



SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE (CL) NEEDS THROUGH THEIR TRANSITION TO STARTING SCHOOL

Did you know?

- Early language skills are the key foundations for underpinning achievement for all round development
- Communication is fundamental to children's development; children need to be able to understand and be understood. Communication is the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play and social interaction ([Communication Trust](#))

READY

- gather information to plan to meet the needs of the individual child

Universal Transition

- Conduct home visits and gather significant information. (Documents 30.1-33.2).
- Conduct previous setting visits to gather any relevant information (Documents 34.1-35.1).
- Use the transition level of need tool to identify level of support required. (Documents 5.1-5.9, 5a & 5b).
- Ensure the whole team are aware of any needs within the cohort and the strategies are in place to support them.

Enhanced Transition

- Contact any external agencies involved with the child and find out if the child has received support or targets, whether they require a series of support and if the child will be observed in school.
- In open day/sessions, engage in conversations during play using hands on and mind off activities- such as play dough construction toys, water and sand, drawing.
- Attend training or identify members of staff to attend training on speech and language support programmes such as Wellcomm, Elklan etc.
- Ensure that if specific targets have been established, these are discussed with parents/carers to be maintained during the summer holidays.

STEADY

- use the information to plan ahead and offer guidance for parents/carers on how to support their child to be ready for school.

Suggest home learning activities prior to starting school

- Set challenges over the school holidays that involve communication skills. For example, learn a new nursery rhyme, read a new story together, visit the library and read a new book (Documents 47.1-49.2)
- Ensure parents/carers understand the importance of talk and listening



- Consider setting some phonemic awareness activities over summer to consolidate listening and attention skills
- Ask children to collect objects that are meaningful to them that they can bring in to school when they start. Use these objects to stimulate conversations (Document 57.1-57.5).

GO

- Have in place activities and resources to support the child through their first days at school

- Create an environment that encourages communication. For example, are there private spaces where children can have conversations one-on-one and in small groups?
- Ensure that there is space in your environment for role play.
- Ensure high quality adult interactions are taking place. For example, are all adults making eye contact, speaking calmly, using appropriately language, modelling.
- Establish regular story telling experiences in your daily routine.
- Establish regular times in your daily routine to sing songs and nursery rhymes.
- Consider using a class puppet or introducing puppets to support children's talk (Documents 38.1-40.5).
- Consider the effective use of funding for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in order to support and develop their communication skills, if appropriate.
- Consider using technology to model to parents/carers how to tell a story. For example, post a video of you telling a story on your website/social media platforms.
- Prepare appropriate visuals for children to use in school and possibly at home.

Remember:

- Have conversations with children. Not everything has to be a question.
- Talking about what you are doing, even if children are pre-verbal, exposes them to new language, vocabulary and experiences. For example 'I am going to carry the scissors safely in my hand as I walk over here'.