



## Fact sheet

# Speech-language therapy services

Skills in speaking and listening, or using another mode of communication such as signing, are fundamental to student learning outcomes and participation in schooling.

The Department of Education provides speech-language therapy services to assist schools with identifying and addressing barriers to learning. These services support students with speech, language and communication needs, or with eating and drinking difficulties, to achieve in education.

### What is a speech-language pathologist?

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) study, identify and treat communication disorders including difficulties with speaking, listening, understanding language, reading, writing, social skills, stuttering and using voice. They work with people who have difficulty communicating and/or who experience difficulties swallowing food and drinks.

Speech-language pathologists work with students, their families and education teams.

### Speech-language therapy services in state schools

Students with speech, language and communication needs or with eating and drinking difficulties may experience problems learning and participating at school. Speech-language therapy services in Queensland state schools support students, their families and education teams to ensure students are able to achieve in education.

Speech-language pathologists can help students with:

- developing their speech sound system
- understanding and using language for thinking, discussing, reading, writing, numeracy and learning
- managing social interactions in the school setting
- speaking fluently
- having a healthy voice so that they can manage talking throughout the school day
- safely eating and drinking at school.

### Who is eligible for speech-language therapy?

Students with speech, language or communication needs enrolled in any Queensland state school or registered for an early childhood development program (ECDP), may be eligible to access the speech-language therapy services.

### How is the service delivered?

Speech-language pathologists work with education teams to identify and support the implementation of adjustments to the curriculum and strategies for teachers to use. These adjustments support students' learning and participation at school.

Speech-language pathologists may use a mix of services which can include advice for teachers and parents, input to curriculum and programming, assessment, individual and group therapy and parent, teacher or teacher aide programs.



The department's speech-language pathologists:

- work as members of education teams to determine the educational needs of students with speech, language and communication needs
- assist schools to develop and deliver programs
- help education teams to adjust the curriculum and use appropriate teaching strategies to support students' communication
- train teachers or teacher aides in ways they can support students
- consult with and provide resources to school staff, parents and the school community
- liaise with other agencies.

### How can these services be accessed?

Speech-language pathologists provide services to a number of schools across a local area while being physically based at one school. To access speech-language therapy services, contact the school principal, Head of Special Education Services or Regional Senior Speech-Language Pathologist.

Concerns about the effects of a child's speech, language and communication skills on their learning should be discussed with classroom teachers or school principals. Schools have referral processes where parents and teachers provide background information and complete a referral form.

For further information visit  
[qld.gov.au/SchoolSpeechPathology](http://qld.gov.au/SchoolSpeechPathology)



