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Communication and interaction - introduction

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Communication and Interaction includes Speech, Language and Communication Needs and the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is an umbrella term used to describe those children or young people who have difficulty communicating with others. This may be because they find it challenging to say what they want to, they have difficulty understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand social rules of communication.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a condition related to brain development that impacts how a person perceives and socialises with others, causing problems in social interaction and communication. The disorder includes limited and repetitive patterns of behaviour (Mayo Clinic, 2021).

There are many different types of speech, language and communication needs, including:

- Speech and language delay — speech and language development isn't what would be expected for a child of that age.
- Receptive language difficulty - problems with understanding words, sentences or instructions.
- Expressive language difficulty — issues with using language to express ideas, needs or feelings.
- Speech or articulation difficulty — a difficulty saying words clearly using the correct sounds.
- Social interaction difficulty — problems following the rules of communication and difficulty interacting socially with others.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) includes conditions that were previously considered separately:

- Autism
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Childhood disintegrative disorder
- Unspecified pervasive development disorder

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Blackpool Council

Municipal Buildings
Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1NF

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