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Primary Care Trust

# **Languagelink & Speechlink**

**Phase 1 Evaluation Report**

**November 2009  
Keren Mousley**



# Contents

Languagelink and Speechlink packages have been introduced to seventeen Primary Schools within the Wyre Forest locality during the academic year 2008 – 2009. This report outlines the project and provides an end of year evaluation.

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## 1. Executive Summary

Evidence shows that in some schools up to 50% of children are entering school with a speech or language difficulty. It was agreed in 2008 that Worcestershire LA and Wyre Forest SLT Services would set up a project to evaluate the effectiveness of speech and language screening and intervention packages available from Speechlink Multimedia.

Seventeen schools in the Wyre Forest applied to take part in the project, for which funding was available through the LA. All the schools applied for the Languagelink package, and of these 5 also selected the Speechlink package.

The implementation of Languagelink to the 17 Phase 1 schools was a success. All schools carried out the assessment on school entry and implemented language programmes within Reception classes. The outcomes on reassessment showed progress for both individual children, and at a whole class level. Feedback from teachers was positive and 94% of the Phase 1 schools are planning to use Languagelink again in 2009-2010, funded from within the school budget.

Benefits of Languagelink have been:

- *Early identification of children with receptive language difficulties and appropriate referral to SLT:* At the first assessment Languagelink identified 21 children with significant receptive language difficulties ('red' children), however only 57% of these were already known to SLT. On reassessment at the end of the year 100% of the 'red' children were on the SLT caseload.
- *Early intervention with evidence at the end of the year that children have made progress:* All the children who showed some receptive language delay, or had a borderline score, were reassessed using Languagelink at the end of the Reception year - 78.4% of these children had age appropriate receptive language (44.4% at the start of the year).
- *Greater knowledge and confidence of Reception staff that is evident in discussions and target setting:* Teacher ratings of their own confidence in identifying children with speech and language difficulties increased by 35.4%
- *Ownership of language development within Reception classes and integration of language strategies at a whole class level:* 72% of Reception classes delivered language interventions at a whole class level as well as in small group work.

Limitations of Languagelink are:

- Languagelink assesses receptive language difficulties only. It is essential that schools continue to monitor functional communication, expressive language, speech sound development and social skills.
- There is a need for training, hands-on demonstration and additional resources to support the programmes on the website.

Speechlink has been used by a much smaller number of schools. Although the feedback was mixed, all five schools have renewed their license.

Languagelink has been offered to the remaining schools within the Wyre Forest and within the Tenbury area. 12 new schools have started to use Languagelink in academic year 2009-2010, with funding from the LA. Currently 85% of schools in the Wyre Forest area are using the Languagelink package.

## **2. Background**

Research has shown that in some areas 50% or more children have delayed speech and language skills when they enter school, and 10% of all children (2-3 in every classroom) have long-term communication difficulties (ICAN, 2006). As communication skills underpin all learning and social skills, early intervention to support language development is essential to ensure that children achieve their potential.

Schools in the Wyre Forest area provide communication programmes as an integral part of the curriculum for many children, with the support of the local speech and language therapy (SLT) service. However data for academic year 2007-2008 showed that 63% of schools' referrals to SLT were made in Year 2 and above - only 20% of children were referred in their Reception year (see Appendix A for data).

As up to 50% of children may be entering Reception with a speech and language delay, there are many children that would benefit from support in this area from their first term in school. In addition, the referral data suggests that it is difficult for Early Years staff to identify which children will have persistent language difficulties which require specific SLT intervention.

It was agreed in 2008 that Worcestershire LA and Wyre Forest SLT Services would set up a project to evaluate the effectiveness of speech and language screening and intervention packages available from Speechlink Multimedia.

This report outlines the delivery and outcome of the project in Phase 1 (academic year 2008-2009). The report focuses primarily on LanguageLink due to the greater uptake of this package.

### **3. LanguageLink and SpeechLink Packages**

Speechlink Multimedia Ltd produce the following software packages to enable schools to screen and support children with speech and language difficulties (for Speechlink Multimedia information please see Appendix G):

#### **Language Link**

LanguageLink is a universal assessment (Wave 1) and intervention (Wave 1-2) package which complements the Early Years Foundation Profile.

Language Link is an online language screen designed to assess the receptive language of children aged between 4 and 5½ years at the start of their Reception year. It targets the 8 key areas of receptive language required to access learning in the classroom at this age, for example understanding of basic concepts (e.g. wet-dry; same-different) and question words (e.g. who; where etc).

All children in Reception are screened, taking around 10 minutes per child.

The screen provides detailed information about individual children and a whole class profile. It identifies children who require class-based support to develop receptive language, and those who need to be referred to speech and language therapy.

There are accompanying language programmes and resources to enable staff to develop specific areas of receptive language within the classroom.

#### **Speech Link**

Speechlink is a Wave 2 assessment and intervention package which can be used with specific children at any time in the school year.

The Speechlink assessment is an online screen for developmental speech difficulties. The assessment is suitable for children between 4 and 8 years of age with a perceived speech difficulty. It takes around 10 minutes to complete with each child.

At the end of the assessment the computer recommends age-appropriate speech programmes for teaching staff to carry out. The supporting website includes a set of printable resources and many of the activities described in the programmes are demonstrated via video clips.

If the child has a complex difficulty, discussion with speech and language therapy service is recommended.

#### **4. Aims of the project**

##### **Aim**

To evaluate Speechlink and LanguageLink as a systematic approach to the identification of speech and language difficulties and to provide appropriate interventions as a result of the information provided.

##### **Objectives**

- i) To trailblaze the programmes by engaging school staff in the project and creating an awareness of, and interest in, the programmes, in order to promote greater take-up by other schools in the future
- ii) To build on well-established relationships and good working practices between schools and SLTs already developed in the Wyre Forest and to facilitate a joint working approach between LA, schools and the PCT
- iii) To determine a successful approach such that it provides a model for future roll-out of the programme across a range of schools including school level of need, context of the school, size of school
- iv) To evaluate the programmes using the following outcomes:
  - Pupil level data provided by the programmes
  - School level data provided by the programmes
  - Feedback from school staff
  - Feedback from SLTs
  - Feedback from parents of children using strategies provided by the programme
  - Other contextual and financial information

#### **5. Staffing and budget**

##### **Project Development Team**

Emma Jordan (Acting Team Leader for Speech & Language Therapy, Wyre Forest, Worcs PCT)

Liz Packwood (SENCO Franche Primary School and Project Manager)

Les Knight (Operational Manager Learning Outreach – Worcs. LA)

Keren Mousley (Speech and Language Therapist, Wyre Forest, Worcs PCT)

The project was overseen by a steering group which included the Project Development Team, a representative from the Learning Support Team (Patsy Bowdige) and a Reception Class Teacher (Cynthia Johnstone, Franche Primary)

The total budget for the project over the academic year 2008 – 2009 was £35,000.

## **6. Applications**

On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008 Head Teachers and SENCOs from primary schools in the Wyre Forest area were invited to a Languagelink / Speechlink information session. The session included a demonstration of the assessments and details of the commitment required in order to be part of the project. All schools were invited to apply and were asked to complete an application form.

In total 17 schools applied and all opted to deliver the Languagelink package. Of these, 5 schools indicated that they also wished to deliver the Speechlink package. It was agreed that funding would be granted to all the applicants and was therefore offered as follows:

### Languagelink Package offered to Phase 1 schools:

- Languagelink licence for academic year 2008 – 2009
- Half-day training in use of the assessment
- Half-day training in delivery of programmes
- Release time for Reception Class Teacher to attend the two training courses; deliver the Languagelink assessments; attend evaluation session
- Support from Speech and Language Therapy

### Speechlink package offered to Phase 1 schools:

- Half of cost of Speechlink licence for academic year 2008 – 2009
- Half-day training in use of assessment
- Support from Speech and Language Therapy

All schools were informed that they had been successful, and were invited to attend an initial training session in use of the Languagelink assessment. Please see Appendix C for a list of the schools involved in Phase 1 of the project.

## **7. Delivery of Languagelink**

Training in use of the Languagelink assessment was delivered to Reception Class Teachers and SENCOs in July 2008. The first half-day session was led by trainers from Speechlink Multimedia, and the second session delivered by the project speech and language therapists.

Over the Autumn Term 2008 all 17 schools used the online Languagelink screen to assess their Reception cohorts. Data from Languagelink indicates that this was a total of 599 pupils.

Speechlink Multimedia provided a report for each individual where a receptive language delay was identified. In addition, once the assessments were complete each Reception class received an overall report which highlighted language needs within the class as a whole.

Once the whole class reports were received, each school was then offered a visit from speech and language therapy to:

- Discuss the report and agree programmes to be delivered within the Reception Class
- Discuss individual children's reports and agree referrals to speech and language therapy
- Identify training needs
- Identify resources needed

A further training session was delivered to Reception class teachers and teaching assistants in February 2009 by a Speechlink Multimedia trainer. This session focussed on support for language within the classroom and was attended by 15 of the project schools.

Each school then delivered language programmes within their reception classes over the Spring and Summer Terms 2009. Please see Appendix C for a breakdown of the language programmes delivered at each of the schools involved in the project. 72% of the Reception classes delivered the language interventions at a whole class level as well as specifically within small group work. Please see Appendix D for a breakdown of model of programme delivery.

At the end of the Summer Term 2009, 14 of the project schools reassessed the children specified by Languagelink – those who were identified with a receptive language delay, and children with a 'borderline' score. Three schools did not reassess at the end of the year.

## 8. Outcomes of Languagelink

Please also see the area report from Speechlink Multimedia (Appendix E)

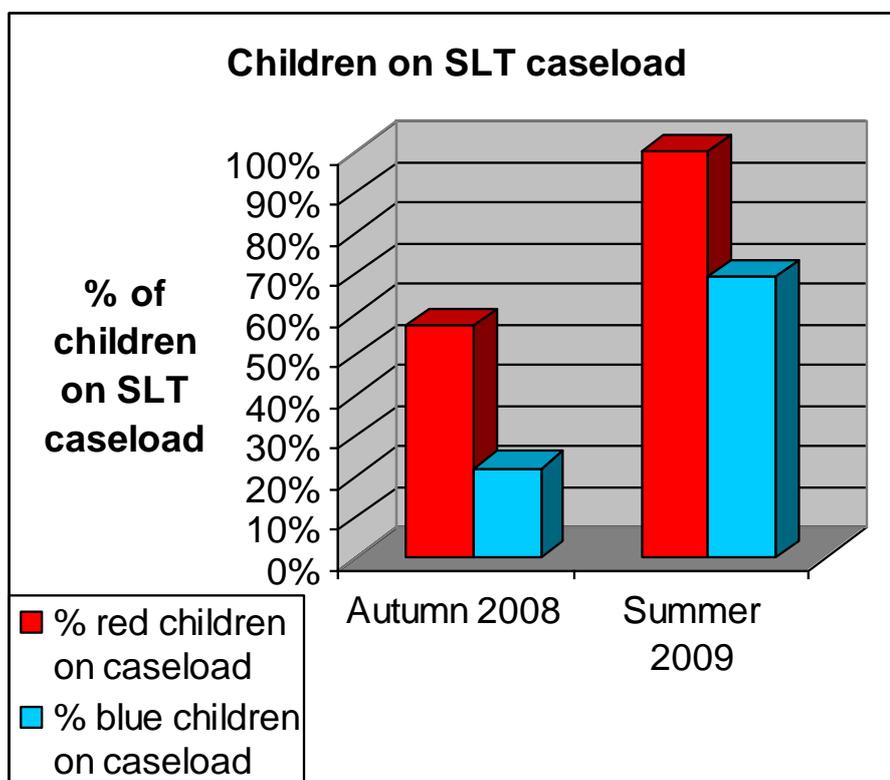
### i) Identification of children and referral to SLT

The Languagelink assessment produces a report for each child screened and places children within three categories:

<b>WHITE</b>	Understanding of language is within the <b>average range</b> for the child's age group on the screening assessment.
<b>BLUE</b>	The screen identified some delay in understanding of language and <b>class-based support</b> to develop these skills is recommended.
<b>RED</b>	Understanding of language is significantly delayed on the screening assessment and <b>discussion with SLT</b> is recommended.

In Autumn 2008 the Languagelink screening process identified 21 'red' children (screen suggested severe receptive language delay) across the 17 schools. Only 57% of these children were already known to SLT. The screening also identified 50 'blue' children (class-based support needed to develop receptive language skills), of which 22% were known to SLT.

On reassessment in the Summer Term 2009, 100% of 'red' children were on the SLT caseload, and 69% of 'blue' children. This is due to the progress of some children (by the end of the year some 'red' children needed only class-based support or were age appropriate on Languagelink) and the schools' referral of identified 'red' children to SLT services.



## ii) Progress of individual children

Where some delay had been identified, the individual Languagelink reports specified areas of receptive language for Reception staff to target. The Languagelink website provides some ideas and resources for teaching staff to use. Some additional informal training and resources were also provided by speech and language therapy.

On assessment in Autumn 2008, 12.7% of the children assessed by Languagelink showed a receptive language delay. Speechlink Multimedia reported that this is slightly higher than the national average of 11.1%. The following table (taken from Speechlink Multimedia report) shows the progress that these children made over the academic year.

	School Entry (excluding EAL)	REASSESSMENT (excluding EAL)
<b>Age Appropriate</b>	<b>44.4%</b>	<b>78.4%</b>
<b>Class based support</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>
<b>Refer to SLT</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>

Please note that the figures include **only children who scored under 40** (out of a possible 50) on the Languagelink assessment i.e. some receptive language delay was identified or the child achieved a borderline score. On reassessment at the end of the summer term only 4.1% of these children continued to show significant receptive language difficulties. The number of children requiring class-based support for language development decreased from 36.1% to 17.5%.

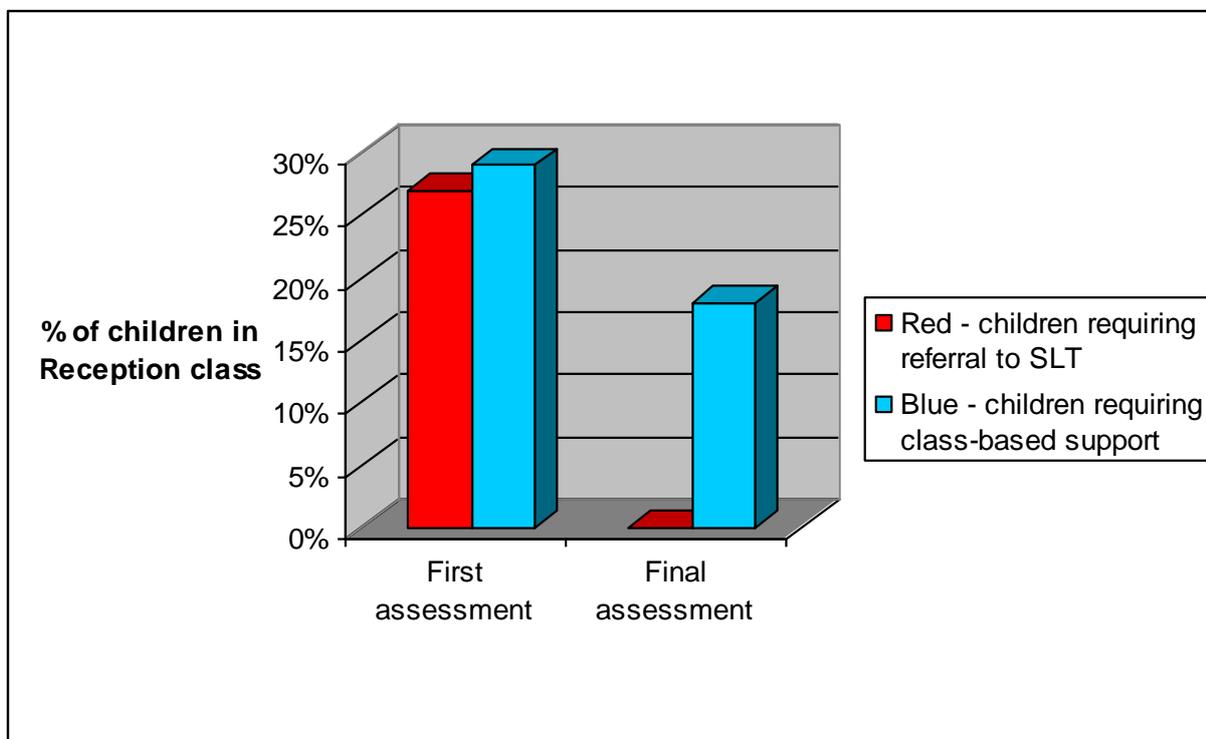
## iii) Whole-class interventions

As well as reports and recommendations for individual children, Languagelink provided a whole class report for each Reception class. The report identified areas of receptive language that were a weakness across the whole class. For example, at School 1 referred to below, 69.4% of children were unsure of basic concepts (e.g. 'hot'-'cold' 'first-last'), and 58.3% were not able to follow 4 keyword instructions consistently. Strategies targeting these areas could then be integrated into whole class activities.

Every class (of those who submitted reassessment data) showed an increase in the percentage of children with age appropriate language skills. Below are some sample results from a range of schools. This data has been formulated assuming that all children who had age appropriate receptive language on the first assessment continued to do so (these children are not reassessed at the end of the year).

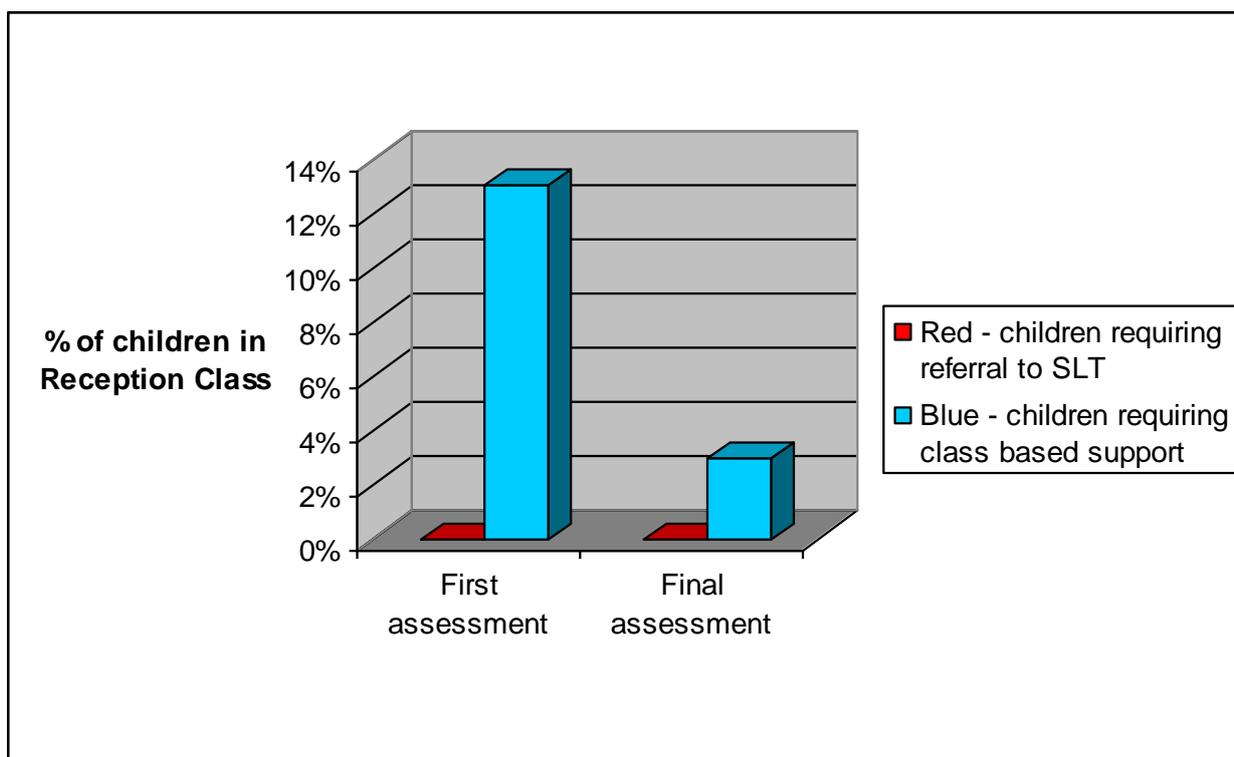
School 1 (urban school; high socioeconomic needs)

At School 1, 56% of children at the start of the year showed a receptive language delay on the Languagelink screen. On reassessment at the end of the academic year, the percentage of 'red' children had decreased from 27% to 0%, and only 18% needed ongoing support within the classroom.



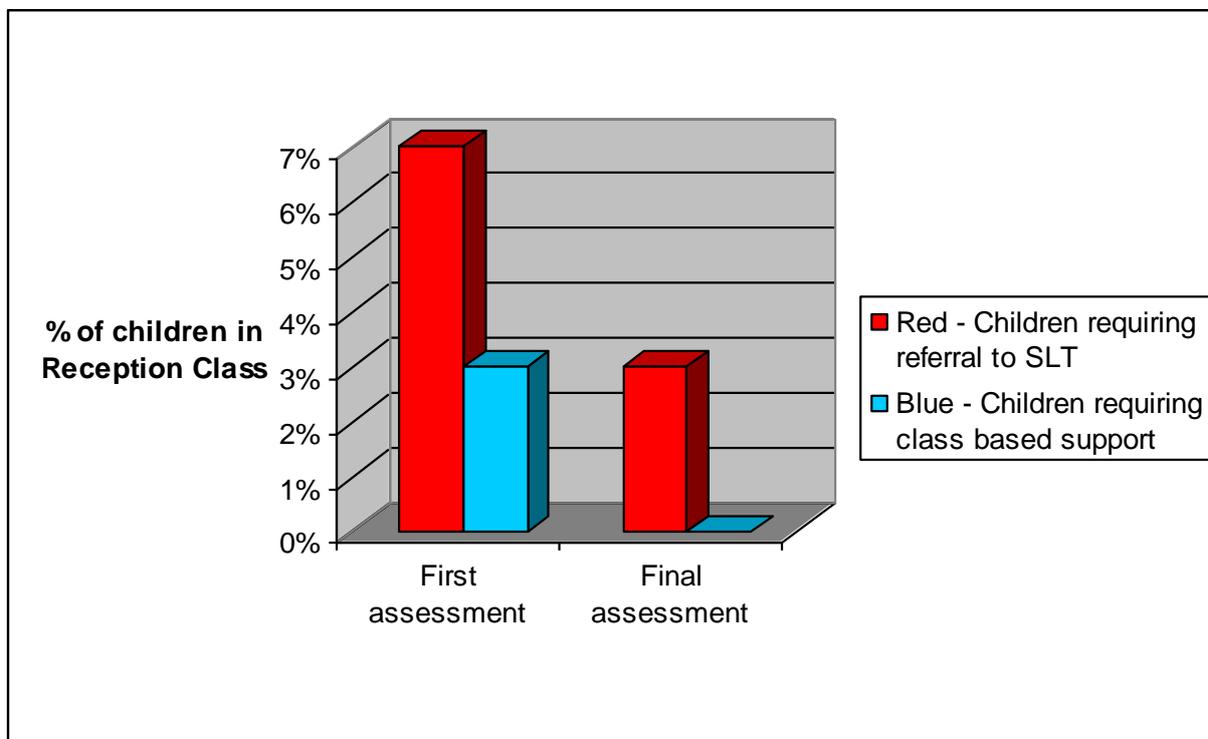
School 2 (small country school)

School 2 is a small countryside school with relatively few children known to SLT. Their profile showed no children with significant language difficulties, but on the Languagelink screen 13% required class-based support for receptive language. By the end of the year this figure had decreased to 3%.



School 3 (medium-sized urban school)

School 3 is a medium sized primary school in Kidderminster. By the end of the academic year the screen indicated that one child continued to have significant receptive language difficulties, and was on the SLT caseload. The other children reassessed scored at an age appropriate level.

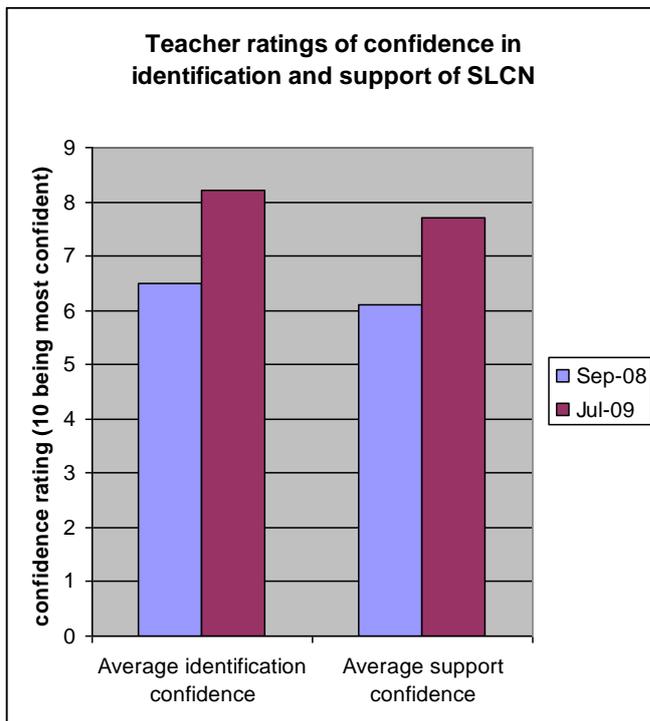


## 9. Feedback - Languagelink

Feedback on Languagelink was sought from teaching staff and speech and language therapists working in schools involved in the Languagelink project. It was not possible to obtain feedback from parents as Languagelink is a Wave 1 assessment (in a similar way to the previous use of BPVS). The names of all children are therefore held confidentially by the schools involved.

### i) **Feedback from teaching staff:**

In July 2008 teaching staff were asked to complete a questionnaire rating their confidence in identifying children with speech and language difficulties, and their confidence in supporting these children. This questionnaire was repeated at the end of the Summer Term 2009.



The results indicate that Reception teachers have increased confidence in both identification (increased by 35.4%) and support (increased by 26%) for children with speech and language difficulties.

Feedback on the benefits and difficulties of LanguageLink was also sought - the key threads have been summarised below.

### Benefits of LanguageLink

Early identification and intervention	<p><i>'identify children quickly and implement support immediately'</i></p> <p><i>'hard to determine whether it is the programme or maturity, but at least we have had the opportunity to have the early intervention'</i></p> <p><i>'I think it has been worthwhile and useful in early identification of potential issues'</i></p>
Identification of 'hidden' language difficulties	<p><i>'identifying children who have difficulties whom you would not expect - 2 big surprises this term'</i></p> <p><i>'children were identified... that one would never have anticipated having any sort of language difficulties'</i></p>
Specific assessment	<p><i>'a clear assessment of each child using a child-friendly computer programme'</i></p> <p><i>'good analysis for identified children' 'no more hit and miss assessments'</i></p> <p><i>'identifies specific areas of language to focus on'</i></p> <p><i>'Early testing and evidence of where the children are having specific difficulties'</i></p>
Provides evidence of progress	<p><i>'given you data to track the child's progress'</i></p> <p><i>'second testing – for evidence of improvement'</i></p>
Progress of individual children	<p><i>'all children showed good progress'</i></p> <p><i>'5 children were identified through the screening. The final screening showed all the children were in line for their age'</i></p>
Benefits of language strategies for the whole class	<p><i>'makes you aware of the whole class as well as individuals'</i></p> <p><i>'they have all improved'</i></p> <p><i>'could decide what to tackle as a whole class approach'</i></p>
Access to language programmes	<p><i>'good resources available online'</i></p> <p><i>'good programmes for teaching'</i></p>

### Difficulties experienced

Time constraints	<p><i>'the initial testing took longer than expected'</i></p> <p><i>'time but this was resolved'</i></p> <p><i>'time to assess all the children'</i></p>
IT difficulties	<p><i>'computer sometimes froze so was unsure if had received the data for a question'</i></p> <p><i>'printing the report – not colour coded as required'</i></p> <p><i>'submitting results'</i></p>
Difficulties with space / location	<p><i>'finding a quiet place!!'</i></p>
Usefulness of resources on website	<p><i>'I think the pictures used were sometimes unclear. Would be better to use actual real-life pictures of people doing the activities rather than cartoons, which make the task more realistic'</i></p>
Selecting areas to target	<p><i>'deciding where priorities re: groups lay, but had support'</i></p>

## ii) Feedback from Speech and Language Therapy Service

Informal feedback was sought from Speech and Language Therapists involved in the project and those working in within LanguageLink project schools. The following was identified:

### Benefits:

To new referrals/liaison:

- LanguageLink reports were useful when agreeing referral of children to SLT
- The individual reports gave additional information to inform the first assessment of new referrals
- Referrals from Reception classes have increased, but it is felt that these have been appropriate and early intervention for the children will be effective
- The whole-class reports were useful in liaison with schools e.g. evidence of numbers of children with receptive language difficulties. This may help to inform service delivery in the future

To children already on the SLT caseload:

- Individual reports were used to inform assessment for children already known to SLT
- As children on SLT caseload were placed within language programmes within their Reception class, SLT could then focus targets on more specific aspects of the child's communication. Services could also be targeted towards the children with significant / persistent language difficulties
- The information available on the website can also be recommended for children within the school at Year 1 and above

Awareness of speech and language:

- Greater awareness about language has facilitated discussion with teaching staff about individual children, especially during joint target setting. Increased knowledge is evident
- Reception staff have greater knowledge of their class' language skills and a greater use of general strategies was observed (e.g. use of sign; reducing language levels)
- They also have ownership of the language interventions they selected to use and it is therefore felt that they have integrated them effectively into planning

### Difficulties:

- Where referral of 'red' children was agreed, two schools did not complete the referral to SLT and needed several prompts to do this
- There have been two incidences reported where inspectors have questioned the model of delivery of language programmes. There is a need for information sharing about LanguageLink with wider agencies
- Information in writing (from the LanguageLink website) did not always enable staff to deliver language interventions appropriately. There is a need for hands-on training and demonstration of strategies
- Some of the resources on the LanguageLink website are not felt to be suitable. Additional resources (e.g. symbols; detailed ideas for keyword level activities) were provided by SLT
- As LanguageLink only assesses receptive language, it is essential that school staff are encouraged to refer children where there are concerns in other areas (e.g. expressive language; speech; social interaction), even if no issues are identified on LanguageLink.

## 10. Speechlink

### i) Delivery of Speechlink

Speechlink is an online assessment of speech sounds which is suitable for children aged 4 to 8 years. It is used with children individually and can be carried out at any time within the school year.

Five of the Phase 1 schools delivered the Speechlink package alongside Languagelink. On 5<sup>th</sup> December 2008 Speechlink Multimedia delivered training to these schools which focussed on development of speech sounds and use of the Speechlink online assessment. Although contact was made with the schools regarding Languagelink, support for Speechlink was not requested by the schools using this package.

Speechlink does not have a time frame for reassessment of the children. At the time of this report reassessment data was not yet available.

### ii) Feedback from teaching staff

At the end of the year feedback on the use of Speechlink was sought, and was returned by 4 of the schools. Feedback from the schools was varied:

- All 4 of the schools had used the Speechlink assessment, and 3 had delivered speech programmes to children within the school
- On average, the schools rated the Speechlink assessment at 9 (out of 10) for usefulness
- On average the schools rated the Speechlink programmes at 5 (out of 10) for effectiveness

#### Benefits:

*'speech programmes are limited but information is good and gives you confidence to develop your own resources'*

*'being able to implement a programme instantly'*

*'tackling minor problems without the need for referral'*

*'having a specific intervention to address such a specific need'*

*'clear identification of speech sound difficulty and clear strategies to use'*

*'Programme effective. Very good resources. We have just needed time to work it into our timetable'*

#### Difficulties

*'time issues'*

*'I feel that ... regular therapy by a trained speech and language therapist [was needed] to have had any impact'*

### iii) Feedback from Speech and Language Therapy Services

Limited feedback was available due to the small number of schools using Speechlink. However the individual reports have been useful in recommending referral to the service.

The limited take-up of Speechlink may be due to the availability of free speech sound training and regular support already offered by local SLT services. In addition the package offered to schools in Phase 1 did not include training on delivery of the programmes and hands-on support was limited.

## **11. Sustainability**

At the end of the Summer Term the seventeen schools involved were asked if they would continue to use Languagelink. 16 schools (94%) indicated that they will renew the license in 2009-2010 and continue deliver the assessments and interventions.

The Phase 1 schools are now implementing the packages independently from within the school budget. If required, schools are able to purchase support for Languagelink from SLT or the Learning Support Team.

At the end of November 2009, 14 of the Phase 1 schools (82%) had started their assessments, and 9 had already received their whole-class report. A feedback session for the Reception class teachers is planned to take place in the Autumn Term 2009 to evaluate the schools' independent implementation of the assessments and language interventions.

The five Speechlink schools have renewed their license for this package, and at the end of November 2009 it had been actively used by one school.

## **12 The Future**

In June 2009 Languagelink was offered to the remaining schools within the Wyre Forest, and those in the Tenbury area. The package offered to the schools included:

- Languagelink licence for academic year 2009 – 2010
- Half-day training in use of the assessment (delivered in July 2009)
- Half-day training in delivery of programmes (to be delivered 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009)
- Release time for teachers to attend the two training sessions
- Support from Speech and Language Therapy

The process of implementing the packages is following the same pattern as Phase 1, with training delivered jointly by a Speech and Language Therapist and a Learning Support Team Teacher. The budget offered to the schools has been reduced as funding for TA release time was not felt to be required - many strategies are integrated into classroom activities.

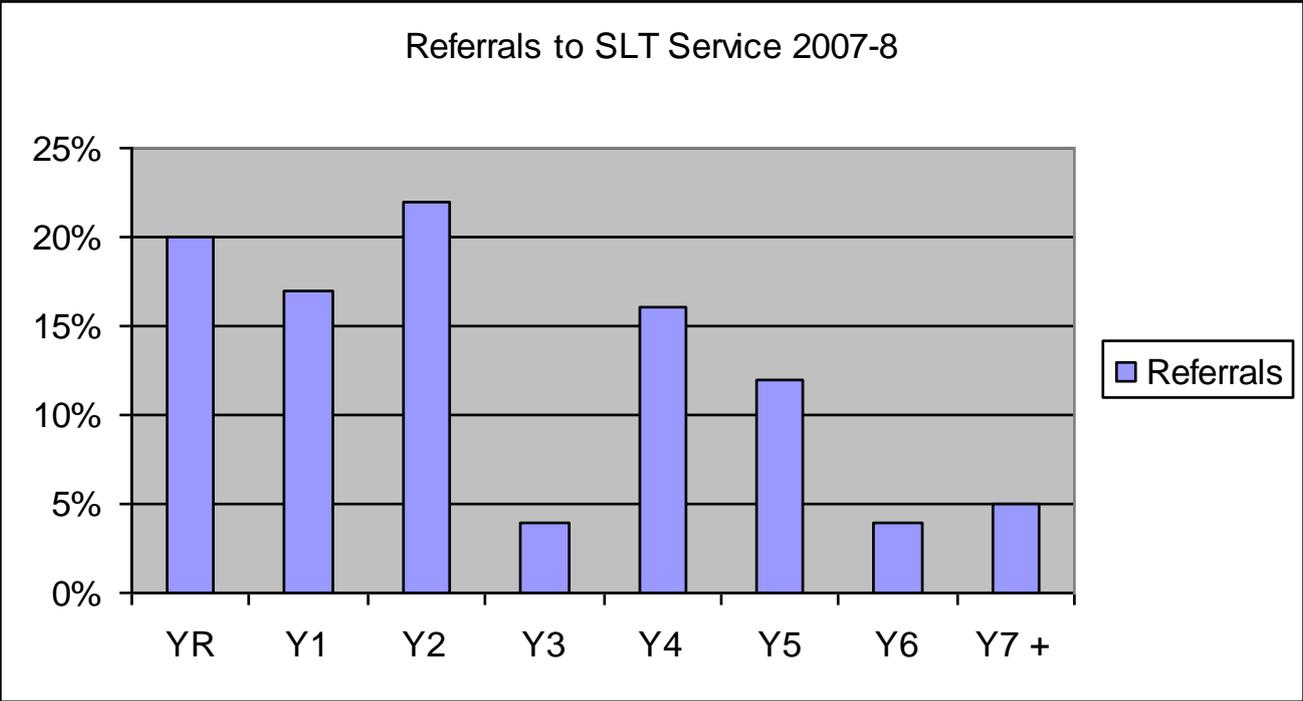
Of the remaining 15 schools in the Wyre Forest and Tenbury, 12 are implementing Languagelink over this academic year. Currently 88% of the total schools in this area are using the Languagelink package (see Appendix F for a list of schools involved).

Speechlink was not offered to schools as part of Phase 2.

## **13 References**

ICAN (2006) The Cost to the Nation of Children's Poor Communication Skills. *ICAN Talk Series: 2*.

**APPENDIX A – REFERRALS TO SLT BY YEAR GROUP (2007-2008)**



## APPENDIX B – SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN PHASE 1

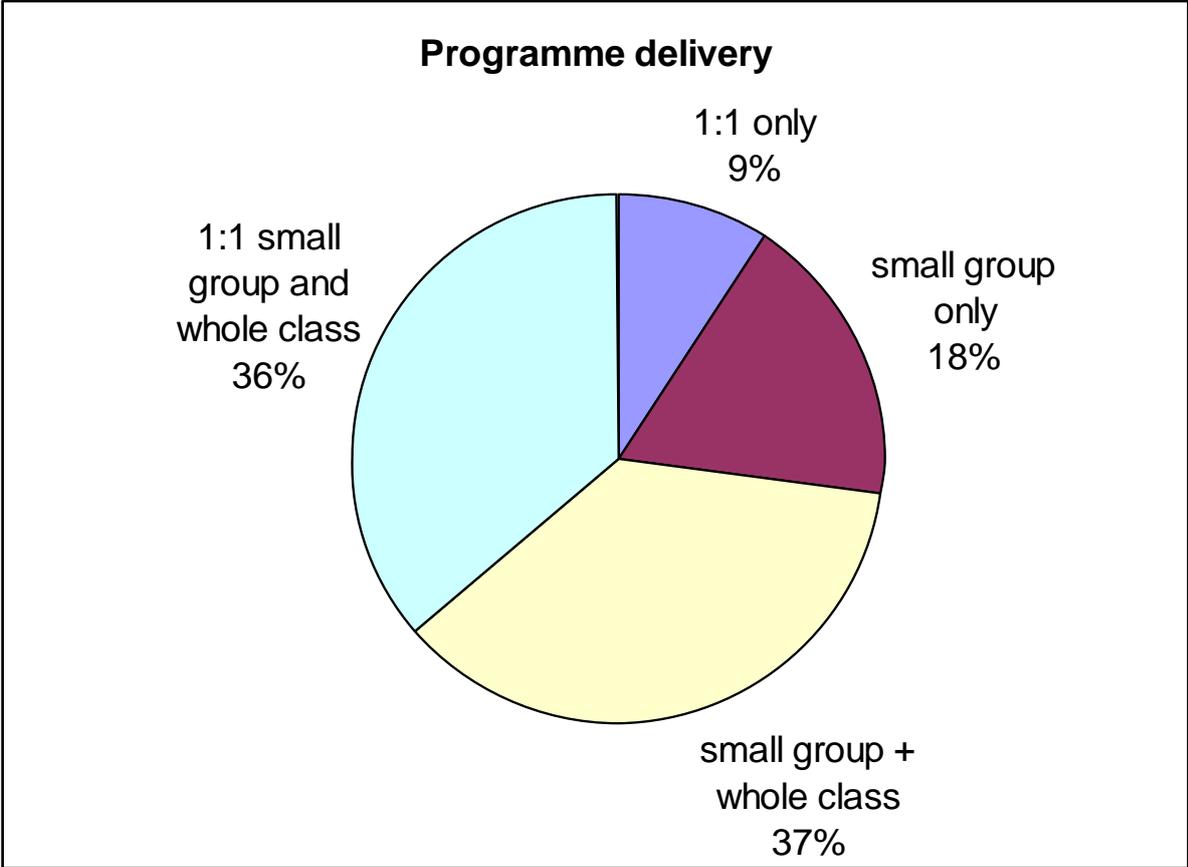
<b><u>SPEECHLINK &amp; LANGUAGELINK PROJECT SCHOOLS</u></b> <b><u>2008-2009</u></b>	
Franch Primary	Languagelink only
St Anne's Primary	
Comberton Primary	
Cookley Primary	
St George's Primary	
Chaddesley Corbett Primary	
Heronswood Primary	
Upper Arley Primary	
St Ambrose Primary	
St. Oswalds Primary	
St Wulstan's Primary	
Far Forest Primary	
Stourport Primary	Languagelink and Speechlink
Burlish Park Primary	
Birchen Coppice Primary	
Offmore Primary	
Foley Park Primary	

## APPENDIX C – LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES DELIVERED

School	Groups running
Stourport Primary	Small group – following instructions
Burlish Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following instructions – small group</li> <li>• Question cue cards – whole class</li> <li>• Basic concepts – 1 child</li> </ul>
Upper Arley	Whole class strategies, for 1 child identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negatives</li> <li>• Basic Concepts</li> </ul>
Cookley Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Concepts – 2 small groups</li> <li>• Prepositions – small group</li> </ul>
St Ambrose Primary	Small group work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic concepts</li> <li>• pronouns</li> </ul>
St Oswald's Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole class- - Basic concepts (+signing)</li> <li>• Small group work – Following instructions</li> </ul>
St Wulstan's Primary	Whole class strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronouns</li> <li>• Basic Concepts</li> </ul>
Foley Park Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause Effect - small group</li> <li>• Following instructions – targeted children</li> </ul>
Far Forest Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups- cause-effect; categorisation; sequencing</li> </ul>
Franch Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic concepts –(with signs / symbols). Small group work experiences then carry-over to classroom</li> <li>• Negatives</li> </ul>
Comberton Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Concepts – whole class strategy + signing</li> <li>• Following instructions – small targeted group</li> </ul>
Birchen Coppice Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic concepts – whole class strategy + symbols / signs</li> <li>• Following instructions</li> </ul>
Offmore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following instructions – whole class strategy + signing</li> <li>• Basic concepts – small group</li> <li>• Prepositions – 2 children</li> </ul>

St George's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepositions group (EAL focus)</li> <li>• Basic concepts – small targeted group</li> <li>• language levels adjustment by class teacher</li> </ul>
Chaddesley Corbett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause-effect – whole class strategy</li> <li>• Pronouns – small targeted group</li> <li>• negatives – 1 child</li> </ul>
Heronswood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following instructions – small group</li> <li>• Basic concepts</li> </ul>
St Anne's	Pronouns – small group, targeting 4 children (then basic concepts + signing)

**APPENDIX D – PROGRAMME DELIVERY**





# **APPENDIX E –**

## **SPEECHLINK MULTIMEDIA REPORT**

# LANGUAGE LINK

## Worcester Area Report 2008 / 2009

### Background

Language Link is a package designed for schools to use in order to identify and support children with receptive language difficulties. The package includes an evaluation which is used to screen all children on school entry. This identifies which children require classroom based support and which children have more complex difficulties that require input from Speech and Language Therapy services. Thus the package enables schools to use limited resources more effectively.

The support materials consist of a web site, printable resources and a web based discussion group which links to the local Speech and Language Therapy department. Both Speech Link and Language Link encourage and facilitate effective collaborative working practice between schools and Speech and Language Therapists.

The Language Link package was placed in 17 schools within the LEA in September 2009. As part of the package all schools were asked to submit their evaluation data to Speech Link Multimedia Ltd in order to receive a detailed report of the language levels within their school. Schools were also asked to re-screen identified pupils and submit data to receive a second report at the end of the academic year.

This report reviews both the initial and retest data. The report uses aggregate data to consider area wide trends in terms of the following:

- The incidence of receptive language difficulties across the sample schools in Year R
- The numbers of children requiring class based support Vs the number of children needing more specialist support from outside agencies such as Speech and Language Therapy.
- The average performance of children on the evaluation in terms of total score and number of sections passed.
- Level of improvement across the area.

### National Incidence

Receptive language delays often present as a 'hidden' problem within the classroom. A child experiencing difficulty understanding language can present in a number of different ways and in the early years in school the problem can be masked. However if difficulty understanding language is not identified and supported in the early years it can lead to much more severe difficulties as the child

progresses through school. Under achievement, challenging behaviour and withdrawal are a few common problems experienced by children with unidentified receptive language difficulties.

The Language Link evaluation identifies children who require school based support and those who require more specialist intervention. This provides a measure of the incidence of receptive language difficulties. Language Link is currently used by over 1028 schools nationally and therefore it is possible to look beyond county data to establish a national incidence figure for receptive language difficulties at school entry.

Few national studies have been conducted to establish the prevalence of receptive language difficulties in children entering school. The most widely used data was provided by Law (2000) who established the prevalence of developmental speech **and** language difficulties in children between 10 – 12% with a median of \*5.36%.\*

For the last academic year, 2007 – 2008, data was received for 9155 pupils across the country. The incidence for receptive language difficulties was 14.1%

### **Incidence within sample schools from Wye Forest**

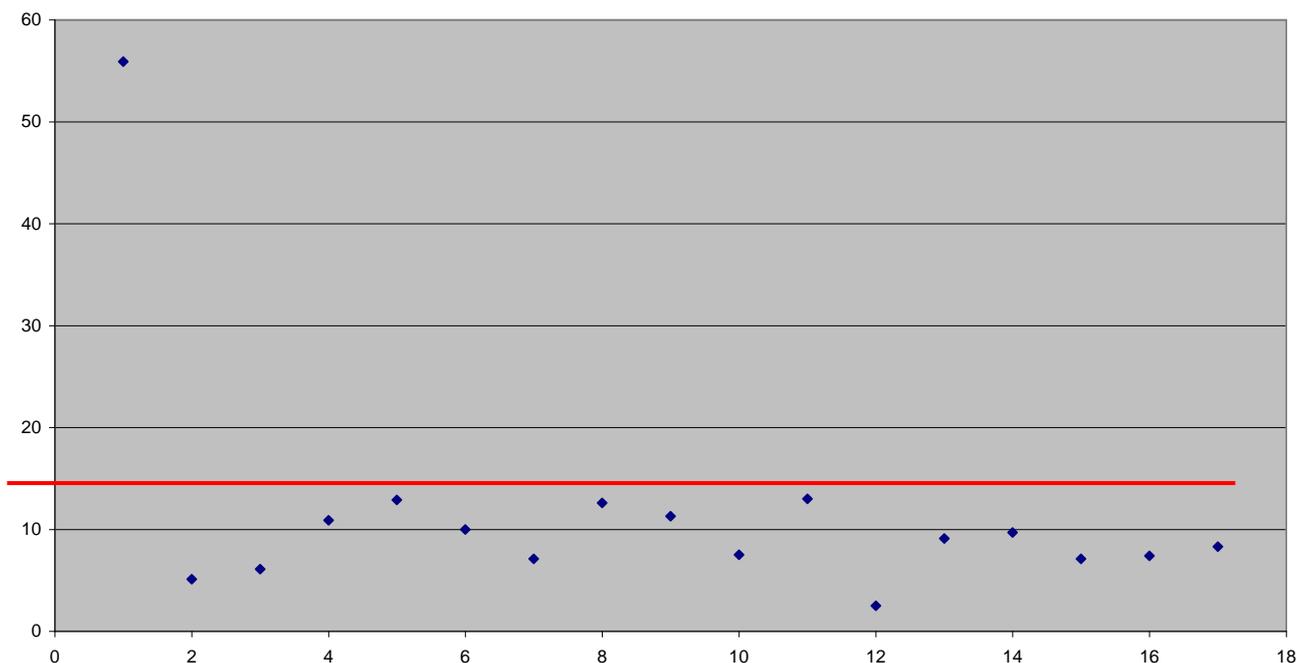
Data was received for 599 pupils across the area from 17 schools. Of these 13 pupils were identified as having English as an additional language (EAL). For the purposes of this report only pupils who had English as their first language were included in the calculations. This represents 586 pupils. National data established the incidence for language link in 2008 – 2009 as 11.1% i.e. this was the percentage of non EAL pupils identified by the language evaluation as needing some support with their understanding of spoken language. Within the sample the incidence of receptive language difficulties was 12.7%. This figure would appear to be a little higher than the national average.

To provide a more accurate measure of incidence, the national data was sampled from 4 LEA's across the country that had placed the package in all their schools. These data is summarized in the table below.

	<b>Total number of pupils</b>	<b>Incidence</b>	<b>% Mild to moderate difficulties</b>	<b>% severe difficulties</b>
<b>Sampled Data</b>	10, 968	10.7	7.7	3.05
<b>Wye Forest data excluding EAL</b>	586	12.7	9	3.7

The data were collated to see which schools had a higher than average number of children requiring support for receptive language difficulties. The figure below shows the distribution of the numbers of children identified with receptive language difficulties in each school in the sample.

Percentage of children identified as requiring support for receptive language difficulties from sample schools



The range of scores for incidence was 2.5 – 55.9%. In view of national data scores of above 15% were considered to be higher than expected. Thus where a school has more than 15% of the class requiring support for receptive language difficulties then the school would be included as a high prevalence school.

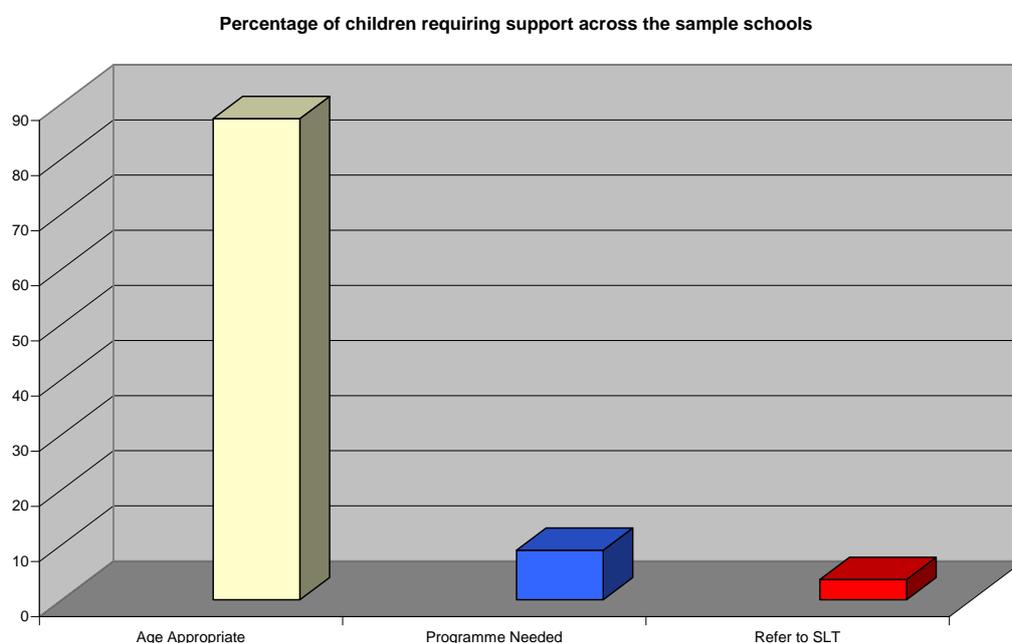
Only 1 school in the sample was identified as having a higher than average number of pupils requiring support for receptive language.

### Level of support required

Overall 87.3% of the children who were screened across the area were deemed to have appropriate levels of receptive language. The table and figure below show the percentage of children who were judged age appropriate and those who needed support for both EAL and Non EAL pupils.

	Total number of children	Total including EAL pupils %	% excluding EAL pupils	% Including EAL pupils
Age Appropriate	516	519	87.3	86.2
Programme Needed	48	54	9	9.5
Refer to Speech and Language Therapy	22	26	3.7	4.3
Number of pupils	586	599		

Across Wye Forest sample schools 13.8% of pupils were identified as having some form of difficulty understanding spoken language. However when the EAL pupils are not included in this calculation the figure fell to 12.7%. The figure below shows the level of support required by non EAL pupils across the sample schools.



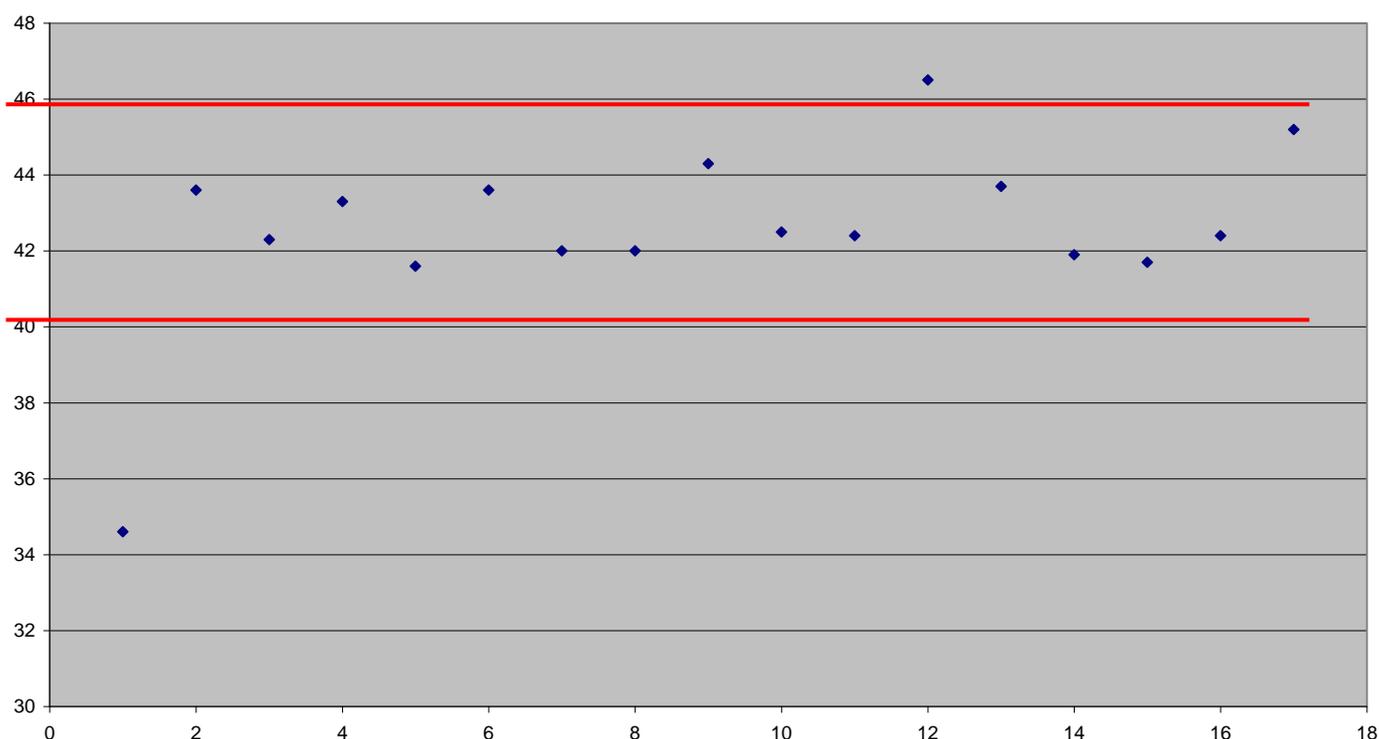
A list of the numbers and percentages of children requiring support can be found in Appendix 2.

## **Total Score**

The Language Link screening assessment analyses each child's responses on two levels. It considers both the total score a child achieves and the number of sections they have passed.

The average total score for the sample was 42.4. There was a wide range in average total scores 34.6 – 46.5. The national average total score for 200-2009 was 42.3 with the majority of schools falling into the range of 40 – 46. Thus most Wye Forest schools would appear to be inside the national average range.

Average total scores for the sample



## RETEST

Each school in the area was asked to re-screen all the children who scored under 40 on their original test and to submit these results to Speech Link Multimedia Ltd for our Speech and Language Therapists to prepare a retest report to show progress within the school across the year.

The reports to schools provide:

- charting of the levels of understanding for the whole class, enabling each school to identify where language support is needed.
- profiles for individual children to allow for tracking.
- suggestions and advice on how to support children's receptive language.

This section reviews these retest data.

Data was received from 17 schools following the first Language Link screen. This represents 599 pupils (586 non EAL and 13 EAL pupils). Retest data was received from 14 schools to the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

Raw retest data for each school are presented in Appendices 3 and 4.

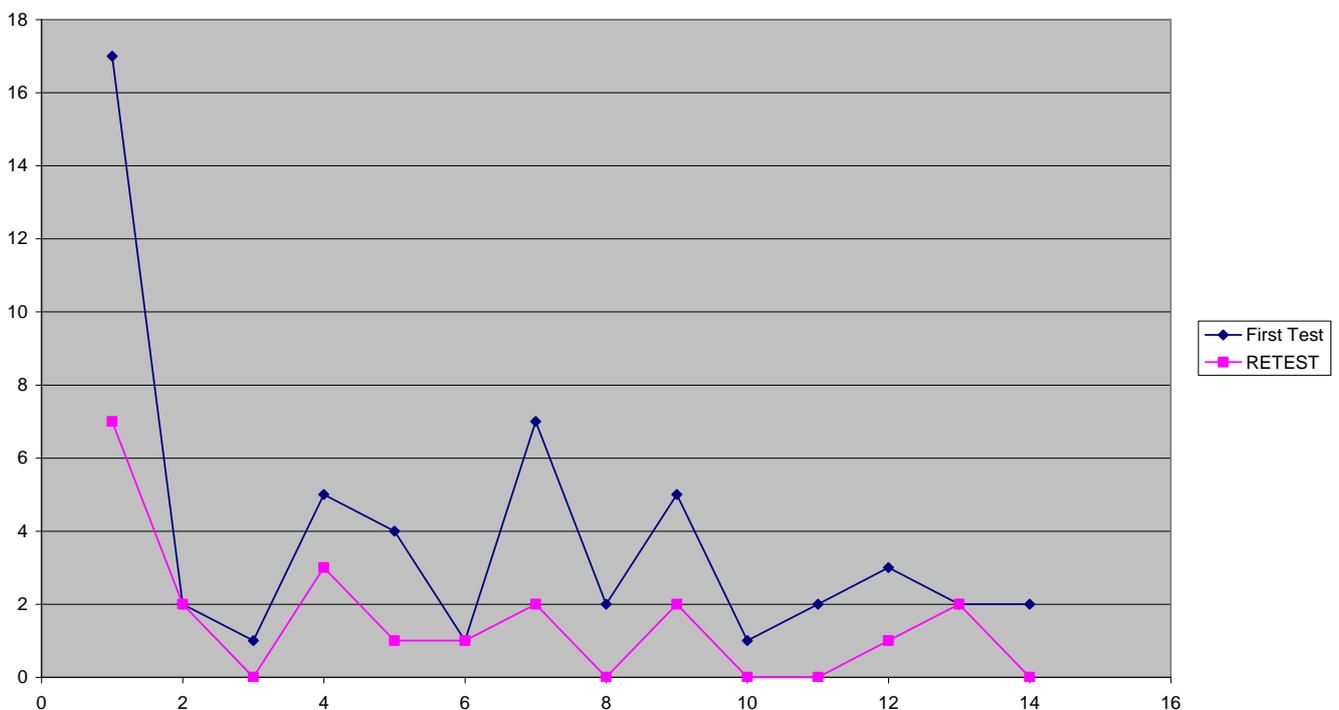
## Incidence at RETEST

At retest schools were required to send in retest data on only those pupils identified with difficulties and/or those that scored under 40 total score on the first test. We would not expect schools that did not have children identified as requiring support at the time of the first test, to submit retest data.

To establish an accurate picture of children's progress only children who had been retested were included in the analyses. Thus the incidence at first test was much higher than the overall incidence figure as most of the children retested would have been identified as having difficulties at first test.

Within the Wye Forest sample 14 schools submitted some retest data. Retest data were received for 97 pupils. The incidence of receptive language difficulties excluding EAL pupils for the retest sample was 55.6% at first test falling to 21.6% at retest.

Number of pupils excluding EAL requiring support at first test and RETEST



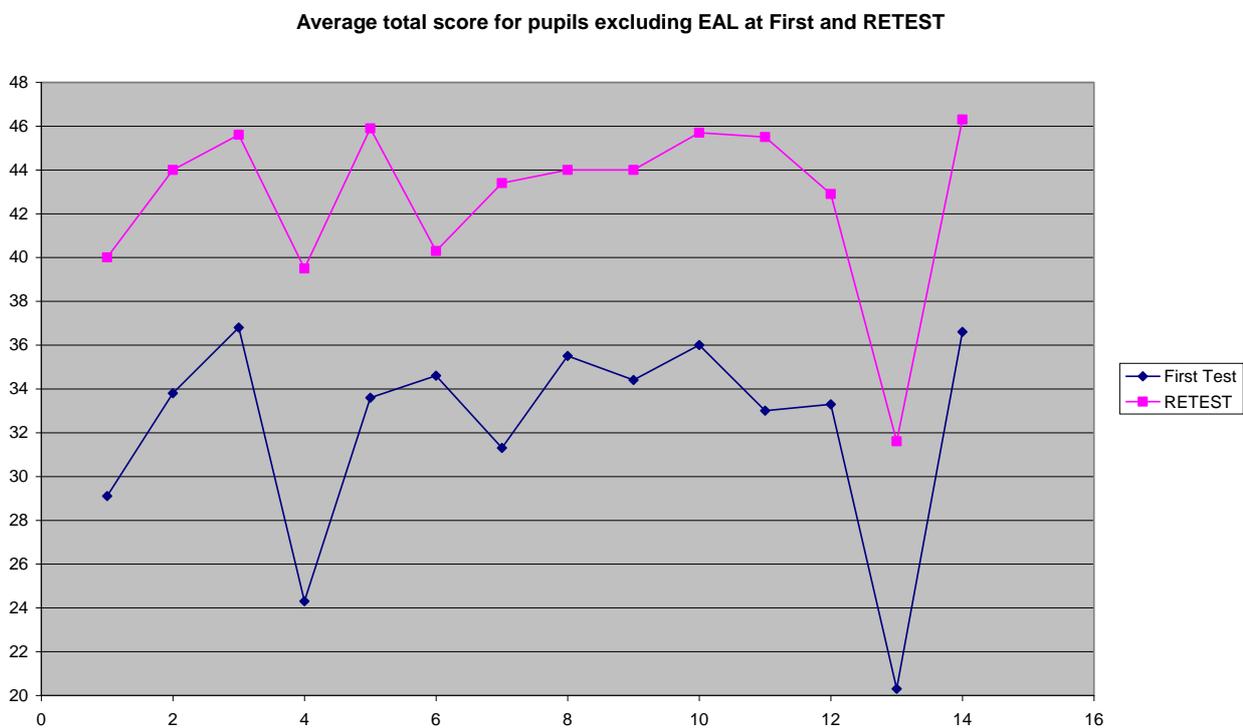
This scattergram shows that less children from the retest sample required support for receptive language difficulties in the majority of these schools at the time of the retest.

## Average Total Score

The average total scores at first and retest were compared for the retest sample group. The table below shows the composite data.

	First Test	RETEST	% increase
Wye Forest sample excluding EAL pupils	32.3	42.7	10.4

The following scattergram shows the average total scores at first and retest for each school.



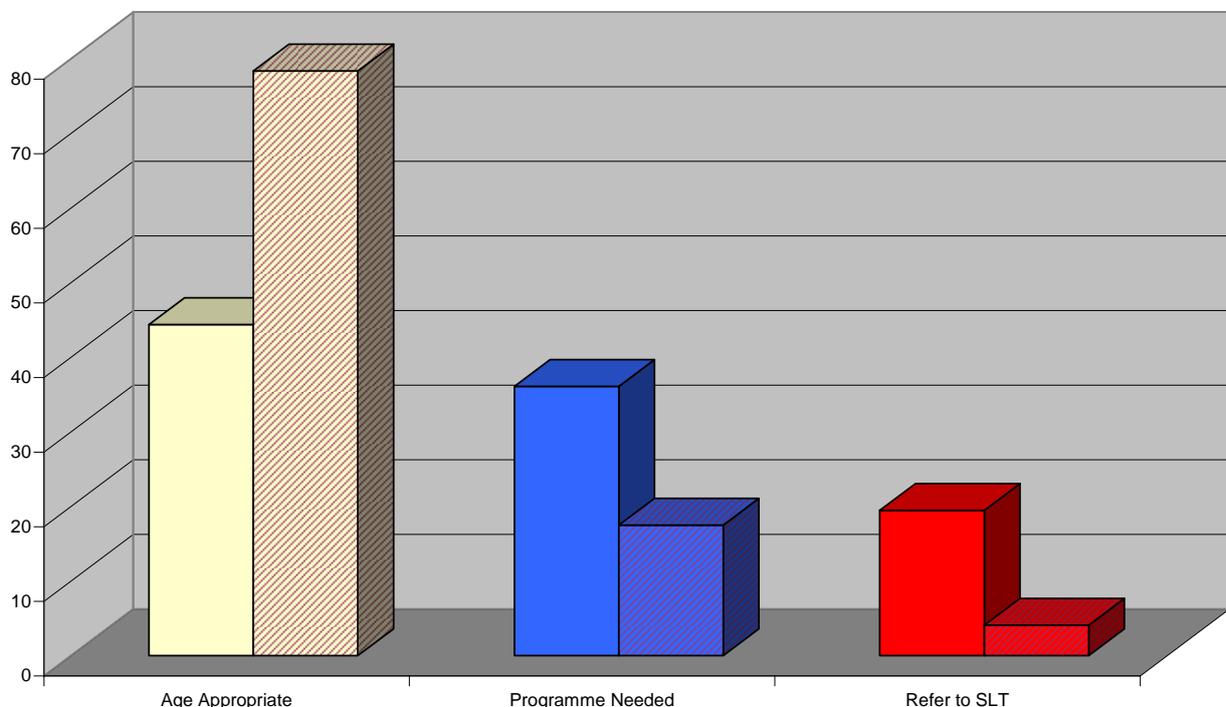
## Level of support required

Overall 44.4% of the children who were screened across the Wye Forest retest sample were deemed to have appropriate levels of receptive language at the time of the first test. The following table shows the percentage of children in the retest sample group who were judged age appropriate and those who needed support at school entry and at retest across the area. Once again the percentage of children requiring support was much higher in this sample as only children who scored under 40 at the first test were retested.

	School Entry excluding EAL	RETEST excluding EAL
<b>Age Appropriate</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>78.4</b>
<b>Class based support</b>	<b>36.1</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>Refer to SLT</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>4.1</b>

The following graphs show the percentage of children excluding EAL pupils requiring class based support and those requiring support from speech and language therapy at school entry and retest.

Percentage of children requiring support in Retest sample at first test and retest



Although the sample at retest was small there was a strong positive trend with less children requiring support from outside agencies and an increase in the number of children who did not require any additional classroom based support for receptive language difficulties. It should be noted that some of the children who were identified as requiring support from outside agencies at school entry still required classroom based support at retest.

## Summary

The key findings for the first year of language link in the Wye Forest sample are summarised below:

- The overall return rate for first test data was 100% This represents a very robust data set.
- The incidence of receptive language problems in the sample schools for the September 2008 intake was 12.7% This figure is a little higher than the national average at 11.1%
- There was a wide variation in the percentage of children requiring support across the schools (2.5 – 55.9%) One school had an incidence above the average national range.
- 14 schools returned some retest data.
- For the retest sample the incidence reduced from 55.6% to 21.6% excluding EAL pupils.
- For the retest sample the average total score increased from 32.3 to 42.7.

**APPENDIX F – SCHOOLS USING LANGUAGELINK AND SPEECHLINK 2009-2010 (WYRE FOREST LOCALITY)**

<p><u>Phase 1 schools continuing to use Languagelink</u></p> <p>Comberton Primary          Chaddesley Corbett Primary          Birchen Coppice Primary          St Anne’s Primary          Franche Primary          Offmore Primary          Heronswood Primary          Burlish Primary          Cookley Primary          St Wulstan’s Primary          Foley Park Primary          Stourport Primary          Upper Arley Primary          Far Forest Primary          St Ambrose Primary          St Oswald’s Primary</p>	<p><u>Phase 2 schools - started Languagelink Sept 2009</u></p> <p>Sutton Park Primary          St Catherine’s Primary          St Mary’s Primary          Wolverley Primary          Lindridge Primary          Tenbury Primary          Lickhill Primary          St Bartholomew’s Primary          Wilden Primary          Bayton Primary          Blakedown Primary          Hartlebury Primary</p>
<p><u>Phase 1 schools continuing to use Speechlink:</u></p> <p>Offmore Primary          Burlish Primary          Birchen Coppice Primary          Stourport Primary          Foley Park Primary</p>	



APPENDIX G –

LANGUAGELINK AND SPEECHLINK  
INFORMATION SHEETS