

### Sam's story September 2021

**Name of service:** Children's Speech and Language Therapy

**Main purpose of service:** Locala's Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) work with children aged 0-18 years who have communication and/or feeding and swallowing difficulties. These children may experience difficulties in the following areas:

- Being able to listen and pay attention
- Understanding words and instructions
- Talking in words and sentences
- Difficulties with pronunciation of speech sounds
- Social communication and interaction
- Stammering
- Eating, drinking & swallowing



**About the person:** Sam is 5 years old and does well in school. Like the rest of his family, he is passionate about Rugby Union and he and his big sisters regularly play. Sam's Mum Rachel explains, **"with some words he was using different sounds, like 'D' instead of 'F'. When he started school, we were advised to get his hearing checked out and that Speech and Language may help."**

Sam's hearing was found to be fine and his GP referred him for Speech and Language therapy. Sam worked with therapist Julie Spencer.

**Virtual programme:** Sam's Mum Rachel explains that all his Speech and Language Therapy sessions were online. **"Julie did his initial assessment and then at first worked with Sam on the sounds at the end of words, then practised sounds at the beginning. She never pushed him faster than he could go."** All sessions were on face time using Sam's i-pad with Julie showing picture cards on screen. Rachel says that Julie sent a link on an email and it worked really well. **"Julie made it work. She was so engaging. She was really good with Sam."**

**Convenient:** Rachel feels that the online therapy sessions were perfect for Sam and their family. **"If it had just been over the phone, there would have been no interaction, but the i-pad worked for us. Sam is familiar with it, he already does Doodle Maths on it, and he got used to it quickly."** Asked if face to face sessions would have worked better, Rachel says, **"Online worked well. I don't drive, so I would have had to have got lifts or a taxi. Sam was at home so he has less distractions. He didn't know any different. Also, if we had needed to go to the clinic, I would have had to sort out someone to look after my daughter when she got back from school. I would have had to collect Sam earlier from school too – he would have missed more time from school."**

**Progress:** Rachel says that Sam's speech has improved. **"People have noticed and said that Sam is so much more chatty! He is having more conversations with people. School have noticed a change too."**