



## First Links: Who is referred?



Children with complex medical and learning needs which are likely to be long term.



Babies from birth – 18 months.



Children aged 18 months - 2years may be accepted for assessment only.



Children must be under the care of a Community Paediatrician and registered with a doctors surgery in Shropshire or Telford and Wrekin.



# First Links: Decision Making Process



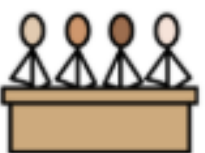
A Health Professional makes a referral.



The referral is triaged by a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT), and either accepted or rejected.



The Paediatrician is informed if the referral is rejected, and an alternative pathway will be recommended.



Children's names are shared at the Child Development Centre (CDC) triage panel for information and to check for onward referrals and actions.



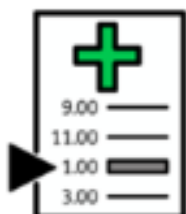
If the child is accepted onto the pathway, a letter is sent out to parents/carers including the dates/times/location of the group.



Transport can be arranged to the group if this is needed.



# First Links: During the Therapy Sessions



An initial appointment is arranged to gather information. This will ideally be in clinic with a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT), a Speech and Language Therapy Assistant (SLTA) or a Specialist Nursery Nurse (SPNN).



The child is invited to attend First Links group. This takes place term time only.



There will be up to 6 children and their parent carers in the group.



The first links team includes SLTs, SPNNs, SALTAs, Occupational Therapists (OTs), Physiotherapists (PTs), Portage, The Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) and the Disabled Children's Team (DCT)



The child has their therapy within the group with SLTs, SLTAs and SPNNs to support the child's development.



Professionals will make observations during the sessions as part of the assessment process.



Individual appointments with the SLT can be made for specific eating, drinking and swallowing advice if needed.



Telford: Child may have a standardised Developmental Assessment with a SPNN when they are aged 27-30 months



Shropshire: Assessment session with Educational Psychology Service (EPS) when they are aged 27-30 months, using a standardised developmental assessment where appropriate.



# First Links: After the Therapy Sessions



The Paediatrician, The First Links team and any other relevant professionals have a video call on Microsoft Teams to share information with parent carers about the child's strengths and next steps.



An Education and Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) will be requested by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) team if it is needed.



A multi-disciplinary report will be finalised and sent out electronically to families (with permission) The report is sent as soon as possible.



The child will no longer attend First Links group sessions. The child will be seen three times yearly by a member of the First Links team at home, in clinic or in their early years setting depending on their need.



Once the child reaches school age, they may be transferred to the speech and language therapist supporting their school or they may be discharged depending on their needs.



The Child Development Centre (CDC), Occupational Therapy (OT) and Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) advice lines are available if parents have further questions.

NOTE: All timeframes provided are estimates.