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# Resources that Accompany the Good Practice Guide for Mainstream Primary Schools

Basic Language Chatterbox  
Expressive Language Chatterbox  
Expressive Language Chatterbox

} LDA, Duke Street, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 2AE  
[www.ldalearning.com](http://www.ldalearning.com)

Learning to Talk DVD  
Chatter Matters DVD  
Chatter Chart

} I CAN, 8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE  
[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)





# Section 1: The Development of the Good Practice Guide



# The Development of the Good Practice Guide



Across Wales there is growing concern about the increasing number of children identified as needing help for speech, language and communication difficulties and the disparity in provision to ensure their needs are met appropriately and equitably.

Conflicting policies and priorities across healthcare and education services have led to wide variations in the way that speech, language and communication needs of children are met nationwide. These factors have led to inequity and inconsistency in service provision across Wales.

In an attempt to resolve these issues, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has commissioned short Speech and Language Pilot Projects across Wales which are to end in March 2008. This has enabled NHS Trusts, Local Health Boards (LHB) and Local Education Authorities (LEA) to work in partnership towards developing a single Children's Speech, Language and Communication Service in their area in an effort to address the local issues relating to disparate provision.

The geographical distribution of these projects was based on NHS Trust boundaries and therefore, the Project in this area covers Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

A partnership has been created between Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust [C & V NHS Trust], Cardiff Local Education Authority [CLEA], Vale Local Education Authority [VLEA], Cardiff Local Health Board [CLHB] and Vale Local Health Board [VLHB], as well as input from Afasic and support from WAG.

These partners are developing collaboration and joint working which will integrate healthcare and education services for children with speech, language and communication difficulties and subsequently improve provision for children and their families.

A Training Sub-Group with representatives from across the partnership organisations has been set up as part of the Project. This Good Practice Guide, which aims to develop and build on the good work already taking place in schools across the two LEAs has been produced as a result.

The Guide offers practical advice, strategies and activities for SENCOs, Classroom Teachers and Teaching Assistants to help children achieve their potential for speech, language and communication within Educational Settings as well as setting out a framework for Good Practice within this field.

The Good Practice Guide was produced by the Training Sub-Group; many thanks to:

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Karen Visser, Principal Speech & Language Therapist, Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust

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Martine Dodd, Associate Adviser, SEN, Vale of Glamorgan LEA

---

Natalie Aitken, Speech & Language Therapist, Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust

---

Linda Davies, Specialist Teacher, Sensory & Communication Team Leader, Cardiff LEA

---

Skye Frazer-Ryan, Speech & Language Therapist, Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust

---

Penny Wooller, Advisory Teacher, SEN, Cardiff LEA

---

Beth Parow, Speech & Language Therapist, Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust

---

Rose Orchard, Early Years SENCO, Cardiff LEA

---

Suzanne Sarjeant, Advisory Teacher, Foundation Phase, Cardiff LEA

---

Elinor Pepperell, Danielle Pritchard, Rebecca Willmoth, WAG Speech and Language Services Pilot Project

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Many thanks also to Elkland and QEd / Swindon LEA for kind permission to use and adapt their material.

## **Elkland**

Sunnyside, Wadebridge Road, St Mabyn  
Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 3BQ  
Tel: 01208 841450 Website: [www.elkland.co.uk](http://www.elkland.co.uk)

## **QEd Publications Ltd**

39 Weeping Cross, Stafford ST17 0DG  
Tel: 01785 620364 Website: [www.qed.uk.com](http://www.qed.uk.com)

## Prevalence of Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties:

“Language, without question, is the key to learning”  
(Boyer 1991)

**Learning to communicate is one of the most important elements of child development in the early years. The ability to listen, understand, talk and interact with others is an essential component of a child’s developmental profile and impacts on all areas of development including social, emotional and behavioural well being. These skills are integral to a child’s ability to access education to their maximum potential.**

Development of language is a remarkably complex process (indeed, despite many theories on how language is acquired and develops, there is no consensus of agreement to the definitive process or requirements). Although children are often considered to be pre-programmed to learn language skills it is generally accepted that competence in this area is dependent on certain experiences, environments and facilitation during key periods for its development.

Delay in language development is recognised as the most common childhood disability affecting pre-school children

Law, 1989

Speech and Language delay has been found to affect up to 20-25% of pre-school children. Boys are more affected than girls.

A recent large study has shown that 13% of school aged children had communication difficulties.

McLeod & McKinnon, 2007

The figure can rise to 60 - 84 percent for children from particularly disadvantaged communities. This information is substantiated on an international level by studies such as that conducted by Hart and Risley (1995); as well as on a national level by research as found in Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) Bulletin, April 2006.

Data obtained on a local level through a questionnaire to Nursery and Reception provision across Cardiff in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 (Carson, 2005) shows that each year difficulty in the area of speech, language and communication is the most prevalent additional need presenting on Nursery school entry (7.5% of whole population in 2005).

## Impact of Speech, Language and Communication Deficits:

There are a number of longitudinal studies which document the impact of a communication disability.

A deficit in language skills results in a substantial impact on a wide range of factors, for example:

### Learning outcomes for children with speech, language and communication difficulties:

Without adequate support, communication disability has been shown to adversely affect academic achievement (Snowling et al, 2001).

Taking into account that there is no area of the Early Years or National Curriculum which does not require language or communication, Hooper et al, 2003, highlights that comprehension difficulties make children incredibly vulnerable in relation to accessing education systems.

Early language impairment in the pre-school years has also been found to be clearly associated with continued (and more wide-ranging) academic difficulties throughout a child’s school career and on into adulthood (Young et al, 2002).

A high proportion (41 – 75%) of children with identified speech and language difficulties in their pre-school years go on to have difficulties with reading skills during their school years.

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, 1999

Tomblin, Zhang, Buckwalter & Catts (2000) found that children with impaired language development were at risk of both reading and behavioural problems.



### Personal and social development and well-being for children with speech, language and communication difficulties:

Young children with speech and language impairments are at risk of continued problems not only in the field of communication, but also for associated cognitive, academic, behavioural, social and psychiatric difficulties (Bashir & Scavuzzo, 1992). Self esteem, emotional health and wellbeing are impacted upon significantly and often have the consequence of affecting social acceptance (Botting & Conti-Ramsden, 2000).

Even in a pre-school setting; children with language difficulties are less likely to be chosen as friendship partners.

**Gertner et al, 1994**

Paul & Kellogg (1997) found that children with slow expressive development at two years of age were rated as “shyer, and less outgoing than peers when followed up at six years of age”. Children with early language impairment present as significantly more anxious as young adults compared with non-impaired children.

The link between early communication difficulties and behavioural development is well documented “Behavioural difficulties of an aggressive nature have been reported as showing increased prevalence in young children with speech and language impairment” (Carson et al, 1998).

An increase in frustration, misunderstanding, and inevitable inability to access the curriculum arising from impaired speech, language and communication could result in aggressive behaviour, as could failure to understand other children and adults.

The impact of speech, language and communication difficulties in the early years can persist into adolescence and adulthood and may even permeate social and moral values. Certainly, low education and speech and literacy difficulties have been identified as risk factors for offending (Tomblin, 2000). High levels of speech, language and communication difficulties are found among the young offender population (Bryan, 2004).

### What can be done?

Although this information would suggest that the outlook for children with speech, language and communication is disheartening; it is important to bear in mind that proactive and coordinated support for developing these skills can make a big difference.

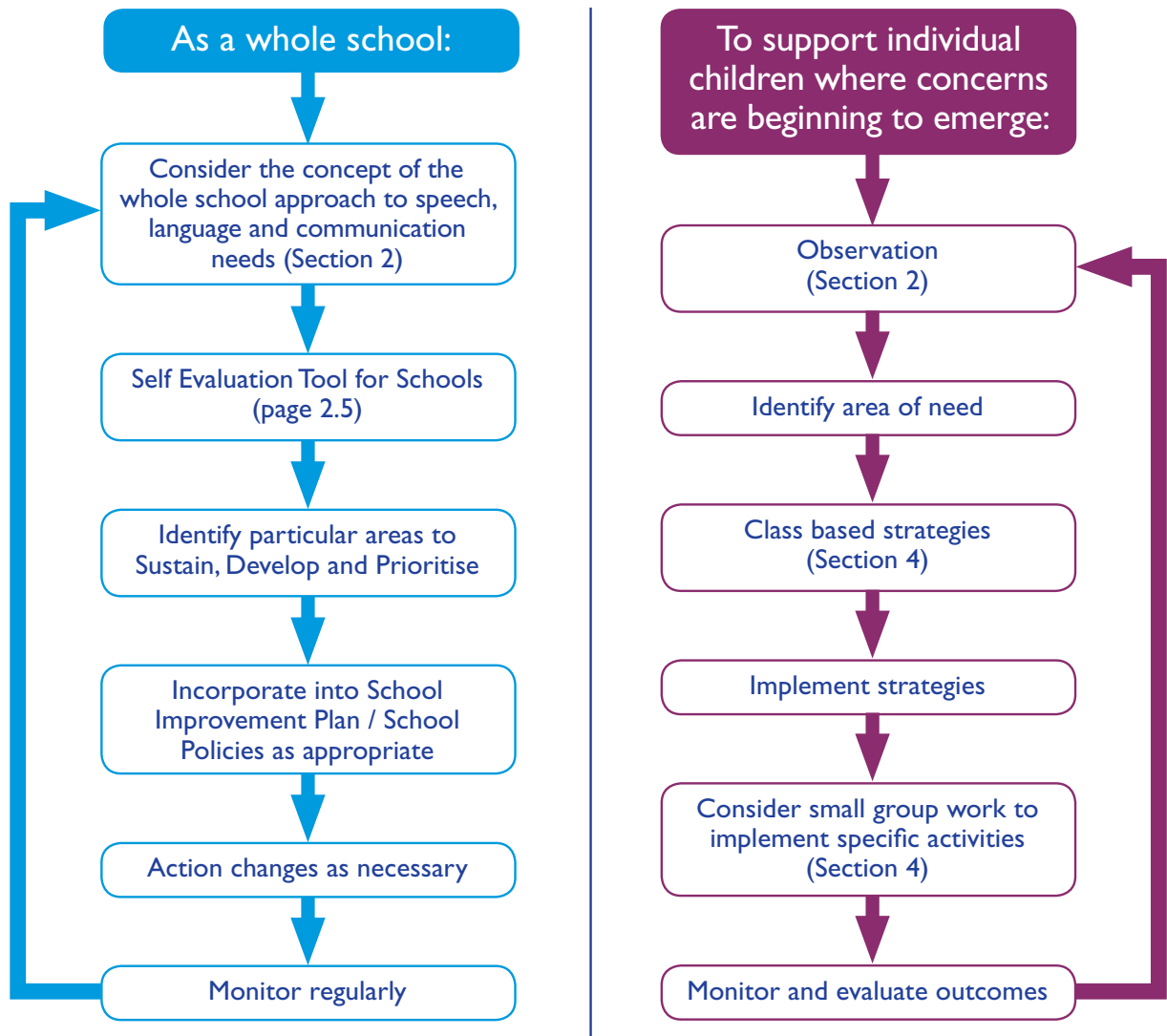
Within the context of education, adopting a Whole School Approach and implementing a range of general and specific strategies will help promote the importance of good communication skills, and for many children could even prevent further delay.

Developing an understanding for all staff members (including non Teaching Staff) of the importance of language in learning and subsequently of their role in an agreed, shared perspective on speech, language and communication promotes an ethos of a “Speech, Language and Communication Friendly School”. A Whole School approach is paramount to ensuring success.

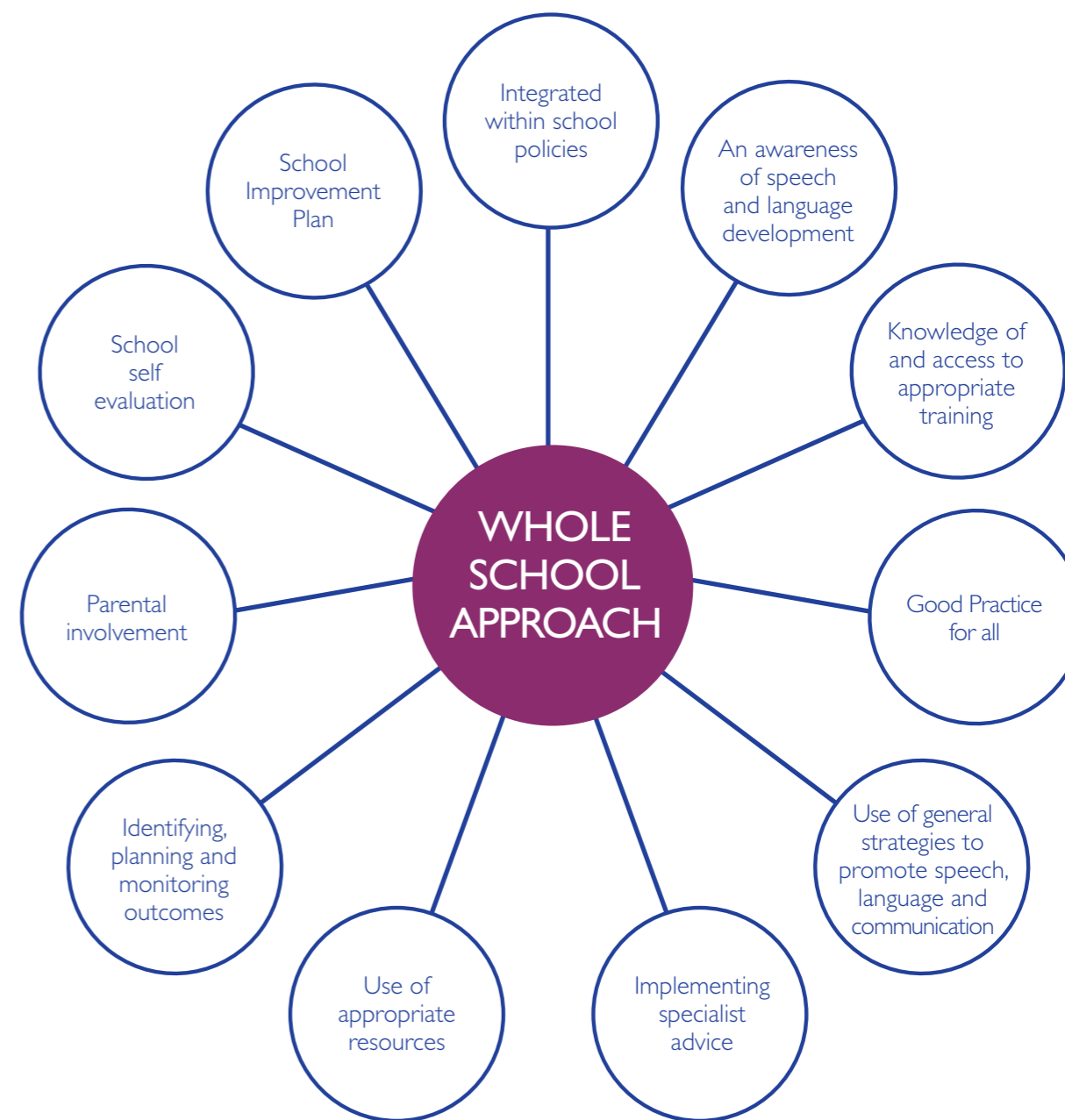
# Section 2: Whole School Approach to Speech, Language and Communication Needs



# How to use the Good Practice Guide



## What is Good Practice?





# A Self Evaluation Tool for Schools

## How well do we meet Speech and Language Needs?

The following Self-Evaluation Tool, adapted from "Guidelines for a Speech and Language Friendly School" (Qed, 2005) will help schools to identify key areas for development.

**S** = Sustain   **D** = Develop   **P** = Prioritise   **G** = Good Practice Guide

Statement of practice	S	D	P	G
Speech and language features in English, Maths, Science and SEN policies. Also if appropriate the School Improvement Plan				
Staff have a basic understanding of typical speech and language development				
Staff understand the terminology related to speech and language difficulties				
Staff are aware of how speech and language difficulties impact on literacy development				See p. 1.3
Staff are aware of how speech and language difficulties affect access to curriculum				
Staff are aware how speech and language difficulties affect social and emotional development				See p. 1.4
Training is available to all staff including a system in place allowing cascading of information from courses to all colleagues				
Staff are aware of general strategies to promote communication e.g. classroom environment, teaching styles, use of support/resources				See p. 4.1
SENCO is aware of referral route for a child with speech and language difficulties and this is passed on to all staff				
Time is allocated for relevant school staff to liaise with outside agencies				
School familiar with current County Criteria/Documents particularly sections relating to speech and language difficulties				
Staff are aware of a range of specific strategies which can help children with speech and language difficulties to access the curriculum e.g. visual strategies etc.				See p. 4.1
Strategies used with specific children are used by all staff				
Resources are in place to ensure the requirements of guidance criteria are fulfilled				
Staff can identify how curriculum can be modified for children with speech and language impairment				
Staff can set suitable targets, write appropriate IEPs which are shared with parents				See p. 3.1
There is a whole school/community approach which ensures a child with speech and language difficulties is supported and has his/her needs fully met				
Effective communication is in place between home and school				See p.2.17

A photocopiable version can be found in Section 5.

# Good Practice and delivering the curriculum

## 1. Good Practice and Active Learning

Active Learning is most likely to take place when a child is fully involved in real experiences with real resources.

In Active Learning, activities are practical and multi-sensory allowing the child to lead the activities and learn "by doing". The child is able to make choices and initiate actions / ideas, thus directing his/her learning experience.

### Active Learning will produce learners who:

- Are able to focus for longer periods of time
- Have high self-esteem as they take responsibility for their own learning
- Can make connections in learning
- Can be independent but also collaborative
- Can take risks
- Have greater confidence
- Are able to question, experiment and hypothesise

### For Active Learning to take place, there must be:

- An appropriate context for learning based on the interest of the child and his/her prior knowledge
- Opportunities for real experiences
- Opportunities for an element of learner choice
- Assessment, based on careful observation
- A consideration of and opportunities for visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles
- An indoor and outdoor environment
- A balance of child initiated and adult led activities

Active Learning is an effective way for teachers to meet the Special Educational Needs of many children of all ages.



**Active Learning and the development of speech, language & communication skills:**

Active learning is essential in the development of a child's speech, language and communication skills. When language used (by adults and others) is meaningful and relevant, the child has an ideal opportunity for learning new vocabulary and language structures. The child is able to relate the language they are hearing to the objects / activity / environment in which they are engaged.

- Pupils are more likely to understand when they are involved in something practical, for example when washing hands. Similarly, positional language is more easily acquired in the context of physical activity where the child is able to get in / on / under an object. Following these activities, the child will be able to use objects and pictures to reinforce newly learned vocabulary.
- There will be natural opportunities for an adult to use strategies such as "modelling" of language, when the child is able to hear meaningful, appropriate language repeated in a context that is interesting to him / her. However, there may also be times when a situation is set up to allow specific opportunities for communication.
- Simple daily routines such as tidying up can be used for sorting, discussing, cooperating and sharing responsibility.
- The child will be more motivated to attend and listen when he/she has chosen the activity. Active learning situations can provide opportunities for games and activities where the child can listen to and carry out requests.

- The child is likely to be more involved and verbally responsive when an activity has meaning for them. She/he will be more likely to use new words, phrases or utterances. She/he is also more likely to respond and communicate appropriately in this situation, speaking with more confidence when operating at their level of ability. The intelligibility of the child's speech may also improve when she/he is motivated to be understood by others.
- In the early stages of these learning situations, the language the child hears will relate to the "here and now", but later the child will internalise this language. This marks the development of abstract language skills.
- Active learning encourages the child to use language in a variety of different ways e.g. for problem solving real experiences; interacting and discussing with others.



**Active Learning provides ideal opportunities for encouraging a child to:**

- Interact and communicate spontaneously
- Talk about his/her immediate and personal interests
- Ask and answer questions
- Express thoughts, ideas and feelings, likes, dislikes and needs

- Express opinions
- Predict outcomes and discuss possibilities

Active Learning and play are interlinked in the Foundation Phase, however; it is important at every stage of learning for a child to have first hand, concrete experiences in order to develop abstract thinking.



## 2. Good Practice and Developing Language Through Play

Play needs to be based on children's first hand experience, expanding and enriching those experiences. It is important for self esteem and helps children to become confident and competent, whilst also assisting them to think and learn independently.

### Why is play so valuable for children?

- Play is intrinsic to children
- They are highly motivated during play
- They can focus and concentrate for extended periods of time
- They are relaxed
- They are able to take risks
- Play is vital for the cognitive development of young children

### Through play children can:

- Practise and build ideas and concepts
- Understand the need for rules
- Learn to co-operate
- Think imaginatively and creatively
- Communicate with others
- Express fears in controlled situations

The role of play for children with EAL is culturally and socially variable. The early experiences of these children may differ from their English/Welsh speaking peers and bilingual staff, if available, can enhance learning opportunities through play. Young children with EAL will learn English/ Welsh from their peers as well as adults and will often be more ready to practise and rehearse language in play away from the gaze of adults. Interactive activities that encourage child-to-child conversations will support all children's language development.

### Whole School Strategies to Develop Communication through Play:

- Ongoing observations are essential (Refer to observation section).
- Let the children take a lead in play and make choices.
- Provide a simple commentary on the child's play e.g. "You're pushing the bus. It's going very fast! I think it's going to stop for the people. Yes, the people are waiting for it".
- If the child says something, repeat the sentence, expanding it slightly, e.g. if the child says 'I've got a bus' answer 'Yes, you've got a big bus'.
- Allow children time to think and talk about what they are doing rather than bombarding them with questions.
- Set up activities reflecting the children's current interest and extend and develop the activity.



### 3. Good Practice and Multi-Sensory Learning

Children continuously receive information about their environment through their senses: hearing, vision, touch, taste and smell.

**They use this sensory information to learn in different ways.**

- **Visual Learning** – children learn through sight. *These children learn best with visual prompts, pictures, diagrams and mind maps.*
- **Auditory learning** – children learn through hearing and listening.
- **Kinaesthetic learning** – children learn through touch, taste and smell. *These children need to handle objects or move around whilst learning.*

Some children have a preferred learning style, where they learn most effectively using a particular modality (sense) or combination of modalities. For example some children with Specific Language Impairment may have poor auditory memory skills but may have very well developed visual memory skills.

The term multi-sensory is used to refer to any learning activity that includes the use of two or more sensory modalities (senses) simultaneously (Birsch, J 2005)

A multi-sensory approach to teaching is important as it ensures that every child has the opportunity to learn in the way that is most effective for them.

A multi-sensory approach will benefit all children. This includes pupils for whom English is an additional language and also those who have Special Educational Needs.

The use of additional visual clues can be a valuable source of help for many children with communication difficulties.

**Consider:**

- How much information can the child understand and remember when you use speech alone? Is this improved by using pictures, real objects, signs and/or symbols?
- How do visual clues (e.g. pictures) and physical props (e.g. real objects) affect the child's concentration and acquisition of language?
- How do visual cues affect the child's spoken language and interaction?

It should be noted that a small proportion of children may experience sensory overload. These children may become overtly distressed or withdrawn if their environment is noisy or very busy visually.

**Identifying a child's preferred learning style:**

It is important that a child has opportunities to develop a variety of learning styles. A child may have a preferred learning style and it is important to use this strength to develop the weaker channels. The most effective teaching method would be multi-sensory incorporating all three modes.

The following observations will be helpful in identifying a child's learning style:

### Visual Learner

- Learns best when shown something
- Enjoys producing charts/pictures to consolidate own learning
- Frequently uses range of visual representations when making notes e.g. mind maps/charts
- Likes to have an overview to see how things fit together
- Some visual learners prefer to read the written word
- Learn best from text book/instruction materials
- Eye for detail and like to work in a linear, logical way

### Auditory Learner

- Enjoys whole class/group discussions – likes teacher to explain things
- Enjoys reading aloud, being read to and making audio tapes
- Enjoys working logically – does best when given step by step instructions verbally in lessons

### Kinaesthetic Learner

- Best motivated when physically experiencing something
- Thinks of self as practical – enjoys hands-on learning experiences or role play
- Tends not to work in logical, linear way
- Prefers experiential learning – progress through trial and error



## 4. Good Practice and Making Observations

The observation of children notes their progress, involvement and enjoyment as well as focussing on the attainment of predetermined outcomes (Supplementary Assessment Guidance ACCAC 2005).

“Observation should play a key role in the everyday practice of all practitioners in the Foundation Phase. It allows us to learn about the holistic development of children and should be undertaken across all Areas of Learning and within a range of contexts”. (WAG, October 2007 Foundation Phase National Training Pack, Module 3 Chwarae Dysgu Tyfu / Play Learn Grow]

“During observations you will recognise important steps in a child's progress and development too. These steps may include a leap in understanding or growth in personal and social development. You will also note the child's general well being and levels of involvement” (WAG, October 2007 Foundation Phase National Training Pack, Module 3 Chwarae Dysgu Tyfu / Play Learn Grow].

Research shows that the more knowledge the adult has of the child, the better matched their support and the more effective their subsequent learning.

Siraj-Blatchford, I., Sylva, K., et al. (2002)  
Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years

### Observation opportunities

Observation does not have to be on a one to one basis all the time and all practitioners working with the children should be alert to opportunities for observation during the day. Some observations will be planned for; others will be incidental.

All members of staff should be able to contribute to ongoing observations in all areas of the curriculum and across the indoor and outdoor environment.

Observations should provide important information on what children know, can do and understand; the organisation of the environment; children's learning opportunities, and context of the teaching.

### What should happen with the information gathered?

- Information allows a practitioner to build on the children's skills which have been acquired, and identify areas to be developed.
- Observations should be used to allow the curriculum and its context for learning to be more closely linked to individual needs and to be based on meaningful experiences for the child.
- The recorded material should be discussed and evaluated with other members of the team.
- Observations should be considered in the context prior knowledge and assessment.
- Recorded material should be used to plan for future learning.
- Observations can inform future planning, identify possible stimuli, focused activities, questions and assessment opportunities.
- Observations can provide evidence to plan the role of adults within the setting.
- Relevant information can be used to report back to parents, carers and other professional.

Observation is an important means of tracking aspects of children's development in speech, language and communication skills. There can often be a discrepancy between a child's skills in communication and the way they use these skills to communicate. So, observation in the school setting can give valuable information on the child's functional communication.

### What should we observe?

- Functional communication (how the child uses language in everyday situations such as asking for information, making comments, taking turns in conversation etc)
- Interactional skills, including how readily a child engages with others
- How the child communicates in a variety of groupings and activities
- The nature of interactions between a child and his/her peers and any adults
- A child's current skills, developments, achievements and involvement levels
- A child's individual learning styles and choices (The Effective Early Learning Project Pascoe C, and Betram, Worcester College, 2004).
- Attention and listening skills
- Verbal comprehension – the ability to understand spoken language
- Expressive language skills – the ability to use spoken language
- Fluency – the ability to talk in sentences which are free from repetitions, hesitations and stammering

### Useful tools to support observation:

- The 'Afasic Checklists' are a tool for Mainstream Primary Teachers to help identify pupils aged 4 -10 years with speech and language difficulties. They can be found in "How to identify and support children with speech and language difficulties" by Jane Speake, LDA, 2004\* .  
\*This book was distributed to all schools in Wales in 2005.
- The Developmental Profile which broadly outlines milestones to check from 9 months - 9 years.
- The Good Practice Guide 'Strategies' Section (Section 4) also provides suggestions for observation linked to specific areas of speech, language and communication.



## 5. Good Practice and Involving Parents

- The role of parents is crucial in all stages of development and education. This is especially true in the development of speech, language and communication skills as much of the child's language learning has and will continue to take place at home. Many children have developed effective language skills by the time they attend school through interaction with parents and family at home. Once a child is at school, language learning should take place dually through experiences in school and at home.
- Liaison with parents offers the opportunity to mutually share suggestions for successful approaches to supporting individual children, and also opens a forum to point out any helpful approaches / responses used by the parent to confirm the positive impact these will have on the child's development.

It may be necessary to give additional suggestions and general advice and this could include the following:



**Advice for Parents**  
(for children at Foundation Phase)

**Advice for Parents**  
(for children at Key Stage 2)

The above photocopiable advice sheets can be found in Section 5.

### Parental Involvement: When a difficulty has been identified or a diagnosis has been made

When specific difficulties have been identified, parents and/or carers should have:

- Clear information on their child's difficulties.
- Support to develop the skills and confidence to positively affect their child's communication skills.
- Encouragement to feel part of the team of people working with their child.
- Opportunities to be involved in target setting including the review of progress.
- Have a clear understanding of their role, and the role of the rest of the team.
- Advice on appropriate activities which can be easily used at home.
- Opportunities to be involved in the completion of the Developmental Profile.

(Based on: Information for Parents: speech and language difficulties 2005, Early support pilot programme; DFES Nottingham)

## The Developmental Profile

The following Developmental Profile has been included to enable teachers to describe pupils' speech, language and communication needs more precisely.

The Profile covers the age range 9 months to 9 years and refers to the key areas of play, verbal comprehension, expressive language, sound development and socialisation. However, the norms outlined may not apply to children with English as an Additional Language.

It must be acknowledged that despite the fact that the Good Practice Guide is to support those working with pupils up to the end of Key Stage 2, the Development Profile does not provide information beyond the age of 9 years. This is due to the fact that research into language development beyond 9 years is sparse. At the end of the profile a summary of skills expected beyond age 9 is provided for general guidance.

The development of communication skills can vary greatly from child to child, so the Profile should be regarded as a **broad guideline for development**. Other assessments may also be necessary, e.g. where a pupil has EAL and a first language assessment is needed.



Along with careful observation, the Profile can help to:

- identify the key areas of significant difficulty and;
- describe the level of development in these skills.

Using this information, schools will then be able to refer to the following sections in the Good Practice Guide which set out appropriate strategies and activities to promote progress.

## 9 months

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>PLAY</b>		
Explores everything and uses appropriate actions on objects e.g. bangs drum, cuddles teddy.	Does the child mouth everything? Is the child unable to differentiate between objects?	
Uses everyday objects appropriately during play e.g. brushes his/her mothers hair.		
Follows when you point to an object.		
Take turns e.g. ball can be rolled between child and adult.	Is the child unable to turn take? e.g. verbal and physical turn taking, rolling a ball. Is the child unable to give appropriate eye contact?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Will listen to speech intently without being distracted by other noises.		
Copies gestures e.g. claps, waves bye.	Does the child ignore facial expressions, tone of voice and gesture?	
Gives object when asked in real situations when gesture is used e.g. point and say 'give me the spoon' at mealtimes.	Consider that the language used by adults may be too complex.	
Responds to the tone of voice e.g. "no!"		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Uses repetitive babble.		
Will shout to attract attention and begins to use sounds and gestures to communicate a need.	Does the child attempt to communicate or ask for things by using noise and or gesture?	

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Please note:  
For children aged 3 years plus functioning at this level, specialist advice will be necessary.

- Please refer to:
- Speech and Language Therapy
  - Community Paediatrician
  - Early Years Forum (Cardiff settings only)
  - Specialist Health Visitors

## 1 ½ years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>PLAY</b>		
Acts out simple routines e.g. puts teddy to bed.	Can the child relate objects to teddy/ doll? e.g. giving a doll some milk.	
Beginning to use miniature toys e.g. dolls house furniture.		
Sorts objects by type e.g. all cars, all animals.		
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Gives everyday objects on request in all situations (N.B. don't point to object).	Consider that the language used by adults may be too complex.	
Points to simple body parts on request.	Consider that the language used by adults may be too complex.	
Carries out simple action on request e.g. 'stand up', 'sit down'.		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Vocabulary of 20 words.		
May begin to combine words e.g. 'more biscuit'.		
Uses a lot of jargon/nonsense language.		
Often echoes the last word of a phrase they hear.		

Printed with kind permission from Eiklan.

Please note:  
For children aged 3 years plus functioning at this level, specialist advice will be necessary.

- Please refer to:
- Speech and Language Therapy
  - Community Paediatrician
  - Early Years Forum (Cardiff settings only)
  - Specialist Health Visitors

## 2 ½ years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>PLAY</b>		
Able to join play sequences together e.g. undresses doll, prepares bath, washes and dresses doll.	Can the child act out simple daily routines with doll/teddy?	
Able to use objects imaginatively e.g. a box represents a car or bed.	Can the child play with miniature toys?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Understands sentences containing 2 key words (information carrying words) e.g. 'The dog is drinking'.	Consider the child's attention and listening skills compared to his/her peers.	
Understands action words e.g. make dolly <u>jump/sleep/run</u> .		
Enjoys listening to a short story.		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Using 2 or 3 word sentences (although often omits small grammatical words and endings e.g. 'James kick ball' for 'James is kicking the ball').	Is the child reluctant to communicate ideas?	
<b>SOUND DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Using the following speech sounds: m n p b t d g w y h	Is the child's speech very difficult to understand?	

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## 3 ½ years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>PLAY</b>		
Enjoys imaginative and pretend play.	Does the child initiate or organise his/ her own play?	
Plays with other children.	Is the child interested in interacting with his/ her peers?	
Concentrates on a favourite activity he/she has chosen for up to 15 minutes.	Consider the child's attention and listening skills compared to his peers.	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Understands simple conversation about an activity you are doing.	Does the child talk a lot and initiate topics, but not reply appropriately to your conversation?	
Understands sentences containing 3 key words (information carrying words) e.g. 'The big dog is drinking'.		
Understands some basic concepts such as position – in, on, under; size – big, little; colour; number – 1 to 15.		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Uses 3 or 4 word sentences. Can express physical needs, e.g. asking to go to the toilet, asking for a drink, asking for a turn in an activity.	Are there any episodes of stammering (dysfluency)?	
Uses small grammatical words and endings e.g. 'my brother is kicking the ball'.	Are adults correcting language inappropriately?	
<b>SOUND DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Sound system is developing and includes: m n p b t d c k g f s sh w y h	Adults should not correct children's speech. Is the child's speech very difficult to understand?	

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## 4 ½ years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>PLAY</b>		
Complex imaginative play involving acting the role of another person.	Can the child spontaneously engage in imaginative play?	
Organising and co-operating with other children.	Will the child engage routinely in group activities?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Can understand a sequence of instructions given to a group of children and individually.	Does the child consistently fail to respond appropriately to a sequence of instructions unless visual cues are available?	
Understands 'why?' and 'how?' type questions.	Does the child respond inappropriately to these types of questions?	
Appreciates past, present and future time.	Is the child only able to talk about things in the here and now?	
Enjoys simple jokes and humour.		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Can hold simple conversation about something which is not immediate.	Is the child able to take turns within a conversation?	
Sentences are generally grammatically correct.	Does the child use immature sentence structure? e.g. not using pronouns or indicating past tense.	
Able to join sentences together e.g. 'I'm going to wear my boots because it's raining'.		
<b>SOUND DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Initial and final sounds should be used appropriately except 'th' and 'r'. Blends (sp, bl etc) should be developing.	Consider the child's auditory discrimination and rhyme awareness.	

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## 5 to 6 years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>SOCIALISING</b>		
Likes to be involved with organising games and co-operating with other children.	Does the child seem to know how to play with friends and peers?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Can understand a sequence of three commands e.g. 'Go upstairs, get your dirty football kit and put it in the washing machine'.		
Understands 'why?' and 'how?' type questions.		
Understands more complex concepts of time e.g. 'Tomorrow, yesterday, today'.		
Enjoys simple jokes.		
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Can join in with group discussions.	Is the child able to have a conversation with an adult but finds it difficult when more people are involved? Does s/he tend to go quiet?	
Uses 5–6 word sentences which are grammatically correct.		
Can listen to and accurately re-tell a story.	Is the child reluctant to share books and discuss things that have happened?	
<b>SOUND DEVELOPMENT</b>		
All sounds at the beginning and ends of words are correct except 'th' and 'r'. Will be using blends like 'sp, st, sk, bl, kr'. (Welsh 'll' and 'ch' sounds are developing)	Consider that, although you may understand everything the child says, watch for the reactions of others. Can they understand him/her?	

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## 6 to 7 years

Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>SOCIALISING</b>		
Is able to socialise with peers.	Does s/he seem to dislike being with friends or doesn't seem to know how to socialise with them?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Can understand most conversations that are appropriate for children and can understand different types of questions.	Does the child need information repeated? Can s/he remember directions? Does s/he have difficulty learning new words?	
Can understand metaphors and a wider range of jokes.	Does the child take things said to him/her very literally?	
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Uses 5-6 word sentences which are grammatically correct.		
Is able to learn and remember new words easily and uses these almost immediately when talking.		
Can join in with group discussions and will stick to the topic being discussed.	Consider whether the child is quiet when others are talking or whether the child dominates the conversation by only talking about his/ her choice of limited topics.	
Uses language for different purposes e.g. to ask questions, to negotiate or persuade.	Is the child finding it difficult to mix with peers? Is s/he resorting to hitting and fighting because s/he cannot use language to settle arguments?	
Can use imagination and create stories which are organised and sequenced clearly and accurately.	Does the child tend to rely on T.V./ books for ideas. Does the child find it difficult to use his own imagination?	
<b>SOUND DEVELOPMENT</b>		
All sounds at the beginning and ends of words are correct 'th' and 'r'. Will be using blends like 'sp, st, sk, bl, kr'. (Welsh 'r', 'rh', 'll' and 'ch' have developed)	Although you may understand everything the child says, watch for the reactions of others – can they understand him/her?	

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## 7 to 9 years

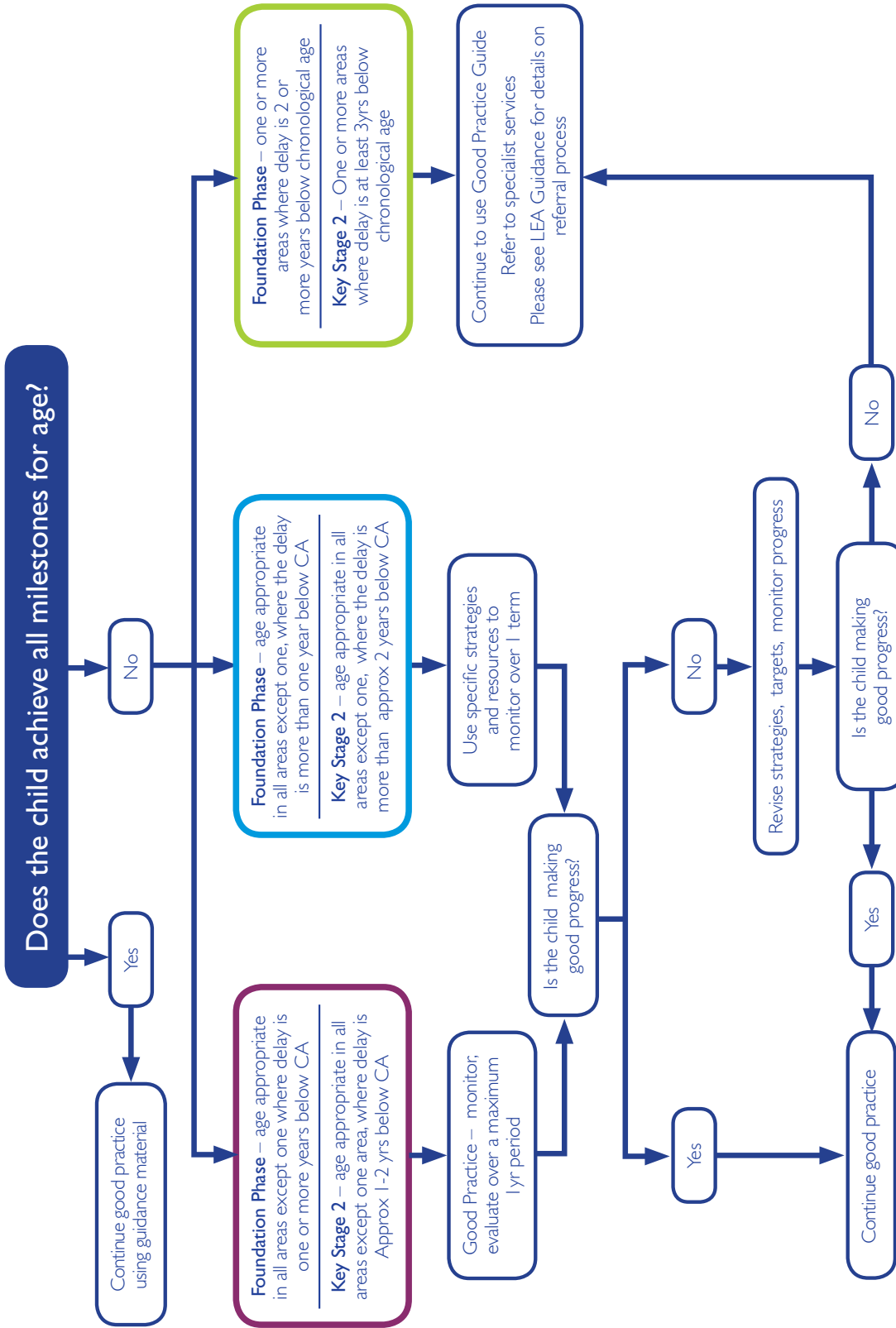
Milestones to check	Observations to consider	Comments/ observations
<b>SOCIALISING</b>		
Is confident socialising with peers and knows how to make and maintain friendships.	Is the child becoming more isolated? Does s/he "not know" how to make friends?	
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION</b>		
Begins to understand hidden meanings and to appreciate that an intended meaning can be quite different from the words spoken.	Does s/he take things you say very literally?	
Is more aware of how other people, real and in books, feel and behave. Can empathise.	Does the child have difficulties understanding how others feel? Is the child aware of the effect their behaviour has on others?	
<b>EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</b>		
Learns new words quickly and confidently. Often learning about 10 new words a day!	Does the child have difficulties learning and remembering new words?	
Can express ideas clearly and can clarify information so the listener is not left confused.	Does the child know how to change an explanation to help the listener understand?	
Can adapt style of talking to suit different situations e.g. talking to friend or teacher.	Does the child have difficulties in changing how s/he talks to suit different situations?	
Begins to know what a listener wants to hear so begins to withhold information or begins to say what he thinks he should say rather than what he wants to say.		

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### By the time a child is aged between 9 and 11 you can expect the ability to:

- Understand increasingly complex vocabulary and concepts, including more abstract aspects of language such as sarcasm and idioms.
- Participate in well organised, narrative discourse – sharing ideas and opinions in discussions.
- Recall and retain spoken information.
- Confidently socialise and use language effectively/ appropriately in social situations with a range of different conversational partners.

# Using the Developmental Profile



Please note, not all children fit the above profiles – please use for guidance and combine with professional judgement and knowledge of the child within the context of the classroom.

# Section 3: Target Setting



# Target Setting

Careful observation and assessment by school staff, including the use of the Developmental Profile in this Guide will help to inform target setting. Input from external professionals may also contribute to this process.

## It is important to note the following general points:

- Many speech, language and communication needs can be met effectively by incorporating Good Practice guidelines in the classroom, although some children will require more specific intervention.
- Any targeted intervention should be additional to Good Practice carried out at a whole school level.
- It is important that where appropriate the child is involved in the target setting process. Parent(s)/ carers, school staff and external agencies should also have an opportunity to work together to draw up and review targets.

## It is also important to note these general points:

- 3 targets are usually appropriate on an IEP [SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002].
- Targets should be individualised and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time limited) and can be recorded in the form of an IEP.



- Strategies are in place and these strategies should be specified in the Individual Education Programme, along with details on the relevant roles of staff regarding the delivery of support.
- Effectiveness of provision should be monitored and evaluated regularly. New targets and strategies should be set on a termly basis, or more frequently, according to ongoing assessment, observation and progress.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is part of the whole school assessment process.
- Support noted on the IEP will be reflected in the provision mapping process for the whole school in line with county advice.



The following examples have been set out as suggestions for appropriate targets in the different key areas of communication:

### 1. Play and Socialisation

	Targets to be achieved	Achievement criteria	Possible learning activities/resources
Foundation Phase	To engage in parallel play with some support for a period of 5 mins	On 3 separate occasions within one week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Role play area</li> <li>– Adult to model appropriate play activities</li> </ul>
Key Stage 2	To initiate conversation within a small group situation	On 5 separate occasions within one week in a structured activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Circle time, including opportunity for smaller group session prior to larger group</li> <li>– Group working with good role models</li> <li>– Problem solving with activities based on pupil's interest. Guessing games</li> </ul>

### 2. Verbal Comprehension

	Targets to be achieved	Achievement criteria	Possible learning activities/resources
Foundation Phase	To develop understanding of requests involving 2 key words, e.g. "Pour the <b>water</b> on the <b>sand</b> "	Able to follow instructions on 3 occasions over 1 day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Outdoor play</li> <li>– Small world play</li> <li>– Songs rhymes and movement</li> <li>– Strategy: adults to use targeted vocabulary in structured activities. Modelling.</li> </ul>
Key Stage 2	To develop understanding to time concepts e.g. today, yesterday, tomorrow	Able to follow instructions on 5 occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Visual timetables and calendar with discussions</li> <li>– Learning through real life activities e.g. cooking with discussion of activity</li> </ul>

### 3. Expressive Language

	Targets to be achieved	Achievement criteria	Possible learning activities/resources
Foundation Phase	To develop use of 10 action words/verbs in naming activity – [specify the verbs]	Correctly name 8 out of 10 actions on 3 occasions over 1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Small world toys</li> <li>– Informal movement rhymes and songs</li> </ul>
Key Stage 2	To develop use of joining words e.g. because, when, until	Correctly names 8 out of 10 joining words on 3 occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Sentence completion activities</li> <li>– Story sequencing</li> </ul>

### 4. The Development of Speech Sounds

	Targets to be achieved	Achievement criteria	Possible learning activities/resources
Foundation Phase	To discriminate between 2 non speech sounds in play	On 5 separate occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Listening and discriminating between animal noises</li> <li>– Listening and discriminating between musical instruments</li> </ul>
Key Stage 2	To develop production of 'sh' in the initial position of a word at a phrase level, in structured activity	8 out of 10 times, on 5 separate occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Pairs game (lotto game) with 'sh' target words [ie at word level building to phrase level].</li> </ul>



## Sample IEP:

### Area/s of concern: Speech & Language – Verbal Comprehension

Start date \_\_\_\_\_ Review date \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> language \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group/IEP No. Nursery \_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Supported by \_\_\_\_\_

Targets to be achieved	Achievement criteria	Possible resources/ techniques	Possible class strategies	Ideas for Support/ Assistant
1.) To understand and use irregular past tense	Correct use in everyday speech on 8 out of 10 separate occasions	Reading books: picture books, posters, language cards, group discussions	Talk about meanings of the words. Encourage correct use when discussing pictures etc.	Model correct use. Encourage correct use in small group activities and conversations
2) To understand and use vocabulary for joining sentences e.g. when, because	Correct use in everyday speech on 8 out of 10 separate occasions	Reading books: picture books, posters, language cards, group discussions	Talk about meanings of the words. Encourage correct use when discussing pictures etc.	Model correct use. Encourage correct use in small group activities and conversations
3) To show understanding of the text that has been read	Answer comprehension questions accurately on three separate occasions	Verbal questions: to formulate own questions based on text	Ask relevant questions. Explain figures of speech	Set comprehension work, e.g. worksheets to accompany reading books

#### Parents/Carers need to:

- Help learn any words that are sent home.
- Talk about books with \_\_\_\_\_

#### Students need to:

- Practise spelling words.
- Remember to bring books back to school.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Senco/Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Section 4: Strategies for Supporting Children at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2



# Strategies for Supporting Children at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2



## 1. Attention and Listening

### Introduction

The term "attention control" refers to the ability to focus or concentrate on a task. These tasks may be visual (e.g. looking at picture books), physical (e.g. construction activities) or auditory (e.g. listening to instructions or listening to a story tape).

Listening skills are part of attention control. Children may be better at focusing their attention to some types of activities than others. For example, a child may be better at concentrating on physical activities than activities which rely on listening skills. However, children need to learn how to focus and maintain their attention across a range of activities.

Through Active Learning and play children learn to:

- Focus and maintain their attention control to an activity
- Share their focus of attention with others
- Switch their focus of attention easily so that for example they can stop what they are doing; listen to an instruction, and then return to what they were doing

These skills underpin independent learning.

Children may have poorly developed attention control for a variety of reasons including early hearing loss due to middle ear infections. Children with immature attention control are often perceived as "naughty". If these problems are not addressed at an early stage in school, these children are at risk of developing behaviour problems.

### Observations to note:

- Can the child choose an activity and stay at that activity for 5-10 minutes or does he/she flit between activities?
- Can the child participate in small group activities or does he/she need a high level of individual support from an adult?
- How does the child respond to an adult refocusing them to an activity?
- Does the child choose to play with a range of different activities or does he/she show a marked preference for a restricted number of activities?
- Can the child change from one activity to another or does this cause the child distress?
- Is the child's concentration better for certain types of activities (e.g. visual or physical activities)?
- Can the child complete short, simple tasks independently?

### Developing Early Listening and Attention Skills, Foundation Phase, 3 years+

#### By the time they are 3 years old, most children can:

- Focus their attention to self directed tasks for up to 10 – 15 minutes.
- Focus their attention to adult directed tasks for short periods of time (this will be highly dependent on the task).
- Participate in small group activities.

At this stage, however, many children still find it difficult to switch their focus of attention from one activity to another. For example if a child is engrossed in one activity they may ignore instructions given by an adult to the whole class or group.

This is not necessarily “being naughty” but may simply be due to the fact that the child does not have the ability to concentrate on more than one thing at a time. This is sometimes called “single channelled attention”.

#### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- **Planning activities**
  - When planning activities, consider whether the child’s concentration is better at particular times of the day. *Try to limit background noise and other distractions particularly when activities involve listening.*
  - Paired activities or very small groups will ensure that the child does not have to wait too long for a turn.
- **Adapting activities to the right level for the child**
  - Give children short tasks / activities which they can complete within the level of their attention and give praise when a task is completed. Use positive reinforcement to gradually extend this and monitor success.
  - Use short, precise instructions at a level of language the child understands (e.g. use 2 key words) Keep discussion and carpet times short. Use real objects and pictures and allow the children to handle them.
  - Children may need a prompt to ensure eye contact to focus attention before starting an activity or before an instruction is given
  - **Allow thinking time.**
  - Encourage children to ask for help.
- **To help transfer between activities**
  - Use **visual timetables** and refer to these throughout the day so that children know what to expect.



**Specific activities for developing attention and listening skills – Foundation Phase, 3 years+:**

● **Tap Tap Box**

The object of this activity is for the children to sit around a box and take turns to open it up, take something out and name it/talk about it. They have to pay attention to hear their name in a song, and the teacher needs to build up anticipation and excitement about what is inside.

You'll need a sturdy box with a secure lid. The children can help you decorate it. Introduce it to the children as the "tap tap box". You will also need some everyday items to put in the box, enough for each child to have 2 or 3 turns each. It is best done with about 4 or 5 children at a time – any more and they lose attention waiting for their turn.

You may want to categorise your items, so one session you may have food items, the next transport etc.

Gather the children to sit around the box, ask them to put their hands on the box ready to tap as they sing/chant:

Tap Tap box

What's in the box?

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of a child)

What's in the box?

Each child then opens the lid, takes out an item and names it/ talks about it. This is a good time to use lots of language around e.g. shape, size, colour, texture.

● **Use "Ready Steady – Go!" games**

These type of games are best played with one or two children and are adult led. The adult leads a game such as building a tower of bricks. The child has to wait until the adult says "Ready... Steady... Go!!" before knocking down the tower. Make this fun by building up a sense of anticipation and gradually make the child wait a little longer each time before you say "Go!"



**Developing Early Listening and Attention Skills, Foundation Phase, 5 years+**

**By the time they are 5 years old, most children can:**

- Focus their attention to self directed tasks for extended periods of time.
- Complete simple tasks independently.
- Participate in small group and whole class activities.
- Change their focus of attention from one activity to another.

**Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:**

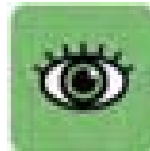
- **Planning activities / planning the classroom**
  - An overly stimulating classroom can be overwhelming for some children. Create a quiet area of the classroom which is distraction free.
  - Break up long periods of listening with physical activity.
- **Seating**
  - Consider seating the children in a circle so that they can see the person speaking. Make sure that all the children can see and hear the teacher clearly.
  - Some children fidget less when seated on a chair, others may need to sit on the floor - for these children it may be helpful to mark boundaries, e.g. by sitting the child on a mat or cushion.
  - When speaking to the children make sure that your face can be seen clearly. *If you stand or sit in front of a window your face will be in shadow.*
  - Children who cannot sit still may be better if given something small to hold e.g. stress ball.

● **Teaching Active Listening Skills**


Teach children explicitly what you expect from them when you ask them to listen:


- Good Looking – looking at the teacher.
- Good Sitting – sitting still with "quiet" hands and feet.
- Good Thinking – thinking about what the teacher is showing / talking about.
- Taking Turns – taking turns to speak, not shouting out or interrupting.

Use pictures or symbols to remind the children each time you need them to listen. For example:

**Good Looking** 

**Good Sitting** 

**Good Thinking** 

**Take Turns** 

Display the symbols prominently (e.g. on a board) and refer to them regularly. For example "Well done Joe, I know you are listening because you are looking at me".

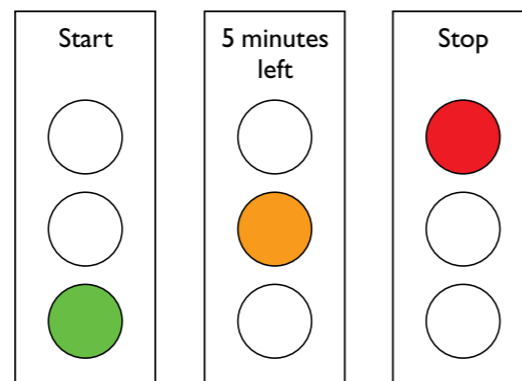
- **Taking turns**

During Circle Time or group discussions, it can be helpful to have a 'talking stick', pretend microphone or other object to reinforce turn taking – you can only speak when it is your turn to hold the object. Gently refocus those children who tend to drift off a topic.

- **Transferring between activities**

- Use visual timetables so that children know in advance what to expect during a session.
- An individual child might have a timetable showing the tasks that the teacher wants them to complete within the session. When a child finds it difficult to move between activities, give him a picture of the next activity which he can take with him and stick next to the activity. Then he puts it back on the timetable when the activity has finished.

- A traffic light system can be helpful for children who have difficulties moving between activities. A green circle is displayed when the children start an activity. Five minutes before the activity is due to end, an orange circle is displayed and the children are told that they have 5 minutes to finish what they are doing. When it is time to stop, the teacher displays a red circle.



- An alternative method is to use pictures of sand timers to represent the beginning, middle and end of an activity.
- When children no longer need the visual prompt of traffic light / sand timer pictures, counting down can be used to give children prior warning of a change of activity/ instruction. Alternatively you could use a particular piece of music or use a musical instrument to signal the end of an activity.



### Specific activities to support the development of early attention and listening skills – Foundation Phase, 5 years+:



Use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox** to plan and deliver activities aimed at developing:

- Eye contact, turn taking and mime
- Identify, describe and mime emotions

#### Further activities

- **To understand the concept of high/low sounds**

*Materials: Xylophone or keyboard if available*

Tell pupils to stand with their heads 'high' (do not say 'tall'.) Then tell them to crouch down with their heads low. Practice several times saying 'high/low', 'high/low'. Explain that when we play musical notes or sing we use high and low notes. Play a few high/low notes on xylophone or keyboard to demonstrate. After pupils understand the concept, practice by playing high and low notes on xylophone or keyboard. Pupils stretch up high, or crouch low to indicate the pitch of the sounds. Praise all appropriate response.

- **Discriminate tones that vary in pitch (high/low)**

*Materials: Xylophone, blindfolds or screen*

Blindfold pupils or place xylophone behind screen. Tell them they are going to play a listening game. The object of the game is to indicate whether two sounds are different, they should raise their hands. Teacher then plays two notes on the xylophone. Half of the notes played should be the same. When using two different notes, first select two very different notes. Toward the end of this activity choose notes that are closer in pitch.

- **Develop short term auditory memory skills, Develop pattern discrimination**

*Materials: Blindfolds, xylophone, same/different cards*

Tell the pupils they are going to play a game to decide whether sound patterns are the same or different. (Note: if you feel the pupils need practice with the concept of same/different first practice same and different colours and shapes.) The teacher then claps a short pattern (e.g. clap twice and then clap twice again). Elicit the response that the pattern is the same. Demonstrate a simple pattern that is different and elicit that response. Instead of replying 'same' or 'different', student may respond by holding up same/different card to show the pattern. Repeat the activity with a variety of 2-4 sound patterns. Expand activity by using xylophone, snapping fingers, stamping feet or combining noise makers.

- **Understand concepts of beginning, middle and end for sound patterns**

*Materials: Animal pictures and tape recorded sounds, coloured felt squares or laminated coloured squares with magnetic strips on back, magnetic board*

The teacher places two animal pictures on the board and asks pupils which picture is first/last. After students are able to give correct responses add a picture in all three positions. Then place three pictures on board and ask one pupil to name them in order (from left to right). Remove one picture and ask pupils to tell you which one is missing (name and position). When pupils are comfortable with this activity, place an arrangement of three pictures in a row and say 'If this is (e.g. cow, dog, horse) show me (dog, cow, horse).' Practice until all pupils have the opportunity to show pattern shifts. Repeat activity with shapes.

- Listen for target word or sound

**Materials:** Familiar nursery rhymes, short stories or familiar stories and poems already used in class

Read the nursery rhyme or story. Then tell the pupils you are going to re-read the story and you want them to put their hands up each time they hear a predetermined target word or sound. Example: Read the nursery rhyme 'Hickory Dickory Dock' and have pupils put their hands up each time you say the word 'clock'.

Extension: Follow above format and use sentence strips. Insert nonsense word and have pupils indicate when they hear a word that does not make sense.

- Supply an appropriate rhyming word to complete a familiar nursery rhyme

**Materials:** Familiar Nursery Rhymes

Read a familiar nursery rhyme. Then tell the pupils you are going to read the nursery rhyme again, but this time you will leave out a word. Their job is to supply the missing word.

## Further resources



**“Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics”**

Book 1 (DFES 00281/2007 BKT-EN)

This covers listening to:

- Aspect 1 – environmental skills
- Aspect 2 – instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3 – body percussion
- Aspect 4 – rhythm and rhyme



## Developing Later Listening and Attention Skills, Key Stage 2, 7 years+

**By the time they enter Key Stage 2, most children can:**

- Focus on adult directed tasks for extended periods of time.
- Listen to instructions whilst continuing to work on a different task. Children should have “multi channelled” attention control rather than needing to focus solely on one task at a time.

## Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- Planning activities / planning the classroom
  - *An overly stimulating classroom can be overwhelming for some children. Create a quiet area of the classroom which is distraction free.*
  - Break up long periods of listening with physical activity.
- Seating
  - Consider seating the children in a circle so that they can see the person speaking. Make sure that all the children can see and hear the teacher clearly.
  - Some children fidget less when seated on a chair; others may need to sit on the floor - for these children it may be helpful to mark boundaries, e.g. by sitting the child on a mat or cushion.
  - *When speaking to the children make sure that your face can be seen clearly. If you stand or sit in front of a window your face will be in shadow.*
  - Children who cannot sit still may be better if given something small to hold e.g. stress ball.
- Taking turns
 

During Circle Time or group discussions, it can be helpful to use a ‘talking stick’, pretend microphone or other object to reinforce turn taking – you can only speak when it is your turn to hold the object. Gently refocus those children who tend to drift off a topic.
- Completing Tasks Independently
  - A list of written tasks may be helpful. Tasks are placed to the left of the child and the child physically moves the piece of work into a finish box when completed, or ticks off tasks as completed.

## Specific activities to support attention and listening skills – Key Stage 2, 7 years+:



Use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox** to plan and deliver activities aimed at developing:

- Eye contact, turn taking and mime.

## Further activities

- To understand the concept of high/low sounds
 

**Materials:** Xylophone or keyboard if available

Tell pupils to stand with their heads ‘high’ (do not say ‘tall’.) Then tell them to crouch down with their heads low. Practice several times saying, ‘high/low’, ‘high/low’. Explain that when we play musical notes or sing we use high and low notes. Play a few high/low notes on xylophone or keyboard to demonstrate. After pupils understand the concept, practice by playing high and low notes on xylophone or keyboard. Pupils stretch up high, or crouch low to indicate the pitch of the sounds. Praise all appropriate response.
- Discriminate tones that vary in pitch (high/low)
 

**Materials:** Xylophone, blindfolds or screen

Blindfold pupils or place xylophone behind screen. Tell them they are going to play a listening game. The object of the game is to indicate whether two sounds are different, they should raise their hands. Teacher then plays two notes on the xylophone. Half of the notes played should be the same. When using two different notes, first select two very different notes. Toward the end of this activity choose notes that are closer in pitch.

- Develop short term auditory memory skills, Develop pattern discrimination

*Materials: Blindfolds, xylophone, same/different cards*

Tell the pupils they are going to play a game to decide whether sound patterns are the same or different. (Note: if you feel the pupils need practice with the concept of same/different first practice same and different colours and shapes.) The teacher then claps a short pattern (e.g. clap twice and then clap twice again). Elicit the response that the pattern is the same. Demonstrate a simple pattern that is different and elicit that response. Instead of replying 'same' or 'different', student may respond by holding up same/different card to show the pattern. Repeat the activity with a variety of 2-4 sound patterns. Expand activity by using xylophone, snapping fingers, stamping feet or combining noise makers.

- Understand concepts of beginning, middle and end for sound patterns

*Materials: Animal pictures and tape recorded sounds, coloured felt squares or laminated coloured squares with magnetic strips on back, magnetic board*

The teacher places two animal pictures on the board and asks pupils which picture is first/last. After students are able to give correct responses add a picture in all three positions. Then place three pictures on board and ask one pupil to name them in order (from left to right). Remove one picture and ask pupils to tell you which one is missing (name and position). When pupils are comfortable with this activity, place an arrangement of three pictures in a row and say 'If this is (e.g. cow, dog, horse) show me (dog, cow, horse)'. Practice until all pupils have the opportunity to show pattern shifts. Repeat activity with shapes.

## 2. Social Interaction

### Introduction

Interaction refers to the process of give and take which occurs when two or more people communicate with each other (Schroeder 2001). The rules which govern social interaction vary from culture to culture. So, what is acceptable in one culture may not be in another, e.g. whereas we stress the importance of eye contact, in some cultures it is regarded as disrespectful.

**Children need to learn the rules which govern social interaction within their own culture. This includes learning:**

- How to use eye contact.
- How to take turns (in play and conversation) and learning not to interrupt.
- How to ask questions.
- How to start a conversation / show interest in a conversation to keep it going / to end a conversation.
- To stay on a topic of conversation.
- How people show emotions.
- How to use body language.
- How to negotiate and compromise.

**Through Active Learning and play children:**

- Learn how to share interests and activities with others.
- Learn about taking turns and co-operating with others.
- Learn "the rules" of conversations.
- Learn how to listen to others, negotiate and compromise.
- Explore emotions, real life problems and situations in a safe environment.

Children develop social interaction skills at very different rates. This may be affected by many factors including experiences at home, intermittent hearing loss due to ear infections, and specific developmental difficulties (e.g. Specific Language Impairment, Autistic Spectrum Disorders and/or Attention Deficit Disorder).



Social interaction skills are interlinked with the development of listening and attention skills. Children who move rapidly between activities or concentrate only on their own choice of activities may not be ready to take turns, share equipment or play co-operatively with others. Children with social interaction difficulties may be at risk of developing behaviour problems and may be vulnerable to teasing and bullying.

**Observations to note:**

- Does the child make eye contact when you speak to him/her? Does he/she look away too quickly or alternatively do they stare for too long?
- Has the child developed listening and attention skills to the point where they can take turns in a paired or small group activity?
- Does the child interact better with adults or their peers?
- Can the child play alongside other children? Are they able to play co-operatively with other children? Does the child need an adult to support their play with other children?
- Can the child take turns in a simple conversation or do they tend to interrupt as soon as they have something to say?
- Can the child maintain a topic of conversation over several turns or do they tend to drift off at a tangent?
- Can the child interpret other people's facial expressions and tone of voice?

## Developing Early Social Skills, Foundation Phase, 3 years+

### By the time they are 3 years old, most children can:

- Play alongside their peers and begin to develop co-operative play skills.
- Take turns in simple games in a small group with adult support.
- Use eye contact when they are listening to someone.

### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- For children who are engaging in solitary play:
  - Start with activities which the child particularly enjoys. Ask an adult to play alongside the child and provide a very simple commentary on what the child is doing. Allow the child to lead the play – the adult should not direct the play. If the child dislikes the commentary, the adult should continue to play alongside the child silently. The adult should copy the child's actions. This may be as simple as copying the child pushing cars along the floor for a few minutes. The child may need this type of adult support for a number of weeks (even months) before he/she is ready to move on. Aim for the adult to engage with the child so that they can establish eye contact, smiling and joint attention.
  - When the child is happy to accept an adult playing alongside them, the adult may from time to time intervene in the play to extend it. However the child should continue to take the lead. The adult should not be tempted to ask the child questions at this stage but it is helpful to provide comments on what the child is doing. If the child talks spontaneously, use modelling. As before, aim for eye contact, smiling and joint attention, but also for the child and adult to begin to copy one another during the play. This will give the child the skills they need to move into parallel play.

- For children who are engaging in parallel play:
  - Continue to provide opportunities for the child to play individually with an adult. The adult should still follow the child's lead but should make suggestions for extending the play from time to time. The purpose of this is to develop the quality of the play (e.g. for child to initiate a short sequence of imaginative play) and also to help the child to accept other people's ideas in play. This is a precursor to co-operative play.
  - Provide opportunities for physical games and activities – the child may be able to interact with his/her peers more easily during chasing games such as "What's the time Mr Wolf?" than during imaginative play activities.
  - Introduce paired and small group activities (2-3 children). Aim for the child to take turns with one or two children with adult support. *Keep these activities short so that the child can complete the game before he/she starts to lose interest. Games such as "Monkey Business", "Pop up Pirate" and "Magnetic Fishing" may be useful for this.*

### Specific activities to support development of social skills – Foundation Phase, 3 years+:

- For children who are not yet able to take turns in a small group or paired activity:
  - Use Tap Tap box activities (see page 4.4)
  - Use Ready Steady - Go! games (see page 4.4)
  - Use the **Chatterbox Basic Language** box activities in individual, paired or small group sessions to establish turn taking, develop listening skills



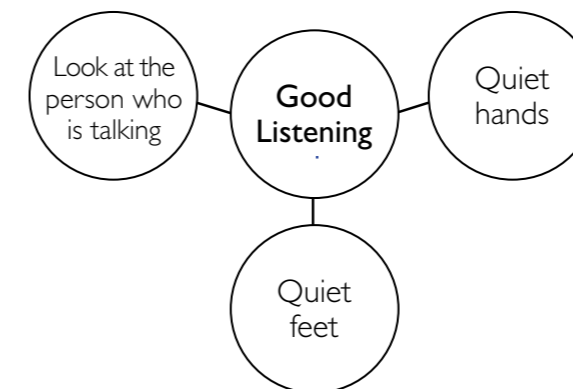
### Developing Early Social Skills Foundation Phase, 5 years+

#### By the time they are 5 years old most children can:

- Play cooperatively.
- Engage in a range of play activities on their own and with others.

#### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- Provide opportunities for indoor and outdoor play and other active learning activities throughout the day. Encourage turn taking through small group work. Use real objects which can be handled to stimulate small group conversations.
- Teach vocabulary which expresses emotions (see activities below).
- Encourage active looking and listening during class discussions. Teach looking and listening skills to the children explicitly. For example ask the children to sit with 'quiet' hands and feet, looking at the teacher and not talking. Praise good examples. You can also use written ones, symbols or pictures to reinforce this. For example:



See also page 4.5 for other ideas.

- It can be helpful to have a 'talking stick', pretend microphone or other object to reinforce turn taking – you can only speak when it is your turn to hold the object. Gently refocus those children who tend to drift off a topic.

#### Specific activities to support the development of social skills – Foundation Phase, 5 years+:



For children who are able to participate in small group activities for 10 minutes or more, use the **Chatterbox Expressive Language Box**.

This box contains activities and resources to:

- Encourage eye contact, turn taking and mime.
- Identify, describe and mime emotions.
- Relate emotions to their own experiences.
- Think of explanations for emotions and feelings.
- Identify problem situations and discuss solutions.
- Mime problem situations and discuss solutions.
- Make up stories around problem solving.



**Developing Later Social Skills Key Stage 2, 7 years+**

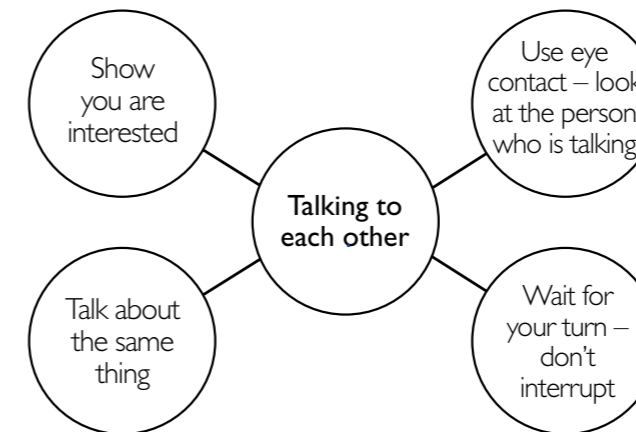
**By the time they enter KS2 most children can:**

- Initiate a conversation appropriately.
- Take turns in a conversation.
- Maintain a topic of conversation over several turns.
- Recognise when other people's body language and facial expressions show that they have not understood or have lost interest.
- Show interest in a topic of conversation by asking questions for more information.

- Use precise feedback to pupils, e.g. rather than 'Wait!' or 'Listen!'. Say: 'You haven't waited long enough' or 'It's your turn after James.'
- The adult should be prepared to summarize points/ add to points to keep the conversation on track or clarify what a child means.
- Develop vocabulary which expresses emotions (see activities below).
- Give children roles – manager, an encourager, recorder and reporter. Talk about these roles and the things that these people might say.
- Use "jigsaw activities" – organise pupils into groups of 4. Number each person in the group. Pupils work with all other people in the room who have the same number as them i.e. all the number 1s work together; all the number 2s work together etc. In their new groups they research a chosen topic. Brief notes are made to enable feedback to 'home' group..

**Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:**

- Use circle time activities to discuss rules of conversational turntaking, including:
  - Look at the person who is talking.
  - Don't speak when someone else is talking.
  - Keep to the subject.
  - Show interest by nodding sometimes or saying things like "hm", "oh really"
  - Make a chart with the children and display it in the classroom to remind them. Refer to the chart regularly. For example:





### Specific activities to support the development of social skills – Key Stage 2, 7 years+:



For children who are able to participate in small group activities for 10 minutes or more, use the **Chatterbox Expressive Language Box**.

This box contains activities and resources to:

- Encourage eye contact, turn taking and mime.
- Identify, describe and mime emotions.
- Relate emotions to their own experiences.
- Think of explanations for emotions and feelings.
- Identify problem situations and discuss solutions.
- Mime problem situations and discuss solutions.
- Make up stories around problem solving.

#### Further resources

- Language Builders
- Time to talk
- Socially speaking
- Helping young children speak with confidence
- Foundation Phase

See References and Resources Section for further details.

## 3. Verbal Comprehension

### Introduction

The term verbal comprehension refers to the ability to understand spoken language. It includes:

- The ability to understand individual words (vocabulary).
- The ability to understand concepts. Early concepts include for example colour and size. At a later stage this could include learning to understand concepts such as gravity or magnetism.
- The ability to remember and process a series of words in a phrase or sentence.
- The ability to understand the rules of grammar.

Verbal comprehension relies heavily on the ability to remember what is heard (auditory memory) in the correct sequence.

Verbal comprehension underpins learning in many areas of the curriculum such as Maths, Science, English and Geography.

Some children have difficulties with all elements of verbal comprehension whilst others may have difficulties with specific aspects. **Children who have problems with verbal comprehension can be overlooked if their spoken language appears adequate and they are good at watching other people.**



#### Observations to note:

- If the child is learning English as an Additional Language please contact EMAS for a first language assessment.
- Does the child understand and use a good range of everyday vocabulary?
- How many key words can a child understand in a phrase or sentence?
- Are there particular elements of grammar which the child does not yet understand (for example the pronoun "she" refers to a female)
- Is the child watching others before he/she starts to follow instructions?
- Can the child follow a sequence of instructions or does he/she need instructions to be modified?
- Does the child struggle to understand and retain new concepts?
- Do physical demonstrations, using pictures or objects help the child to understand?

## Developing Early Verbal Comprehension Foundation Phase, 3 years+

### By the time they are 3 years old, most children can:

- Understand a wide range of everyday nouns and verbs
- Understand early concepts such as big / little, some colour names and some position words ("in", "on", "under")
- Understand short instructions which contain 2-3 key words, e.g. "Give the big book to Bethan"

### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

#### ● Total Communication

For children who are still developing early language skills (ie those who are not yet talking in 3-4 word sentences) a Total Communication approach is appropriate. In Total Communication gestures, real objects, signs and symbols are used by the adults working with the child to support verbal language. Speech is used and encouraged but the child may communicate using any combination of words, gestures, signs and symbols. The Total Communication approach is supported by research findings.



Many parents are anxious that a child who is introduced to hand signs will use signing in preference to speech. Research has found that the reverse is true – children learn to understand and use verbal language more quickly when they can see hand signs which accompany words.

#### ● Visual Timetables

- Visual timetables can be used in different formats and in different ways with whole class groups or individual children. Symbols, photos or objects may be used depending on individual needs. For example; pictures of activities for the session are placed on a board. The teacher selects the picture of the next activity, talks about it and displays it in sequence.
- An individual child might have a timetable showing the tasks that the teacher wants them to complete within the session.

#### ● Giving Instructions

- Make sure you have the child's full attention before giving an instruction.
- Consider how many key words are in each part of the instruction. You should aim to keep your sentences at or very slightly above the level the child understands.
- Keep instructions short. Use visual prompts (e.g. use real objects or pictures) to help support understanding of tasks.

#### ● Developing vocabulary and early concepts

- Use Play and Active Learning activities to provide natural opportunities to develop children's verbal comprehension.
- Observe carefully the current level of a child's language, noting early vocabulary and concepts which the child does not yet understand.
- Plan activities which will introduce the vocabulary or concept naturally. This could be carried out with an individual child, a small group or a whole class.
- Take photographs and use these with an individual child or a small group so that there are opportunities to hear new vocabulary again during follow up activities.



### Specific activities to support early verbal comprehension – Foundation Phase, 3 years+:



For children who are in Nursery or Reception years and who have not yet achieved the language skills outlined on the 2 ½ and 3 ½ year

Development Profiles, use the **Chatterbox Basic Language Box**. This box may also be useful for older children who have not yet developed these skills.

This box contains activities, games and resources to develop:

- Noun Vocabulary – understanding everyday objects, toys, kitchen utensils and body parts.
- Verbs – understanding everyday actions.
- Understanding simple instructions.

- Introducing concepts – big/little, colours and prepositions in/on/under/behind/in front.
- Question forms – understanding who/where/what.
- Sorting and categorising.
- Pronouns – understanding and using she/he, his/her.
- Sequencing pictures.

These activities can all be used alongside a Total Communication approach.

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.

### Developing Early Verbal Comprehension – Foundation Phase, 5 years+

#### By the time they are 5 years old, most children can:

- Understand short instructions which contain up to 4 key words and understand simple 2-part instructions.
- Understand questions why / how
- Understand a range of concepts such as colour names, counting objects, heavy / light, long / short.
- Understand today, tomorrow and yesterday
- Understand a range of grammatical structures such as pronouns (e.g. he, she, they, them) and simple past tenses.

#### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- **Visual prompts** – visual prompts support the child's understanding of language. Ensure that any context for learning is based on real objects or real experience. Use real items wherever possible in a variety of role play areas which should be changed regularly. When explaining tasks (see Section 4.29), use demonstrations and modelling.
- **Visual Timetables** – Visual timetables can be used in different formats and in different ways with whole class groups or individual children. Symbols, photos or objects may be used depending on individual needs. For example; pictures of activities for the session are placed on a board. The teacher selects the picture of the next activity, talks about it and displays it in sequence.
  - An individual child might have a timetable showing the tasks that the teacher wants them to complete within the session.
- **Giving instructions** – Consider how many key words are in each part of the instruction. Keep instructions short. Break longer instructions down into shorter chunks. Repeat if necessary.

### Specific activities to support early verbal comprehension – Foundation Phase, 5 years+:



For children who are in Year 1 & 2 who have achieved the language skills outlined above but who have not yet developed the language skills outlined on the 5-6 year Development Profile, use the **Conceptual Language Chatterbox**. This box can also be used by older children who have not yet developed these skills. This box contains activities, games and resources to develop:

- Maths concepts – shape/sorting/space/ordering/number and measuring.
- Science concepts – cause and effect, time and growth.
- Things that go together.
- Similarities, differences and opposites.
- Attributes – adjectives and categorisation.
- Problem solving – identifying absurdities in pictures.

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.

For children in Year 2, you may find it helpful to refer to the strategies and activities for Key Stage 2 on page 4.25.



## Developing Later Verbal Comprehension – Key Stage 2, 7 years+

### By the time they reach Key Stage 2, most children can:

- Remember and follow a sequence of instructions.
- Learn and retain new vocabulary and concepts related to topics (e.g. magnetism) quickly.
- Understand a range of grammatical and sentence structures, for example, understanding past and future tense forms; understanding complex, embedded sentences, e.g. "The boy fell over the book which was on the floor".

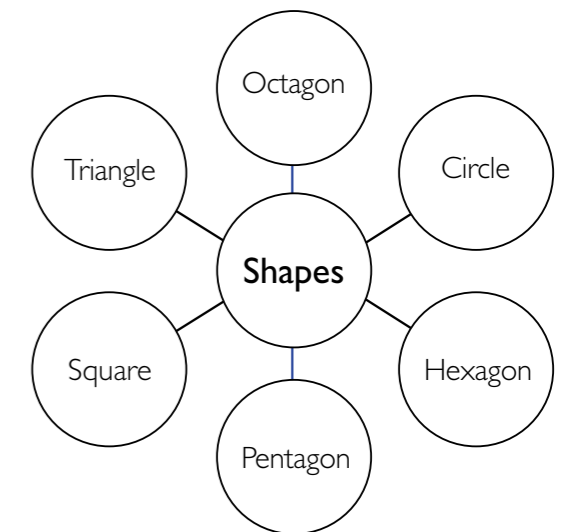
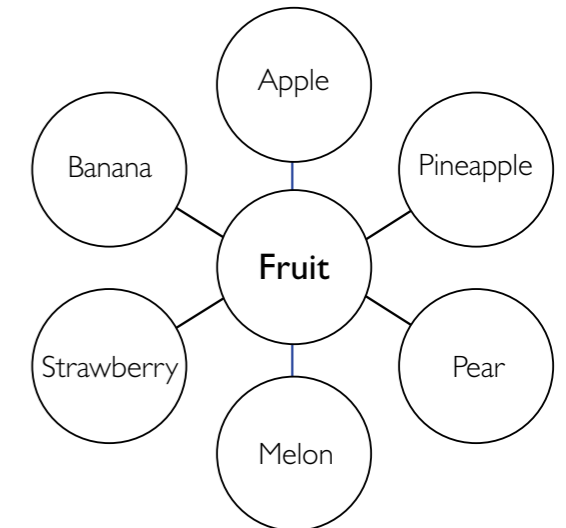
### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

For children who have developed early verbal comprehension skills but continue to experience difficulties in understanding language in the classroom, the following strategies will be helpful.

- **Pre-teaching:**

- It is helpful to provide an overview of a topic on one sheet. This can be produced as a mindmap. It is possible to use pictures for those children who cannot yet read. It is also helpful to provide a glossary with simple explanations or pictures of key vocabulary and concepts.
- Identify new concepts and key vocabulary for the topic. For some children you may need to reduce the amount of vocabulary you expect them to learn to a small core of words.
- Pre teach the core vocabulary before starting the topic.

- When pre teaching, the meaning and sound structure of words should be explicitly taught. Word webs are an effective way of demonstrating visually the meaning of words (definition, category and words which may mean the same or the opposite).



- Words and phrases with more than one meaning should be explained (e.g. economy – meaning lowest price or a country's incomes; idioms – he'll hit the roof).

● **During teaching:**

- Be aware of the limitations of a child's auditory memory when giving instructions. Avoid long sentences. Break them down into manageable chunks. Children with auditory memory problems will be easily confused by lots of instructions.
- Don't be afraid of silence, when you ask a question allow plenty of time for processing.
- Repeat instructions where necessary and encourage children to ask for clarification or indicate that they have not understood.
- Give a sequence of instructions in the order you want them done.
- Check the child isn't overloaded with too many concepts in one sentence.

● **Use visual strategies:**

- Use mindmaps and wordwebs to support understanding. Mindmaps are a way of presenting key information on one page and visually linking parts of a topic together. Remember to refer to the mindmap at the beginning of each topic session.
- Use real objects and practical demonstrations wherever possible. Use photographs and pictures to help remind a child of a practical demonstration from several days/weeks ago. These can also be used to rehearse the sequence of an activity such as a science experiment.
- Find alternative ways to show understanding e.g. draw a picture.
- Give extra exposure to visual material e.g. use internet, images, photos, library to develop understanding.
- Use visual dictionaries.






● **Reviewing and revising teaching points:**

- Children with language difficulties often find it difficult to retain new information. They may need to be exposed to a new word or concept many times before they can retain it accurately. Reviewing and revising is therefore essential in helping them to learn.
- Review key vocabulary at the beginning and end of each session.
- Build in review slots at weekly intervals during a topic so that you go over what was learned earlier in the term.
- Revise earlier topics at the beginning and end of each term.



The revision slots do not need to be long. Spend about 5 -10 minutes at the beginning or end of a session reviewing a topic. You can ask the children what they can remember about a topic or you can use the mindmap as a reminder. Alternatively you can ask them to write or draw a picture which shows one thing they liked, one thing they did not like and one thing which was interesting.

For example:

Topic: Victorians		
 I liked Going to St Fagans	 I didn't like The teachers were horrible	 This was interesting They didn't have cars

**Specific activities to support verbal comprehension Key Stage 2:**



For children in Year 3 who have not yet developed early verbal comprehension skills outlined on the 5-6 and 6-7 year Developmental Profile, use the **Conceptual Language Chatterbox**. This box can also be used by older children who have not yet developed these skills. This box contains activities, games and resources to develop:

**Further activities to support verbal comprehension Key Stage 2, 7 years+:**

Older children (Years 4 and above) with language difficulties often have particular difficulties understanding and remembering time and spatial concepts.

The following concepts may need to be specifically taught in small groups or individually.



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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● **Teaching time concepts**

Days of the week and understanding concepts of today, tomorrow and yesterday:

- Make laminated cards with each day written on it.
- Practice putting the cards in the correct sequence.
- Play games in pairs where one child closes their eyes, the other takes a card away. The first child opens their eyes and has to say which card is missing.
- Take turns for one person to close their eyes whilst the other person jumbles the cards. When the first person opens their eyes, they need to work out what has changed and move the cards back to the correct sequence.
- Encourage the children to work from Left to Right. Mark which day it is today by placing a vertical arrow pointing downwards over the correct day. See page 5.25 in the Additional Resources Section for photocopyable cards for you to laminate.

● **Months of the year:**

- Make laminated cards for the months of the year (see page 5.17 in the Additional Resources Section for a photocopyable version). Practice putting them into the correct order with the child. You may need to learn the months in sections (e.g. learn January, February, March for several sessions or weeks and then add April, May, June and so on). Work from left to right or top to bottom. Play games in pairs to practice this:
  - Take turns for one person to close their eyes whilst the other person jumbles the cards. When the first person opens their eyes, they need to work out what has changed and move the cards back to the correct sequence.

- Take turns for one person to close their eyes while the other person removes one of the cards. When the first person opens their eyes, he/she needs to work out which card is missing.
- Make a chart or wheel, with the child, showing the months of the year. Help the child to write in the months of the year. Ask the child to draw pictures or write on the wheel or chart to mark significant events (eg. Family birthdays, Christmas or other religious festivals which the child's family celebrate) See page 5.27 in the Additional Resources Section for a blank photocopyable version.

January	February 	March 	April	May 	June
July 	August	September 	October 	November 	December 

Keep the completed chart or wheel and refer to it regularly with the child.

● **Seasons of the year:**

- Make laminated cards which are colour coded to show spring, summer, autumn and winter (see page 2.22 in the Additional Resources Section for a set of colour coded cards which can be cut out, coloured and laminated). Colour winter in pale blue, spring in pale green, summer in yellow and autumn in light brown. This is best if done in pencil so that the text is still easy to read. Practice putting the cards in the correct sequence working from left to right. Talk about which season it is now and key features of this season, e.g. spring weather and changes in the environment. The child can draw pictures to represent this on the cards in washable marker pen.

- Practise matching the months of the year to the correct season (see pages 5.17 and 5.22 in the Additional Resources Section for a set of cards which can be cut out and laminated. You can colour code the months to match them with the correct season (e.g. March – pale green).
- Use a colour coded season wheel (see page 5.20 in the Additional Resources Section for this). The child can colour this in and write the months on in washable marker pen or blue-tack the months of the year cards onto the wheel: Colour winter months pale blue, spring months pale green, summer months yellow and autumn months light brown.

## 4. Expressive Language

### Introduction

The term “expressive language” is used to describe spoken language. It is the way we use words and sentences to express ourselves and involves:

- Using word order: This varies between languages. For example in English “the boy is kicking the ball” means something different to “the ball is kicking the boy”
- Using grammar: This varies between languages. In English for example the word ending “-ed” denotes past tense for regular verbs.
- Linking sentences to form a narrative (i.e. a sequenced account of an event or an idea). This involves planning and organising thoughts and ideas as well as sequencing the sentences.
- Retrieving vocabulary from memory and using it. This is sometimes known as word-finding or word-retrieval.

Some children have difficulties with all aspects of spoken language whereas others may have difficulties with specific aspects of expressive language (for example word finding, planning and organising narrative).

### Observations to note:

- Is the child learning English as an Additional Language? If so, how well developed is their home language? If the child has age appropriate skills in their home language and needs help in acquiring English, please contact EMAS for advice.
- Does the child use a good range of everyday vocabulary?
- How many words can the child put together in a phrase or sentence? Is the child putting together short phrases? (e.g. two or three word combinations) or is the child using sentences (i.e. 4 or more words)
- If the child is talking in sentences, are there grammatical errors (e.g. “him got a big spade”)
- Are there particular elements of grammar which the child has not yet mastered (for example using irregular forms of past tense incorrect, such as “brokek” rather than “broke”).
- Is the child struggling to link sentences together to form a coherent account?
- Does the child struggle to recall words which they already know?



## Developing Early Expressive Language Skills – Foundation Phase, 3 years +

By the time they are 3 years old, most children can:

- Use a range of everyday nouns and verbs.
- Use phrases and short sentences of 3-4 words.

### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

For children using single words or 2 – 3 word phrases:

- **Using the Modelling Technique:**
  - Modelling is an effective technique for developing children's language. In modelling, the adult observes the level of language which a child is currently able to use. The adult then modifies his/her own language and uses phrases or sentences which are a little longer or more complex than the child's own.
  - Modelling can be used to extend a child's language, e.g. when a child uses a phrase or sentence, the adult repeats the sentence back but adds or changes a word to make the sentence more complex. For example: child "I got bus". Adult: "Oh yes. You've got a big bus" placing emphasis on the word 'big'.
  - Modelling does not immediately change a child's language use. However it is very effective when used consistently over a period of time.
- **Total Communication:**
  - For children who are still developing early language skills a Total Communication approach is appropriate. In Total Communication real objects, gestures, signs and symbols are used by the adults working with the child to support their ability to express themselves. Speech is used and encouraged but the child may communicate using any combination of words, gestures, signs and symbols. The Total Communication approach is supported by research findings. Many parents are anxious that a child who is introduced to signs will use signing in preference to speech. Research has found that the reverse is true – children learn to understand and use verbal language more quickly when they are taught signs to accompany new words.
  - Talk about real objects which the child can see and handle.



### Specific activities to support early expressive language skills – Foundation Phase, 3 years+:



For children who are in nursery or Reception years and who have not yet achieved the language skills outlined on the 2 ½ and 3 ½ year

Development Profiles, use the **Chatterbox Basic Language Box**. This box may also be useful for older children with severe language difficulties. This box contains activities, games and resources to develop:

- Noun Vocabulary – naming and describing everyday objects, toys, kitchen utensils and body parts.
- Verbs – naming everyday actions
- Introducing concepts – using big/little, colours and prepositions in/on/under/behind/in front
- Pronouns – using she/he, his/her
- Sequencing pictures and beginning to use past tense

These activities can all be used alongside a Total Communication approach.

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.

### Developing Early Expressive Language Skills – Foundation Phase, 5 years+

#### By the time they are 5 years old, most children can:

- Use sentences of 5-6 words or more
- Use pronouns and past tenses consistently

#### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

##### For children who are using 4 word phrases or more:

The following strategies can be implemented across the school day to support the expressive language skills of all children who have already developed early language skills.

- **Modelling:**
  - Modelling is an effective technique for developing children's language. In modelling, the adult observes the level of language which a child is currently able to use. When the child uses a phrase or sentence, the adult repeats the sentence back but adds a word or two to make the sentence longer or changes a word to model the correct grammatical form, for example:  
CHILD: "I goed to the park"  
ADULT: "You went to the park" placing stress on the word went
  - Modelling ensures that the child hears the correct sentence structure but does not place pressure on them by expecting them to repeat the correct form.


- **Using question forms to the best effect:**

- Forced alternatives – these questions are a halfway house between closed and open ended questions. When using forced alternatives, the adult gives the child a choice of two answers. For example rather than ask "Would you like some juice" the adult asks "Would you like apple juice or water?". This also works well with more complex questions such as "did the magnets pull together or push apart?". This enables the adult to model vocabulary or sentence structures for the child.
- Open ended questions – these questions require the child to formulate their own response. This can be useful for children who are able to talk in sentences and can express complex ideas. For example "What happened?"
- Avoid closed questions – these questions require only a yes/no or one word response for example "do you want a drink?". In general, closed questions should be avoided as they do not encourage the child to communicate.



### Strategies for children who are using sentences of 6 or more words:

These strategies will be helpful in supporting children who are able to use sentences of 6 or more words but have difficulty in planning and organising sentences in order to give an account of a past event or explain an idea.

- Develop general sequencing skills using pictures – see specific activities using the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. 
- Provide opportunities for extended talk e.g. retelling a sequence of events, retelling a story, planning a story. Use photographs, pictures and real objects as prompts.
- To develop a simple narrative structure, encourage children to describe pictures or retell events using structured questions to help scaffold the children's responses:
  - Who is it about?
  - What happened?
  - Where did it happen?
  - When did it happen?
- Provide opportunities to assume different communicative roles for example sometimes let the child take the lead and direct other children.

It can be helpful to have these questions written down as a prompt on large pieces of card displayed in the classroom or on A4 cards next to the child.

- Developing verbal narrative skills links strongly with structuring story writing. Story grids and story plans can be very helpful in structuring children's ideas. Most story plans/grids use a similar structure.
  - Setting - name and describe the characters (who is the story about?) & the location (where is the story set?)
  - Event/problem – what happened to start the story?
  - Ways of solving the problem – sometimes called “And then” or “It starts to sort itself out”
  - Outcome and consequences – (the end)
- Provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and plan together before carrying out any writing.
- Use tape recorders and act out or read stories onto tape.
- Act out stories which the children have written or use puppets.



### Specific activities for supporting early expressive language – Foundation Phase, 5 years+:

#### Expressive Language Skills – developing and using sentences for describing



For children who are in Year 1 & 2 who are using short sentences, who have not yet developed the language skills outlined on the 5-6 year

Development Profile, use the **Conceptual Language Chatterbox**. This box can also be used by older children who have not yet developed these skills. This box contains activities, games and resources to develop:

- Maths concepts – using language to describe shape, measuring, comparing, space, ordering and number.
- Science concepts – describing cause and effect, describing time and growth.
- Things that go together.
- Describing similarities, differences and opposites.
- Attributes – using adjectives.
- Problem solving – describing what's wrong in pictures.

#### Developing narrative skills



For children in Year 1 & 2 who are able to join sentences together but are not yet able to accurately retell a story, use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. This box can also be used by older children. This box contains games, activities and resources to develop:

- Sequencing pictures and describing what has happened.
- Predicting the end of a story.
- Answering questions who/what/where/when/why and how.
- Problem solving – what would you do if...
- Understanding and using the words beginning/middle/end/first & before relating to story structures.
- Using vocabulary to describe emotions.
- Describing similarities and differences.


In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.

## Developing Later Expressive Language Skills – Key Stage 2, 7 years+

### By the time they enter KS2, most children can:

- Use long sentences (10+ words) which link phrases using “and” “because”, and other connectives.
- Use a range of complex grammatical structures to indicate past + future tenses, e.g. “I would have...”, “he had been running”
- Link several sentences together to give a coherent account of a past event.
- Recall and use subject specific vocabulary.


### Strategies to support children who have not yet developed these skills:

- Develop general sequencing skills using pictures – see specific activities (below) using the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. 
- Provide opportunities for extended talk e.g. retelling sequence of events, retelling a story, planning a story. Use photographs, pictures and real objects as prompts.
- Provide opportunities to assume different communicative roles for example sometimes let the child take the lead and direct others.
- To develop a simple narrative structure, encourage children to describe pictures or retell events using structured questions to help scaffold the children’s responses:
  - Who is it about?
  - What happened?
  - Where did it happen?
  - When did it happen?

It can be helpful to have these questions written down as a prompt on large pieces of card displayed in the classroom or on A4 cards next to the child.

- Developing verbal narrative skills links strongly with structuring story writing. Story grids and story plans can be very helpful in structuring children’s ideas. Most story plans/grids use a similar structure.
  - Setting - name and describe the characters (who is the story about?) & the location (where is the story set?)
  - Event/problem – what happened to start the story?
  - Ways of solving the problem – sometimes called “And then” or “It starts to sort itself out”
  - Outcome and consequences – (the end)

### Specific activities for supporting later expressive language skills – Key Stage 2, 7 years+:

For children who are in Year 3 and above who have developed early language skills above but who have not yet developed the language skills outlined on the 5-6 year and 6-7 year Development Profiles, use the **Conceptual Language Chatterbox** to develop the following skills: 

- Maths concepts – using language to describe shape, measuring, comparing, space, ordering and number.
- Science concepts – describing cause and effect, describing time and growth.
- Things that go together.
- Describing similarities, differences and opposites.
- Attributes – using adjectives.
- Problem solving – describing what’s wrong in pictures.

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities..



For children in Year 3 and above who are able to join sentences together but are not yet able to accurately retell a story, use the

### Expressive Language Chatterbox.

This box contains games, activities and resources to develop:

- Sequencing pictures and describing what has happened.
- Predicting the end of a story.
- Answering questions who/what/where/when/why and how.
- Problem solving – what would you do if...
- Understanding and using the words beginning/middle/end/first & before relating to story structures.
- Using vocabulary to describe emotions.
- Describing similarities and differences.

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.



### Word Finding Difficulties

Word finding difficulties occur when a child or adult knows a word or name but is unable to recall and use it. All of us experience word finding difficulties from time to time – we often say that a word or name is on the tip of my tongue when we cannot think of it.

However some children and adults experience word finding difficulties very frequently. These children often hesitate or use fillers (e.g. "er you know"), describe words or talk around them (e.g. "you know the thing we saw when we went to that place near Nan's house").

There are several strategies which can be used to support children who are experiencing word finding difficulties.

### Strategies for supporting children with word finding difficulties:

These strategies can be used to support the child to acquire and use new vocabulary across the curriculum.

#### Learning new words

- Teach the meaning of important new words explicitly. Teach how the word relates to other words (e.g. words which mean the opposite and words which mean the same). Also teach the sound structure of the word, for example, identify the first sound, the number of syllables, the last sound and words which rhyme with it. Research has shown that this is an effective technique.
- Revise new words frequently – children with word finding difficulties need to overlearn vocabulary
- Using visual strategies, particularly mindmaps will help children to store vocabulary accurately and this should make word finding easier. Use visual dictionaries.
- Build word banks (lists of key vocabulary for a topic) together and offer these to pupils. These could also be taken home to reinforce learning.

#### Helping word recall

When a child is struggling to remember a word, give them plenty of time to recall the word. If this doesn't work, use the following cueing strategies:

- Give clues or ask simple questions to help them think of the meaning of the word e.g. Where do you find it? What does it look like?

- Ask the child if he/she can think of the first sound
- If you know the word, use a sentence with the word missing – this may enable the child to remember it.
- As a last resort, give the child the initial sound if you know the word they are trying to recall
- As the child gets more practised at using these strategies, encourage the child to try to use these strategies to cue themselves.

### Specific activities for developing word retrieval:

Use the **Chatterbox Expressive Language** box to develop:



- Naming vocabulary
- Describing

In each Chatterbox, there is a set of white A5 cards which details games and activities. These target specific language skills as well as providing the resources needed to set up these activities.



## 5. Speech Sound Development

### Introduction

Every language has a specific set of sounds which are combined to make words. Young children gradually learn to discriminate and produce the sounds within their home language.

Speech sound development involves:

- Having adequate hearing.
- Listening to and paying attention to speech sounds.
- Being able to discriminate the subtle differences between speech sounds.
- Being able to articulate each sound.
- Being able to co-ordinate breathing with the rapid movements of lips, teeth, tongue and larynx which is required to join sounds together to make words and sentences.

Children tend to develop speech sounds in a developmental pattern. For example for children learning English/Welsh as their home language the sounds "b", "d" and "m" tend to develop early (usually by 2 ½ years) whereas the sounds "s", "sh" and "ch" tend to develop later (usually by around 3 ½ to 4 years). There is a wide variation in the rate of normal development but usually children who are learning English as their home language will have developed the full range of English sounds (including "r" and consonant clusters such as "br", "spl" and "str") by the age of 7 years. In some dialects it is normal for "th" to be pronounced as "f", even in adulthood.

Delays in developing speech sounds are relatively common and this is the most frequently cited reason for referral to the Community Speech and Language Therapy service.

Most of these children will have immature speech sound development with associated difficulties in discriminating between sounds. Research suggests that this type of speech sound difficulty tends to resolve with age. However, children with speech sound difficulties which persist beyond the age of 5 years are at increased risk of developing specific literacy difficulties.

Children's ability to discriminate speech sounds underpins their speech development and their later literacy development.

A small number of children have a physical cause for their speech sound difficulty. This could be due to a structural abnormality in the head or neck (e.g. cleft palate), muscle weakness or paralysis (dysarthria) or difficulties in co-ordinating oral muscle movements (sometimes referred to as verbal dyspraxia).

### Observations to note:

- Are the vowel sounds affected?
- Does the child substitute sounds e.g. "k" pronounced as "t". Which sounds are substituted?
- Does the child omit sounds completely e.g. all of the final consonants in words are missed out
- Can the child discriminate between sounds (phonological awareness)

For any child who has delayed speech sounds, it is important that they have a hearing test.



### Strategies to support children's speech sound development:

- **What to do if you can't understand what the child says:**
  - Use real objects or pictures so that you have some contextual clues to help you understand.
  - Rather than asking the child to slow down, **slow your own rate of speech**. The child will automatically slow down their rate of speech.
  - If you are having difficulties understanding a child, recap what you have understood and allow them time to fill in the rest. If you really can't understand them, ask them to use additional cues such as drawing, writing, pointing etc.
  - Accept that on occasions you may not understand but offer positive rewards for attempts to communicate.
- **Use the modelling technique:**
  - Don't be tempted to correct unclear speech, as this may inhibit the child from communicating. Instead **use the modelling technique**. In modelling, the adult listens carefully to the child and then repeats the word or phrase back to the child correctly. **The child is not asked to copy the adult**. Modelling ensures that the child hears the correct speech sound in a word but does not place pressure on the child by expecting them to repeat the correct form.
  - Modelling does not immediately change a child's speech; however, it is very effective when used consistently over a period of time.

- **When working on phonological awareness:**
  - Make sure that the child understands the concepts first / last; beginning, middle and end before starting phonological awareness work. You may need to teach these concepts directly using play based activities.
  - Work on discriminating environmental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and musical instruments before you start working on speech sounds (see below for specific activities).
  - Use pictures and/or signs to represent sounds (for example a snake could represent the sound 's')
  - Be careful how you pronounce the speech sounds when teaching phonological awareness. **Avoid using an 'uh' sound when talking about consonant sounds i.e. 'p' is 'p' not 'puh'**.
  - During focused sound discrimination activities, keep background noise and other distractions to a minimum.



### Specific activities to support speech sound discrimination skills – Foundation Phase

- **The analysis game – segmenting**

**Materials:** picture cards showing objects which are CVC words

A child picks a card and names what it depicts. For this example, let us assume that the child chooses a picture of a hair bow. The teacher repeats the word, but slowly and with a clear pause (about a half second interval) between its two phonemes (e.g. 'b...o'). Then all the children should repeat the word in this same manner; 'b...o...'. To show that the word bow consists of two separate sounds, the teacher now places blocks in two different colours underneath the picture as she enunciates the sound represented by each.

The children then repeat the word sound by sound while representing the sounds of the word, left to right, with their own blocks. The children should repeat the sounds while pointing to the respective blocks and then the word, pausing slightly less between phonemes with each repetition. (e.g. 'b...o... , bow, b... o... , bow, b... o... , bow, b... o... , bow')

- **The synthesis game – Blending**

**Materials:** picture cards showing objects which are CVC words

This game is just the reverse of the analysis game and likewise requires that you model the procedure before turning it over to the children. Choose a picture and place it face down so the children cannot see it. Then name the picture, phoneme by phoneme (e.g. 'b... o'), while placing the blocks beneath the picture. While pointing to their own blocks, the children must repeat the phonemes over and over and faster and faster as they did in the analysis game. When they believe they know the identity of the picture they should raise their hands. The teacher may then ask the group or any individual to name the picture. After resolving any disagreements, the picture is held up for all to see.



After modelling several words in this way, pass the challenge to the children. For each new picture, help them agree on its name and give them time to analyze it on their own. To gain a good sense of who is and is not catching on, ask one or more individuals to share his or her solution to each word. Then the whole group should repeat the solution together, voicing the separate phonemes of the word as they point to their corresponding blocks.

- **Everyone sits in a circle and the teacher tells a tale**

Once upon a time, there was a kind little troll who loved to give children presents. The only catch was that the troll always wanted people to know what their present was before giving it to them. The problem was that the little troll has a very strange way of talking. If he was going to tell a child that the present was a bike, he would say 'b-i-k'. Not until the child has guessed what the present was would he be completely happy. Now I will pretend to be the troll. I will name a surprise for one of you. When you figure out what it is, it will be your turn.

Choose one child and pronounce the name of the present, phoneme by phoneme. When the child guesses the word, she or he is to name a present for somebody else. Work up from short (two and three sound) words to longer ones as the children become more adept at hearing the sounds. It is best to limit the game to only four or five children on any given day or it becomes a bit long.

Examples of gifts include the following:

*Ape, bean, Book, Bow, Bread, Brick, Broom, Cheese, Desk, Dog*

*Dress, Eel, Glass, Ice, Moose, Pan, Pea, Pen, Phone, Shoe, Skate, Soap, Stool, Stump, Tie, Train, Truck*



Using the everyday objects pictures from the Chatterbox Basic Language cards.

- Select pictures using the fishing game and clap out the syllables in the word.
- Draw attention to the first sound, last sound and rhyming words.

You should refer to the Speech and Language Therapy Service when:

- A child aged 3 – 4 years is unintelligible or omits sounds completely. Also refer children aged 3 – 4 who substitute several sounds or use unusual non-English sounds.
- A child aged 5 – 6 years who omits consonants or who makes sound substitutions with one or more consonant sounds. However, please do not refer children who cannot produce “r” or “th”. Children who pronounce ‘s’ as a welsch ‘ll’ sound need to be referred. Please do not refer children under 7 years whose only difficulty is pronouncing ‘s’ as ‘th’. Children with lisps (e.g. ‘s’ pronounced as ‘th’) may be referred if their adult front teeth have emerged.
- A child aged 7 years or above with persistent immaturities in speech sounds (except for “th”).



## 6. Fluency, Normal Non-Fluency and Stammering

### Introduction

Fluency refers to being able to talk in sentences which are free from repetitions, hesitations, stuttering/stammering, and using “fillers”, e.g. “uhm”, “er”. All children and adults experience episodes of non-fluency from time to time. However a small percentage of children and adults will have significant difficulties with non-fluency to the extent that they are recognised as having a stammer or stutter.

### Normal Non-Fluency

Many children experience episodes of non-fluency between the ages of 2 and 7 years. ***This is known as “normal non-fluency” and for the majority of children this phase will pass and they will not go on to develop a stammer.***

In normal non-fluency, children tend to repeat whole words or phrases. They may also repeat parts of words (e.g. foo-foo-football). The child may show little awareness of their non-fluency, although this may vary according to their age. Normal non-fluency is not usually associated with the child using body or head movements to “break out” of the stammer.

### Stammering

Older children, adolescents and adults who stammer experience a range of disruptions to their speech and may also experience anxiety when speaking. They can experience a combination or all of the following:

- Repetition of whole words and parts of words
- Prolonging sounds
- Blocking sounds (where the speaker struggles to get a sound out)
- Associated head or body movements as they try to break out of a stammer.
- Avoidance behaviours – where the speaker tries to avoid sounds, words and social situations where they may stammer



Children are more likely to develop a stammer if they have a family history of stammering. Boys are affected more often than girls; around 4 males are affected to 1 female.

### Observations to note:

- When did you first notice the stammer? How long has it been present?
- Does the child seem anxious or distressed by the stammer?
- Is the stammer better or worse in particular situations? For example is it better when the child is playing or chatting with friends?

### Strategies to support children with normal non-fluency and stammering:

It is important that all adults who are interacting with the child follow the advice below;

- Give the child plenty of time to speak. Feeling rushed makes stammering and non fluency worse.
- When stammering/non fluency occurs, continue to maintain eye contact and wait for the child to finish. Show the child that you are listening and that you are interested in what he/she has to say. Make sure the other children also wait. It is not helpful to finish the sentence for the child.
- It is not helpful to make the child repeat the word or sentence afterwards.
- Don't be tempted to ask the child to slow down or start again. Instead, slow your own rate of speech when you talk to the child. Research has shown that this can be effective in slowing the child's speech and this may improve fluency.
- If the child volunteers to answer a question, give them the opportunity to speak. However avoid putting them on the spot by asking questions in front of the class/group.

- Reduce the number of direct questions you ask the child even in 1:1 situations. This is particularly important with open ended questions where the child has to formulate his/her own response. If it is necessary to ask a question it is better to use forced alternatives (giving a choice of two answers).
- Avoid correcting grammatical errors and speech sounds. Modelling correct sentences without drawing attention to the child's errors is fine (see page 4.44 for further information about modelling).

#### You should refer to Speech and Language Therapy when:

- The non-fluency occurs for more than 6 weeks.
- The child or family are concerned.
- The child is showing signs of stammering rather than normal non-fluency.

## 7. The Link between Speech, Language and Literacy

### Introduction

Children with a history of speech and language problems are 3-4 times more likely to have problems with literacy. However, it is worth noting that not all children with speech problems need therapy and not all children who have speech and language therapy will develop literacy problems.

**Bowen, 1998**

Learning to read, write and spell is a complex process which builds on the skills which children already begin to develop in their spoken language. Children with speech and language difficulties may experience a range of problems in developing literacy skills such as:

- Developing decoding and spelling skills, (Phonological awareness).
- Understanding written language.
- Structuring sentences and using grammar in written language.
- Constructing a coherent narrative, e.g. when writing up an investigation or writing a story.

Research indicates that early hearing loss related to ear infections is strongly linked to speech, language and literacy problems later. The earlier glue ear or ear infections may have resolved but ***if there is any concern that the child may be experiencing ongoing hearing difficulties please contact the school nurse to request referral for a hearing test.***

The observations to note and the strategies in this section of the manual have been divided into:

- Developing phonological awareness
- Developing reading comprehension
- Developing written language skills



## Developing Phonological Awareness

Children who have well developed phonological awareness when they come to school have a head start making sense of how sounds and letters operate in print.

Children who have difficulty with this area of language (approximately 20%) will struggle through school figuring out how sounds work in print. They will not be able to use sound knowledge effectively because they will not have the underlying ability to 'listen inside a word' and 'play with sounds' they hear.

Many phonic programmes teaching phonological awareness don't start at a basic enough level to help these children.

A child's phonological awareness at the end of the Foundation Phase is one of the strongest predictors of future reading success.

### Definitions

- Phonological Awareness is the ability to process or analyse the phonological or sound structure of language as distinct from its meaning. Types of phonological awareness include: phonemic awareness, rhyme awareness, syllable awareness, word awareness and sentence awareness.
- Phonemic awareness is not phonics. Phonics is the relationship between sounds and their symbols (letters), and the methods of instruction used to teach those relationships.
- Phonemic Awareness is the ability to identify and manipulate speech sounds. It is also the understanding that speech is composed of a sequence of sounds (phonemes) that are combined and can be recombined to form other words. Phonemic awareness is sub-category of phonological awareness.



### Observations to note:

By the time they enter Key Stage 2, most children have mastered the basic skills of phonological awareness. However a small number of children will continue to need to work on these skills.

- Is the child easily distracted by extraneous sounds/ noises? Does he/she find it difficult to locate and pay attention to sound, particularly speech? For example, the child may be inattentive during stories.
- Does the child have immature speech sound development?
- Does the child have a history of ear infections?
- Does the child request a speaker to repeat what is said on a frequent basis?
- Does the child have trouble differentiating one sound from another?

### Strategies to support children in developing phonological awareness skills, Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2

- Pupils learning English as an additional language may not benefit from a phonic approach. Seek advice from EMAS if you require assistance.
- During focused sound discrimination activities, KEEP BACKGROUND NOISE TO A MINIMUM.
- There should be opportunities to develop phonological awareness skills throughout the day across all areas of the Foundation Phase. You can use the vocabulary from any indoor or outdoor activity to play with words (e.g. breaking them into syllables and talking about which sounds the children can hear at the beginning of the words).
- Be careful when pronouncing the speech sounds when teaching. Avoid using an 'uh' sound when talking about consonant sounds i.e. 'p' is 'p' not 'puh'.
- Use pictures and/or signs to represent sounds for example a snake could represent the sound 's')
- Make sure that the child understands the concepts first/last, beginning/middle and end before starting phonological awareness work. You may need to teach these concepts directly using play based activities. See Section 5 for more activities.
- Children who find phonological awareness difficult need to tackle it in carefully graded steps. They need extra time to consolidate learning and plenty of opportunities for repetition and revision.

### Specific activities to develop phonological awareness, Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, 3 years+, 5yrs+ and 7yrs+:

- A range of activities can be found in Section 4 in the speech sound section. These focus on developing early phonological awareness.
- When children are able to tackle these activities confidently, they are ready to move on to more challenging phonological awareness activities. Please see Section 5 for a range of activities which are designed to work on:
  - Word awareness
  - Syllable awareness
  - Rhyming
  - Sound awareness

#### Further resources

For a range of activities to teach phonological awareness, see



**'Letter and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics'**  
Primary literacy strategy,  
ISBN 00281-2007 BKT-EN

### Developing Reading Comprehension

As well as learning to decode text when reading, children need to learn how to interpret what text means. Children with difficulties in understanding spoken language may struggle to understand what they have read or what has been read to them. Other children many have more subtle difficulties in understanding inference, non literal use of language and understanding the feelings/motivation of characters in fiction.

#### By the time they are 5 years old, most children can:

- Listen to and understand short stories.
- Use the pictures in story books to help them understand stories and predict what might happen next.

#### Observations to note:

##### Foundation Phase:

- Is the child learning English as an additional language? If so, please contact EMAS for advice.
- Does the child understand a wide range of vocabulary?
- How does the child respond to questions? Does the child understand question forms e.g. 'who' 'where' 'how'?
- Does the child understand that word order can change meaning (e.g. 'Ben pushed Joe', versus 'Joe pushed Ben')?
- Can the child sequence pictures to make a visual story?

##### Key Stage 2:

- Is the child learning English as an additional language? If so, please contact EMAS for advice.
- Can the child understand complex sentences (sentences of 10 or more words.)?
- Does the child understand that word order can change meaning (e.g. 'Ben pushed Joe', versus 'Joe pushed Ben')?
- Can the child predict what will happen next?
- Can the child draw from inferences from a piece of text?

- Does the child understand idiomatic language (e.g. pull your socks up) or does he/she tend to interpret language literally?
- Does the child understand characters feelings and emotions?
- Can the child identify the difference between factual accounts from fiction and fact from opinion?

#### Strategies to support reading comprehension – Foundation Phase:

- Encourage children to look at the pictures in story books. Talk about what they can see in the pictures.
- Use photographs and pictures showing sequences of class activities (indoors and outdoors). Use these to make books.
- Pre-teach key vocabulary before introducing a story.
- Use puppets, models and toys to act out stories which you have read together
- Teach early question words.
  - Who?
  - Whats \_\_\_\_\_doing?
  - Where?
  - Please note – 'How' and 'Why' are much more difficult question forms

#### Specific activities – Foundation Phase:

- Plan activities which encourage sequencing skills. You can use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. This has activities and resources and develops:
  - Sequencing pictures and describing what has happened.
  - Predicting the end of a story.
  - Answering questions who/what/where/when/ why and how?
  - Problem solving – what would you do if...?
  - Understanding and using the words "beginning/middle/end", "first/before" relating to story structures.



### Strategies for supporting reading comprehension – Key Stage 2, 7yrs+:

- Pre-teach key vocabulary, this may be particularly important for:
  - Words which may have more than one meaning.
  - Vocabulary which describes emotions.
- Provide an overview of the plot before you begin working on complex stories.
- For stories which you study over a number of weeks, provide a simple synopsis for each chapter which summarises key points.
- Use pictures to support understanding e.g. use pictures to match a caption or use pictures to help sequence a plot.
- Provide opportunities for role play, drama and discussions to help support comprehension.
- Use audio books and plays so that the child can have opportunities to listen to a story /chapter of a story more than once.
- When studying a story over several weeks, use mind maps which can be used to review what has happened so far in the story.
- Use writing frames to encourage discussion and enable the child to sequence events.
- Modify text to make it more memorable and more easily understood e.g. highlighting key vocabulary, changing fonts, underlining and using sub headings.
- Encourage older children to take notes.

### Specific activities, Key Stage 2, 7 years+:

- Plan activities which encourage sequencing skills. You can use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. This has activities and resources and develops:
  - Sequencing pictures and describing what has happened.
  - Predicting the end of a story.
  - Answering questions who/what/where/when/why and how?
  - Problem solving – what would you do if.....?
  - Understanding and using the words beginning/middle/end/first and before relating to story structures.



### Further resources

This is a book of black and white pictures with prompt questions. 'Think it say it' aims at developing prediction, inference, problem solving and verbal reasoning skills.



**'Think it say it – black and white pictures with prompt questions'**

**SPEECH BUBBLES – BLACK SHEEP PRESS**

### Developing Written Language Skills

Once children have begun to write independently they begin to use their knowledge of grammar and sentence construction in their written work. They also begin to sequence sentences to create narratives.

Children with language difficulties, particularly those with poorly developed expressive language may have problems with:

- Recalling vocabulary (see Section 4.40 for word finding)
- Writing sentences. Words may be omitted and word endings (e.g. plural 's') may be missing. Word order may also be incorrect
- Sequencing stories. Stories may be disorganised and poorly structured.

### Observations to note:

- Is the child learning English as an additional language? If so, please contact EMAS for advice.
- Can the child understand and use a wide range of vocabulary? Can they remember, retain and recall new words easily?
- Can the child use complex sentence forms in their spoken language? Is their use of grammar appropriate or is this immature compared to their peers?
- Can the child give a sequenced account of a past event verbally?

### Strategies to support written language development:

- Use modelling to develop spoken language structure e.g. repeat back what they have said, emphasise the correct form and expand on what the child has said. See page 4.35 for more information on modelling.
- Pre teach vocabulary using word webs to strengthen the links between the meaning of the word and its sound structure. See page 4.25 for more information on word webs.
- Revisit vocabulary regularly. For some children, over learning the vocabulary may be useful.
- Use prompts in context to support word finding skills, e.g. Can you describe it? What do you do with it? Where do you find it? Show me (using gesture). What sound does it start with?
- Specifically teach grammatical markers, e.g. tense endings, pronouns.
- Use word banks.
- Use mind maps to help plan the content of factual writing and story writing. Use writing frames to structure written work.



**Specific activities to develop written language skills in Key Stage 2:**

- Plan activities which encourage sequencing skills. You can use the **Expressive Language Chatterbox**. This has activities and resources aimed at developing:
  - Sequencing pictures and describing what has happened.
  - Predicting the end of a story
  - Answering questions who/what/where/when/why and how?
  - Problem solving – what would you do if...?
  - Understanding and using the words “beginning/middle/end/first/before” relating to story structures.



- When teaching specific parts of grammar (for example past tense endings) you can use written worksheets to:
  - Provide a set of sentences which have some correct examples and others where there are deliberate errors. The child has to judge whether the sentence is correct or not. For example:

1.	The man <u>walked</u> down the road.	✓
2.	The man <u>runned</u> down the road.	✗

- Use sentence closure tasks where the child is given sentences with the grammatical word missing. They need to choose from two words which is the correct missing word.

The dog \_\_\_\_\_ after the ball.  
 runned    ran

- To make this task more difficult give sentences with the grammatical word missing. The child has to fill in the missing word but no choices are given.
- Give the child jumbled sentences and ask them to put the words in the right order. It can be helpful to have pictures which give the child a clue about what the sentences should be. Initially write the sentences and cut them into words or phrases and allow the child to physically move the words around until the sentence makes sense.

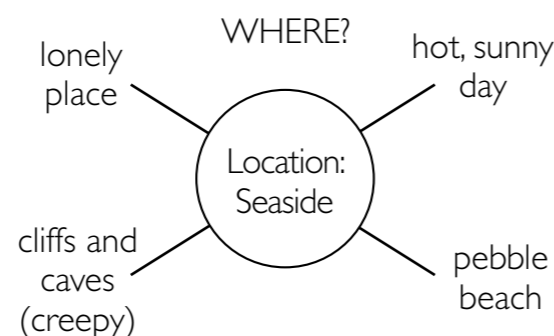
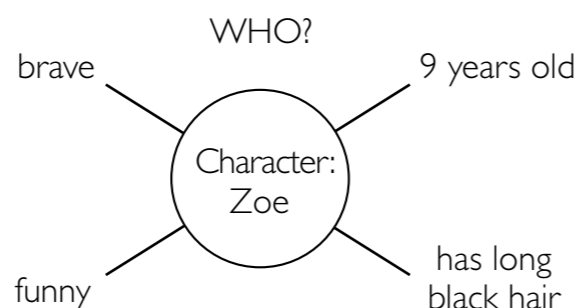
e.g. DOG CHASED THE HIS BALL

To make the task harder, give the words on a piece of paper but don't cut them up.

- Structuring a story** – Use a story frame such as the one below to plan and draft creative writing.

1) Who?	2) Where?	3) Something starts to happen
4) And then...	5) It starts to sort its self out	6) The end

To begin, children can use cartoon/stick drawings to plan the first draft and write one sentence in each box. Older children or children who can manage a longer piece of writing can begin by brainstorming the characters and location using mind maps in boxes one and two. For example:



The outline of the plot should be planned using boxes 3, 4, + 5. This could be a few sentences, or a paragraph for each box. Make sure all the loose ends are tied up in box 6.

## 8. Behaviour Problems and Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties

The term “Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties” [BESD] covers a wide range of need, including pupils who are very withdrawn. Many of these pupils will also have speech, language and communication needs.

Communication and social behaviour are clearly inter-linked. Some pupils, despite having age appropriate understanding and expressive skills find it very difficult to use these skills socially, for interactions with others. Some pupils' ability to understand and use spoken language is delayed. The impact of needs in the areas of behaviour and communication will vary according to the severity of the problem, the support the child receives, the child's confidence and the demands of the child's environment.

There are thousands of children and young people effectively disabled by speech, language and communication impairments. There is a progression between this “hidden disability”, exclusion from school and young adults ending up in trouble, and it starts early. We need to spot and offer provision for these impairments as early as possible.

**Linda Lascelles, Chief Executive, Afasic**

In some cases, communication difficulties are the primary need and they can give rise to behaviour problems. Studies have shown that substantial proportions of children with specific language impairment experience social and behavioural problems as they reach high school age and that these problems increase over time (Redmond & Rice, 2002).

At other times, communication difficulties are a secondary factor, which exacerbate behaviour difficulties. Dealing with feelings such as frustration, peer rejection, and lack of confidence is far more difficult for a pupil who has poor linguistic skills. Pupils with limited expressive communication skills may use other, sometimes inappropriate, ways of communication including physical contact.



A pupil's cognitive, emotional and communication development need to be taken into account when planning and discussing intervention for inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. This is especially important when helping children to learn how to communicate their feelings, get on with others, work well together and set themselves goals to become independent learners.

Classroom strategies for speech, language and communication needs should take account of broader strategies relating to BESD. These include:

- Being aware that comprehension difficulties are not always apparent. Look out for non-verbal cues which can suggest that a pupil does not understand spoken language, e.g. the pupil regularly looks to peers for clues as to what to do.
- Check that a pupil has understood instructions. Use short, simple instructions or paraphrase if you feel there may be problems.
- Using visual strategies can also help pupils with comprehension difficulties. A visual cue can reinforce auditory information e.g. objects, visual aids, visual timetables.
- Be aware of the difficulties some pupils may have with non-literal language. Avoid or explain language such as “Who can come up with an idea?” A pupil may respond by coming up to the front of the class
- Remember that effective processing of language is affected by feelings such as anger, frustration. Allow a pupil time for “cooling down” before discussing an incident.
- Be aware of your own non-verbal communication e.g. your tone of voice, facial expressions and physical proximity. These can diffuse or escalate a situation.

## 9. Children with Additional Languages

A child with an additional language can refer to any pupil who uses or is learning a language, other than their main home language.

In many areas, especially in larger towns or cities, there is a growing number of children with additional languages. Some of these children will acquire linguistic competence without difficulty. Others who may have difficulty with their first language, may also encounter difficulties in an additional language.

There can be a natural delay in language acquisition for children learning one or more additional language with the exception of Welsh speaking pupils learning English.

Social language takes up to 2 years to develop, with academic language taking 5-7 years.

A lack of competence in either English or Welsh for an EAL pupil does not necessarily mean that a pupil has language or learning difficulties.

Thorough assessment is needed to identify specific problems and a first language assessment is sometimes needed. In both Cardiff and the Vale, an assessment using "CATE" [Cardiff Assessment Tool for EAL] is used by the members of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service [EMAS].



### Strategies for developing the communication skills of a pupil with an additional language who may have specific communication needs in their home language:

Where a Teacher suspects a child may have specific communication needs in their home language, the following strategies may be helpful:

1. Be clear with instructions and use simple "natural" language. Give one instruction at a time and allow plenty of time for a response.
2. Generally speaking, the use of too many "closed" questions by adults is known to restrict a child's communication. However, used carefully and with contextual support, closed questions can often help a child with an additional language understand more.
3. When necessary, use objects and visual cues to support spoken language and facilitate understanding.
4. Use concrete, first hand and practical experiences to enable the child to learn by doing (refer to Active Learning section), incorporating the pupil's own culture and experience, whenever possible.
5. Remember to use "Modelling", repeating back what the child says but using the correct grammar and also expanding on their language. Modelling can be used throughout the day, but always without pressure on the child to repeat back the correct form. When using modelling, care should be taken not to interrupt the flow and enjoyment of conversation.
6. Help the pupil with an additional language to develop and use a bilingual dictionary, which relates to their personal interests and needs.
7. Be aware that children with an additional language may use grammatical structures and linguistic rules of their mother tongue when trying to communicate. If a child labels an object in the mother tongue, accept this response then explain we can also call it \_\_\_\_\_. Alternatively, ask "Do you know what we call it in \_\_\_\_\_ (target language)?" It would not be acceptable to say he/she is wrong to label objects in mother tongue.

# Section 5: Additional Activities and Photocopiable Resources



# Additional Activities

## Word Awareness Activities

### Emergent Reader Activities

#### 1. Read Aloud Interactively

Point to specific words as you read. Then ask children to point to words as you read.

#### 2. Sing Songs

Sing songs that accentuate single words ("e.g. Pop! goes the weasel").

#### 3. Identify missing words

Identify missing words by placing a number of objects on the table and asking pupils to hide their eyes as you remove one or more of the objects. Pupils must identify which object(s) was (were) removed. This is a precursor to word deletion activities.

## Manipulation of Words in Sentences

#### 1. Class Story

Develop a 4-5 sentence story relevant to a topic used in curriculum or getting ready for school, etc. Write the story on the board as the pupils tell it. (At this point, it is a good idea to write each sentence on a new line rather than in paragraph form.) Each time someone gives you a sentence, identify it as a sentence. (Note that the letter it starts with is taller than the others ("we call it a capital letter") and that you put a dot ("we call it a full stop") at the end.

#### 2. Pupils Identify Sentences

Choose one pupil to come up and show you on the board where the sentence begins and ends. Have a pupil come up and cut off one sentence with a pair of scissors. Place the sentence strips in the board. (For an interesting related activity, place them out of sequence and when all the sentences are cut out, read the "new" story back to them. Ask them to help you sequence it a second time so it is correct.) Repeat, giving other pupils an opportunity for a turn until the entire story is cut up into sentences.

#### 3. Fill In the Blank

As you read a story, stop and allow pupils to "fill in the blank" for the next word. When possible, mention that they supplied a word. If you're reading a big book, point to the words as you read and allow the pupils to "read" one of the words occasionally. Ask, "What is the next word?"

#### 4. Word Counting Using Manipulatives

Use blocks, numbered squares, etc. to give visual grounding. The pupil moves the blocks or points to the square to mark each word as he repeats the sentence.

#### 5. Sentence Segmentation

Write sentences on sentence strips and cut apart into words. Give each group of words to a pupils or group of pupils and ask them to arrange the words into a sentence. They can then put them on a mini white board and share with the class what their sentence says. At that point, ask how many words they have in their sentence. (This can be done in conjunction with a lesson on function of words [describing or naming] or using compound, spelling words or other related words being used in the curriculum.)



## Syllable Awareness Activities

### 1. Compound Word Segmentation

Syllable segmentation activities are easiest when using compound words. For this activity you will need pictures representing the two words that make up a compound word. Ask pupils to create new words with two of the pictures.

Although they may have fun seeing what kind of silly words they can come up with, encourage them to create real compound words.

### 2. Compound Word Deletion Activity

Show two pictures representing the two parts of a compound word. Take one part away and ask what word is left. Give other compound words without pictures after pupils have successfully performed the task with the pictures.

### 3. Syllable Search

Have pupils find things around the room with a certain number of syllables (for example, two-syllable words like window, pencil, teacher, etc.). Check to see if the child has chosen a word with the correct number of syllables by clapping the syllables or putting a magnetic shape on the board to represent each syllable.

### 4. Syllable Categories

Place a number of objects on the table. Identify how many syllables are in the word that names each object. Categorize the objects by the number of syllables.

### 5. Count Syllables

Spontaneously, in the middle of a lesson, stop and ask how many syllables comprise a word. A pupil who has serious phonological awareness difficulties may need manipulatives to provide a visual "handle."

This practice with manipulatives serves as a precursor for the more difficult task of phoneme manipulation.

### 6. Syllable Response Cards

Print the number "1" on one side of an index card, "2" on the other side. Print "3" and "4" on a second card. As the teacher pronounces multi-syllabic words, pupils hold up a number indicating how many syllables they hear. (Use number fans)

### 7. Syllables with Manipulatives

Using blocks, pennies or counters pupils indicate the number of syllables they hear in a word. Or using square grids pupils listen for a word and point to the number of squares, placing one chip or block on the table for each syllable heard.

### 8. Syllable Identification

Ask pupils whether a given syllable is in a certain word. (e.g., Is butter in butterfly?)

### 9. Syllable Addition

Ask pupils to add prefix or suffix to a given word (e.g., add ing to the end of run). Increasing the complexity of the words (e.g., photo, photograph, photographer, photography, photographic" can facilitate phonological maturity).

### 10. Substitution of Syllables

Ask pupils to replace part of a word. (e.g., housefly "Now say 'boat' instead of fly" --houseboat).

### 11. Rotating Syllables in Compound Words

Ask pupils to reverse the two parts of a word (e.g., "butterfly" becomes "flybutter").

### List of One to Four Syllable Words

- |              |                    |                |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. telephone | 11. disappointment | 21. dictionary |
| 2. question  | 12. title          | 22. clock      |
| 3. pen       | 13. book           | 23. surprise   |
| 4. teacher   | 14. calculator     | 24. sentence   |
| 5. music     | 15. eraser         | 25. cupboard   |
| 6. computer  | 16. Saturday       | 26. paper      |
| 7. elephant  | 17. homework       | 27. American   |
| 8. remember  | 18. sound          | 28. January    |
| 9. pencil    | 19. speech         | 29. secretary  |
| 10. Monday   | 20. girl           | 30. calendar   |



### Rhyming Activities

#### 1. Read stories that have rhyming words

Draw pupils' attention to the words that rhyme. Help the pupil to identify the patterns made by a rhyme, i.e., which last two sounds are the same?

Remember the aim is for the child to become an **independent investigator** of sounds in words.

#### 2. Which one does not belong?

Give three consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, e.g., but, mat, cat.

"Two of these words rhyme, one does not rhyme. Can you tell me which one does not rhyme with the others?"

#### 3. Match the rhyme

Present four pictures, one of which is placed inside a square. Name each picture and ask pupil to identify the picture that rhymes with the one inside the box.

#### 4. Provide the rhyming word

"Say a word that sounds like \_\_\_\_." The child is to produce a rhyming word. A nonsense word is acceptable as long as it rhymes.

#### 5. Rhyming Memory

Use pictures of objects that rhyme, e.g., "bat" "cat" to create rhyming memory games for use in free time and centre activities.



#### 6. Rhyming Patterns

Help the pupils to discover the pattern made by rhyming words by using coloured squares to indicate sounds in rhyming CVC words (Using visual strategies). (Make sure each square represents one sound not each letter, e.g., /sh/ is one sound but two letters).

Example:

cat = red, blue, green

bat = black, blue, green

mat = yellow, blue, green

"We change the colour when we hear the sound change. It stays the same when the sound stays the same. Do you see a pattern in the coloured squares?"

### 7. Rhyming Using Songs

Using songs makes learning rhyming words more fun.

Sing *We Can Rhyme to the tune of Three Blind Mice.*

We can rhyme. We can rhyme.  
Listen to the words. Listen to the words.  
\_\_\_\_\_ rhymes with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ rhymes with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ rhymes with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
We can rhyme. We can rhyme.

Sing *Down by the Bay by Raffi.*

Do this for several days until the pupils have developed a familiarity with the words. At this point, it would be appropriate to introduce the concept of rhyming words. Example: "Listen to these words – grow, go. Do you hear how these words sound alike at the end? These are called rhyming words.

A-hunting we will go  
A-hunting we will go  
We'll catch a fox  
And put him in a box  
A-hunting we will go

After the rhyme has been learned ask the pupils to pick out the rhyming words. Encourage pupils to think of other animal names that they could use in their rhymes. Some examples might be frog-log, goat-boat, snake-lake, whale-pail, bear-chair. For each new suggestion, create a new verse:

We'll catch a whale  
And put him up for sale  
We'll catch a bear  
And put him in a chair

(Adapted from McCracken & McCracken (1986), *Stories, Songs and Poetry to Teach Reading and Writing*, Teachers College Press)

Sing *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly.*

After the song has been learned, ask the pupils to pick out the rhyming words. Ask them to think of other words that rhyme with the pairs. Example: "Fly and cry – do you know any other words that rhyme with fly and cry?"

### 8. Willaby Wallaby

In this game, the teacher sings and uses the pupils' names to complete the rhyme.

Willaby Wallaby Wusan,  
An elephant sat on Susan  
Willaby Wallaby Wark  
An elephant sat on Mark

As pupils catch on to the rhyming pattern, they can generate the rhyme using other names.

### 9. Squirrel in A Tree

This game is the old favourite 'run and capture' with a new twist. One child is "it" and wears a picture of a fox. His job is to catch a squirrel that is not in its tree. The rest of the pupils are divided into two groups.

Half are trees and are given pictures of things that rhyme with another picture that is worn by the other half of the group, the squirrels.

The trees are stationary in various parts of the room and the squirrels must find their matching tree before the fox catches them.

The leader starts the game by saying, "The fox is coming, and you should go to your tree." The squirrels begin to run. Then the leader says, "The fox is here!", and the fox runs to catch any squirrel not in a tree. If he catches one, that squirrel is the fox for the next game. Trees become squirrels and vice-versa and the game is played again.

### Sound Awareness Activities

**Phoneme Identification – explicit training in identifying which sound is heard in the beginning, final or middle position of a word.**

**Note: A letter enclosed in // indicates speech sound rather than the letter name.**

#### Examples:

- Word to word matching: Do top and time begin with the same sound?
- Sound to sound matching: Is there a /p/ in nap?
- Sound isolation: What is the first sound in door?

#### 1. Initial Sound Identification

Place one letter name on each of several paper cups. Say a word that begins with the sound of one of those letters on the cups. The pupil places a counter in the cup marked with the letter representing the beginning sound of the stated word.

#### 2. Sound Patterns

Present four words orally to pupils. Pictures may or may not accompany orally presented words. When pictures are used, a grid serves as a reference whereby one picture is placed in the first square and the other three pictures are lined up next to it.

Ask, "Which picture(s)

begins with \_\_\_\_\_

ends with \_\_\_\_\_

has the same middle sound \_\_\_\_\_

as the one in the square?"

When not using pictures say, "I'm going to say three words. Which one has the same beginning sound as car? Cow, sister, tree." (If a child has difficulty with auditory/sequential memory, using the pictures will provide the additional visual cue.)

### 3. Initial/Final Sound Change Game

Play a game where pupils make new/different words by changing the beginning or ending sounds. Look around the room for words or use your own.

(For example, if you are changing all words to begin with /k/, chair would be care, table would become cable. With ending words, pot would become pok, flag would become flak.)

### 4. Memory Game

Make a memory game out of pictures that begin with sounds with which the pupils are familiar. The game should include several sets of two (and only two) pictures that begin with the same sound. (Later, for pupils with more experience, you may include any even number of pictures that begin with the same sound. Any of the other pictures beginning with the same sound could be "matches" in this case.) Students play memory. A pair is two words that begin with the same sound--not two identical pictures.

### 5. Alliteration in Literature

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial sound in two or more words.

Literature that plays with language can be used to help children understand alliteration.



### 6. Initial Sounds in Songs

Play with the language through songs. Select a favourite song and innovate on the sounds in the lyrics.

To the tune of *Ten Little Indians*:

One little, two little, three little bunnies  
 Four little, five little, six little bunnies  
 Seven little, eight little, nine little bunnies  
 Ten little bunnies bounce.  
 Name a word that starts with a /b/sound  
**(repeat three times)**  
 Tell us your word now: \_\_\_\_\_

This song can be repeated using any sound by changing the kind of animal and the action. For example, try: dogs-dig, fish-flip, hippos-hop, or tigers-tiptoe.

To the tune of *Mary Wore Her Red Dress*:

Mary wore her red dress,  
 Red dress, red dress,  
 Mary wore her red dress  
 All day long.

Use the tune to this song to encourage children to think about beginning sounds in words. After you sing the new lyrics below, pause at the end to say a word children know, and have them identify the beginning sound they hear. You may wish to begin with words such as red, day, or Mary, or choose words of your own.

Can you say the first sound,  
 First sound, first sound,  
 Can you say the first sound  
 In this word: \_\_\_\_\_

To the tune of *If You're Happy and You Know It*:

If you have a /t/ word share it now  
 If you have a /t/ word share it now  
 If you have a/t/ word and you think  
 It should be heard  
 If you have a/t/ word share it now

Repeat the song letting children share new words that begin with /t/ or use a different initial sound for the next verse.

To the tune of *Did You Ever See Lassie?*

Did you ever hear a /h/ word,  
 A /h/ word, a /h/ word  
 Did you ever hear a /h/ word  
 That goes like this: \_\_\_\_\_?

Repeat with other words until the children get the idea. Let volunteers repeat the song with a /h/ word of their own. Repeat later using a different sound. (Adapted from Farr & Strickland (1995), *Treasury of Literature*, Harcourt Brace)

### 6. Name Game

- Young children quickly make connections when they notice that their name starts like a friend's name. For example, Robert noticed that Rebecca's name sounds like his name at the beginning. Teachable moments like this can be used to draw children's attention to words that are phonemically alike.
- As the classroom teacher is taking the register, she directs children's attention to names that begin with the same sound. Example: "If the beginning of your name sounds like Rosa, stand up." (Children can create sentence patterns that use words that begin with the same initial sounds.  
 Examples:  
 My name is Anna and I like apples.  
 My name is Paul and I like puppies.

## Sound Manipulation

### 1. Simple sound tracking

Say three to five sounds (e.g., /p/, /b/, /b/, /k/). Using a square grid, the pupil is to show how many sounds are the same, are different, and the sequence of the given sounds. The example sequence might be shown by four squares: green, red, red, blue. The actual colour does not matter, as long as the representation of colour is the same for sounds that are the same and different for those sounds that are different, that they represent the right number, and that the sequence of sounds given is correct.

### 2. Addition of sound(s)

Start with one sound on the table, (represented by a block, a unifix cube, a coloured square). Say, "Show me /ee/." Introduce addition of sounds by saying, "If that says /ee/, show me /be/." The child should place a different coloured manipulative in front of the sound already on the table. It could be added at the end, in which case you would say, "If that says /ee/, show me /eeb/."

### 3. Omission of sound(s)

When there are at least two sounds on the table. You may delete or omit sound by saying, "If that says /eb/, show me /b/." The pupil should remove the first manipulative, the one that represents /e/.

### 4. Substitution of sound(s)

The pupil has several blocks on the table representing /bup/. You may substitute a sound by saying, "If that says /bup/, show me /bap/." The pupil must determine that the sound that changed was the one in the middle, take away that manipulative, and replace it with a different colour.



### 5. Rotation of sound(s)

The blocks on the table represent /sep/. You ask the pupil to show you /esp/. The pupil must determine that the first and second sounds changed places and rotate the two manipulative representing those sounds.

**Phoneme Blending - asking the pupil to put a segmented word back together by “stretching” the sounds together or asking the pupil to mentally rejoin the phonemes.**

#### Sound Blending

Say the sounds of a word in slow motion like this: /m/-/a/-/n/. Then put the sounds together fast and say man. Now have pupils listen to you slowly say the sounds of a word and have them put all the sounds together to say the word. Present simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, then progress to words that have a consonant digraph (sh, ch, wh, or th) at the beginning. Next present VC, CCVC and CVCC.

- **Blending continuous sounds**

- Give pupils three sounds and ask them to put them together-- /th/, uh, /m/. (thththth uhuhuhuhuhuh mmmmmm = thumb.)
- Use the continuant sounds: /m/, /n/, /s/, /f/, /sh/, /th/, /r/, /h/, /l/, and /w/ as initial sounds.

- **Blend non-continuous sounds**

Non-continuous sounds cause the mouth to stop in order to produce the sound. /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/ are non-continuous sounds. Ask the pupil to say /k/-/a/-/t/. Then ask the pupil to say the word. This activity can be done with pupils while lining up using their names.

- **Use objects in the room**

Say the sounds for the name of the object in a segmented fashion. Ask the pupils to identify the object (e.g., /f/-/l/-/a/-/g/ would be the flag). Make sure you put enough space between the sounds so the students have to do the auditory processing to put it together:

- **Use letters** as pupils become more proficient at the activity above, place cards with letters on them on a table. As you slowly say the sounds of a word, the pupils pick out the letters that corresponds to those sounds. Make sure you are sounding out simple CVC words or CCVC words for this connecting with graphemes activity (e.g., /b/-/a/-/g/ and /f/-/l/-/a/-/g/).

- **Across the curriculum**

The teacher tells the class that she is thinking of an animal, an insect, a word connected to a topic you are working on. For example, “I’m thinking of an insect. The insect is an /a/ /n/ /t/.” The children would then blend the sounds together and say the word “ant.” Short sessions (5-7 minutes) that encourage phonemic segmentation and blending can be incorporated throughout the day several times a week. As children begin to understand the game, they give clues and articulate the sounds for the teacher and their classmates to blend.

- A variation is to place several animal pictures in a row in front of the children, articulate the word in a segmented fashion, and allow the students to pick the picture that matches the word and say it. Sound Blending using Songs -Songs can also be used for blending activities.

- **To the tune of *If You’re Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands***

If you think you know this word, shout it out!  
If you think you know this word, shout it out!  
If you think you know this word,  
Then tell me what you’ve heard,  
If you think you know this word, shout it out!

The teacher says a segmented word such as /k/ /a/ /t/ and pupils respond by saying the blended word “cat.” Eventually, individual children will be able to contribute the segmented sounds for their peers to blend. (Yopp, M., 1992)

- ***The Bear Went Over the Mountain***

The bear went over the mountain,  
The bear went over the mountain,  
The bear went over the mountain,  
To see what he could see,  
To see what he could see,  
To see what he could see,  
The bear went over the mountain,  
To see what he could see.

Sing the first four lines of the song with the children. Then say the name of something the bear might see, isolating the sounds in the word. For example,

The bear could see a /h/ /ou/ /s/.

- ***Old MacDonald Had a Farm***

You will need the following picture cards for this activity: cat, cow, dog, duck, goat, horse, lamb, and pig. Hide the farm animal pictures inside a bag. Then explain that you will sing a verse of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm,” but you will say an animal name in a special way. Ask children to guess what animal name you are saying by blending the separate sounds together.

Old MacDonald had a farm  
E-I-E-I-O

And on that farm he had a /d/ /u/ /k/...  
Pause for children to blend the sounds, repeating them again, if necessary.

When someone says duck, ask him or her come up and find the duck picture in the bag and show it to the group. Children may wish to continue singing the song about a duck, then repeat the blending activity with other animal names.

- **Robot Talk**

Say this little rhyme (talk like a robot) and have the pupils respond. Encourage them to say the rhyme in ‘robot talk’ and then blend the final word to answer the robot’s question.

I am a robot  
Can you help me?  
Who (what) do I see?  
I see /j/ /a/ /n/ (Jan)



**Phoneme Deletion - asking a pupil to identify and omit a specific sound from a string of unrelated sounds, nonsense words, or real words.**

**Examples:**

- Phoneme deletion: What word would be left if /p/ were taken away from 'pat'?
- Deleted phoneme: What sound do you hear in 'fear' that is missing in 'ear'?

**Simple Deletion with Coloured Squares**

Laminate 5-6 different coloured sheets of paper and cut them into squares. (Make 1-2" squares for individual work at a table and 3-4" squares with magnetic strips on the back for use on the board with the whole class.) Begin by saying a string of unrelated sounds (for example /t/, /k/, /m/). Place a different colour square on the board as you say each sound. Then, repeat the string of sounds but leave off one sound. Ask a child to come to the board and remove the square that represents the sound deleted. This begins skill development in deletion. After pupils are familiar with this concept, progress to simple CVC words which may be used in conjunction with a rhyming or word family unit. (For example -Three different coloured squares represent /f-i-sh/. Remember that consonant digraphs (th, sh, ch, wh) make only one sound and are, therefore, represented by only one coloured card. Take away the "f" card and ask the children to say what remains (- ish). Eventually, the activity is completed without coloured cards. More difficult versions of this activity involve asking the student to first delete the final sound in the word and then to delete one sound in an initial blend. Finally, the student is asked to delete one sound in a final blend.

**Deletion using minimal pairs**

Place pairs of pictures that are named such that the second word differs from the first word by simple omission of that word's first consonant sound, (e.g., train/rain, block/lock, sleep/leap). This is a complex skill due to the imbedding of the sound phonemes and requires more advanced auditory perceptual skills.

**Phoneme Substitution - asking a pupil to identify and replace with another sound a specific sound from a string of unrelated sounds, nonsense words, or real words.**

**Example:**

- Say "cat". Now say it again, but change the /k/ to /b/ ('Cat' becomes 'bat').

**Simple Substitution with Coloured Squares**

Similar to the activity described under phoneme deletion, coloured squares are used to represent a sequence of sounds. Repeat the sound sequence but change one of the sounds. The progression from easy to difficult follows the sequence of initial sound, final sound, and medial sound. Because the square represents the sound rather than the actual spelling, this type of activity is appropriate in lessons addressing short vowels in simple CVC words (bat-bet-bit-but), and in lessons contrasting long vowel words.

## Photocopiable Resources



### A Self Evaluation Tool for Schools:

Statement of practice	S	D	P	G
Speech and language features in English, Maths, Science and SEN policies. Also if appropriate the School Improvement Plan				
Staff have a basic understanding of typical speech and language development				
Staff understand the terminology related to speech and language difficulties				
Staff are aware of how speech and language difficulties impact on literacy development				See p. 1.3
Staff are aware of how speech and language difficulties affect access to curriculum				
Staff are aware how speech and language difficulties affect social and emotional development				See p. 1.4
Training is available to all staff including a system in place allowing cascading of information from courses to all colleagues				
Staff are aware of general strategies to promote communication e.g. classroom environment, teaching styles, use of support/resources				See p. 4.1
SENCO is aware of referral route for a child with speech and language difficulties and this is passed on to all staff				
Time is allocated for relevant school staff to liaise with outside agencies				
School familiar with current County Criteria/Documents particularly sections relating to speech and language difficulties				
Staff are aware of a range of specific strategies which can help children with speech and language difficulties to access the curriculum e.g. visual strategies etc.				See p. 4.1
Strategies used with specific children are used by all staff				
Resources are in place to ensure the requirements of guidance criteria are fulfilled				
Staff can identify how curriculum can be modified for children with speech and language impairment				
Staff can set suitable targets, write appropriate IEPs which are shared with parents				See p. 3.1
There is a whole school/community approach which ensures a child with speech and language difficulties is supported and has his/her needs fully met				
Effective communication is in place between home and school				See p. 2.17

### Information for Parents for Children at Foundation Phase

- Involve your child in everyday activities inside and outside the home such as cooking; shopping; going to the park, and gardening. Use simple language and use the same words and phrases each time. Daily routines and activities provide an ideal opportunity for your child to hear these important key words and phrases repeated for them, but in a situation which is interesting and meaningful for them. This repetition will help the child to learn basic everyday vocabulary and language, especially 2-3 word phrases.
- Your child learns how to communicate by ‘interacting’ and spending time with you. Toys, television and computer games can be helpful for developing language if a parent talks to or plays with the child while they are involved. However, without this support, these activities are unlikely to help communication skills. So, spend time with your child when you are not involved in domestic chores so that you can give them your full attention. Cut down on background noise (switch off the TV/ radio/computer and shut the door on noisy kitchen appliances) so that your child can focus on what you are saying. Use this time to play with your child. Talk to him about his/her toys, share books and songs together.
- Show interest in whatever your child tries to tell you and respond to his/her ideas – don’t worry too much about pronunciation, focus on what you understand them trying to say and respond. Children communicate and eventually talk more when they feel confident that they have a contribution to make.
- Allow silence when it seems to give your child time to organise their thoughts
- Respond positively to any attempt that your child makes to communicate. Show him/her that you are pleased with their attempts. Depending on the age of your child, this may mean different things.

#### For example:

- Show you are listening when your child looks at you and makes noise, by looking back and smiling.
- Repeat back what you hear your child trying to say even if their attempt is not yet quite clear, but do not insist on them trying to correct their attempts. Instead, encourage them to continue with the conversation.
- Expand on what your child says. For example, if they say ‘nana’ you might say ‘yes, it’s a banana. You like bananas, don’t you?’
- Be positive and give praise when your child has communicated successfully. For example you might say ‘Yes, that’s right, it is a spoon’
- If your child attempts a word, but what he/she says is unclear, say the word you think they’re trying to say clearly. This is called ‘modelling’. For example, if they say ‘u’, you say ‘yes – it’s a duck’. If some sounds are clear, but others are not, repeat the word, stressing the key sounds that are missing or wrong. For example you might say ‘duck’. However, remember that trying to make your child repeat words correctly over and over, is unlikely to help. Additionally, over time this may even discourage him/her from trying to speak.
- If your child is able to use single words clearly, repeat it and add another.
- Avoid asking too many questions like ‘What’s that?’ while pointing to familiar objects in a book. Instead, you might try describing the pictures and then leaving a pause for your child to join in if they want to.

## Information for Parents for Children at Key Stage 2

- Children at this stage often enjoy telling / re-telling stories or events from films, television and books. You can help by discussing characters, settings and outcomes, this will help their ability to structure their spoken language and develop their skills in predicting and drawing conclusions.
- Children should be encouraged to discuss a wide range of past, present and future events which take place in school, at home, and elsewhere. Encourage your child to understand and talk about how other people may feel in different situations and to interpret the reasons for events taking place.
- Playing games together, and sport, can be helpful for developing communication and social skills as children learn to attend over a period of time, take turns, win and lose appropriately.

## Months of the Year Cards:

Colour coding information:

**Winter** (December, January, February): light blue

**Spring** (March, April, May): light green

**Summer** (June, July, August): yellow

**Autumn** (September, October, November): light brown

December

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

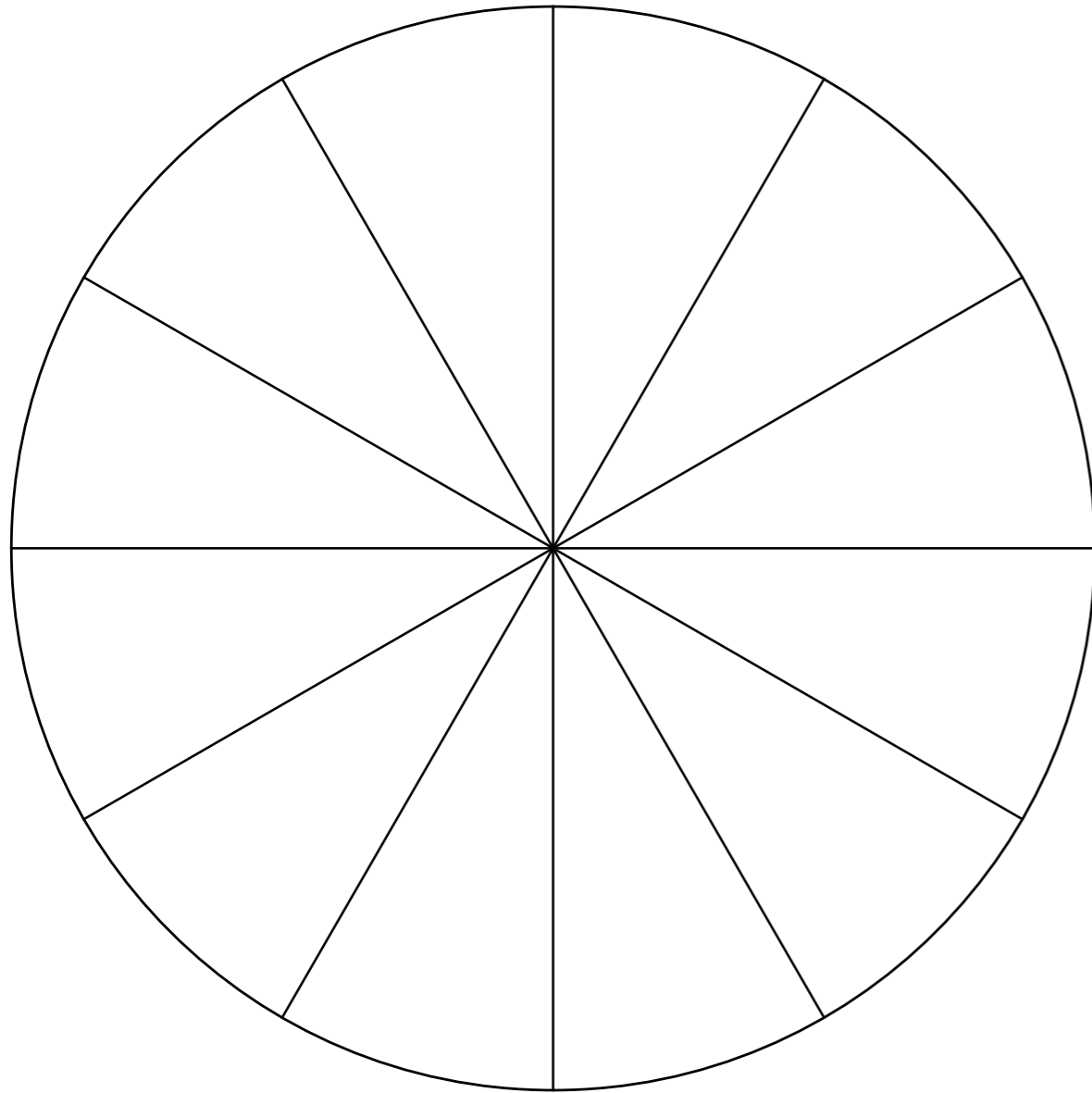
August

September

October

November

**Blank Wheel for Months of the Year:**



**Blank Chart for Months of the Year:**


**Seasons Cards:**

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

**Teaching Active Listening Skills:**

Good Looking



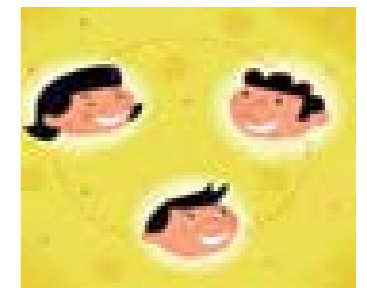
Good Sitting

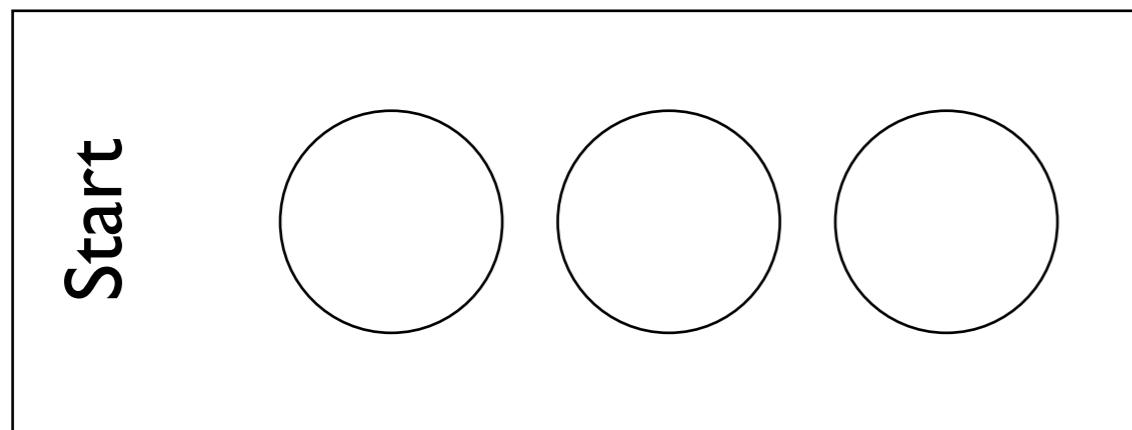
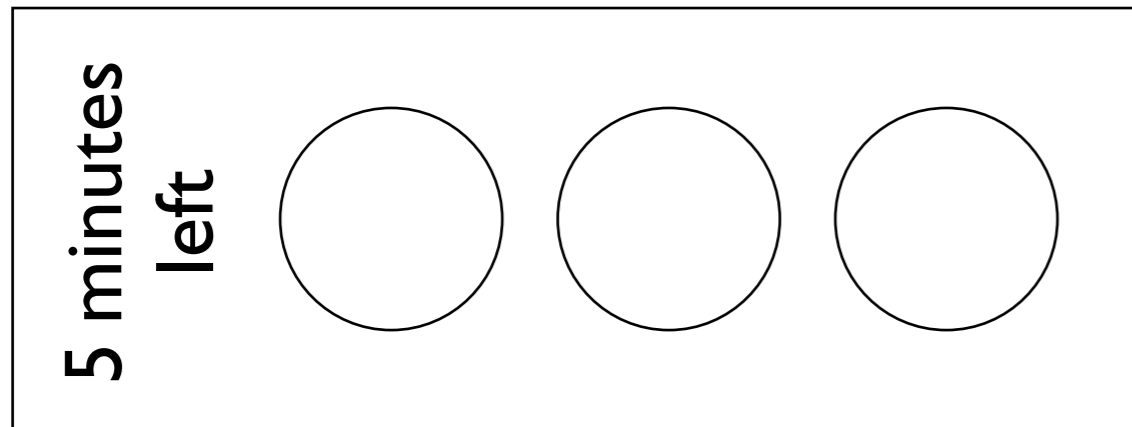
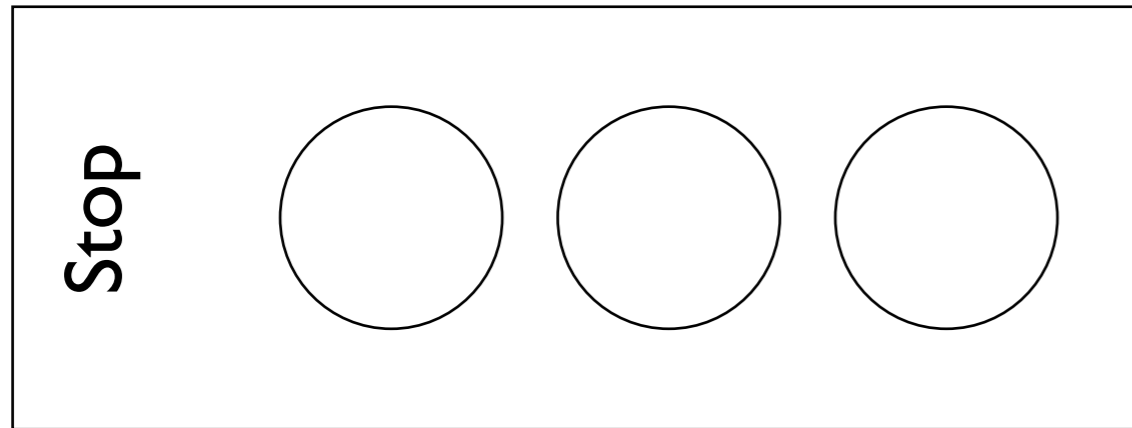


Good Thinking

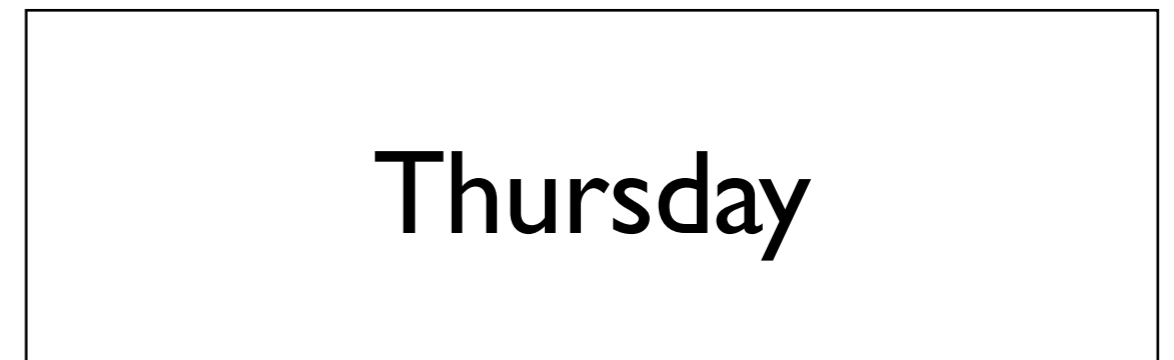
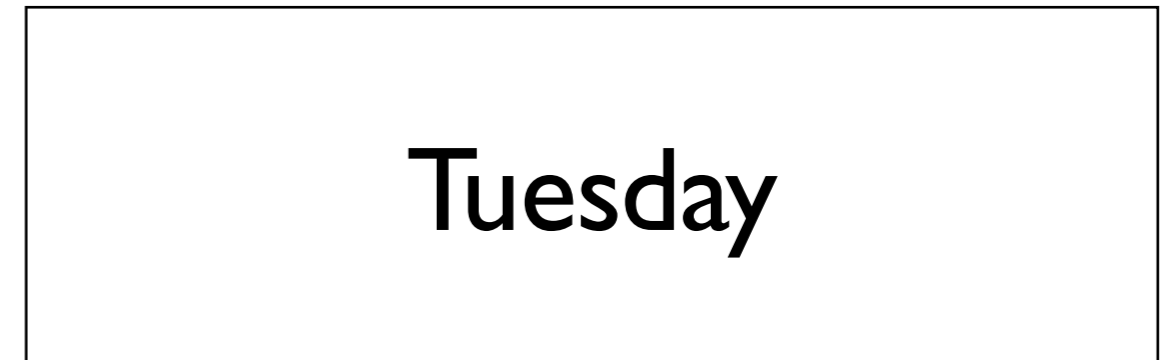


Take Turns





Teaching Time Concepts:



Friday

Saturday

Sunday

**Months of the Year Cards:**

January	July
February	August
March	September
April	October
May	November
June	December

**Story frame for structuring a story:**

<p><b>1) Who?</b></p>	<p><b>2) Where?</b></p>	<p><b>3) Something starts to happen</b></p>
<p><b>4) And then...</b></p>	<p><b>5) It starts to sort its self out</b></p>	<p><b>6) The end</b></p>

# Section 6: References and Resources



# References and Resources

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## Books

*How to Identify and Support Children with Speech and Language Difficulties*  
Jane Speake, Rebecca Barnes, LDA, 2003

*Elklan Language Builders, Advice and activities to encourage children's communication skills (age 5-11)*,  
Liz Elks & Henrietta McLachlan, 2003

*Elklan Early Language Builders, Advice and activities to encourage children's communication skills (under 5s)*,  
Liz Elks & Henrietta McLachlan, 2003

*Socially Speaking: Pragmatic Social Skills Programme for Pupils with Mild to Moderate Learning Disabilities*  
by Alison Schroeder (Author), Jacqueline M. Jomain (Illustrator), LDA, 1998

*Helping Young Children Speak with Confidence*, by Ros Bayley (Author), Lynn Broadbent, Adrina Flinders, Lawrence Educational Publications, 2004

*Guidelines for a Speech & Language Friendly School*, by a partnership of education professionals, Swindon; QEd Publishers, 2005: This book offers "guidelines to help schools provide inclusive education for children with speech and language difficulties"



## 2. Resources

### Websites

**ICAN:**  
[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

- ICAN works to support the development of speech, language and communication skills in all children with a special focus on those who find this hard: children with a communication disability.
- ICAN support children, parents, practitioners, and Local Authorities and provide a wide range of training opportunities, resources and publications.

**AFASIC:**  
[www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)  
[www.afasiccymru.org.uk](http://www.afasiccymru.org.uk)

- Afasic is the UK charity, established in 1968, to help children and young people, their families and the professionals working with them. They offer training, a helpline, publications and more.
- Afasic Cymru represents children with speech and language and communication impairments on a number of working party groups at the Wales Assembly Government and at local level.

**ROYAL COLLEGE OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPISTS:**  
[www.rcslt.org.uk](http://www.rcslt.org.uk)

Represents speech and language therapists and support workers, promotes excellence in practice and influences health, education and social care policies.

**TALKING POINT:**  
[www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)

A website produced by ICAN; Afasic, and RCSLT to support parents and professionals. Their support ranges from factsheets and resources to developmental norms and information about specific difficulties.

**ELKLAN:**  
[www.elklan.co.uk](http://www.elklan.co.uk)

Elklan provides training and resources for all those seeking to support and understand children of all ages with a wide range of communication difficulties.

**NATIONAL LITERACY TRUST:**  
[www.nationalliteracytrust.org.uk](http://www.nationalliteracytrust.org.uk)  
[www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk](http://www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk)

- The National Literacy Trust provides information for parents and practitioners on a range of issues relating to learning, including language.
- Talk To Your Baby is a campaign run by the National Literacy Trust to encourage parents and carers to talk more to children from birth to three. Talking to young children helps them become good communicators, which is essential if they are to do well at school and lead happy, fulfilled and successful lives.

**BRITISH STAMMERING ASSOCIATION:**  
[www.stammering.org.uk](http://www.stammering.org.uk)

Provides support for children, families, teachers and the wider community with regard to stammering.

**BASIC SKILLS AGENCY**  
[www.basic-skills.org.uk](http://www.basic-skills.org.uk)  
[www.basic-skills-wales.org.uk](http://www.basic-skills-wales.org.uk)

The Basic Skills Agency is committed to finding, developing and disseminating good practice in literacy, language and numeracy.

## Books

Book	Foundation Phase	Key Stage 2	Attention Listening	Understanding Language	Expressive Language	Speech Sounds	Social Skills	Language Literacy
<b>Baseline Communication Skills</b> C. Delamain & J. Spring Speechmark, 1999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Speaking, Listening and Understanding Games for Young Children</b> C. Delamain & J. Spring Speechmark 2003	✓	✓		✓	✓			
<b>Talkabout: A Social Communication Skills Package</b> Alex Kelly, Speechmark, 1997		✓					✓	
<b>Time to Talk</b> Alison Schroeder, LDA, 2001	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
<b>Black Sheep Resources</b> <a href="http://www.blacksheep-eypress.com">www.blacksheep-eypress.com</a> <small>*Please note – many of these packages have been translated into Welsh</small>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓