



SWANSEA
PARENT CARER FORUM
Influencing positive change



People you may meet

As parent carers ourselves we have tried to explain in simple terms what different professionals do.

Professional titles can be confusing if you're not familiar with them, particularly if you're meeting a lot of new people from different professional backgrounds at the same time. Don't worry - although this looks daunting, you will probably only come into contact with a few of the people listed.

Health

Audiologist

An audiologist carries out hearing tests and explains the results of those tests. If your child needs hearing aids they will identify the best type and arrange for you to get them. They also monitor your child's hearing, to make sure that any hearing aids supplied are appropriate. An audiologist usually refers you to a doctor who works with deaf children. Depending on where you live, this doctor can be called an audiological physician, a community paediatrician in audiology, or an ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgeon.

Dietician

A dietician is a health professional who gives advice about nutrition and swallowing or feeding difficulties. Sometimes children need nasogastric or gastrostomy feeding to receive the nutrition they need. This means liquid feed is given through a tube that is inserted directly through the abdominal wall or through a narrow tube that is passed through the nose, down the food pipe and into the stomach. A dietician makes a full nutritional assessment before feeding begins in this way. They can advise you, the hospital and community health staff about the feed type, the amount, the method of administration, the feeding regimen and any equipment required for your child.

Ear, Nose and Throat consultant (ENT consultant)

An ENT consultant is a doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of ear, nose and throat conditions. When a hearing loss has been identified, they can help in trying to discover the cause of deafness. They also offer advice and treatment when older children develop glue ear (also known as Otitis Media).

Occupational therapist (OT)

An occupational therapist (OT) helps children improve their developmental function by therapeutic techniques, environmental adaptations and the use of specialist equipment. OTs are concerned with difficulties that children have in carrying out the activities of everyday life. This could include sitting in a chair, holding a spoon and fork or drinking from a cup. They can also advise on how you as a parent can carry your child up and down stairs safely. OTs work for both the health service and social services. Paediatric OTs working for the health service assess children for things like specialist chairs or cups. Social services OTs pay for the equipment. You may also come across health service OTs once your child starts nursery or school.

Ophthalmologist

An ophthalmologist is a doctor based in a hospital who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of eye defects and diseases. They have special qualifications and experience in eye disorders and in treating them with appropriate medicine and surgery. You may be referred to one to check that your child's eyes are healthy.

Optician

An optician is trained to dispense and adjust spectacles and other optical aids.

Optometrist/Ophthalmic optician

An optometrist is a health professional who specialises in measuring children's sight and prescribing glasses. They can identify eye diseases and are usually based at a hospital or opticians, although young children with multi-sensory impairment is more likely to be assessed at a specialist clinic. The dispensing optician will help you choose frames and make sure they fit properly but cannot test your child's sight or prescribe glasses.

Orthoptist

An orthoptist is a health professional who specialises in correcting vision by nonsurgical means (especially by exercises to strengthen the eye muscles). They often work with ophthalmologists in hospitals but may also work in a health clinic.

Paediatrician

A paediatrician is a doctor who specialises in working with babies and children. They are often the first point of contact for families who find out their child has an impairment or disability very early on in hospital and can offer advice, information and support about any medical condition(s) a child has. Paediatricians sometimes work in hospitals and sometimes within community health. It's usually a paediatrician who refers your child on to any other specialists that they need to see.

Physiotherapist

A physiotherapist is a health professional specialising in physical and motor development. They are concerned with maximising children's potential. This means they will assess your child and develop a plan that might include helping your child control their head movement, sit, roll over, crawl or walk. Physiotherapists can also teach you how to handle your child at home for feeding, bathing and dressing, and advise on equipment that might help your child's mobility. A physiotherapist may see your child at home, or in other settings such as a nursery placement or child development centre (CDC). They work closely with families, with other healthcare professionals and anyone else involved in caring for children. Some families meet a physiotherapist for the first time very early on, when their child is in a Special Care Baby Unit or on a hospital ward.

Portage home visitor/Portage worker

Someone who has received training from the National Portage Association to work with you and your child. Portage home visitors come from a wide range of professional backgrounds and may be teachers, speech and language therapists or occupational therapists, nursery nurses, health visitors, social workers or parents or volunteers with relevant experience. They are not available in every area of Wales. In Swansea Stepping Stones run a portage service.

Specialist health visitor

A specialist health visitor is a health visitor who has additional training and experience of working with young children with medical problems or disabilities. They can act as a bridge between hospital and community health services in the pre-school years.

Speech and language therapist

A speech and language therapist specialises in speech, language and communication problems. They assess, diagnose and develop programmes of care to help children develop communication skills. They offer support and advice to parents and to other professionals about developing communication that may be verbal (i.e. using speech) or non-verbal, using signs, symbols or communication aids. Some speech and language therapists also specialise in feeding, eating or swallowing disorders. There are many causes of speech and language difficulties. Some speech and language therapists specialise in working with particular populations of children - for example, deaf children or children with cleft lip and palate. They work with children of all ages. Speech and language therapists work as members of teams in many different settings including health clinics, hospitals, nurseries, Sure Start Children's Centres and schools. They work closely with families, medical and health staff, teachers and social workers, depending on children's needs and circumstances.

How health services are organized in Wales

Currently, the NHS in Wales provides 4 levels of care:

1. **Primary Care** – this is provided through GPs, opticians, dentists, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals such as health visitors
2. **Secondary Care** – this is more specialist care provided through hospitals
3. **Tertiary Care** - provided through specialist hospitals treating particular types of illness such as cancer
4. **Community Care** - provided by the NHS in partnership with local social services to help vulnerable people.

In addition, NHS Wales provides specialist services that support medical diagnosis and treatment and disease prevention, such as screening services. Local Health Boards (LHBs) have been set up across Wales. Local Health Boards (LHBs) are responsible for planning, designing, developing and securing the delivery of:

- primary services
- community services
- in-hospital care services
- specialised and tertiary services

The health board that covers Swansea is Swansea Bay University Health Board

Education

ALN Case Worker

Your ALN Caseworker is a key contact and they will work collaboratively with everyone involved in your young person's education to achieve the best outcomes for them. You may work with them during your young person's annual review particularly around transition stages (to a new school) or changes in provision or if there are particular issues in meeting a learner's needs that need to be worked through. They will provide information, advice and guidance at any stage including early years settings, schools, colleges in an open, honest and transparent way.

Additional Learning Needs co-ordinator (ALNCo)

An ALNCo has responsibility for what happens on a day-to-day basis in the school for pupils with additional learning needs. The ALNCo also provides professional advice to other teachers in the school to help all pupils to make progress. The headteacher and school governors also have responsibilities in law, in relation to children with additional learning needs. An ALNCo is usually a teacher in a school or early years setting who has responsibility for identifying children with special educational needs and making sure they receive appropriate support. This may involve working directly with the child, supporting mainstream staff in assessing a child's needs or a combination of both of these.

Advisory teacher

An advisory teacher is a teacher, usually with additional training in a particular specialism, who advises schools and families on educational approaches. Some advisory teachers visit families with pre-school age children in their homes.

Educational audiologist

An educational audiologist is a qualified teacher of the deaf, who has an

additional recognised qualification in audiology including hearing assessment. They give guidance to other teachers of the deaf, parents and other professionals about hearing assessments, hearing aids and hearing support.

Educational psychologist (EP)

An educational psychologist has a doctorate in educational psychology as well as a degree in psychology. Educational psychologists are concerned with children's learning and development. They use their specialist skills in psychological and educational assessment techniques to help those having difficulties in learning, behaviour or social adjustment. They carry out a wide range of tasks with the aim of enhancing children's learning and enabling to become more aware of the social factors affecting teaching and learning.

Learning support assistant/teaching assistant

A learning support or teaching assistant is someone who works in education settings alongside teachers, supporting individual children or small groups to help them learn effectively, participate and fulfill their potential.

Physical and Complex Needs service

Provides a Specialist Teacher who works with children and their families, schools and health professionals to ensure that the child's needs are being met within the school setting. The Specialist Teacher for Physical and Complex Needs works with children and young people with complex physical and medical conditions.

Sensory Needs Service is divided into three areas:

1. Hearing Impairment
2. Deaf, Visual Impairment
3. Blind and Habilitation Specialists

The Hearing Impairment Team and the Visual Impairment Team are made up of Specialist Teachers and Specialist Teaching Assistant also known as Multi-Sensory Impairment teachers (MSI) and Qualified Teacher for Visual Impairment (QVI). They provide support to pupils from 0-19 years as outlined on Statements of Special Educational Need, School Action Plus (SA+) level and Individual Development Plans. Training and advice are also offered from the team to schools to offer support and advice to parents. Habilitation Specialists also offer advice and guidance to pupils, families and schools on accessibility issues related to visual impairment whilst attending school.

Speech, Language and Communication Team (SLCT)

Provide support, offer advice and guidance to primary and secondary schools across Swansea for children and young adults aged 3-19 years with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) including Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This service is offered to pupils in English medium and Welsh medium schools.

Within the Speech, Language and Communication Team, there are specialist teachers and specialist teaching assistants for speech, language and communication needs and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) manage School Action Plus (SA+) referrals through a 'communication forum' referral process which occurs weekly and supports the SLCT in schools with Statemented caseload providing the Speech Sound Impairment Service (SSI) and the Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) services

Behaviour Support Service

Offers advice to schools across Swansea for professionals working with pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The service comprises of Specialist Behaviour Support Teachers (BST) and a Support Assistant, based within school clusters. The service provides school staff with practical support for pupils demonstrating social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). Behaviour Support Teachers (BST) also deliver training in schools, and where needed, work directly with groups or individual children. For example, providing advice about a particular pupil, or providing support to develop strategies to promote positive behaviour or manage challenging behaviour.

School Counselling

Children and young people between the ages of 5-25 and living in Swansea are supported with counselling and therapy services. The services are delivered by The Exchange and are available in schools throughout the County and in Swansea City Centre. The primary purpose is to support the development of psychological and emotional resilience in the young clients.

Social Care

Swansea Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

Families living in Swansea can contact SPOC themselves to ask for help or advice.

Supports families in Swansea to live happy, healthy, and safe lives. They can help you get support from the right people at the right time.

You may have already been referred for more specialist support within social care see below:-

Child Disability Team

Is a specialist team who look after the specific needs of children and young people with disabilities. It is one of the services provided by Child and Family Services in Swansea. The team is made up of social workers and family support workers. They work closely with lots of different professionals including; health visitors, health support workers and occupational therapists.

Duty worker/duty social worker/duty officer

A duty worker is a person who answers the phone and takes details when you ring to make contact with social services. Most teams of social workers operate a duty system, which means that each team member is responsible in turn for answering the phones, making home visits and dealing with families who do not yet have an allocated or named social worker.

Social worker

A social worker is a professional who supports children and families by advising on appropriate services and introducing families to some of the services they need. Social workers provide practical help and advice supporting a range of disabled children. They may also be able to help you with claiming welfare benefits or obtaining equipment you need at home. They help families to access other services, such as family sign language classes, parents' groups or play schemes.

Social services OTs

If you think you might need housing adaptations of any kind. They can carry out an assessment for minor adaptations (like providing a portable ramp for your front door) to major adaptations like an extension. Social services OTs can also tell you about Disabled Facilities Grants. If you are eligible, these grants can help towards the cost of providing adaptations.

We hope you found this information useful.

Swansea Parent Carer Forum helps to influence and shape services relevant to our children of all ages.

You don't need to be signed up to the Forum to get involved, but by becoming a member you will receive our monthly newsletter and be kept informed of the work we are doing, as well as training and workshops that we run.

What we say and how we work needs to reflect what you want and what matters to you. Join us as a member to help influence the future.
www.swanseapcf.org/joinus

Web: swanseapcf.org

Facebook Page: [@swanseapcf](https://www.facebook.com/swanseapcf)

Facebook Group: [@swanseapcf](https://www.facebook.com/groups/swanseapcf)

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