

Communication and Language Leaflet

February 2021

Focus this month:

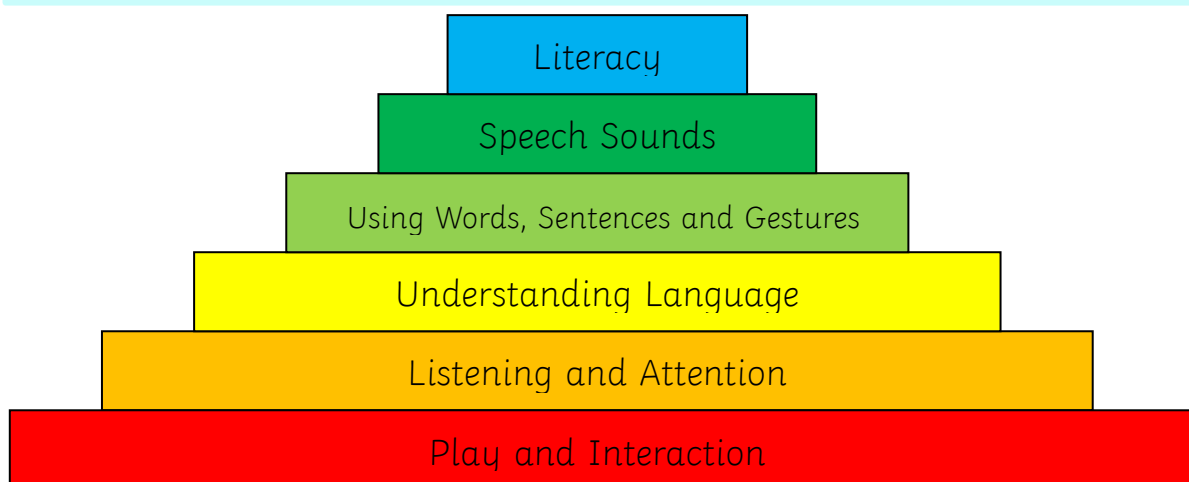
Playing and Interacting



What is play?

- The essence of play is that it is initiated by the child themselves; for unlike work, play is carried out for its own sake, not for the sake of an end product or reward. The act of playing is its own reward.
- Play is a time for babies and children to develop and expand their communication skills through experimentation and practice.

Children learn best through play. When they are enjoying themselves they spend longer on an activity. In a fun activity they will hear words repeated and may be motivated to try out the new words.



Play is the foundation for speech and language development.

Why play?

- Children learn best through play.
- Playing with your children lets them know you are interested in them and builds self-esteem.
- Playing and talking with your child every day helps their language development.
- Play is fun!

Play how your child wants to. Follow their lead! Let your child see you are enjoying yourself. Take turns with your child.

Tune in to your child. Watch them play. Notice how they like to do things. Children love repetition. Play the same games again and again with your child.

Through play, children learn....

- About themselves and their friends.
- That their ideas are important.
- New words.
- About the world.
- To take turns and wait.
- To negotiate.

Different types of play that children love:

People games – Peek-a-boo, round and round the garden.

Physical play – Climbing, running, jumping, playing with balls.

Pretending and Role Play – Dressing up, shopping games, being a doctor, having tea parties, playing superheroes, driving cars, buses and trains.

Special Time...

To help your child's talking skills, take some time out each day to play together.

- Special time only needs to be 5-10 minutes each day.
- Turn off the TV/iPads etc.
- Let your child pick what they want to play with.
- Concentrate your attention just on your child for that time.
- Try to get down to their level to show them that they have your full attention.

Face to face is the best place...

When you are face to face it will mean that:

- You can make eye contact.
- You can see what your child is choosing to play with.
- You can also see if your child is enjoying the play.
- You can talk about what you are looking at together.
- You can see if your child points or uses a gesture.
- You can share the play.

Comment on what your child is doing...

This means that:

- Your child will hear the words that go with the things they are looking at.
- They will be able to make a link between the word and the objects or actions.
- They will feel you are sharing in their play.
- They will hear words to copy if they want.
- They can then take turns at talking.

Play Activity Idea 1 – Tea Party

You will need:

- Small plates, cups, spoons etc.
- Some dolls or soft toys.
- Toy food, pictures of food or your child's favourite snacks.
- A blanket

What to do:

Clear a space on the floor for the tea party. You can use a blanket to show the space if you have one.

Set out places for yourselves and the toys.

Enjoy the tea party! Let your child decide where the toys sit and what they eat. Talk about what you like to eat and what the toys are doing. You may like to make cakes or biscuits for the party.

Reading for pleasure:

The Tiger Who Came to Tea by Judith Kerr



Play Activity Idea 2 – Heuristic Play

“What can I do with this?”

What to do:

Give your child time to investigate natural & recycled objects. Give them safe objects to stack, bang together, fill, empty, knock down, squeeze, sort, post, twist, stretch and smell.

You could collect:

- Sea shells
- Pebbles
- Pinecones
- Ribbons
- Lids
- Cardboard tubes
- Boxes
- Hair rollers
- Corks
- Sponges
- Dolly pegs
- Old keys



Let's talk:

- Soft
- Hard
- Cold
- Warm
- Smelly
- Noisy
- Squishy
- Bumpy

Play Activity Idea 3 – Cornflour

You will need:

- Water
- Cornflour
- Optional- Add colour/smell to make the cornflour more interesting.

What to do:

Add a small amount of water to the cornflour. Mix the water and cornflour together. Play with the cornflour, pouring & filling bowls and containers, mixing with forks and spoons. This will help your child to explore colour, texture, scent and language whilst having fun.

Let's talk:

- Sticky
- Smooth
- Feel
- Soft
- Drip
- Solid
- Runny
- Liquid



Play Activity Idea 4 – Play Outdoors

You will need:

- An outdoor space (a local park, garden etc.)
- Enthusiasm!

What to do:

Go outdoors. Go to the park, take a ball, have a race, hop, skip and jump. See how many different ways you can move. Look for animals and their habitats. Find leaves, rocks or flowers and talk about the different shapes, sizes and colours. Talk with your child about what you are doing.

It's Raining, It's Pouring...

Put on your coats and wellies. Splash in the puddles. Talk about the weather. How does this type of weather make you feel? What animals like the rain?

Have fun!



Play Activity Idea 5 – Play Dough

Make your own dough:

- 2 Cups of flour
- 1 Cup of salt
- 2 Tablespoons of oil
- 2 Teaspoons of cream of tartar
- 2 Cups of hot water
- Heat in a pan and keep stirring

Add:

- Scent (herbs/spices/essential oils)
- Textures (oats/rice)
- Colour (food colouring/glitter)



Let's talk:

- Cold
- Sticky
- Flat
- Smell
- Smooth
- Mix
- More
- Roll
- Squash
- Press

What to do:

Explore and mix the dough together. Do you need to add more flour/glitter? Is the pan full or empty? Use words to describe the colour, texture and scent. Flatten out the dough and cut shapes. Find things to use with the dough from your home. You could make cakes by putting balls of dough in a baking tray; add lollypop sticks for candles.

This will help your child to explore colour, texture, scent and language.