



A child receiving support from his speech and language therapist

# Success to speak of

**A** ground-breaking scheme where health and education professionals work together to improve children's speech and language skills has been praised by the Government.

The project in Hackney is unique and was held up as an example of good practice in a recent review. The borough was applauded for its range of innovations and for making services

more responsive and accessible to children and families. Every child in Hackney can benefit from

**“By working together we can help children gain confidence, make friends and thrive”**

the service. All primary schools are linked to a speech and language therapist (SLT) who helps children develop their skills. Innovative services in secondary schools include cookery classes that also serve to monitor pupil's understanding of language.

Families with pre-school age children can access support through six children's centres across the borough. There is also a

monthly drop-in service for parents who want advice on how to help their child.

The service is a joint project between the City & Hackney Primary Care Trust and The Learning Trust. Sally Shaw, Speech and Language Therapy team leader, said: “By working together to develop children's communication skills, including learning to read and write, we can help them gain confidence, make friends and thrive in their school environment.”

Sally added: “Our therapists offer training for parents, teachers, dinner ladies and playground supervisors. In particular, we want parents to know how they can support their child at home.”

SLT services in the borough have almost doubled in the past five years and specialist support is now available for children with more complex problems.

Penny Dixie, from the Learning Trust, added: “We know that we are making a difference especially when schools, children's centres, teachers and parents tell us how pleased they are with the new service.”

## MORE INFO

The service accepts referrals from parents.  
Call: 020 7683 4587



## It's a bug's life

**LEADING** writer, academic and critic Germaine Greer opened an unusual photo exhibition at Homerton hospital as part of celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the NHS.

Close Encounters showcases the work of retired cardiologist and physician Dr Dan Tunstall Pedoe (pictured above with

Germaine) and includes over 100 colour images – mostly close-ups of insects. Professor Greer, who is also president of invertebrate charity Buglife, said: “It is an honour to launch this splendid exhibition. Dr Tunstall Pedoe's work is, I believe, a pointer to the future as it shows us all a new way of collecting these wonderful creatures. Any

child can pick up a decent digital camera and put together a butterfly collection without harming or killing a single insect.”

The exhibition runs until 7 November. To view by appointment e-mail: [shaun.caton@homerton.nhs.uk](mailto:shaun.caton@homerton.nhs.uk). For more info about insects visit: [www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)