



As the February chill lingers, here's the latest speech and language news to keep you informed and inspired!

With a wealth of resources, insights, and upcoming events, there's plenty to help you stay motivated. So, grab a hot drink, settle in, and read on for everything you need to keep the momentum going as we head towards spring!

Highlights include:

- Upcoming events and where to catch us next
- A round up of SLCN news articles
- The latest edition of *The Link Primary* magazine
- What's new for **The Link Community** members

The Speech & Language Link team are out and about!

The Speech & Language Link team was thrilled to join an incredible group of exhibitors and speakers at the very first **Tes SEND Show North**.

We also had a fantastic time connecting with everyone at **SENSible24** in Nottingham and the **HFL event** in Hatfield. At the **SENSible SENCO** event, we were thrilled to present a lucky winner with a one-year subscription to one of our packages as a prize.

At all the events, the presentations were inspiring and the delegates were highly engaged. We're already looking forward to next year!

If you missed us at these events, don't worry! You can catch up with us at the **Language Matters Conference in Lincoln on 5th March**.



(Abigail Hawkins, SENSible SENCo and Nancy Hamling, Speech & Language Link)

Speech and Language News

What is speech and language therapy? Hear from the RCSLT in their new video.

[Read more →](#)

Scottish schools participate in the RCSLT joke telling competition to highlight the importance of communication.

[Read more →](#)

There is a breakdown in communication and empathy when it is assumed that a neurotypical way is 'right'. How to bridge the gap between autistic and non-autistic individuals.

[Read more →](#)

Application deadline approaching for "Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship Level 3".

[Read more →](#)

Expert warns pre-school children's speech and language development is in 'steady decline' due to excessive screen time.

[Read more →](#)

Young children can learn new words by recognising subtle grammatical hints in sentences new research suggests.

[Read more →](#)

Labour minister agrees to meet Mikey Ackers regarding failing speech and language therapy provision.

[Read more →](#)

New DLD video from RADLD - *Why is language important for mental health?*

[Read more →](#)

An historic day for the deaf community in Northern Ireland as the *Sign Languages Bill* takes a step closer to becoming law.

[Read more →](#)

Help Afasic raise funds for children and families affected by DLD.

[Read more →](#)

Headteacher Update Podcast - Managing SEN in the primary school

Speech & Language Link was delighted to join Sara Alston and Eleanor Hodgson on the **Headteacher Update podcast** to share best practices for managing SEN.

Our own Kate Freeman, consultant - speech and language in education, was also part of the discussion. (You may remember her from [The Link Live Speech & Language Day online conference 2024!](#))

In this podcast, the expert panel explores how school leaders can best support their SENCOs and what SENCOs need to thrive in their roles. The discussion wraps up with a focus on two of the most common SEN: autism and speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).



[Listen here](#)

NEW ISSUE!

The Link Primary

Issue 31 in schools this week!

[Access the full Link magazine library here](#)



New for Link Community Members

If you haven't already signed up to our free speech and language resource hub, now's the time. To become a member just register below.

[Join the community here](#)

Latest Podcast

Boost classroom communication with specialist speech and language therapists, Alison and Juliet in their **Talkaways Podcast**.

Episode 2: The Element of Surprise

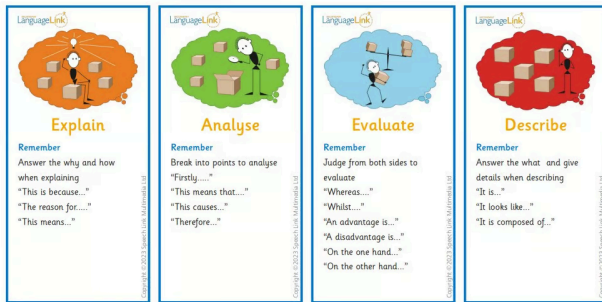
Humans are programmed to find patterns to make sense of the world. When something unusual happens or appears we find it hard to ignore. In this episode Alison and Juliet will be discussing ways to include change or the element of surprise to get the conversation going.



[Listen here](#)

Command words

Use these cards to help students understand these important command words in spoken and written language. They can be used as bookmarks or as a complete set. When introducing a card make sure the student fully understands the word and has opportunities to practise the skills.



These cards are part of **SECONDARY LANGUAGE LINK**
Find out more at www.speechandlanguage.org/forsecondary



Free resource for secondary students from Speech & Language Link

Our *Command Words* resource is designed to help students fully understand key command words in both written and spoken language.

[Download now](#)

Key presentations from The Link Live 2024

Visit The Link Community to watch the newly released on-demand session from Alison Fowle and Juliet Leonard, specialist speech and language therapists:

Rhythm & Rhyme Time in the Pre-school Years.

This session aims to provide an understanding of phonological awareness and explores the impact on children who struggle to develop these key foundational skills. Alison and Juliet also suggest practical ways to support the development of phonological awareness in an EYFS setting.



[Watch today](#)

SAVE THE DATE!

After the overwhelming success of the 2024 event, The Link Live Speech & Language Day will be returning this year, online, on **Thursday 27th November.**

Be sure to join The Link Community to be the first to hear about our 2025 speaker line-up!

[Find out more here](#)



Awareness, Phonics, and Phonetics – Do They All Mean the Same Thing?

In this blog, Emma Price, one of our specialist speech and language therapists, clarifies the differences between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and phonics. She also offers practical activities for supporting children in the classroom.



[Read the SLCN Blog](#)

Take Part in Important Speech and Language Research – and Benefit Your Setting!

In collaboration with the *Cambridge University Psychometrics Centre*, **Speech & Language Link** is conducting two nationwide research projects.

We'd be thrilled for your school to get involved – here's how!



Standardising the assessment for our new nursery package, Little Link

Nursery schools and pre-school settings will be asked to carry out 15 x Little Link assessments (should take 10-15 minutes each) with their children.

As a thank you, settings will receive:

- a summary report of the children assessed
- a **1-hour CPD UK certified training** webinar from one of our speech and language therapists



Enhancing the assessment of Infant Language Link

Schools will carry out 20 x Infant Language Link assessments (should take around 20 minutes each) with children from their P1/ school entry year.

As a thank you, schools will receive:

- a summary report of those children assessed
- a **year's subscription to Infant Language Link (normally £375.00+VAT)**

Schools will also be reimbursed for the time taken for staff to carry out assessments.



Register your interest and find out more [HERE](#)

Join us on Facebook!

With over 3.9k members, our **Speech and Language Facebook group** provides a supportive space for school staff working with SLCN.

It's a place to **ask questions, exchange advice**, and **celebrate weekly wins!** We welcome all educators passionate about making a positive impact on students with SLCN. **Managed by the specialist speech and language therapists** at Speech & Language Link.



[Join Now](#)

6000+ of you now subscribe to the Speech & Language News, thank you so much for being part of our community. Why not forward this email to colleagues you think might also be interested? [They can subscribe directly here.](#)



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