

## What to do if you think that your child has a stammer

**Remember to keep a file with all the details of your child's medical history, education reports and other important documents. You may need this information at some time and it should be kept in a safe place.**

When your child is receiving therapy and was placed on '[Early Years Action](#)' or '[Early Years Action Plus](#)' then the pre-school will have passed on the details when your child transferred. This should be the starting point for your discussion about support for your child's stammer with the class teacher.

## What to do if you think that your child has a stammer

**Take action yourself: two important steps to take.**

### 1. Contact your local speech and language therapy service

The BSA would advise a parent to seek advice from a therapist when they are concerned about a stammer, particularly if the child seems to be anxious. Ideally you should contact a therapist who specialises in stammering. You may ask the school to complete the referral but as this would involve staff considering whether to refer after going through the [Special Educational Needs Code of Practice](#) there would be a delay. It is best to avoid delay when seeking the advice of a therapist as Early Intervention gives the best chance of recovery from stammering as late as 7 years in some cases. Older children can be helped by therapy to manage their speech and maintain their confidence, so that their progress in school is not held back. Remember that this service is free to you as the National Health Service funds it. The [BSA](#) can provide you with the contact details of your local service.

### Stammering and more complex needs

[When your child has complex needs](#)

**Most children who stammer do not have other complex needs but if your child appears to have significant difficulties you should raise your concerns with the class teacher, and ask for an assessment.**

### 2. Working in partnership with school staff

Even when you have contacted a therapist yourself, it is advisable to keep the school informed. When you do, you are likely to find that the staff will be guided in their response by the [Special Educational Needs Code of Practice \(SEN Code\)](#).

The Code is there to ensure that any child, who has a need for additional support, can be provided with this in a pre-school or school setting. It is therefore helpful for parents to talk about this with the class teacher. The BSA would always advise parents to discuss the SEN Code with staff, as it is the means by which resources may be provided for a child. The SEN Code should ensure that the child's needs are monitored and planned for, and that parents and any other professionals involved, such as a speech and language therapist, are kept regularly informed about the child's progress.

### Keep in regular contact with the school

Talk frequently to your child's teacher and pass on any concerns you have, and respond to any concerns expressed by her. **It is very helpful if your child has one colleague, perhaps the teacher or the teaching assistant, who will regularly talk with your child, particularly when he is settling in. After that your child should feel able to approach that colleague when he has a worry. This colleague should also be the key contact in the school for both you and the therapist.**

If your child is receiving therapy ask the therapist if she could go into the school to give the staff

information and, if appropriate, involve the member of staff who works with your child in any programme of therapy being used.

Ask the teacher to access [BSA:Education](#) the online training resource for school staff.

**Do not worry that you are being a nuisance, or are over-reacting when you express your concern about your child's stammer, research does show that parents usually know their own child best and their concerns are legitimate.** It is important that the school and the therapist work with you to ensure that the stammer is not a barrier to learning for your child.