

Parity Between Speech and Language Therapy Reports for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

We, the Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practice (ASLTIP), wish to address a critical issue on behalf of our members. We have been made aware that some local authorities are refusing to consider reports provided by independent Speech and Language Therapists as part of the EHCP process.

Statement of fact

All practising Speech and Language Therapists working in the UK are:

- Required to complete the same degree level qualification.
- Registered with the regulator for the profession, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- Bound by the same standards of proficiency, conduct, performance and ethics set by the HCPC which they are required to adhere to.

All ASLTIP members are:

- Qualified Speech and Language Therapists, with a minimum of two years recent and continuous post graduate experience.
- Registered with HCPC and bound by standards of proficiency, conduct and performance.
- Members of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT).

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) states that local authorities are required to consider all evidence provided by professionals to deliver an outcomes focused and coordinated plan for children and young people with SEND. The Code specifies that local authorities must:

- Ensure the views, wishes, and feelings of the child and their parents are taken into account (Section 9.49).
- Consider advice and information from any person requested by the child's parent or young person (Section 9.49).
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach (Section 9.22).

The Equalities Act (2010) mandates that all children and young people should have access to the support they need, without unfair treatment or bias.

It is essential that all children and young people receive the support they need to secure the best possible outcomes, based on thorough and unbiased assessments from qualified professionals. ASLTIP calls upon local authorities to recognise their legal obligations and act in the best interests of children and young people by considering all input fairly and without discrimination.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and are available to discuss this further to ensure that the needs of children and young people are appropriately met.

The ASLTIP Executive Board, September 2024