



## **EDITORS NOTES**

The Association for Research into Stammering in Childhood

**The Association for Research into Stammering in Childhood (ARSC), funds the delivery of specialist services that transform the lives of children and young people who stammer.**

ARSC is the Charity behind the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children. Based in Islington, this national Centre runs the UK's largest specialist service exclusively dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of children who stammer.

Stammering is a severe communication disability which impairs social, emotional and educational development. Estimates for children suggest that 1 in 20 children stammer and that it is 3 to 4 times more common in boys than in girls. While stammering is outwardly characterised by repetitions, prolongations and blocking of sounds, these core behaviours can be accompanied by feelings of isolation, frustration, embarrassment, diminished self-worth and poor self-image.

Stammering crosses all races, cultures, religions and social groupings, conceals intellectual ability, affects educational choices and attainment, results in impaired communication skills and frequently becomes a focus for teasing and bullying. In chronic cases, it may play a significant part in a young person's ability to achieve their potential and to make their full contribution to society as an adult.

As well as providing specialist assessments and therapy, the charity also funds training of Speech and Language Therapists and appropriate Research. The training increases the understanding, skills and confidence of generalist Speech and Language Therapists to be able to work with a child who stammers and the Research programme provides evidence of the efficacy of the work done whilst at the same time helps to continue to develop the best possible therapies.

### **History**

ARSC was the inspiration of Travers Reid, a lifelong stammerer and successful businessman, who was determined to provide help to children who stammer throughout the UK. The Charity was founded in 1991 by him, along with the late Dr Lena Rustin, an internationally recognised speech and language therapist.

The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children was founded in 1993 as a national specialist centre. It is jointly funded by ARSC and the NHS. Originally the Centre employed one part time Speech and Language Therapist, but there are now 11 (full- and part-time) specialist therapists supported by a small administrative team. ARSC is extremely proud of the high standard of professionalism and dedication of the staff who work there. ARSC is also very excited about our discussions with the NHS in Leeds and our plans to work in partnership with them to help establish a new, more local centre for children in the Yorkshire and Humber area.

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