

Teaching and Learning

Communication and Language



The communication and language development of young children is high priority both on a local and national level. As a result, many programmes and projects have run in recent years to promote the importance of early communication and language development and what we can do in the early years to support it.

Leicester's Speech, Language and Communication Pathway was created to assist families and professionals in navigating the support available for children with identified delays in their speech language and communication. Guidance included within the pathway, reinforces the need for a staged approach to children SLC development. Therefore, providers approach to supporting children's development, should be well considered, and targeted to meet the child's individual needs.

As a prime area of development, Communication and Language is broken down into the following 3 aspects: interactions, exploring language, and listening and understanding

As a prime area, it is the foundation for further learning and life skills. It is not to be considered in isolation and is embedded within all other areas of learning.

Task 1

Take a moment to reflect on your current provision. How communication and language friendly it is?

- How are visual cues or tools (e.g., photographed labels, self-registers, visual timetables) used to support and promote communication and language?
- Think about the noise levels. What can you hear? How do the acoustics of the room impact on interactions and listening?
- Are there cosy or quiet spaces for children to talk, listen and think? How about opportunities to yell and sing and exploring their voices?
- How are your routines successful in promoting language and communication? Think about mealtimes, changing and toileting, when children arrive or when they're preparing to go home etc?
- Reflect on the activities and resources available today and how they can be used to support the child's communication and language development. Talk with a partner and consider any missed opportunities and how they could be addressed.

Task 2

What role do you play? - What strategies do you apply to your interactions with child? Schedule a time to carry out a peer observation. Using the list below, mark down when you observe the adult apply one of the strategies.

- Paused to allow the child to respond
- Listened carefully to what the child said
- Asked a question
- Commented on what was happening
- Introduced new vocabulary
- Expanded on what the child said
- Checked the child's understanding

Together, reflect on your findings. Were some strategies applied more than others? Were things that could be improved e.g., pausing for longer to allow the child to process what has been said/asked, asking few questions, commenting more etc.

For further guidance and reflective activities with the focus of communication and language, be sure to look at the SLC suite of cards that can be found in the inclusive practice section of the Q cards index.