School Talk - Infant Age

Hillingdon’s Pack of Ideas: Supporting All Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs in Reception and Infant School

Central and North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

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School Talk
Introduction

Aim

The aim of this pack is to give schools further ideas they can work on with children who have been identified as having difficulties following Language Link screening.

Language Link already provides schools with lots of good information and ideas for supporting children’s language, but some schools may want additional ideas to increase their range of strategies and activities.

This pack includes similar areas to those found on the Language Link site as well as additional areas of communication need:

- attention and listening
- basic concepts
- following instructions
- negatives
- prepositions
- pronouns
- verb tenses
- wh questions
- vocabulary
- speech
- stammering
- selective mutism
- social skills
- transition to new year groups

It includes for each area:

- a brief introduction
- classroom strategies
- targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals
- possible resources to support that area (which are not essential, but schools may be interested in buying)

In addition it also includes:

- information from research explaining the importance of speech, language & communication for a child’s educational success and well-being
- general guidance on working with children with speech, language and communication needs
- general guidance on working with children who are speaking English as an additional language
- advice on setting up and implementing communication groups in school
- recommended resources for schools to consider purchasing
- recommended websites for schools to get further details

We hope you enjoy using this pack and have fun talking with your pupils.
Research

Speech, language and communication is the most common type of special educational need in primary-aged children.

Attainment

- Only a fifth of children with speech, language and communication needs reach the expected levels for their age in both English and maths (2009). Only 10% get five good GCSEs including English and maths (2009).

- Vocabulary at age 5 is a very strong predictor of the qualifications achieved at school leaving age and beyond (Feinstein and Duckworth, 2006)

- Early speech, language and communication difficulties are a very significant predictor of later literacy difficulties (Snowling et al, 2010).

- At the age of six there is a gap of a few months between the reading age of children who had good oral language skills at 5, and those with poor oral language skills at 5. By the time they are 14, this gap has widened to five years’ difference in reading age (Hirsch, 1996).

- Research has shown that primary-aged children with poor reading comprehension made greater improvements when provided with an intervention to develop their oral language than they did when provided with an intervention directly targeting reading comprehension skills (Snowling et al, 2010).

Behaviour and wellbeing

- Good language skills act as a ‘protective factor’ which reduces the likelihood of poor school attendance, truancy, delinquency and substance misuse (Snow, 2000).

- Children’s frustrations can bubble to the surface when trying to learn in an environment where their weakness is also the vehicle for learning. As a result, many children with SLCN can demonstrate behaviour difficulties ranging from occasional bouts of unpredictable behaviour to specific patterns of misbehaviour (Communication Trust)

- Two thirds of young offenders have speech, language and communication difficulties, but in only 5% of cases were they identified before the offending began (Bryan, 2008).

- Victims of bullying and those who are both bullies and victims are more likely to have had limited early language skills than other children (Gutman and Brown, 2008)

- Without effective help a third of children with speech, language and communication difficulties need treatment for mental health problems (Clegg et al, 1999).
Narrowing the gap

A school strategy to promote improved speech, language and communication skills is vital in narrowing gaps between outcomes for disadvantaged children and their peers. Language skills are a critical factor in social disadvantage:

- On average a toddler from a family on welfare will hear around 600 words per hour, with a ratio of two prohibitions (‘stop that’, ‘get down off there’) to one encouraging comment. A child from a professional family will hear over 2000 words per hour, with a ratio of six encouraging comments to one negative (Hart and Risley, 2003).

- Low income children lag behind their middle income counterparts at school entry by nearly one year in vocabulary. The gap in language is very much larger than gaps in other cognitive skills (Waldfogel and Washbrook, 2010).

- Vocabulary at age 5 has been found to be the best predictor (from a range of measures at age 5 and 10) of whether children who experienced social deprivation in childhood were able to ‘buck the trend’ and escape poverty in later adult life (Blanden, 2006).

- In some parts of the UK, particularly in areas of social disadvantage, upwards of 50% of children are starting schools with SLCN (Locke, Ginsborg and Peers, 2002).
Skills at the bottom have to be in place before the skills above them can be developed.
General advice to support children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

(Taken from Don’t Get me Wrong from The Communication Trust)

The following suggestions are good practice not only for children with SLCN but for all children.

**If they have difficulty understanding language**

- Make classroom language easier to understand to improve children’s compliance and general behaviour
- Consider the teaching environment, e.g. reduce background noise and distractions

**Check their understanding**

- Support children to recognise when they do not understand
- Ask the child to repeat back in their own words what you have said, then you will know how much they have understood

**Help them focus on what is important**

- Make sure you are facing the child when giving information
- Use their name at the start of instructions if they are not focussed
- Use phrases like ‘everyone needs to listen to this’, however this instruction may be difficult for someone who has autism, for example
- Give an overview first
- Give pointers for what they should listen to such as, “It’s important you remember X from what I am going to tell you”
- Emphasise key words
- Repeat key information

**Give extra thinking time**

- Allow extra time for them to listen and process language

**Simplify your language**

- Use simple language
- Use short chunks of language and only include the important points
- Repeat and rephrase where necessary
- Slow your speech and insert more pauses
- Use shorter sentences
- Avoid or explain difficult words or idioms

**Provide cues**

- Support what you are saying with visual cues eg. gestures, signing, diagrams, pictures etc.
- Use visual timetables to help their understanding of the sequence of events
- Mind maps may help some children and can be used to capture ideas
- Narrative frames including cues such as ‘who?’, ‘where?’ ‘when?’, ‘what happened?’
- Demonstrate what you want the child to do where possible
Help them make links

- Link new information to what the children already know

If they have difficulty expressing themselves

- Listen and show your interest by maintaining eye contact and using their name but be aware that excessive use of eye contact may be difficult for some children, particularly those with autism
- Be patient and let them know you will wait
- Give positive feedback for effort
- Build on what they have already said, follow their lead
- Increase opportunities for real dialogue and conversation, take short turns
- Sometimes you may have to say (kindly) that you cannot understand and perhaps there is another way to explain it
- Offer help and support when they ask for it
- Make sure they are not rushed or feeling rushed
- Do not correct, instead provide the right model of spoken language eg. If the child says “I cutted the paper”, you can say, “yes, you cut the paper”
- Respond to what they are trying to say rather than how
- Prompt with cues such as ‘first’, ‘then’, ‘last’
Advice for developing speech, language & communication skills with EAL children

- All children, including children who have EAL, need a language rich environment to develop their speech, language & communication skills
- Parents should be encouraged to keep talking to their child in their first / home language, as this is very important for the child’s development
- Children who are not understanding or speaking English because they have EAL, will make more rapid progress in learning English than a child who has an underlying difficulty with learning language generally (if they are exposed to a language rich environment)
- Some children who have EAL can go through a “silent period” while they are learning a new language, but this usually only lasts for a few months

Here are some general strategies which will help you provide a language rich environment which is important for all children:

- Learn to pronounce the child’s name correctly, using the name used commonly at home
- Use the child’s name to get their attention, before give an instruction
- Make sure the child is looking at you when you are giving instructions
- Make sure you use lots of visual support to back up what you are saying eg pointing, gestures, demonstrations, pictures, symbols
- Give a commentary about what the child is doing, as they are doing it. eg. “Wow, that’s a great tower you are building”, “it’s getting really tall!”, “uh,oh, it’s fallen over, what a crash”
- Reduce the number of questions you ask, and use comments instead to model good language
- Make the most of chances to talk with the child in different situations eg. painting, role play, literacy eg 1:1, small groups, large groups
- Use short simple sentences as a model for the child to hear
- Do not be afraid of repetition as you are commenting, as the child needs to hear the same word in context many times before being able to learn it
- Allow the child extra time to respond (count to 5 in your head), as they may take longer to understand what you are saying and to think of a response
- Stop & listen to show you are interested in what the child is saying
- Respond to questions that the child asks
- Try not to correct the child when they talk. Let them finish & gently say it back the right way e.g. “I swimmned very well” “yes, you swam very well”
- Try not to interrupt the child when they are talking
- Talk about what is happening in books, including looking at the pictures, rather than focusing on the reading
- Counting rhymes and singing songs from different cultures provides opportunities for repetition
Attention and Listening Skills

Introduction

Attention and listening is a prerequisite to learning language. Some children find listening difficult. This may be because they:

- Hearing loss or previous problems with hearing like glue ear
- Difficulties understanding language e.g. it’s too complex/long
- It takes time for them to process language
- Environmental factors e.g. background noise, visual distractions
- The speakers voice is too quiet/too fast
- A medical disorder like ADHD

Children with long-standing comprehension difficulties get used to not understanding and may guess at answers or change the subject so that they don’t ‘fail’. They may expect to be wrong and wait to be corrected. They may become passive listeners.

Children need to know that not speaking doesn’t necessarily mean that they are listening!

Children need to be taught the ‘rules’ of good listening, i.e. sit still, look at the speaker and think about the words. The Language Link website provides Good Talking Pictures to support training of good listening ‘rules’.

Role play with another adult, can be used to support a child’s understanding of good listening rules. When a child recognises the behaviour in others, it will help them to recognise the behaviour in themselves and so change it.

General classroom strategies to support attention and listening skills

- Sit the child near the front and make frequent eye contact
- Before making an announcement to the whole class, gain the children’s attention by tapping a board/clapping/ ringing a small bell/using a shaker. Make sure that the class know that this is their signal to stop, look at the teacher, and get ready to listen
- Use the child’s name to get their attention before you talk to them
- Regain the child’s attention by casually mentioning his/her name while you are talking to the whole class
- Sit the child where there are few distractions such as away from windows, corridors, computer screens, etc.
- Use visual support such as flash cards, pictures or objects while you are talking as children find it easier to concentrate on visual things
- Keep instructions as short as possible. Break them into small steps
- Tell child what he/she is to listen out for
- Have a ‘special’ place for the child to sit during carpet time, maybe their own carpet ‘square’ or cushion
- Give the child something to hold for you during group tasks, for example word cards
- Give a synopsis of what is to come, ‘this is about a girl who...’
- Use the symbols/pictures from Language Link to describe good listening, and put them where children can see them. Praise children who are following
these rules eg. “Well done Ben for doing good sitting”, “I can see that Amita is doing good looking at me”

- Ensure that the task has been understood
- Ask the child to repeat what s/he thinks s/he has heard as soon as possible after the instruction. Questions to ask could be:
  - ‘What have you got to do?’ (describe the task)
  - What have you got to do first/next…’ etc (describe the sequence)
  - ‘How will you know when you have finished?’ (describe the expected result)

**Activities for use with individuals or small groups**

Listening for a length of time requires practise. The following activities are designed to improve attention and listening skills.

- Act out actions to songs and finger rhymes together
- Play ‘Simon Says’
- Play ‘Where’s the clock?’ Hide a ticking clock (or some other item that makes a quiet noise). Can the children locate the item?
- Play the ‘Bear and the Honey Pot’. One child sits blindfolded in the middle with a bunch of keys in front of them. The adult points to one of the children sitting around the edge, and that child has to try to get the keys without “the bear” hearing them. “The bear” has to listen carefully, and points when he/she hears a noise
- Play sound lotto with a tape of sounds and matching pictures
- Make a set of shakers using plastic bottles. Each shaker contains something different, e.g. pebbles, pasta, peas, buttons. The child is blindfolded or turns his/her back and a sound is made with one of the shakers. Can he/she identify which one it was?
- Ask the child to copy a simple rhythm using clapping or simple instruments
- Play barrier games with musical instruments. Place behind a screen a set of musical instruments that have already been looked at, listened to and named by the children. Make a noise behind the screen with one of the instruments and the children have to guess the instrument
- Recognising voices. Can the child identify familiar voices on tape? Can they match the voice to a photo?
- Play listening and remembering games, e.g. variations on ‘I went to the shops and bought….’
- Place a number of pictures on the table, e.g. pictures of farm animals. Give each child a different picture name (e.g. a different animal name). Tell a story mentioning the pictures by name. When a child’s picture is named they raise their hand or point to the picture
- Play Spot the Mistake. Children listen to sentences/rhymes with deliberate mistakes. Can they identify and correct the mistake? E.g. Baa, baa, blue sheep
- Zoo Game – Children sit in a circle with enough room outside the circle for them to run around. Give each child a different toy zoo animal (e.g. zebra, elephant etc.) Tell a story about a trip to the zoo. Each time they hear their animal mentioned they have to get up and run around the outside of the circle and back to their place. When the word Zoo is heard all the children get up and run around. This game is good for developing attention and listening skills, concentration and memory skills as they have to remember their animal
**Possible Resources**

- Language Link resources
- Sound lotto game
- Musical instruments
- Easylearn: Start Listening Book A and B.
- Speechmark: Speaking, Listening and Understanding: Games for Young Children
- Black Sheep Press – Language Through Listening (WIG2)
Play and Social Skills

Introduction

‘Social skills’ is a general term which refers to any skill which facilitates interaction and communication with others. This might include using appropriate eye contact, starting an interaction appropriately, listening, turntaking, staying on topic, being aware of the other person’s feelings, using and interpreting non-verbal communication and knowing how to close the conversation.

Developing Social Play – adapted from Elklan Early Language Builders

Stages of Play Development

- **Solitary play** – ‘Children are happy to be on their own directing their own play without others. They are exploring and learning about the materials they are playing with’.
- **Parallel play** – Develops around 2-3 years. Includes watching other children with fleeting attempts to make meaningful contact. At around 3-4, will happily stand around an activity in a group and play alongside other children but on their own.
- **Co-operative play** – At around 4-5 years, children are beginning to interact with each other. They want to play together, share toys and take turns.

Classroom strategies

- Encourage co-operative play in the classroom and playground, through turn-taking and sharing using activities such as tower-building, reward games, etc.
- Praise attempts at turn taking appropriately during these games or during conversations.
- Discuss key social interaction skills including making eye contact, listening, turn taking and staying on topic during circle time/group time.
- Use visual reminders regarding the key social skills e.g. good looking, turn taking and staying on topic in the classroom.
- Encourage the child to be an active listener and use pictures or symbols to support the use of good listening skills.
- Model and encourage appropriate greetings and farewells to adult and peers, for example ‘hello’, ‘good morning’, and ‘good bye, see you tomorrow’.
- Encourage the use of talking partners whereby you pose a question or problem to the group and the children discuss their ideas in pairs. Children who have social skills difficulties may benefit from being paired with children who are more able in this area to provide them with a good model.
Activity ideas for use with individuals or small groups

- Work on basic turn taking skills using simple turn taking games, like ‘Pop-up Pirate’, posting activities, fishing games, etc. Teach children to take turns with an adult first, before moving into activities with 1 other children, then a group.
- Design a turn-taking board to show the order of turns in a structure group activity.
- Use a visual prop, e.g. a microphone, during verbal activities to identify whose turn it is to talk.
- Circle time – children go around a circle and have to describe/act out a picture (e.g. animal noises)
- Use Lego activities or barrier worksheets/games, whereby children provide an adult/peer with instructions, to help develop children’s initiation and listening skills.
- Use Social Stories to support a child’s understanding of social situations.
- Set up a social skills group following liaison with the school Speech and Language Therapist. Refer to published resources, for example ‘Time to Talk’, for support regarding this.

Possible resources

- ‘Time to Talk’ by Alison Schroeder
  - A programme to develop oral and social interaction skills at Reception and Key Stage One
- ‘Socially Speaking’ by Alison Schroeder
  - A pragmatic social skills programme for primary pupils
- ‘The New Social Story Book’ by Carol Gray
- Elklan’s ‘Language Builders’ books - ‘Social Skills’ section
- Black Sheep Press pack - Emotions and Facial Expressions
Basic Concepts

Introduction

Concepts can be abstract and difficult for children with language difficulties to learn and use.

Children with language difficulties may need more opportunities to overlearn concept vocabulary and often have to be taught one concept at a time before introducing the opposite, for example teach hot/not hot rather than hot/cold. The associated concept can be introduced later.

Children must understand a concept before they can begin using it correctly in their talking.

In this pack, you will find advice sheets for the following concepts:

- “All”
- “Hard + Soft”
- “Heavy + Light”
- “Hot + Cold”
- “Big + Little”
Concept – ‘All’

Classroom strategies

- Work on the more ‘concrete’ strategies first in a practical way.
- Consider using a sign or symbol to reinforce the concept of all to make it more visual (e.g. Signalong/Makaton, Widgit/Boardmaker)
- Pause before and after using the key word all and slightly emphasise the word as you say it e.g. “Please give out all the fruit”
- Make opportunities to use the word in the classroom every day, e.g.
  - When taking the register ask ‘are all the children here today? Who is away?’
  - After lunch, ask “who ate all their lunch?”
  - “Please give out all the pencils”
- If possible, work on the new concept vocabulary before the lesson.

Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals

- Have a tea ‘party’ and ask the child to give out cups, plates cakes etc. to all the toys.
- Ask the child to close his/her eyes as you share out toys, ask who has all the toys?
- Have pictures to colour in, “colour all the cars”
- When playing games, ask “who has all the counters/cards”, etc.
- Put balls/marbles in pots/buckets, “put all the marbles in the bucket”
- Play with cars and parking, e.g. “put all the cars in the carpark”
- Reverse roles so that the children have the opportunity to use the vocabulary
- Remember to keep on practising in the classroom too

Possible Resources:

- Everyday objects and toys
- Black Sheep Press pack – All/Except
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark
- Language Link resources
Concept – ‘Hard/Soft’

Introduction

Children with language difficulties may need more opportunities to overlearn concept vocabulary and often have to be taught one concept at a time before introducing the opposite, for example teach hard/ not hard, then soft/ not soft and finally hard/soft.

Classroom strategies

- Work on the more ‘concrete’ strategies first in a practical way
- Consider using a sign or symbol to reinforce the concept of hard or soft to make it more visual (e.g. Signalong, Makaton)
- Pause before and after using the key word hard or soft, and slightly emphasise the word as you say it e.g. “The table feels hard when I touch it”
- Make opportunities to use the word in the classroom everyday e.g. “The cushions feel lovely and soft”, “The chair feels not soft, it feels hard”, “Teddy is all soft”
- Encourage the children to go round the class feeling things, and reporting back what they have found. Model the concept while they are touching the objects e.g. “Yes, the cushion does feel soft”
- Consider setting up a display table of hard/soft objects
- If possible, work on the new concept vocabulary before the lesson
- Teach the concept in a variety of contexts, e.g. class, playground, different lessons

Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals

Check understanding:

- Sorting objects to a picture or symbol (Widgit) to represent hard/soft, sign to the child as you sort
- Using the display tables of hard/soft objects, ask the child to collect something hard/soft
- Later, sort pictures of hard/soft things; make into a book with a symbol for reference
- Making a ‘word web’ for reference
- Remember to keep practising in the classroom too

Possible Resources:

- Everyday objects to touch
- Black Sheep Press
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark
- Language Link resources
Concept – ‘Heavy/Light’

Introduction

Children with language difficulties may need more opportunities to overlearn concept vocabulary and often have to be taught one concept at a time before introducing the opposite, for example teach *heavy/not heavy*, then *light/not light* and finally *heavy/light*.

Classroom strategies

- Work on the more ‘concrete’ strategies first in a practical way
- Consider using a sign or symbol to reinforce the concept of *heavy* or *light* to make it more visual
- Pause before and after using the key word *heavy* or *light*, and slightly emphasise the word as you say it e.g. “My bag is *heavy* today”
- Make opportunities to use the word in the classroom everyday e.g. “The box of books is *heavy*”, “This pencil is *not heavy*, this pencil is *light*”
- Talk about *heavy* and *light* when you are setting up equipment for PE, or when it is tidy up time e.g. “This bench is *heavy* to lift.”
- Ask the children if their book bags are feeling *heavy* today
- Consider setting up a display table of *heavy/light* objects
- If possible, work on the new concept vocabulary before the lesson
- Teach the concept in a variety of contexts, e.g. class, playground, different lessons

Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals

Check understanding by:

- Playing with the children and ‘acting’ out carrying *heavy* or *light* things
- Sorting *heavy* and *light* objects using simple scales
- Sorting objects to a picture or symbol (Widgit, Boardmaker) to represent *heavy/light*, sign to the child as you sort
- Collecting objects that are *heavy/light* and feeling them together in the group. Talk about how they feel while they are touching them
- Remember to keep practising in the classroom too

Reverse roles so that the children have the opportunity to use the vocabulary.

Possible Resources:

- Everyday objects to touch
- Black Sheep Press pack – Heavy/Light
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark
- Language Link resources
Concept – ‘Hot/Cold’

Introduction

Children with language difficulties may need more opportunities to overlearn concept vocabulary and often have to be taught one concept at a time before introducing the opposite, for example teach hot/not hot, then cold/not cold and finally hot/cold.

Classroom strategies

- Work on the more ‘concrete’ strategies first in a practical way
- Consider using a sign or symbol or gesture to reinforce the concept of hot or cold to make it more visual (e.g. Signalong/Makaton – see above)
- Pause before and after using the key word hot or cold, and slightly emphasise the word as you say it e.g. “The radiator feels hot when I touch it”
- Make opportunities to use the word in the classroom everyday e.g. “I’m feeling cold today”, “We need to put our sun-cream on because it is hot today”, “The water feels cold”
- Encourage the children to go round the class feeling things, and reporting back what they have found. Model the concept while they are touching the objects e.g. “yes, I think that metal cupboard feels cold”
- If possible, work on the new concept vocabulary before the lesson.
- Teach the concept in a variety of contexts, e.g. class, playground, different lessons

Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals

- Use real life activities where possible to start working on hot or cold and talk about what the children are feeling
- Play with warm water and cold water to teach the difference
- Go outside and talk about the weather e.g. “It’s a cold day today”, use gesture to illustrate
- Talk about what the children are eating at lunch time (hot food or cold food)
- Engage in a simple cooking activity such as making cakes or a jelly (getting things out of the fridge, putting them in the oven etc)
- Sort pictures of different drinks and foods into hot/not hot, cold/not cold groups
- Sort pictures of clothes into hot weather clothes and cold weather clothes
- Look through pictures cut from travel brochure of hot and cold holidays
- Remember to keep practising in the classroom too
Possible Resources:

- Everyday objects and pictures
- Black Sheep Press pack – Hot/Cold
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark
- Language Link resources
Following Instructions

Introduction

Children develop understanding of single words first, and then they learn to understand sentences. The following activities aim to develop the child's ability to understand sentences of increasing length and complexity.

To do these activities you need to be able to work out how many key words are in an instruction. A key word is a word a child has to understand in order to follow an instruction. It does not mean the actual number of words in the sentence. You may also hear these being referred to as information carrying words. Here are some examples:

No Key Words
- Adult says to the whole class: “Put on your coats and line up at the door”
- There is a pencil and no other objects between you and the child, you hold out your hand and say: “Give me the pencil”

In these instructions a child can follow other children or clues in the environment. There are no key words because the child does not need to understand the spoken sentences at all.

1 Key word
- There is a book and a pen in front of you and the child, you hold out your hand and say “Give me the book”

The child doesn’t need to understand the words “give me” but they do need to understand the word “book” to follow the instruction.

For further examples, please see the table below.

Your Speech and Language Therapist can tell you what level to start at after an assessment of the child. Alternatively, try a few different instructions to see the number of key words a child can retain and follow, when you give an instruction. You need to be sure the child understands the vocabulary being used.

It is important when working on key word instructions to be aware of automatic actions e.g. put teddy on the chair has 2 key words and not 3 as a child does not need to understand the word “on” in the sentence. The child would automatically put teddy on the chair.

There has to be a choice for it to count as a key word, e.g. teddy vs dolly, under vs behind, chair vs bed, red vs blue, plate vs cup etc.

Typical development

- 1 key word = 1 year
- 2 key words = 2 years
- 3 key words and more = 3 years and over
Strategies to help a child follow instructions in the classroom

- Ensure you have the child’s attention before giving an instruction
- Repeat instructions and give the child time to process and respond
- Break down instructions into smaller chunks to support understanding (e.g. instead of giving a 4 key word instruction, break it down into two 2 key word instructions). If the child is still struggling, break it down further
- Use visual support (e.g. gesture, pointing, signs, pictures, symbols) to support understanding where necessary
- Encourage children to use self-help strategies such as asking adults to repeat or break down instructions into smaller chunks. Cue cards that the child shows the adult may help (see Black Sheep – Visual Cue cards pp.6-7)
- Ask the child to tell you or show you what they have to do after you have given an instructions. Avoid asking “do you understand?” as most small children will automatically say “yes”
- Use pointing, gestures, signs, symbols, pictures, objects, lists and practical demonstrations to support your verbal instructions

Activities for use with individuals or small groups

Work out how many key words a child understands. Work on some instructions at this level to provide a feeling of success, and then move up to the level that the child struggles with and practise.

You may have to check that the child understands concepts such as big/little, prepositions under/behind and colours etc. before including them in an instruction.

Use familiar vocabulary/toys/objects or pre-teach new vocabulary before including in key word instructions

- Use toys and give instructions for the child to follow. Do some silly instructions to make it fun and to ensure you avoid automatic responses.

  Equipment you will need: bed, chair, teddy, dolly, big banana, small banana, big apple, small apple
  - 2 ICW: Put dolly on the chair
  - 3 ICW: Put the bed under teddy
  - 4 ICW: Put the big banana under the chair

- Play barrier games. Each have the same set of objects/toys and ask the child to follow an instruction to see if they can match what is behind the barrier (the barrier could be a box/screen/large book)

  Equipment you will need: green pencil, blue pencil, book, spoon, green cup, blue cup, teddy, dolly
  - 2 ICW: Give teddy the spoon
  - 3 ICW: Put the green pencil on the book
  - 4 ICW: Put the blue cup under dolly
- Dressing up game with real items or fuzzy felt game or pictures: dress the boy/girl and ask the child to follow instructions e.g. “Put the pink skirt on the girl”
  Equipment you will need: boy, girl, pink shoes, blue shoes, pink skirt, blue skirt, t-shirt, vest, trousers
  - 2 ICW: Put the **vest** on the **girl**
  - 3 ICW: Put the **pink shoes** on the **boy**
  - 4 ICW: Put the **blue shoes** on the **boy’s head**

- Animal game: put big and small animals in the field/barn (or farm/zoo/house) and ask the child to follow instructions. Use pictures or toy objects
  Equipment you will need: big cow, small cow, big horse, small horse, field, barn
  - 2 ICW: Find the **big cow**
  - 3 ICW: Put the **small horse** in the **field**
  - 4 ICW: Put the **small cow behind** the **barn**

- Transport: put vehicles in the sky or on the road and ask the child to follow instructions. Use objects and pictures
  Equipment you will need: blue helicopter, red helicopter, car, bus, road, sky
  - 2 ICW: Put the **car** in the **sky**
  - 3 ICW: Put the **blue helicopter** on the **road**
  - 4 ICW: Put the **red helicopter under** the **car**

- Picnic: use teddy/dolly, food, cutlery, plates etc. and ask the child to follow instructions
  Equipment you will need: dolly, teddy, big orange, small orange, big apple, small apple, spoon, cup
  - 2 ICW: Give the **spoon** to **teddy**
  - 3 ICW: Feed **dolly** a **big orange**
  - 4 ICW: Give the **cup** to **teddy** and the **spoon** to **dolly**

- Simon says: follow instructions
  Equipment: yourselves!
  - 2 ICW: **Tap** your **arm**
  - 3 ICW: **Jump**, wave **and smile**
  - 4 ICW: **Wave**, sit down and wiggle your **nose**

- Secret tasks: ask the child to do special fun jobs for the teacher in class
  Equipment: big teddy, small teddy, different coloured pencils, chair, table
  - 2 ICW: Find the **big teddy**
  - 3 ICW: Put **small teddy** on the **chair**
  - 4 ICW: Find a **blue pencil** and put it **under** the **chair**

- Practise in everyday situations in the classroom
  - 2 ICW: Put your **book** in your **tray**
  - 3 ICW: Put your **bag under** the **desk**
  - 4 ICW: Get a **blue pencil**, a **big** piece of **paper**

*Tip*
It is a good idea to write down a plan of key word instructions for each activity and underline the key word, which remember is the meaningful word which has to have the element of choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of instruction</th>
<th>You need</th>
<th>Example instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 key word</td>
<td>Teddy, dolly, ball, spoon, cup, plate</td>
<td>Give me the teddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give me the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Pass the child the teddy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make teddy jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 key words</td>
<td>Teddy, dolly, ball, spoon, cup, plate</td>
<td>Make teddy jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make dolly sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Put the spoon in the cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give me the ball and the plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 key words</td>
<td>Big teddy, little teddy, big dolly, little dolly, ball, spoon, cup, plate</td>
<td>Put big teddy on the plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Put the spoon under the cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make little dolly jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 key words</td>
<td>Big teddy, little teddy, big dolly, little dolly, ball, spoon, cup, plate</td>
<td>Give me big teddy, the cup and the spoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make little teddy jump then sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Put big dolly under the ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Using instructions in the classroom**

When you have tried some of the structured activities, help the child to generalise this skill to a functional situation by giving instructions in the classroom with the number of key words you are working on e.g.:

- 3 key words ‘Put the bag under the desk’
- 4 key words ‘put the big book on the chair’

**Possible resources:**

- Black sheet press: Barrier worksheets
- Language Link resources
- Early Language Builders: Elklan
- Language Builders: Elklan
- Small world equipment
- Everyday objects/toys
- Boardmaker pictures/pictures from the internet/cut out pictures from catalogues
Negatives

Introduction

There are different negative forms in English, such as no, not, don’t, won’t, can’t. Initially, the child develops understanding and use of the forms relating to absence, i.e. “he has got no shoes on”, “she is not sitting down” and gradually learns to use the full range of negative forms.

Children with language needs can find it difficult to understand instructions containing negatives, and may not follow this key part of the instruction.

Classroom Strategies

- As a general rule, say what you want the child to do, rather than what you don’t want the child to do, e.g. “Walk!” instead of “Don’t run!”, “Talk quietly!” instead of “No shouting!” “Arms still!” instead of “No hitting!”
- Practise contrasting positive and negative forms in the class, e.g. “Put your hand up if you walk to school”, “Now put your hand up if you do not walk to school” e.g. “Put your hand up if you have a whiteboard”, “Now put your hand up if you do not have a whiteboard”.
- In circle time/at the end of the day play a game where you stand up if you have/don’t have something e.g. “Stand up if you have blue eyes”, “Now stand up if you have not got blue eyes” e.g. “Stand up if you have a brother”, “Now stand up if you do not have a brother”.
- Comment on children as situations arise e.g. “Charlie has got his hat on. Zara has not got her hat on.” e.g. “Zainab has got her shoes on. Callum has not got his shoes on”.
- Comment on what the children are doing e.g. “Anna is painting. Tilly is not painting. Tilly is drawing.”

Activities for use with small groups or individuals

- Choose a selection of cuddly toys/dolls and a tea set. Give each toy, apart from one, a cup etc. Start by talking to the child about who has a cup etc. e.g. “The teddy has a cup, the baby has a cup. Who has no cup?” Then do the same with the other items in the tea set e.g. plate, spoon, knife, fork
- Choose a selection of cuddly toys/dolls and small objects. Give each toy, apart from one, a ball/pencil/counter/car/compare bear etc. Start by talking to the child about who has got a ball etc. e.g. “The teddy has got a ball, the baby has got a ball. Who has not got a ball?” Then do the same with the other items.
- Play a game where one child closes their eyes/waits outside while the rest of the children do an action apart from one. When the child opens their eyes/comes back in the room, ask them “Who is not running/sleeping/jumping etc.”
- Play a chair swapping game using a mixture of instructions e.g. “Swap chairs if you have brown hair”, “Swap chairs if you do not have brown hair”.
- When the child can follow instructions consistently in the above activities, swap roles and let them be the teacher telling you what to do. This will help the child practise using negatives.
- Remember to continue practising in the classroom too.
**Possible Resources:**

- Black Sheep Press: No... Noun
- Black Sheep Press: Not... Verb
- Black Sheep Press: Not... Adjective
- Toys and everyday objects e.g. toy people, tea set, teddy, doll
- Language Link resources
**Prepositions**

**Introduction**

A preposition is a word that shows the relation of a noun or pronoun to other words in a sentence, for example ‘the boy is on the bike’. The preposition *on* shows the relationship between the boy and the bike. A preposition comes before a noun phrase, connecting it to the rest of the sentence.

Abstract concepts such as prepositions are often difficult for children with language difficulties.

**Development of prepositions**

Level 1: in, on, out, under, up, down
Level 2: behind, in front, inside, off, over, though, top, bottom
Level 3: above, below, around, between, nearest to, furthest from, next to, beside, by, across, apart, together, middle, near, far

**Classroom strategies**

- Work on the more concrete strategies first.
- Consider using a sign or symbol or gesture to support the child’s understanding of the word
- Use everyday situations in the classroom to teach/reinforce preposition knowledge, e.g:
  - **On/off** – getting dressed, light switches, hanging up coats (on/off a coat peg)
  - **In/out** – getting out and putting away toys or games from a box or cupboard
  - **Up/down** - playground slides, see-saws, steps
  - **Behind/in front** – standing in the line. Who’s in front? Who’s behind?
- An obstacle course can provide the opportunity to teach/reinforce knowledge of a variety of prepositions. For example:
  - Slide: up, down
  - Large boxes: in, on, behind, in front, beside, between
  - Tunnels: in, through, beside, next to
  - Tables: next to, beside, under
- If possible, work on the new concept vocabulary before the lesson

**Targeted activities for use with individuals or small groups**

- Start with level 1 prepositions first then move onto harder levels
- Demonstrate the meaning of the preposition and talk about what you are doing, e.g. I am *under* the table. I am *on* the chair. Encourage the child to carry out actions that contain the targeted preposition.
- Encourage the child to say what he/she is doing e.g. I am *under* the table.
- When the child has learnt two or three prepositions, give instructions using the different prepositions but keeping the place the same, e.g. put the ball *on* the chair/ *behind* the chair/ *in front* of the chair/ *next to* the chair. This will enable the adult to check the child understands the prepositions.
- Play ‘Hunt the Thimble’. Use any small object/toy and hide it in the room.
  Talk about where the child could look e.g. “Is it under the table?” “Is it in the
  cupboard?” Encourage the child to verbalise where it might be using
  prepositions, e.g. “Is the toy in the box, under the box, on the box?”
- Use small world toys. Give instructions where to place the toys. e.g. “Put the
dog under the table.” “Put the car in front of the bench.”
- Use small toys or figures and line them up for queues e.g. bus queue, traffic
  jam, queue for ice-creams. Talk about who is in front/behind in the queue.
- Play a barrier game with small objects, where you give an instruction and the
  child has to arrange his objects in the same way e.g. “Put the car behind the
  man”
- Play a parking game, where the child has to follow instructions to park the car
  in front/behind/next to the house

Possible Resources

- Everyday objects and pictures
- Small toys
- Black Sheep Press - Prepositions
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark
- Language Link resources
Pronouns: he/she/they

Introduction

Pronouns are small grammatical words which can be used in place of a person, place or object (nouns). This section focuses on those in place of people, i.e. he, she, they.

Classroom strategies

- Make sure the children have a good understanding of who is a boy and who is a girl, as well as who is a man and who is a woman
- Talk about who is a boy/girl/man/woman in the class and when looking at pictures or photos in books
- Explain explicitly that “he” is only for a boy or a man, “she” is only for a girl or a woman and that “they” is for when there is more than one person
- Comment using pronouns when you are looking at pictures in a book e.g. “Poppy is drawing. She is drawing a beautiful picture”
- If any of the children in the class make a mistake with using a pronoun, repeat back the correct version of the sentence, e.g. “He is running”, “Lacey is a girl. She is running”. There is no need to ask the child to repeat the correct version

Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals

- Make sure the child has a good understanding of who is a boy and who is a girl, as well as who is a man and who is a woman. You may need to spend a few sessions on this before moving onto work on pronouns
- At the beginning of each session explain that “he” is only for a boy or a man, “she” is only for a girl or a woman and that “they” is for when there is more than one person
- Choose two toys that are clearly a boy or a girl (e.g. girl doll and Action Man or small play people) and some play food. Give the child simple instructions about what the toys want to eat e.g. “He wants a banana”, “She wants a drink”, “They want an apple”
- Choose two toys that are clearly a boy or a girl (as above) and some small toys. Give the child simple instructions about what the toys want to play with e.g. “She wants to play with the ball”, “They want to play with the car”, “He wants to play with the teddy”
- Choose two toys that are clearly a boy or a girl (as above). Give the child simple instructions about actions you want the toys to do, e.g. “They are sleeping”, “He is jumping”, “She is sitting”
- When the child can follow instructions consistently in the above, swap roles and let them be the teacher telling you what to do. This will help the child practise using pronouns
- Take photos of the children in the class or teachers in the school and practise making up a sentence about the person e.g. “This is Mrs. Thomas. She likes to eat ice-cream”. “This is Vijay. He likes to play football”. The sentences can be funny or true
- Talk about what the characters are doing in the pictures of the children’s reading books, or class stories
- Remember to continue practising in the classroom too
Possible resources:

Black Sheep Press: Pronouns
Girl and boy toy e.g. female doll and Action Man/Spiderman/Postman Pat etc.
Small toys
Photos
Pictures in books
Language Link resources
Verb Tenses

Introduction

A verb is an action word and is probably one of the most important parts of the sentence. Children need to use verbs in order to progress from single words to phrases and sentences. At first, verbs are used in a simple way in two-word and then three-word combinations, e.g. “Daddy tickle”, “Sophie splash”, “Jack brush teeth”.

However, verbs are much more complicated than this as children have to learn all the ways in which they can change in order to signal a change of tense. For instance, regular verbs use the suffix ‘–ed’ to mark past tense, e.g. picked, looked, brushed. For irregular verbs there are a variety of ways of indicating past tense: Examples include ring → rang, sleep → slept, go → went and hit → hit.

It’s not just the past tense that’s complicated – children also have to learn how to use auxiliary verbs, such as I am jumping, he is running, I have a train and he has a train, they were swimming, she was singing, they are going to sleep).

Classroom strategies

- To help develop the range of verbs that the children understand and use, they need to see and hear them in context
- Using comments to talk about what is happening in the class, or what the children are doing will help increase the range of verbs the children hear and understand
- Use everyday situations in the classroom and in P.E. to emphasise a variety of verbs and tenses, e.g. “In 5 minutes we will be going to assembly” e.g. “After play we will be reading a story” e.g. “In PE we ran around the hall, and jumped in the hoops” e.g. “At snack time we ate oranges”
- Use the visual timetable to talk about the events of the day: “Blue group will read. Red group will paint”. Later in the day, review what the children have done: “Blue group read this story”. “Red group painted these pictures”
- At the beginning of an activity, talk to the children about what they will be doing. At the end of an activity talk through what they did
- Children will need plenty of repetition to learn new verbs
- To help children develop their understanding and use of verb tenses you can consider using visual support, e.g. pictures, gesture, symbols or sign e.g. Signalong.
- If a child makes a mistake with using a form of the verb, then repeat back to the child the sentence using the correct form, so that they can hear it modelled e.g. “I *runned in the park”, “oh, you ran in the park”

Targeted Activities for use with individuals or small groups

- Use small world toys to enact scenes and talk about what the characters did, e.g.
  “The dog ran into the garden.
  He jumped into the pond.
  He ran upstairs.”
He jumped on the bed.
Daddy shouted ‘bad dog!’
The children can take turns to move the toys and retell the story.

- Play “Follow the leader”. Initially, this game could be supported with some everyday objects. Collect five or six objects in a box, such as a cup, brush, ball, soap & flannel, car. Each day show the children one item at a time and help them to talk about them. For instance, show the ball and ask ‘What is Ross going to do with this?’ (He’s going to kick the ball). One child mimics the action. The other children say what the child has just done, e.g. “Ross kicked the ball” They can then copy the action. Later, the children can name the action they’re going to demonstrate (“I’m going to wave”). The other children describe the action and copy it: “He waved” “She skipped” “George clapped his hands”

- Draw a picture, providing a commentary: ‘I’m going to draw a face. I drew a nose. I drew some eyes. I drew a mouth’.

- Play “Guess the Action”. The children take turns to pick a card showing simple action pictures. They mime this for the rest of the group to name the action.

**Possible Resources**

- Language Link resources
- Black Sheep Press: Verbs
- Black Sheep Press: Regular Past, Irregular Past
- Black Sheep Press: Speaking and Listening Through Narrative
‘Wh’ Questions

Introduction

‘Wh’ Questions include the following:

- What
- Who
- Where
- Which
- Why
- When
- How

Children tend to learn them in this order as they become more abstract and more difficult to answer. However, there are variations. For example, children may have experienced frequent repetition of questions such as ‘How old are you?’ So this will be much easier for them to understand than ‘How do you know/how can you tell…?’ involving abstract concepts.

‘Why’ questions

Why is one of the hardest of the ‘wh’ questions for children to understand and be able to answer, even though children ask this question early in their development.

Why questions can vary in difficulty from a question where the answer is ‘obvious from the context, to the same question being asked without an obvious answer and where the child has to think of a possible reason. For example, “why is she dirty?” is a much easier question to answer if you can see a girl playing in a muddy puddle, compared to seeing the same girl in the car.

Classroom strategies

- Introduce or reinforce knowledge of ‘Wh’ Questions with physical demonstrations and consider using visual support such as signs (e.g. Signalong) or use symbols from Language Link, or Blacksheep Narrative pack.

- Everyday situations in the classroom can be used to teach/reinforce understanding of questions. For example:
  - What’s this?
  - What’s in the feely bag/your lunchbox/ today?
  - What is x doing?
  - Where is your shoulder/elbow/knee/coat/pencil/?
  - Who has brown eyes/white socks/long hair?
  - Who is in this picture?
  - Why do we clean our teeth?
  - Why do we need an umbrella?
  - When is your birthday?
  - When do you go to bed?
Start with simple why questions where the answer is obvious from the context, or from routine e.g. "Why do we need to put our coats on today?”, “why should we put an apron on when we are painting?”, “why do we need to sit quietly on the carpet?”, “why do we need to wash our hands before snack time?”, “why are we lining up now?”

If the child does not know the answer to your question, you can offer them a choice of answers, or you can model the correct answer for them.

You can also use pictures in stories that you are sharing with the class or a small group. Start with questions where the answer can be seen in the picture e.g. “where is the boy going?” or ask “why is the girl crying?” when you can see in the picture that the girl has cut her knee.

Once the child can answer these easier ‘why’ questions you can start asking questions which require them to think through possible options e.g. “Why is Cherry looking cross?”. You may need to offer a choice of answers to start with.

**Using Visual Timetable with pictures/symbols:**

Talk to the whole class and groups frequently, using questions so that children who are struggling with language can hear good models. Focus on each type of question:

- What happens after play?
- What are we going to do next?
- Who is in red group?
- When do we go swimming/to play/to the library?

**Activities for use with individuals or small groups – ‘wh’ questions in general**

- Focus on teaching one question word at a time to start with until the child is confident, and then move onto another question word.
- Use the symbol or sign in the session.
- Slightly emphasise the question word when you use it, to help cue the children in.
- Talk about what the word means at the beginning of the session e.g. “where’ is the word about places”, “who’ is the word about the person”, “when’ is the word about time’
- Model some questions and answers using toys or pictures from books e.g. “Where is Floppy?... he is in the park”, “Where is the teddy?...he is under the table”
- Play in the home corner, unpacking the shopping. Ask “Where shall I put the bread?” “Where shall I put the apples?” “Who has the bananas?” “Why do we put the ice cream in the freezer?”
- Look at pictures together and talk about them. Introduce questions in the discussion. For example, “Who’s in the car?” “Who’s in the house?” “Who’s swimming/running/skipping/painting?”
- Use small world toys. “What’s the baby doing?” “Where’s mummy?” “Who’s in the bath?”
- Play “Who Am I?” or “Where Am I?” giving clues to help the child guess the person or place.
- Tell nursery rhymes and encourage the children to re-enact these. Ask questions, e.g.  
  - Who sat on the wall?
  - What happened next?
  - How did Humpty Dumpty feel?
  - Who came to help him?
Activities for use with individuals or small groups – ‘why’ questions

- Use pictures in books, and start with questions where the answer can be seen in the picture. Oxford Reading Tree books are good, but you can use any book.
- To start with model the answers for the child, so that they get to know the why-because pattern eg. “why is he making a sandwich?... because he is hungry” eg. “why is he all wet?... because he fell in the river”.
- You can then start asking the child questions. You can prompt them by pointing to the clue in the picture to start with, but once they get more confident you can stop using this prompt.
- If the child does not know the answer then you can offer them a choice of answers eg. “is he hot because it is a sunny day, or because he is standing next to the radiator?”, or you can model the correct answer eg. “why is he hot?... he is hot because it is a sunny day”.
- Take digital photos of children and teachers doing activities around the school, and use these to talk about why-because in a similar way.
- You can also use small toy play to act out scenes and ask questions in a similar way eg. “why is the Mummy cuddling the baby?”, “why are the children going to bed?”.
- If the child gets really confident at these questions, then you can start to move onto why-because questions when the answer is not obvious from the picture/context. Encourage the child to think of a range of different possible ideas eg. “the boy is cross because...his brother has annoyed him/his toy has broken/the girl hit him/the boy snatched his toy”.
- Remember to continue practising in the classroom too.

Possible resources:

- Language Link resources
- Blacksheep Narrative Pack
- Black Sheep Press: Why-Because
- Pictures in books, sequences
- Photos
- Small world toys
- Language Link resources
Vocabulary

Introduction

Words are vital for speaking, reading and writing.

Children must understand a word before they can use it in their language appropriately.

Some children with language difficulties may present with:

- Limited vocabularies i.e. they do not understand many words
- Word finding difficulties: The child will know the word they want to say, but they can’t access it at all or may use a related word in its place. This is similar to having a word on the ‘tip-of-the-tongue’, which can be frustrating for the child and the listener. The child may appear to have forgotten the word, when in fact the difficulty is in accessing it, not remembering it

Research tells us that in order to store and access words accurately a child needs to know:

- What the word means
- What it sounds like

Classroom Strategies

Present the class with a strategy for learning new words. This can be achieved using a simple diagram containing various questions to focus on the meanings and sounds of words. The more this strategy is used in the classroom, the more it will become an independent word learning strategy for the children. Identifying the meanings and sounds in words also has benefits for literacy development by promoting the development of decoding skills and reading comprehension.

Choose the questions that are most relevant for the children in your class and for the word you are learning. Answer the questions related to topic vocabulary or words that will be useful for the children to learn. Some examples are below:

For younger children (4 and 5 years) use questions such as:

- What do you know about the word? / What can you tell me about the word?
- What do you do with it? / What does it do?
- Where do you find it?
- What does it look like?
- What is the first sound?
- What does the word rhyme with?
- How many syllables?
For older children (6 years plus) use questions such as:
- What do you know about the word? / What can you tell me about the word?
- What else can you find out about the word?
- What do you do with it? / What does it do?
- Where do you find it?
- Describe it?
- Draw a picture to remind you of the word
- What group / category is it from?
- What are the sounds in the word?

Using additional questions can also support word storage, for example:
- Use the word in a sentence: Make sure you give the child an opportunity to use the new word when talking, perhaps during partner work
- Think of words that have a similar / different meaning

Ideally this strategy will be a regular feature of classroom work to encourage the children to use this strategy independently when learning new words. Learning a ‘word of the week’ can be a simple way to introduce vocabulary learning into the classroom.

Record information for the words you have learned and revise these when possible, for example, on a monthly basis.

**Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals**

- Children who are having difficulties with storing or retrieving vocabulary are likely to have problems identifying the meaning or sound of the word. Identify which is most difficult for the child and talk about word meanings or develop basic sound awareness tasks to help the child to improve their skills in this area
- Use word webs to explore key words, using the questions above
- Use a vocabulary book (sorted into categories/topics) and use the above strategies to reinforce the word at a later date
- Once the child has learnt new words show them how these words relate to others using categorisation activities, mind maps, topic webs, etc. This will help them to organise the words in their mind

**General vocabulary enrichment ideas will also benefit individuals or groups**

- Make sure the child has a good language model at home and school
- Repeat words so the child will relate this to the object it corresponds to
- Expose the child to new words by reading books to them and looking at pictures, pointing and labelling new words
- Match spoken words to pictures / objects by playing games such as lotto

**Possible Resources**

- Word Whizzer [www.wordwhizzer.com](http://www.wordwhizzer.com)
- Black Sheep Press: Vocab Builder
- Elklan: Language Builders
- Pictures
Speech Sounds

Introduction

Children learn speech sounds at different rates. It is normal for children to make lots of errors when they are learning their speech sounds. By the time a child starts school their speech should, for the most part, be clear and intelligible with only occasional speech sound errors.

Speech is different from language. Language is what we are trying to say, it is the message. Speech sounds are what comes out, it is how the message sounds.

Speech sounds are different from letters. One sound can be written with different letters e.g. ee vs. ea “beach” vs. “beetle”. Producing speech sounds involves hearing the subtle differences between sounds and saying the sound by selecting the correct set of speech sounds. We have to plan the sequence of sounds to say, sequence the sounds in the right order and co-ordinate the muscles to say all the right speech sounds.

Speech is a complex area and a child is not being lazy when he or she makes speech errors.

Normal speech sound development, approximate ages:

- By 3 years: p, b, t, d, n, m, h
- By 3;06 years: all the above sounds and s,f
- By 4 years: all the above sounds and v, z, k, g, y, ng
- By 5-6 years: all the above sounds and l, ch, j, sh, clusters e.g. st, sm
- By 6-7 years old: all the above sounds and th, r

Common sound substitutions

- ‘t’ replaces ‘k’ e.g. ‘tup’ for ‘cup’
- ‘d’/’t’ replaces ‘s’ e.g. ‘dun’ or ‘tun’ for ‘sun’
- ‘p’/’b’ replaces ‘f’ e.g. ‘pire’ or ‘bire’ for ‘fire’
- Consonant blends are simplified to one sound e.g. ‘spoon’ to ‘poon’
- ‘s’ replaces ‘sh’ e.g. ‘seep’ for ‘sheep’
- ‘t’ replaces ‘ch’ e.g. ‘tair’ for ‘chair’
- ‘d’ replaces ‘j’ e.g. ‘dam’ for ‘jam’
- ‘w’ replaces ‘r’ e.g. ‘wed’ for ‘red’
Speech Hierarchy to target specific sounds

To work on a sound, it must be targeted in the following order. The child should be able to say the sound at one level before moving onto the next.

**Hearing the sound:** the child can hear the difference between the target sound and the sound he/she is using instead

**Isolation:** work on the target sound on its own

**Consonant vowel combinations:** blend sound with a vowel

**Words:** work on the sound in words: final, initial, medial position

**Phrases:** practice the sounds in a short phrase

**Sentences:** practice the sound in a sentence

**Conversation:** self-correction of sounds in connected speech

**Generalisation to everyday use:** using the sound spontaneously in all speaking environments without adult support

Classroom strategies

- Encourage the child to listen to the difference between sounds in the environment and in speech sounds
- Model the correct word without the pressure of the child saying it back, give the child enough time and you will find they will repeat the word naturally
- Emphasise target sounds e.g. child says “bish”, adult says “yes that's a ffffish”
- Repeat target words and use them frequently in conversation e.g. “Look at the blue fish, the fish is swimming, oh there is another fish”
- Encourage the child to show you what they want in other ways when you cannot understand them e.g. pointing, gesturing, drawing
- If you are really struggling to understand the child, admit you do not know and blame yourself e.g. “my ears are not working”
- Ask questions that give choices when you are not sure what the child is saying e.g. “do you want paint or a pencil?”
- Give lots of praise and positive feedback when the child says a sound correctly
- Talk clearly and slowly, wait and allow the child time to speak
- Use good eye contact when the child is speaking so they know you are listening
**Targeted activities for use with small groups or individuals**

- Work in a quiet environment so the child can listen to the sounds
- Make sure the child is able to attend and listen well and is ready for speech work
- Listen to environmental sounds e.g. a plane in the sky and identify what it is
- Use symbols and pictures to represent the sounds e.g. ‘t’ is a picture of a tap and ‘k’/ ‘c’ is a picture of a camera. You can find these on the Speech Link site.
- Do lots of listening work with picture symbols: listen to the difference between the target sound (e.g. ‘c’ for camera) and to the substituted sound (‘t’ for tap) Get the child to point to the picture they hear when you say the sound. Then swap roles and let the child say the sounds and you point to the one you hear and see if the picture matches what you hear. When the picture and the sound the child is trying to say doesn’t match this will raise the child’s awareness that they are not saying it correctly
- Use a mirror to look at how to make the sound
- Talk about it being a noisy/quiet sound or if the sound is made at the front of the mouth or the back of the mouth
- Work through the hierarchy to target one sound at a time: this could take weeks to work through each level, don’t rush on to the next stage until the child has grasped the level you are on
- Play reward games to keep the child motivated e.g. pop up pirate and every time the child says the sound they have a turn at the game
- “Little and often”: practice every day or every other day for 10-15 mins
- Make a scrapbook of pictures with the target sounds
- Play games, as it can get boring for a child going over the same sounds e.g. what’s in the bag (all things starting with ‘f’), listening lotto, pairs game, snap

**Possible Resources**

- Speech Link pictures
- Black Sheep Press: Phonological Worksheets for specific sounds
- ‘Talking Pictures’
- Phonics pictures
Stammering

What is stammering?

Stammering is also known as stuttering or dysfluency. It can take many forms, but can include: repeating of whole words or sounds in words; stretching sounds (known as prolongation); blocking of sounds – the child tries to say something, but nothing comes out; tension in the muscles around the face and neck; movements a child makes when they stammer, e.g. blinking, flinching, banging hand on the table; interrupted breathing patterns; avoiding words or situations, and episodic stammering that comes and goes.

Dysfluency affects us all from time to time, when we’re tired or struggling to think of what to say. About 5 percent of young children experience times when their speech is not fluent, especially while they are learning lots of complex language skills. Of this 5 percent, 4 out of 5 children will stop stammering during childhood; whereas 1 out of 5 people will continue to stammer into adulthood.

What causes stammering?

We do not know exactly what causes stammering. It is a complex process with many influencing factors. It is thought to be related to differences in the way that messages are sent within the brains of people with stammers. About 80 percent of children who stammer have a family member who also stammers.

The stammer can be affected by the child’s speech and language abilities, whether advanced, delayed or mixed. Emotions and personality can affect a stammer too. Children with stammers can be perfectionists, or very sensitive or anxious. The child’s environment can also affect their stammer. Children with stammers can benefit from a slower pace and fewer pressures to talk.

When should I contact the Speech and Language Therapist

Early intervention is the most effective, so if you think a child in your school has a stammer it’s best to speak to the speech and language therapist sooner rather than later. Following discussion, Infant age children are referred to the Early Years Speech and Language Therapy team for assessment and therapy.

Strategies to support speech fluency

- Assign a key adult to support the child to talk to the child on a 1:1 basis now and then. The child might find it useful to talk to this adult about how they are feeling or the things they would like support with. The adult can also reinforce the message that stammering is ok, and gently encourage the child to participate and have a go at talking, even if they stammer.

- Be open with the child about their stammer. Take time to talk to them about when they find talking hard, and explore possible solutions that will work for this individual child, e.g. If a child finds reading aloud in front of the class, consider pairing with another child to read in unison or giving them the opportunity to talk in front of a smaller audience. Here are some areas you may wish to explore:
  - Answering questions in class
- Systems for saying if the child needs help or doesn't understand something, e.g. card to hold up
- Answering the register. The child may prefer to be at the beginning to stop their anxiety building as you go through the list of names
- Reading aloud, e.g. Try encouraging a relaxed reading pace in your class or you may wish to build up to reading in front of groups in steps

- Give the child plenty of time to talk. Avoid interrupting or finishing the child’s sentence as this can increase the child’s frustration, and listen to what the child says, not how they say it
- Avoid giving the child advice when they are stammering, e.g. telling them to take a breath or slow down. This interrupts the child and can cause more frustration
- Keep eye contact with the child if they stammer. This helps reassure them that you are still listening. It may be useful to get down to their level and nod too
- Slow your own speech down. This helps encourage the child to slow their speech down, and means that you don't need to interrupt them to tell them to slow down
- Avoid asking too many questions, or consider the types of questions you ask the child. The child is likely to feel less pressured when being asked a question with a choice or two answers, or a polar ‘yes’/‘no’ question
- Give the child a lot of praise for things they do well. This will help build confidence and self-esteem
- When talking to your class about bullying or differences between people, you may wish to include stammering generally in your discussions to increase other children's awareness

**Possible Resources**

- The British stammering Association has a range of leaflets and information for parents, teachers and other professionals: [www.stammering.org](http://www.stammering.org)
- The British Stammering Association has a postal lending library for its members and also sells a selection of books, including:
  - ‘Stammering - A Practical Guide for Teachers and Other Professionals’ (August 2001) Lena Rustin, Frances Cook, Keleman
  - 'Stammering - Advice for All Ages' - Renée Byrne and Louise Wright (Sheldon Press, July 2008)
  - 'If Your Child Stutters - A Guide for Parents' - Stuttering Foundation of America.
  - ‘Stuttering and Your Child: Questions and Answers' - Stuttering Foundation of America.
- The Action for Stammering Children website (Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children) has more advice for teachers and others, as well as a very useful 10 minute film called ‘Wait, wait I’m not finished yet’ that all teaching staff should see: [http://www.stammeringcentre.org/teacher-information](http://www.stammeringcentre.org/teacher-information)
Look out for

Stammering

Is there a child in your class who does any of the following?

1. Repeating sounds  
   W-w-w-w-where’s my pencil?

2. Stretching sounds  
   Wheeeeeeere’s my pencil?

3. Trying to say something but nothing comes out (possible tension around the neck/face).  
   The words are getting stuck in my throat

If the answer is yes, then this child may need a referral to the speech and language therapy service for stammering.

Please discuss this child with your school’s speech and language therapist.

Useful websites:  www.stammeringcentre.org  www.stammering.org

The earlier you spot it, the more likely we can stop it.
Selective Mutism

Introduction

Selective Mutism (SM) refers to a child who is able to speak freely to a small number of people that they feel comfortable with, in a particular and/or familiar situation. Children with Selective Mutism are consistently unable to speak in specific social situations (e.g. at school) even though they are able to speak in other situations. This can impact on their educational needs as they may be unable to participate in classroom discussions, answer questions verbally and it could limit their ability to ask for help in and out of the classroom. It’s important to be aware that the child may have additional developmental or educational difficulties which will need to be monitored and addressed accordingly.

Strategies to support the child’s confidence to speak

- Be positive and try not to pressure the child to speak – this will help to decrease the child’s anxiety and discomfort.
- Reassure the child and try to reduce anxiety where possible - explain to the child that you understand that they find it difficult and they can talk when they are ready.
- Allocate a key worker with whom the child can build rapport and confidence with – in the early stages it is important that the child develop links with key worker in order to elicit speech at school, which can later be generalised
- Provide incentives for the child to speak e.g. seeing other children gain from speaking in class or positive reinforcement by responding to any communicative attempt.
- Accept the child’s non-verbal responses and where possible adapt the curriculum so tasks can be achieved through non-verbal communication initially
- Talk to the child, comment on what is going on – children with SM tend to be excluded from social situations and benefit from language enrichment activities
- Avoid direct questions – as this puts more pressure on the child to speak - instead ask yes/no questions where answers can be given non-verbally e.g. shaking or nodding their head
- Encourage home/school connections e.g. parents bringing in recordings or videos of the child talking at home to show to staff in the classroom or getting the child to bring in something from home and show to teacher and class
- Give the child a job or responsibility in the classroom – this encourages the child’s involvement in the class and helps the child to feel valued
- Continue to create an accepting and rewarding atmosphere, helping the child to feel valued, regardless of talking
- Use structured play/music/art activities in small group contexts to encourage peer interactions and help them continue to develop friendships as well as increase their confidence
- Give praise for any of the child’s achievements
Resources

- Selective Mutism Information and Research Association (SMIRA) – information for parents and teachers
- The Selective Mutism Resource Manual by Maggie Johnson & Alison Wintgens
- Confident Speaking grid (from Johnson & Wintgens) – included in this pack
### The Stages of Confident Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Child’s Presentation</th>
<th>Examples of behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1     | Does not communicate or participate | Child may:  
- Observe activity from a distance or sit passively as part of group  
- Accept help but make no attempt to seek assistance or interaction |
| 2     | Co-operates but limited communication | Child is able to:  
- Participate in non-verbal activities (e.g. puzzles, board games) and may show enjoyment  
- Make limited choices (e.g. favourite food)  
- Comply with requests that are felt to be non-threatening (e.g. pass an object, draw a picture) |
| 3     | Communicates through visual, non-verbal means | Child responds and may even initiate contact through:  
- Pointing  
- Nodding/shaking head  
- Mime/gesture  
- Drawing/writing  
Otherwise is silent, even when in pain |
| 4     | Uses non-verbal sounds | Child is more vocal and may use audible sound to:  
- Express emotion  
- Accompany play (e.g. transport, animal noises)  
May seem close to speaking but not actually do so |
| 5     | Speaks within earshot of person but not directly to them | Child may:  
- Talk to mother in same room as another person, quietly or at normal volume  
- Talk to other children in classroom but not to a teacher  
- Talk to family using telephone in public area |
| 6     | Uses single words with selected people | Child may:  
- Respond to questions/prompts giving minimum of information  
- Whisper when standing close  
- Read aloud or in a whisper, but use minimal conversational speech |
| 7     | Uses connected speech with selected people | Child may be:  
- Comfortable with certain adults and able to communicate with them provided no one else is perceived to be listening |
| 8     | Begins to generalise to a range of people | Child may:  
- Continue speaking to a selected adult when others enter the room  
- Talk normally at home in front of visitors  
- Talk to several children/adults in ‘safe’ settings |
| 9     | Begins to generalise to a range of settings | Child may:  
- Speak to a selected adult outside ‘safe’ settings within earshot of others  
- Talk more easily with family in community settings |
| 10    | Communicates freely | Child:  
- Responds to, or approaches strangers in familiar and unfamiliar settings  
- Contributes to class discussion  
- Volunteers information |

Taken from ‘The Selective Mutism Resource Manual’ by Maggie Johnson & Alison Wintgens
Transition to a new class

Introduction

Transition can involve moving up a new academic year or moving school such as from reception to year one. This can be a difficult time for many children. Those pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties often need additional help with preparing for this change. This includes supporting pupils with:

- **Understanding the transition process** i.e. identifying what will be different
- **Making and maintaining friendships** e.g. playing with peers or conversational skills
- **Problem solving a range of situations** e.g. what to do if you get lost or hurt
- **Developing organisational skills** e.g. using a visual timetable or a homework diary
- **Familiarising with a new setting** e.g. finding the toilets in KS2
- **Classroom strategies to cope with new expectations/demands** e.g. new rules, what to do when you don’t understand

In this section you will find strategies to support pupils with speech language and communication needs in managing transition and prepare for these changes.

Strategies for supporting transition to a new year group

- **Visual aids** → support children with speech, language and communication needs by providing visual prompts and reminders around things that will be changing e.g.
  - Photos of new teachers, classrooms, important places e.g. toilets, first aid
  - If the child has a visual timetable, introduce new lessons or activities, e.g. swimming
  - Use a visual time line to illustrate the steps in the transition process
- **Social story** → with guidance from a Speech and Language Therapist, generate a simple story about moving up an academic year. Use the pupil as the character in the story and discuss the transition process. Use photographs of the child at school where possible.
- **Communication passport** → this is a book that is completed by the child with adult support and can be adapted each year. It includes information to help school staff understand the pupil’s need and support them in their new class.
  - **Information included**: Name, My friends, likes, dislikes, I need help with X, I am good at Y, I am looking forward to/frightened about Z
- **New routines and settings** → in advance, discuss and introduce new routines and parts of the school to give pupils an additional opportunity to learn and familiarise themselves with these changes. For example:
  - Spend a play or lunch time in the key stage 2 playground
  - Have lunch or a snack in the canteen or school hall
  - Organise a transition morning where the children visit their new classroom
  - Introduce new teachers and staff to pupils on classroom visits
Setting Up Communication Groups

Introduction

Communication is a key skill for learning and day to day interactions. Small group work is effective in supporting children develop their communication skills. Evidence shows that “group intervention provided by the assistants or therapists is just as effective as one-to-one sessions” [with a Speech and Language Therapist] (Gross, 2013).

A communication group is a regular opportunity for children with speech, language and communication needs to develop and practise important skills needed for communication, e.g. turn taking, listening, and vocabulary. This section is designed to support you with setting up and running communication groups in school.

The resources and information provided in the rest of the pack will support you with specific areas to target within your communication group. This information can be used to support children that you as school have identified as having SLCN as well as those children known to the speech and language therapy service.

For children who are known to the service, a key part of the role of the Speech and Language Therapist will be to support school staff with understanding the child’s difficulties and how to develop their communication skills. One of the principal methods of doing this is modelling group therapy to a member of staff, such as a teaching assistant. We, therefore, require teaching assistants to observe sessions so they are able to carry over activities in regular communication groups run in the school. For these children, there is likely to be a care plan with targets which summarises the key aims for the child’s therapy over a given term.

Setting up a communication group

When setting up a communication group, consider the following:

- **Need the children and aim of the group** → consider the range needs of the children in the group and identify what you are targeting, e.g. attention and listening, language, speech sounds, social interaction. Where possible try to match children based on their level of need

- **Space** → where possible activities should be carried out in a quiet environment, away from distractions where the children are able to fully attend to the task

- **Time** → staff running the group will need to be allocated a regular day and time on their timetable for when they will be running the group

- **Length** → Keep sessions short in order to maintain the children’s attention e.g. 15 to 20 minutes

- **Frequency** → consider how often to run groups i.e. once or twice weekly. This may vary based on the level of need of the group or aim of the session, e.g. the suggested frequency of a speech sound group might be 10 minutes every day.

- **Resources** → give time to prepare resources required prior to running sessions, e.g. language link resources
- **Recording progress** → consider how to record progress, e.g. table, numbered scoring system, tick sheet. This is important for establishing starting skill levels, measuring progress and setting targets or aims for future input. Ensuring that input and progress has been recorded is also key for children where the school are looking to apply for additional support e.g. EHCPs

**Structure**

Below is a suggested structure that a communication group can take:

- **Visual timetable and group rules** (2 mins) → Show the group the activities to be completed on a visual timetable (using symbols, pictures, drawings or words) and provide any prompts around behaviour (use visuals to remind the group throughout the session)
  - For example:
    - Visual timetable – First news, Next listening, After sentences, and Last game
    - Behaviour prompts – sitting on your chair, waiting for your turn

- **Warm up / hello (optional)** (3 mins) → This is a quick activity or game that is a fun way to encourage the groups to interact with each other.
  - For example:
    - Hello song
    - News sharing
    - Ice breaker games

- **Activities** (10 - 15 mins) → This is where you would complete 1 to 2 activities targeting speech sounds, language or social communication.

- **Reward activity and end** (5mins) → finishing the group with a feedback, praise, and/or a rewarding game. These helps to finish positively as well as act as a motivator for future groups.
  - For example:
    - Feedback – ‘Next time let’s try to remember 3 words’
    - Praise – ‘That was very good waiting for your friends turn’
    - Rewarding game – crocodile dentist, shark attack, Jenga, sleeping lions, buckaroo, monkey business, etc.

**Possible resources**

1. Communication & Language Activities; Running Group For School-Aged Children By Hackney Speech & Language Therapy Service, Edited By Sarah Nash
2. Developing baseline communication skills by Catherine Delamain & Jill Spring

**References**

1. **J. Gross** (2013) *Time to Talk: Implementing outstanding practice in speech, language and communication*; p152
Language Classroom Strategies

Comment more and question less → use a combination of ‘wh’ questions, comments and sentence set up cues.

E.g. Comment - Look, Jack went up the hill
       Sentence set up - Jack went up the ......(hill)
       Wh question - Where did Jack go?

Simplify questions → Use ‘who’ ‘what’ ‘where’ as they are easier for a child to understand compared to ‘when’ ‘why’ and ‘how’.

Short & simple → Use short, simple sentences emphasising the keywords. Give one step at a time

E.g. Instead of saying "after you finish your picture we are going to do maths."
     Say “finish your picture”

Make it visual → To support understanding. Allow children to see, touch, smell, or experience the new word or concept.

E.g. Use gesture, sign, facial expressions, pointing, pictures, objects, rhymes, songs, videos and practical activities.

Slow Down → Pause between sentences to allow extra time to process & respond. Say it again if needed.

E.g. “First write date [pause] Now cut the pictures [pause] last write a sentence.”
Model back and expand  → Give a model of the correct sentence or word and add 1 or 2 words to the sentence.

E.g. "book" 'Yes, a yellow book'

For more information see: 'Language link' resources available in school.
Speech Classroom Strategies

It is important to be aware of the speech sounds that a child is having difficulty with. This may affect your expectation of tasks such as phonics.

**Model back the word** → repeat **single** words clearly to give good examples. **Do not** make the child repeat it in the correct way.

*E.g.* “It’s my pencil”  “Yes, it’s your pencil”

**Offer choices & ask questions** → when you are not sure of the word they are trying to say.

*E.g.* ‘Did you say sad or dad?’

**Show me** → Encourage the child to show you what they want in other ways if you cannot understand them.

*E.g.* pointing, gesture/acting, drawing

**Say if you’re struggling** → Admit you don’t know and encourage them to try again later or show you.

*E.g.* with younger children blame yourself “it’s my ears”

**Provide practice** → it’s **highly recommended** that children have daily speech practice for 5 minutes, following the child’s targets in a quiet environment. 25 minutes once a week is far less effective!

*For more information see:* ‘Speech link’ resources available in school.
Stammering Classroom Strategies

Look ➔ keep natural eye contact with the child if they stammer. Try not to look away.

Listen ➔ listen to what the child says, not how they say it.

Stay calm ➔ try not to react and be aware of your facial expressions / body language.

Let them finish ➔ avoid interrupting the child or trying to finish what they say.

Slow down ➔ slow down your own rate of speech when talking to the child. This will encourage them to slow down too.

Less questions ➔ reduce the number of questions you ask and give plenty of time for the child to answer.

Talk to the child ➔ Ask the child what helps and what makes it more difficult when they are stammering.

Use praise ➔ give the child a lot of praise for things they do well as this will help build confidence and self-esteem.

For more information see:
Action for Stammering Children at http://www.stammeringcentre.org/
The British Stammering Association at http://www.stammering.org/
Social Communication Strategies

Be aware of possible sensory needs that the child may have. Consider things in the environment that the child may be sensitive to or require support with e.g. noise, touch or light.

Provide structure → use a visual timetable to prepare for transitions throughout the day and cope with change.

E.g. Set up a work station in the classroom away from distractions.

Use a ‘Now, next, after’ board. “First snack, then golden time and last is carpet time.”

Consider using a timer to pre-warn the child of the end of a motivating activity.

Use motivators → Use motivating activities or rewards at the end of a difficult or less motivating task.

E.g. “First is story, then it’s writing and last is marble run.”

Make it visual → Use gesture or symbols to support understanding of spoken language and to reinforce behaviour.

E.g. Stop [hand] “It’s time to line up” [point to door].

“Goodbye everybody” [wave].

Be direct → Use the child’s name to get their attention and use direct and simple language.

E.g. Say “Megan write the date in your book” instead of “Would you like to write the date?”

Say what you mean → use simple language and clear language. Avoid using hints, figures of speech and sarcasm. Explain metaphors and non-literal language.
E.g. Say “Megan you need to finish 3 more questions” instead of “oh, look on that table. I think someone needs to pull their socks up.”

“In the story they said it was raining cats and dogs, this means there was a lot of rain.”

**Explain emotions** → talk about feelings, facial expressions and social situations as they arise in the day to teach the child within context.

E.g. “Lucas is feeling sad today because he fell over” (teacher models sad facial expression).

**Help with play** → Encourage joint play and interaction by teaching playground games and setting up buddy systems at playtimes.

E.g. What’s the time Mr Wolf? (Structured/rule based games are easier to learn)

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It’s important to teach all of these skills in everyday ways by integrating social communication activities into the school day. *E.g. news sharing about weekend, talking partners, circle time, show & tell.*

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Recommended resources

These are some of our favourite resources which schools may want to consider purchasing.

Please ask your Speech and Language Therapist if you would like to have a look through these resources before buying.

**Foundation Stage**

- Time to Talk: LDA
- Nursery Narrative Pack: Black Sheep Press
- Reception Narrative Pack: Black Sheep Press
- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark Publishing (Reception onwards)
- Early Language Builders: Elklan

**Key Stage 1**

- Developing Language Concepts: Speechmark Publishing
- Talkabout School: Black Sheep Press (Year 2 onwards)
- Language for Thinking: Speechmark Publishing (Year 2 onwards)
- Reception Narrative Pack: Black Sheep Press
- Language Builders: Elklan

**Key Stage 2**

- Language for Thinking: Speechmark Publishing
- Talkabout: Speechmark Publishing
- Speech Bubbles: Black Sheep Press
- Think About It: Black Sheep Press
- Talkabout School: Black Sheep Press
- Language Builders: Elklan

**Websites for ordering recommended resources:**

- [www.blacksheeppress.co.uk](http://www.blacksheeppress.co.uk)
- [www.elklan.co.uk](http://www.elklan.co.uk)
- [www.speechmark.net](http://www.speechmark.net)
- [www.ldalearning.com](http://www.ldalearning.com)
Recommended Websites for Further Ideas/Resources/Information

Hillingdon’s Speech and Language Therapy online resources:

- Website (coming soon!)
- Check us out on Facebook - Hillingdon Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy

Other online resources:

- [http://www.speechandlanguage.support/](http://www.speechandlanguage.support/) (formerly speechlink.co.uk) – login required
- [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)
- [www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk)
- [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)
- [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)
- [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)