JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	**Communication and Language Specialist (CALS)**
Service/Department:	**Chatterbug Speech and Language Therapy**
Location:	**As specified in contract**
Accountable/Responsible to:	**Clinical Service Manager / Supervising SLT**

Job Purpose

The postholder will work as a Communication and Language Specialist (CALS), supporting children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) under the direction and supervision of a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT). The role will use Chatterbug's Brightspeech screening tools, deliver planned interventions, monitor progress and contribute to safe, effective and person-centred services across education, home, community, Chatterbug and online settings.

Brief Job Description

The postholder will carry out Brightspeech screenings within their training and agreed competence; deliver individual and group interventions indicated by screening outcomes or directed by an SLT; re-screen to track progress; maintain accurate records; and promptly share outcomes, concerns and recommendations with the supervising SLT.
The CALS will contribute to SLT assessments through structured observations and information gathering, support practitioners and families to implement agreed strategies, and contribute to service development and project work with guidance from an SLT. The postholder must work within the boundaries of the CALS role and must not independently diagnose SLCN, undertake specialist assessment, alter clinical plans or discharge a child or young person.

Duties and Responsibilities

Clinical Responsibilities

- Carry out screening of children and young people's speech, language and communication needs using Brightspeech screening tools, in accordance with training, protocols and agreed competence.
- Deliver individual and group interventions for children and young people as indicated by Brightspeech screening results and/or an intervention plan agreed with the supervising SLT.
- Re-screen children and young people using Brightspeech screening tools at agreed review points to track progress and inform next steps.
- Accurately record screening, intervention and re-screening outcomes and report progress, concerns or unexpected findings promptly to the supervising SLT.

- Refer children and young people to an SLT for an in-depth assessment in line with agreed pathways, including where screening, progress, risk or professional judgement indicates that further assessment is required.
- Contribute to SLT assessments by carrying out structured observations and gathering information from children and young people, parents/carers and education practitioners, as directed by the SLT.
- Carry out sessions in settings appropriate to the child or young person's needs, including schools, nurseries, homes, Chatterbug sites, community venues and online appointments.
- Prepare for and deliver intervention programmes, adapting session activities within agreed parameters while maintaining the intended clinical goals.
- Use agreed visual supports, signs, symbols, augmentative and alternative communication approaches and other resources following training and SLT guidance.
- Support parents/carers and education practitioners to understand and implement agreed communication strategies and intervention activities.
- Manage an allocated caseload or workload as directed by the lead or supervising SLT, escalating concerns and seeking support appropriately.
- Recommend continuation, review or closure of intervention to the supervising SLT; final clinical decisions remain with the SLT.
- Contribute to service development, quality improvement and project work with guidance and support from an SLT.
- Maintain, prepare and use therapy, screening and training materials and equipment safely and effectively.

Communication

- Communicate clearly, respectfully and accessibly with children and young people, parents/carers, colleagues and professionals, adapting communication to individual, cultural and linguistic needs.
- Explain screening and intervention activities within the scope of the role and share agreed advice and strategies in a form that is easy to understand.
- Keep the supervising SLT fully informed of progress, barriers, risks, safeguarding concerns and changes in presentation.
- Maintain timely, accurate and contemporaneous records in Chatterbug systems in line with service policies, confidentiality, data protection and information governance requirements.
- Attend and contribute to meetings, reviews and service-promotion activities when required and under appropriate SLT guidance.

Teaching and Practitioner Support

- Deliver pre-prepared training, demonstrations or workshops relating to speech, language and communication, within agreed competence and with SLT support.
- Coach and support parents/carers and education practitioners to deliver agreed intervention activities and communication strategies.

- Gather feedback and reflect on the effectiveness of training and support with the supervising SLT.

Clinical Governance and Safeguarding

- Work within Chatterbug policies, procedures, clinical pathways, standard operating procedures and the boundaries of the CALS role.
- Maintain a working knowledge of safeguarding procedures and act immediately on concerns in accordance with local and national guidance and Chatterbug policy.
- Gather and submit activity, outcome and quality data accurately and on time, including Brightspeech screening and progress information.
- Participate in supervision, audit, quality assurance, incident reporting, service evaluation and improvement activity as required.
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Chatterbug information governance requirements.

Continuing Professional Development

- Complete induction, role-specific competency training and all mandatory training.
- Participate in regular clinical supervision, line management, appraisal and objective setting.
- Take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills in SLCN, Brightspeech screening, intervention delivery, digital systems and outcome measurement.
- Recognise personal limits of competence and seek advice or support before acting outside agreed boundaries.

Analytical and Judgemental Skills

- Observe and describe children and young people's communication skills objectively, distinguishing observed information from interpretation.
- Use agreed screening thresholds, intervention guidance and escalation pathways consistently.
- Reflect on practice, use feedback constructively and identify learning and development needs.
- Identify barriers to engagement or progress and discuss appropriate adjustments with the supervising SLT.

Responsibility for Children, Young People and Families

- Build positive, professional relationships and demonstrate empathy, patience and a non-judgemental approach.
- Promote participation, choice and dignity, using developmentally appropriate and neurodiversity-affirming approaches.

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- Adapt the delivery of agreed activities to the child or young person's circumstances while preserving the intervention aims and seeking guidance where material changes may be required.
- Maintain professional boundaries and respond sensitively when children, young people or families are distressed or when barriers to understanding are present.

Service Development and Organisational Contribution

- Contribute to service development, project work, quality improvement and organisational initiatives with guidance and support from an SLT.
- Represent Chatterbug's ethos, values and social-enterprise mission in day-to-day practice.
- Work collaboratively across teams and share learning, feedback and ideas that may improve outcomes, efficiency or service-user experience.

Responsibility for Equipment and Resources

- Be responsible for the safe use, security, care and maintenance of screening, therapy and digital equipment.
- Monitor stock and resource levels and request replacement or additional resources through agreed processes.
- Follow infection prevention, lone-working, moving and handling, online-safety and health and safety requirements relevant to each setting.

Freedom to Act

- Work independently within delegated tasks, agreed plans, competence and protocols, with regular access to SLT supervision.
- Seek timely support when a child or young person's needs, progress or circumstances fall outside the agreed plan or the postholder's competence.
- Do not independently diagnose, undertake specialist SLT assessment, prescribe or materially change clinical programmes, make final referral or discharge decisions, or provide advice beyond the scope of the role.

Health and Safety

Take a proactive role in managing risk, completing required checks and risk assessments, and reporting incidents, near misses and hazards. Exercise a duty of care for personal safety and for others who may be affected by the postholder's acts or omissions.

Safeguarding

Chatterbug is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults. The postholder must follow national and local safeguarding procedures, complete required training and act promptly on any concern.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Act in ways that promote equality, inclusion and human rights and comply with the Equality Act 2010 and Chatterbug policies. Provide equitable, culturally responsive and neurodiversity-affirming support and challenge discrimination.

This job description is a guide and is not exhaustive. Duties may be reviewed in line with service and business needs, provided they remain appropriate to the role, competence and level of responsibility.

	ESSENTIAL	**DESIRABLE**	**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT**
Qualifications	Relevant Level 3 qualification (for example, Early Years, Education, Health or Care) or equivalent demonstrable experience. English and Maths at Level 2/GCSE or equivalent.	Relevant Level 4 or higher qualification. Training in SLCN, Brightspeech, Makaton, AAC, safeguarding or related areas.	(e.g. Application Form/ Interview/ Certificates/ Assessment Centre/ Psychometric Tests)
Experience	Experience of working with children and young people, including those with SLCN. Experience of working collaboratively with families, education practitioners and/or other professionals. Experience of following structured programmes, recording outcomes and working within agreed boundaries.	Experience of delivering individual or group communication interventions. Experience of screening, visual supports, AAC or coaching others. Experience of working across education, home, clinic, community or online settings.	(e.g. Application Form/ Interview/ Certificates/ Assessment Centre/ Psychometric Tests)

	Experience of safeguarding practice and maintaining confidentiality.		
Skills & Knowledge	Sound knowledge of typical speech, language and communication development and awareness of SLCN. Clear written and verbal communication; accurate observation and record-keeping skills. Ability to follow protocols, use screening tools and deliver structured interventions following training. Ability to recognise limits of competence, escalate concerns and use supervision effectively. Confident use of digital systems and ability to learn Brightspeech tools. Strong relationship-building, organisation and time-management skills. Commitment to safeguarding, equality, neurodiversity-affirming practice and Chatterbug's ethos and values.		(e.g. Application Form/ Interview/ Certificates/ Assessment Centre/ Psychometric Tests)
Job Specific Requirements	Ability to travel independently between required service settings.		

	Ability to work flexibly in accordance with service needs, including face-to-face and online delivery. Enhanced DBS clearance and continued suitability to work with children and young people. Ability to work independently within delegated responsibilities and as part of a team, with regular supervision.		

Core Behaviours

Innovative & Knowledgeable

- Demonstrate creativity in solving problems.
- Bring forward new ideas or methods to improve operations.
- Displays a strong understanding of industry trends and best practices.

Respectful

- Treat others with dignity and fairness.
- Listens actively and values diverse perspectives.
- Maintains professionalism even in difficult situations.

Collaborative

- Works effectively in teams, encouraging input from others.
- Builds strong relationships with colleagues, clients, and partners.
- Supports team members in achieving shared goals.

Resilient

- Responds well to challenges and setbacks.
- Shows persistence in the face of obstacles.
- Maintains focus and positivity under pressure.

Communication and Language Specialist (CALS)

Customer Focused

- Prioritises client needs and delivers excellent customer service.
- Anticipates and resolves customer issues proactively.
- Tailors solutions to meet client expectations.

Lead by Example

- Acts with integrity and professionalism.
- Models desired behaviours for team members.
- Takes the initiative to drive progress and uphold standards.

Flexible

- Adapts to changing priorities and demands.
- Remains open to new approaches and solutions.
- Manages uncertainty and ambiguity well.

Curious

- Actively seeks out new knowledge and learning opportunities.
- Questions assumptions and explores different perspectives.
- Shows a passion for continuous improvement.

Results Oriented

- Focuses on achieving tangible outcomes.
- Demonstrates a strong work ethic to meet or exceed targets.
- Holds themselves accountable for delivering results.

Conscious Capitalism

- Demonstrates an understanding of the social enterprise model.
- Balances business goals with the organisation's mission to create a positive societal impact.
- Makes decisions with sustainability and long-term value in mind.

Employee's Name and Signature: **Date:**

Manager's Name and Signature: **Date:**