directly with an affordable resource so you can access session plans for immediate implementation. Tools are provided to support you with monitoring and evaluating pupil progress.

The training is delivered in two sections to cover:

- An Introduction to Colourful Semantics
- Next Steps in Colourful Semantics

The course content is recorded. Each step can be accessed again and again at your convenience to help you to move through the intervention one step at a time.

Linked Resource:

Colourful Semantics: A Resource for Developing Children's Spoken and Written Language Skills (2020) By NHS Forth Valley

Run by:

Written and recorded by the speech and language therapy team.

Suitable for:

This course is suitable for school staff using Colourful Semantics either as a targeted intervention or a whole class teaching tool.

- SENCOs
- English Leads
- Specialist SLCN Provision staff
- Class Teachers
- School support staff

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

