

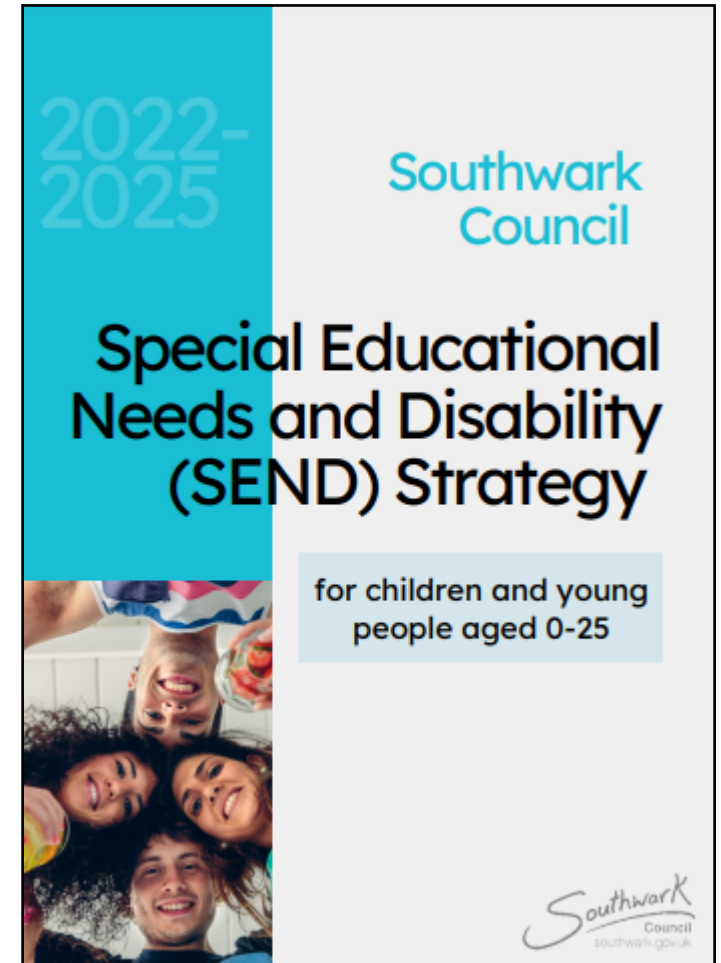
# Early Intervention in SEND Update

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission –  
4 September 2024



# Early Intervention in SEND

- Research evidence tells us very clearly that early intervention to support young children with special educational needs and disabilities **can fundamentally alter their developmental trajectory and reduce the gap in outcomes** between them and their peers without additional needs.
- Early intervention for children with SEND and their parents and carers can be delivered across many areas including, early years settings, schools, health services and directly with parents and carers. Delivering early identification, and evidence-based interventions that help improve outcomes, including behavioural and emotional skills, social-emotional skills (such as the ability to socialise with peers) as well as cognitive skills (such as reading skills).
- Southwark Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy sets out four priorities for improving outcomes for our children and young people with SEND. The second priority of the strategy is the **provision of more timely, high-quality identification and provision.**



# Our developing approaches

Our families have told us that our early intervention offer in SEND needs to be multifaceted and responsive to the dynamic nature of needs in our Borough. To meet that challenge from our families we are mobilising a range of initiatives to increase our offer locally, this includes:

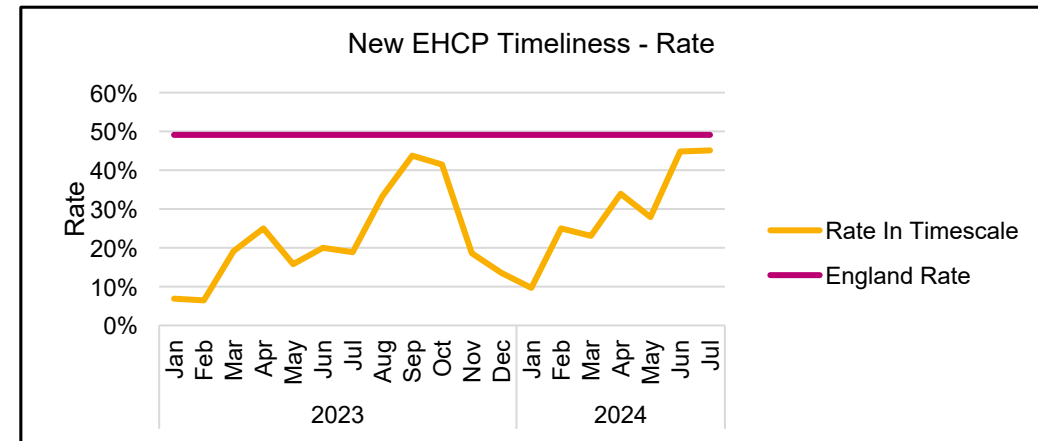
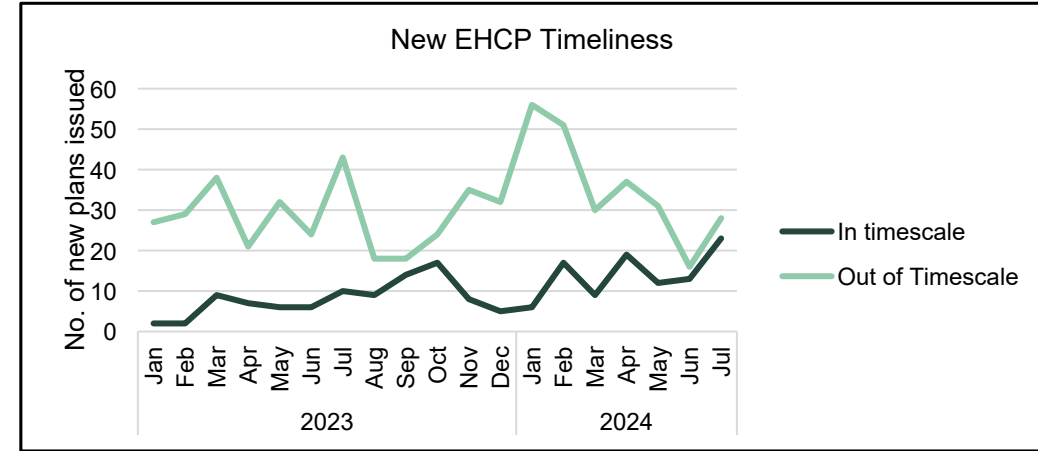
- Our **Communication and Social Interaction Pilot**. Up to 15 group and individual programmes of support to work with young people in KS1 who have identified speech and language and communication and require additional and targeted intervention to support access to mainstream education and reduce escalation to an EHC plan.
- A **Specialist Resources Provision at The Grove Nursery**. 12 part time places and 4 supported places for children with significant and complex social communication needs and or significant learning needs. Which means children's needs can be supported sooner and appropriate pathways identified.
- Creating a new **multi-agency transition panel** to promote even earlier planning and wraparound support for children with additional needs moving from primary to secondary.
- Building a truly **whole system approach** that recognises the importance of early language and communication development, and investing in support to parents to create a home environment that helps stimulate their children's critical early development.

# SENDIF Funding

- The Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) is a provision for 3 and 4 years olds with SEND whose parents/carers are taking up the free entitlement to a pre-school place.
- The fund is to support providers to put in place specialist resources or enhanced staffing so that those children with additional support needs can be successfully included in settings. SENDIF is a key part of meeting the early needs of children with SEND and getting inclusive provision right for them to prevent escalation of their needs.
- For the Summer Term 2023-24 there were approximately 140 children being provided additional support through SENDIF at 59 different nurseries and child care settings.
- For the academic year 2024-25 the Council has increased the overall SENDIF budget by 147% from £250k to £680k. With the average annual SENDIF support contribution being approximately £3,000k per child, the additional budget allocation should be able to support an extra 140 children per year to be included in child care settings.

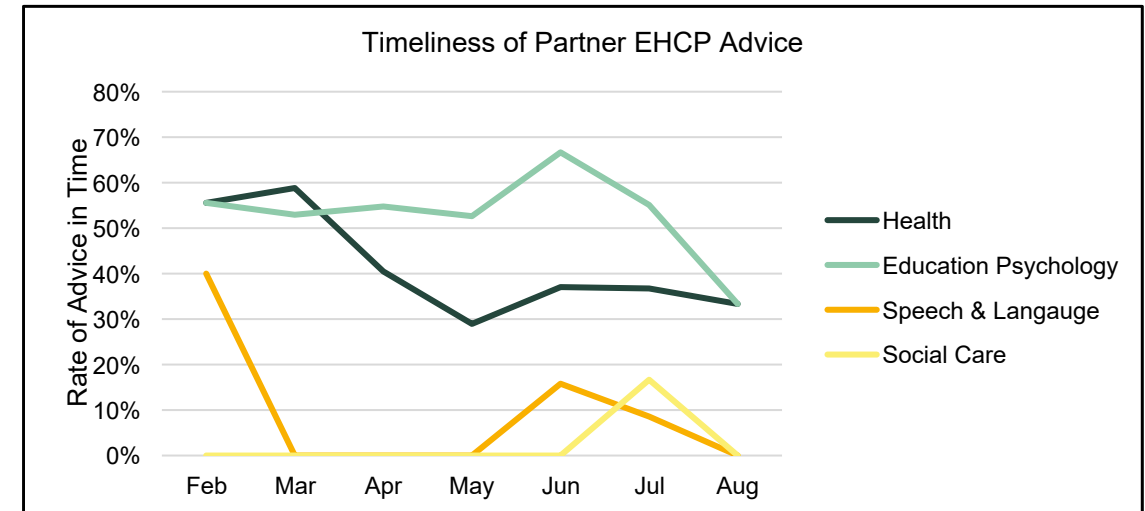
# EHCP Timeliness

- Over the past year significant efforts and investment has been delivered to clear a backlog of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments the bulk of the backlog was cleared between November to February.
- Due to the efforts to clear the backlog the average timeliness of plans being issue dropped significantly reaching a low of 10% in January 2024.
- Subsequent to the work to clear the backlog timeliness in plans being issued within the statutory 20-week period has consistently increased. As at the end of July 2024 the rate of plans issued within the expected timescales has reached 45%, marginally below the national average of 49%.
- Reporting as of July 2024 shows a small continuing backlog in assessments (8%) down from over 30% in previous months. Close performance monitoring and management oversight is in place to ensure timely resolution and progress of completion of all overdue assessments



# EHCP Process Improvement

- A major contributory factor in delivering timely EHCPs continues to be the timeliness of partnership advice to contribute to needs assessments. The new SEND Strategic Partnership Board has taken the resolution of multi-agency timeliness issues as a key priority and will be receiving routine performance reporting on this issue and offering challenge to partners to ensure improvements are delivered.
- Within the service new data visualisation performance tools have been created using the Power BI tool, and are due to go live from September. These will give managers live oversight of EHCP performance at a child and worker level and increase the capacity for proactive performance management to drive necessary improvement.
- In the last quarter work has also been undertaken to mobilise stronger co-production of better working practices for the delivery of EHCPs with our schools and parents and carers. 6 in-person workshops, supported by an online consultation, were completed to review all of our EHCP documentation and ensure they are fit for purpose and meet best practice requirements. Initial recommendations from these development sessions are being drafted and will be further reviewed by a second round of participation and co-production with parents and also young people in the autumn term before implementation of process changes in commenced.



# Early Intervention in SEND – Speech, Language & Communication

# Early Language & Home Learning Environment

Wendy Heller - Service Development Manager: Early Years & Childcare





The home is the single most significant environmental factor in enabling children to develop the trust, attitude and skills that will help them to learn and engage positively with the world. A good home learning environment provides the love, security, stimulation, encouragement and opportunities that help children to flourish - a process that begins at birth, if not before.

Roberts, 2009



# Early Words Together at 3 and 4

The National Literacy Trust's programme 'Early Words Together' brings early years practitioners, parents and their young children together to engage in lots of fun learning activities based around story books which can be shared in the home to support their child's speech, language and communication (SLC) development.



# The delivery

**Session 1:** Supporting talk through imaginative play

**Session 2:** Singing songs and rhymes

**Session 3:** Sharing books and stories

**Session 4:** Mark-making

**Session 5:** Getting out and about

**Session 6:** Visiting the library and celebration

.



# The impact



**A Big red bus**



**'Just a scribble'**

# Making it REAL

Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) is an award-winning intervention programme that develops children's early literacy by helping parents create a positive early 'Home Learning Environment'.



# The training

Making it REAL training and projects are designed to enable practitioners to use the REAL evidence-based approach to support the **early Home Learning Environment**: This has been shown to have a powerful impact on children's outcomes and on family literacy practice



# The delivery

REAL: The **ORIM Framework**, home visits and family literacy events

		EARLY LITERACY STRANDS			
		Env. Print	Books	Writing	Oral language
<b>FAMILIES PROVIDE</b>	<u>O</u> pportunities				
	<u>R</u> ecognition				
	<u>I</u> nteraction				
	<u>M</u> odel				



# Wellcomm

- As part of our **SLC pathway of support**, the early identification of any speech and language difficulty or delay for our young children is key to their overall development. It is therefore essential to ensure that all early years practitioners have a good awareness of what represents appropriate development and have access to programmes that assist them to support children's language.
- **Wellcomm is a speech and language toolkit** that is designed to assess children's speech and language skills. It is available to early years practitioners working with children from 6 months to 6 years (Early years), and 6 years to 11 years (Primary).



- Our **early years practitioners, in both maintained and PVI settings** play a crucial role in identifying children with potential language difficulties and to offer a range of customised intervention activities to help support their language development.
- To date, we have purchased **30 Wellcomm toolkits** and worked with our partners in SLT to train 30 Early Years practitioners from different early years settings to use the toolkits and monitor children's progress.
- The majority of these settings have either been training in **EWT and / or Making it REAL.**

# Identifying Early Communication Needs - The Evelina London targeted nursery offer

Lindsay McLelland -  
Head of Therapies &  
Joint Head of Speech & Language  
Therapy

Cathy Johnston - Speech &  
Language Therapist - Early Years &  
Community



# Darcie's Story: A Video about Developmental Language Disorder



# Speech, language and communication needs: The scale of the problem

## Prevalence of SLCN in the UK:



**In some areas of deprivation, more than 50% of children start school with SLCN**



**10% of all children have long-term SLCN.**

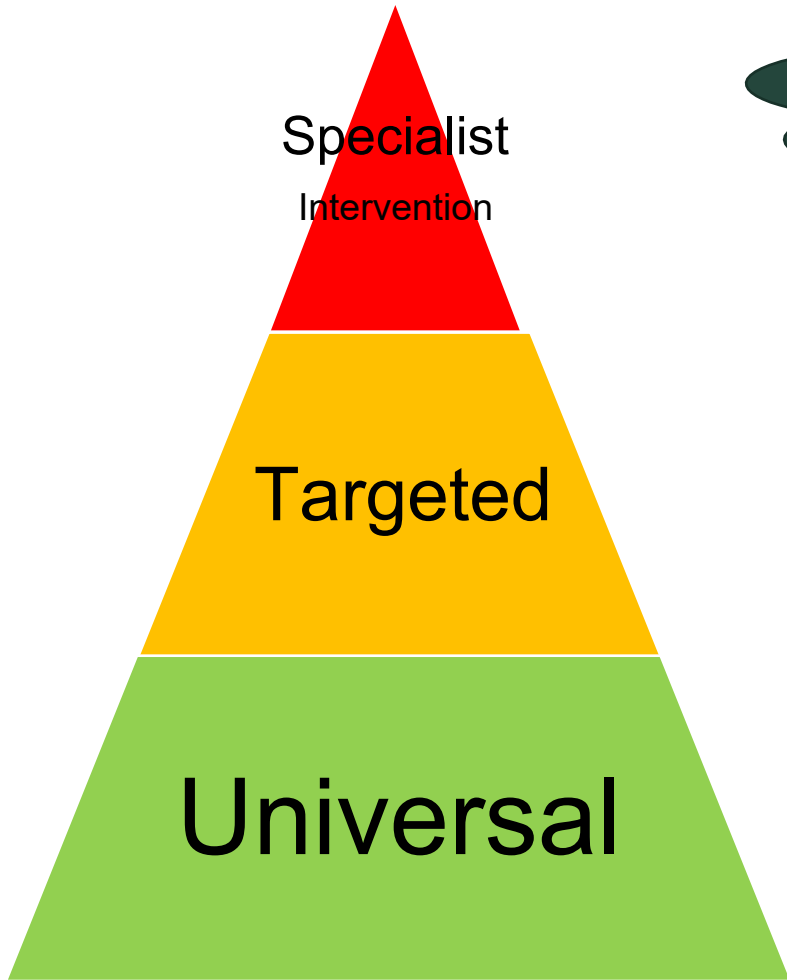


**7.56% of all children have a Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)**



**1% of all children have severe and complex SLCN**

# Context of Evelina SLT universal & targeted offer 0-5 years



Partnership working between health and local authorities to support SLCN pathway development for the early years

Increase **earlier identification of SLCN**  
referred to specialist SLT or signposted to targeted SLT support

Children's workforce are **skilled & confident to support SLCN** needs for all children in their setting to ensure inclusive practice

**Parents & practitioners** know key messages about supporting Speech Language & Communication development.

# Why is an additional screening tool needed?

- Screening has been recommended by PHE & DfE:
  - Detect delays
  - Improve child outcomes
  - Encourage parental involvement
- Children with mild-moderate language delay can easily be missed by parents, EYs practitioners (e.g. nursery staff) and health professionals unless a robust, evidence-based screening tool is used.
- Consistent identification of children who requiring either targeted or specialist SLT support needs practitioners across education (e.g. CC's / nurseries) and health (e.g. HV's) be using a consistent & sensitive, universal screening tool.

**The WellComm allows us to do exactly that!**

# The WellComm: What is it?

Screening tool - developed by Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Hospital Trust's SLTs service in 2010

- Split into 9 age stages: 6 months to 6 years
- 10 questions plus narrative at each stage
- Quick & easy to administer (10-20 minutes)
- Provides a RAG rating of child's language skills & thus clear pathway for practitioners to follow
- Resources and activities to specifically target areas of need and share with parents or practitioners



# The WellComm: RAG rating



GREEN - Language skills are age appropriate:

- Share appropriate universal health promotion advice and activities

AMBER - Language skills are delayed:

Continue the screening using the score sheet from the age band below until the child receives a GREEN score.

- Set up targeted support using activities/advice from The Big Book of Ideas (start with the section immediately above the section where a child scored green)
- Repeat screen in 3 months
- Signpost to targeted activities in SLC service/ EY setting (e.g. Chattertime)

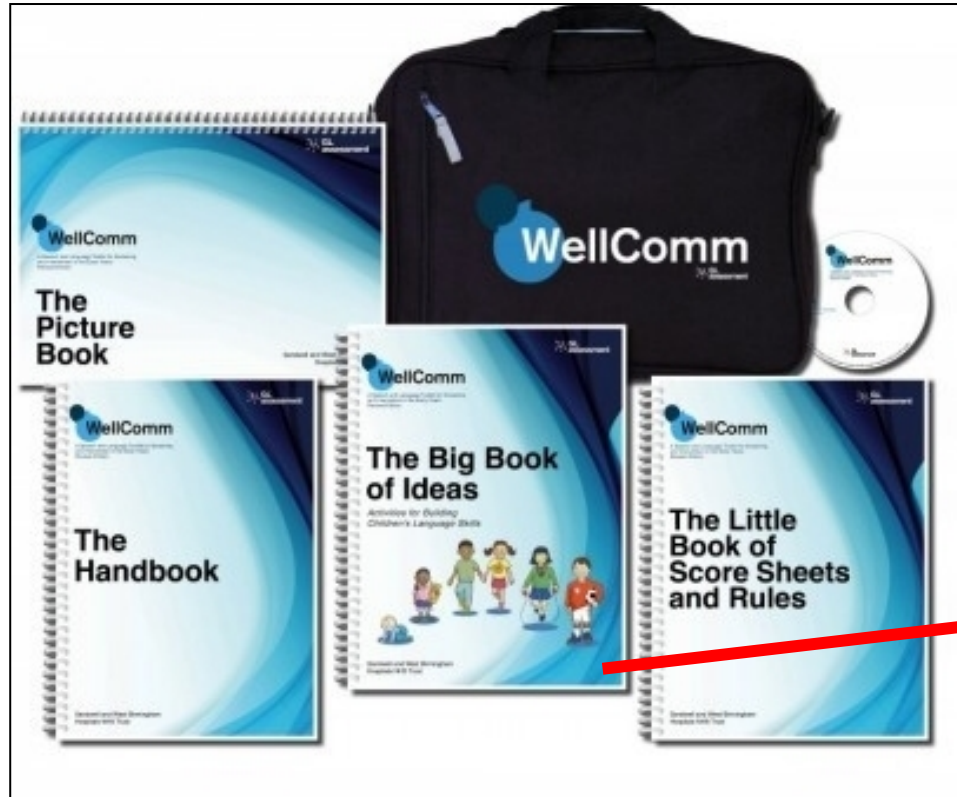
RED - Language skills are significantly delayed:

**\*Complete immediate referral to SLT team\***

- Set up support as above for Amber + appropriate targeted/ SEN support local offer



# The WellComm: Big Book of Ideas



## Section 4.2

### Understanding simple describing words (adjectives) in sentences



#### Why is this important?

Adjectives are describing words that tell us a bit more about the object or item referred to (e.g. 'wet hands', 'dirty shoes').

#### What to do

- Gather together some pairs of pictures. One of the pictures should show the item in a different state (e.g. 'dirty', 'happy', 'wet', 'broken', 'big'). The other picture should show the object in its 'normal' state.
- Put out two pairs (e.g. 'happy' girl and 'normal' girl; 'broken' cup and 'normal' cup).
- Ask the child to point to 'broken cup'.
- If this is successful, move onto other picture sets.

#### Step up



- Look through early story books. Ask the child to point to things (such as the 'broken chair' in Goldilocks). Remember to make sure there is always a second item in the pictures that is not 'broken'/'dirty'/'happy' because if there is only one object, for example, one chair in 'Goldilocks', then the child may not have understood the adjective 'broken' but just the object 'chair'.
- Encourage the child to use some adjectives to describe everyday activities (e.g. when washing – 'wet hands/face'; when playing in the garden 'dirty shoes/ball').
- Introduce the 'opposite' adjective as being 'not happy', 'not wet'. Can the child find the object that is 'wet' and the object that is 'not wet'?

#### Step down

- Use real objects (e.g. 'big' teddy and 'normal-sized' teddy; 'dirty' glove and 'not dirty' glove).
- Use gestures/signs alongside the describing word (adjective) and object name.
- Concentrate on one adjective to begin with (e.g. find lots of things that are 'wet'

- or 'dirty').
- Don't refer to the other item as being 'not dirty' or 'clean' as we are not expecting the child to differentiate between the adjectives at this stage (you can try this when 'stepping up').



# WellComm: Our experience & use in early years

## LEAP – Lambeth Early Action Partnership

- Supporting EY PVI/Maintained settings to identify need to then give specific & targeted support to staff in the settings

## Children's Centres as part of U&T input

- CC staff trained across both boroughs to screen families as they are accessing support and then signpost to sessions available in the boroughs (e.g SLT supported Chattertimes or referral)

Training for nurseries involved in the Early Words Together (EWT) programme in Southwark

Introduction of the WellComm alongside ASQ-3 by Child development workers (CDWs) & HVs at the 2 year developmental check to support early identification of language needs

## **Next Steps:**

Funding to support use of WellComm & modelling/co-delivering identified targeted interventions through an SLT delivered, targeted nursery service into early years settings across both boroughs

# WellComm: Our experience & use in early years

## Identification

WellComm Screening completed with children under 5 years in Southwark & Lambeth

## Screening & actions

WellComm RAG rating defines next steps

## Support/Intervention

### HV screen WellComm + ASQ3

24 months for generic HV pathway (earlier for Early Intervention HV)

**GREEN**  
WellComm  
screen

- Stay & Play sessions
- EY setting trained to support SLC development at universal level

WellComm used as children commence in EY settings (PVI & maintained settings)

**AMBER**  
WellComm  
screen

- Signposting to weekly drop-in sessions in Children's Centres
- Targeted groups & approaches used by EY settings
- Big book of ideas shared with parents

WellComm used as families access Children's centres

**RED**  
WellComm  
Screen

- Referral to SLT specialist service (Evelina SLT)
- Signposting to Stay & Play groups with relevant SEN focus in community settings (local offer)
- EY settings implementing intervention > training
- Big book of ideas shared with parents

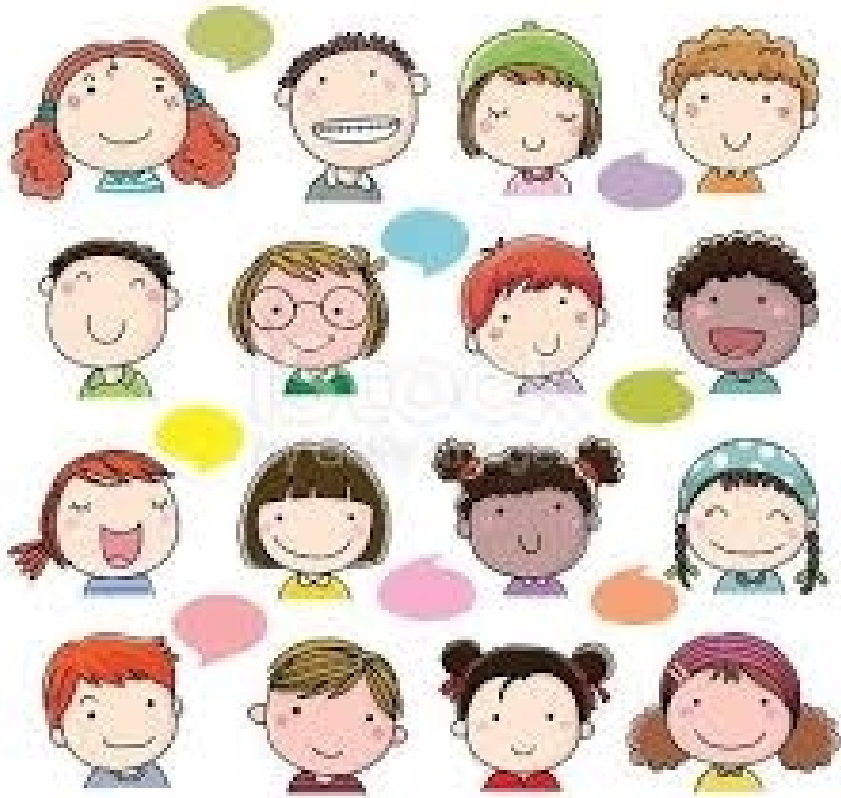
Child Under 5

# The WellComm in Action: Local examples

“Initially the WellComm tool was daunting but over time the programme has shown to be very helpful with identifying children who may need support. I have seen children score in the white area of the ASQ scoring 50-60/60 but scoring amber on the WellComm. These children would have potentially been missed without the WellComm tool. The time it takes to complete this section of our reviews have also been manageable. It takes less than 10 minutes if the child scores within the green but slightly longer for amber/red. The more I have been practicing this, the more confident and quicker I have felt the process has been with the exception of children who require more time/support. Finally, liaising with the SALT team has been very helpful with understanding the new tool and I am very grateful for the support we have been given with our new addition to the health reviews.”

**Child development worker in the HV team**

# The WellComm



1. Evidenced robust screening tool – identifying the children who are currently ‘missing’ from our caseloads & referrals
2. Ease of delivery & concrete actions and ‘next steps’ for practitioners to follow
3. Guided the training and support that we could then offer into the settings we were supporting
4. Clear rationale to support referral to the service to share with families
5. Can then monitor progress and changes at an individual and cohort level
6. Supports early identification & intervention

# Evelina Community SLT EY&C specialist, targeted & universal service

<b>Specialist</b>	<b>Assessment &amp; Intervention</b>	Children Referred to SLT - Receive specialist assessment and intervention, as clinically indicated, in their local 'cluster'/via central offer: 6 geographical 'clusters':1) Elephant & Castle, 2) Bermondsey & Rotherhithe, 3) Camberwell & Peckham, 4) Clapham & Brixton, 5) Streatham, 6) West Norwood & Dulwich 1;1 & group – some delivered through the local cluster and others in a central offer* (*PACT; MTW; ITTT)
<b>Targeted</b>	<b>Drop-In Advice Sessions</b> (virtual/ F2F)	<b>Drop-in sessions</b> (F2F) in Children's Centres/community groups/libraries – 10 sessions per month <b>Virtual Drop ins</b> - scheduled as requested by parents
	<b>Chattertimes</b> (Face-to-face)	<b>Chattertimes</b> in Children's Centres – 11 sessions a week Stay & Play with focus on SLC development through adult-child interaction strategies
	<b>SENdsational/ Chattertime Plus Groups</b>	Supporting CC/EY staff to deliver stay & play sessions with a SEND and communication focus (largely social comm), <b>led by Children's Centre staff and supported by SLT</b> – 3 sessions a week
	<b>Targeted Nursery offer</b>	<b>New targeted service commencing 2024-25 Support EY settings (PVI/maintained) in early identification and delivery of quality targeted interventions</b> to support SLC development Training and on-site co-delivery /coaching
<b>Universal</b>	<b>Workforce Development:</b>	<b>Evelina Communication Friendly Award:</b> Use of an audit tool to identify strengths and gaps in setting as a starting place for helping EY settings/Children's centres to demonstrate the impact of SLT training and how they are supporting SLCN  <b>WellComm training:</b> to support early identification/input– in funded settings and to HV team
	<b>Health Promotion with users:</b> Talk & Play Every Day key messages Tiny Happy People BBC campaign	<b>SLT attendance at community groups or settings – as requested/agreed, dependent on capacity</b> Resources to share with parents at health and educational settings: <b>Talk &amp; Play Everyday:</b> <a href="#">Community speech and language therapy advice   Evelina London</a>  <b>BBC:</b> <a href="#">Children's language development and parenting advice - BBC Tiny Happy People</a>

Questions?

