

# Speech, Language and Communication



## Information and Resources





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## Introduction

This information and resource file has been developed to support early years workers in Derby City pre-school settings. It provides information about the development of speech, language and communication which can be used in work with children. The file has been developed by Bibiana Wigley, Speech and Language Therapist.

The file outlines different language areas, how they develop and what can go wrong.

You can use the general strategies with all children in a setting to create the right environment for learning language and increase communication.

You can use the specific activities to support individual children.

The file includes:

- information sheets for parents
- useful website addresses.

When you use the file, remember to:

- support the development of attention and listening skills before you work on language
- check the obvious, such as hearing, dummies.

Before referring a child or young person for a specialised SLT assessment, you will need to discuss your concerns directly with a speech and language therapist. To find details of your local therapist and how to access our telephone advice line, please visit our website: [www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk](http://www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk)

***With thanks to Bibiana Wigley, Speech and Language Therapist, for this information.***

## Attention

### What is 'Attention'?

- Attention is the ability to choose something to focus on while ignoring other stimuli.
- Good attention skills are needed for effective language learning.

### How Does Attention Develop?

Age	Child:
0-1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pays fleeting attention to something new.</li><li>• Is easily distracted by something new.</li></ul>
1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attends to their own choice of activity.</li><li>• Unable to tolerate adult intervention.</li><li>• Needs to concentrate so ignores outside stimuli.</li></ul>
2-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has single-channelled attention so can only attend to one thing at a time.</li><li>• Is able to attend to an adult's choice of activity but this is difficult to control.</li><li>• Needs to stop their activity to attend to an adult.</li></ul>
3-4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has single-channelled attention which is more easily controlled.</li><li>• Can carry out simple commands without looking.</li><li>• Needs to shift attention between an activity and an adult when given more complex instructions.</li></ul>
4-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is able to listen to a speaker whilst looking at and doing something else.</li><li>• Can have short attention span.</li></ul>

### How Can I Tell if Attention is a Difficulty?

- Child pays fleeting attention to any activity.
- Child seems obsessive about a certain toy or activity.
- Child ignores instructions when busy with another activity.

### What Can Go Wrong?

Children can have difficulty due to:

- **Immature Attention Control:** Attention is following a delayed pattern of development

- **Short Attention Span:** A child may not be able to hold their attention for long due to having a 'low boredom threshold' or because they are 'distractible'.
- **Over-focused Attention:** A child becomes over-focused on one particular thing.
- **Attention Overload:** If there are too many things going on at the same time, a child may not know what to focus on.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Attention?

### General Strategies

Make sure you understand the level of attention development the child is at. You can then adapt the activity so that it is at the child's level. You can also provide appropriate support.

- Use an auditory signal to gain the child's attention such as call/say the child's name, use a bell.
- Use a visual signal to get their attention.
- Tap the child's shoulder to get their attention.
- Say the child's name before you give an instruction.
- Use high-interest activities, such as bubbles.
- Work in areas that have no or few distractions.
- Be aware of background noise that may be distracting.
- Praise good attention.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Attention?

### Developing Specific Skills

**Current Skill:** Child pays fleeting attention to something and is easily distracted by something new.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to sustain attention to people, objects or events around them.

**Activities:**

- Find a high-interest activity that the child enjoys. High interest activities include bubbles, pop-up toys, marble runs.
  - Encourage the child to focus on the activity for increasing lengths of time.
  - Extend the number of activities the child attends to.

**Current Skill:** Child is able to attend to their own choice of activity, but does not tolerate adult intervention.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to tolerate adult presence and involvement in an activity they have chosen.

**Activities:**

- Play alongside the child and copy what they are doing.
  - Slightly change what you are doing.
  - Encourage the child to join in and copy you.
  - Over time, increase the length of time spent on the new activity.

**Current Skill:** Child has single-channelled attention.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to develop control over the focus of his attention.

**Activities:**

- Let the child play with his chosen activity.
  - While the child is playing call his name.
  - Tell him to 'look' and 'listen'.
  - When he is attending to you, give a simple instruction relating to the chosen activity, such as 'give me the car'.
  - Give lots of praise for 'looking' and 'listening'.
  - Over time reduce the prompts

**Current Skill:** Child is able to shift their attention between and activity and an adult.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to listen to what someone says without stopping what they are doing.

**Activities:**

- Let the child play at his chosen activity.
  - Sit with the child at an activity.
  - When he is aware that you are there, give him a simple instruction linked to the activity he is doing.
  - Encourage the child not to look up to listen to the instruction but to continue with the activity as you provide instructions.

**Current Skill:** Child can listen to what someone says whilst they are doing an activity.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to increase the time spent on a task.

**Activities:**

- Encourage the child to stay at an activity for an increasing length of time.

## Listening

### What is 'Listening'?

- Listening is when we focus on what has been heard.
- Good listening skills are needed for effective language learning.

### How Does Listening Develop?

Age	Skills That Most Children Have:
0-1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognise familiar sounds.</li><li>• Listen to familiar rhymes.</li><li>• Understands familiar words and some single words.</li></ul>
1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to simple questions and instructions.</li><li>• Enjoy listening to and joining in with action songs and simple rhymes.</li><li>• Identify familiar objects from pictures.</li></ul>
2-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respond to two or three similar instructions in the order given.</li><li>• Enjoy listening to and learning simple rhymes.</li><li>• Follow a simple story with pictures.</li></ul>
3-4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow three less predictable instructions.</li><li>• Clap out a simple rhythm.</li></ul>
4-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow instructions given in a group setting.</li><li>• Enjoy games with speech sounds.</li></ul>

### How Can I Tell if Listening is a Difficulty?

- Child finds it difficult to follow simple instructions.
- Child pays fleeting attention to activities.
- Child is restless at story time.

### What Can Go Wrong?

Children can have difficulty due to:

- **Hearing:** A child with hearing loss may have listening difficulties.
- **Auditory Processing:** A child may have difficulty perceiving and processing language.
- **Motivation:** A child may think a task is too easy, too difficult or may be thinking about something else.

- **Voice:** A child may have difficulty because of the way a speaker speaks.
- **Background Noise:** A noisy environment can make listening hard work for a child.
- **Experience and Opportunities:** Early experiences and opportunities to develop good listening skills may have been limited, so skills in this area may be delayed.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Listening Skills?

### General Strategies

- Ensure the environment is as quiet as possible and reduce any background noise.
- Ensure you are face to face with the child.
- Support what you say with visual clues where possible.
- Ensure the group is small, three to four children.
- Cue children in to listening. This can be done by saying their name, tapping their shoulder, telling them to look at you.
- Promote active listening by teaching the rules of good listening.
- Praise good listening behaviour.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Listening Skills?

### Developing Specific Skills

**Current Skill:** Child finds any activity involving listening difficult.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to listen to sound vs no sound.

### Activities:

- Play 'Musical Statues'. Move around the room to music. When the music stops encourage the child to stop. Bring attention to the fact that it is quiet.
- Collect together a variety of objects, some of which make noises and some of which do not make a noise. Demonstrate which objects do make a noise and which objects do not make a noise.

- Wake Up' game. In a quiet environment the child pretends to be asleep. Encourage him to open his eyes and jump up when you make a noise banging a drum/shaking a rattle.
- Develop a 'Listening Box' full of objects, some of which make no noise and some of which are noisy.
- Using a ball in a quiet environment, encourage the child to wait until he hears a noise. When he hears the noise he can roll the ball. This can be adapted to a number of activities, such as pushing a car, releasing a marble on a marble run, knocking down skittles.
- Introduce action songs and rhymes.

**Current Skill:** Child recognises sound vs no sound.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to recognise familiar sounds.

**Activities:**

- Bring the child's attention to familiar sounds in the environment, such as door closing, door bell ringing, baby crying, sounds from toys, paper rustling, child coughing.
- Take the child outside to listen to different sounds in the environment, such as cars, police sirens, dogs barking, aeroplanes.
- Sit a small group of children in a circle. Call out a child's name. When the child looks at you, roll a ball to him.
- Use photographs of noise-making objects that the child is familiar with. Encourage the child to listen for sounds in the environment and then match them with their corresponding photograph.
- Use 'Sound Lotto' games to increase awareness of new sounds.
- Sing songs and rhymes such as 'Old MacDonald', 'Walking Through the Jungle' and 'The Wheels on the Bus' to introduce a range of sounds. Use toys and/or pictures and/or actions to link the sound with the object that makes it.

**Current Skill:** Child recognises familiar sounds.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to recognise familiar words.

**Activities:**

- Introduce a 'Treasure Box' or a 'Feely Bag' of familiar items. Encourage the child to take out one item, say the single word for the item and repeat what you say, such as 'car ... car ... car'.
- Sing songs and rhymes which introduce new words, such as 'Heads, Shoulders', 'Wind the Bobbin' and 'Old MacDonald'.
- Play 'Simon Says' to introduce action words, such as jump, sit, sleep. Say and do the action to link the word with what it means for the child.
- Place familiar objects in the four corners of the room, such as car, ball, teddy, cup. Play music for the child to move around to. When the music stops shout out the name of an object. The child then has to go to the corner with the object you called out.

**Current Skill:** Child recognises familiar words.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to extend the number of words they recognise.

**Activities:**

- As above, but introduce new objects and actions.

**Current Skill:** Child recognises a range of single words.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to follow two word instructions.

**Activities:**

- Use a box or bag, together with a variety of real objects that the child knows. Ask the child to put two of the objects in the box/bag, such as 'car' and 'shoe'. Keep your language simple and try to use only the key words.
- In a shopping game where the child is the shopkeeper, ask for two objects to buy 'ball and socks'.
- Put a large hoop on the floor. Using a two word instruction, ask the children to jump into the hoop if they are wearing, such as, a 'blue jumper' or 'red socks'.

- Use a pretend washing line to hang out clothes. Give the child a two word instruction to hang out, such as 'hat and tights' or 'red trousers'.

**Current Skill:** Child to follow two word instructions.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to follow three word instructions.

**Activities:**

- As above using three word instructions, such as 'big hat' and 'socks'.
- Introduce more early describing words, such as 'big', 'little', 'wet', 'dirty'.

## Understanding

### What is 'Understanding'?

- Understanding is the ability to process and interpret language.
- Understanding usually comes before expression.

### HOW DOES UNDERSTANDING DEVELOP?

Age	Child:
0-1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands what sounds are in their environment. Begins to understand language in a familiar context.</li><li>• Begins to understand the names of common objects.</li></ul>
1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands single word object words.</li><li>• Begins to understand action words used in context.</li></ul>
2-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands two word structures, such as 'baby's nose'</li></ul>
3-4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands 3 word structures, such as 'give <b>big spoon</b> to <b>teddy</b>'.</li><li>• Begins to understand colour and early concepts, such as big/little.</li></ul>
4-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands four word structures.</li><li>• Understands colours and size vocabulary.</li><li>• Understand question forms, prepositions (in/on), tenses and pronouns.</li></ul>

### How Can I Tell if Understanding is a Difficulty?

- Child avoids eye contact.
- Child copies other children.
- Child tries to avoid activities and communication.
- Child does not follow instructions.
- Child may echo what you have said.
- Child may appear to have behaviour difficulties.
- Child will not follow instructions.
- Child changes the topic to talk about something he is more comfortable with.

## What Can Go Wrong?

- **Auditory difficulties:** A child with difficulties with listening, attention and hearing will have more difficulty with understanding.
- **Memory:** If a sentence is too long for a child's memory, they will have difficulties understanding.
- **Vocabulary and Concepts:** A child may not understand specific words or concepts.
- **Grammar:** As sentence structures become more complex, a child may have difficulty understanding.
- **Experience, opportunities and knowledge:** Lack of experiences results in a restricted vocabulary and so difficulties in understanding.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Understanding?

### General Strategies

- Make sure the child is attending to you before you start to talk.
- Get down to the child's level and make sure you are face to face with the child.
- Support what you say with visual clues where possible. Use objects, pictures, natural gesture and signing.
- Simplify your language to the child's level.
- Give the child extra time to process what you have said.
- Repeat what you say.
- Emphasise key words using slight stress.

## How Can I Help Develop a Child's Understanding?

### Developing Specific Skills

**Current Skill:** Child recognises some familiar words.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to extend the number of words they recognise to include both object and action words.

### Activities:

- To build understanding of body part names, use a teddy and a sponge. Pretend to wash different parts of the teddy saying the word as you do it such as 'nose' or 'feet'. Say the same word several times so that the child has lots of chances to hear it, such as 'nose', 'nose', 'nose'.
- Sing songs and rhymes such as 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', 'Wind the Bobbin' and 'Old MacDonald' which introduce new words. Make sure that you link the words to the objects as you sing. This can be done by pointing as in 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' or using toys or pictures as in 'Old MacDonald'.
- Play a shopping game. As you put objects into a bag say the word for the object and repeat what you say, such as 'ball, ball, ball'.
- Play 'Simon Says' to introduce action words, such as jump, sit, sleep. Say and do the action to link the word with what it means for the child.
- Use a washing line, pegs and clothes. Help the child to hang up the washing. Label the object as the child hangs it up 'sock ... sock ... sock'.

**Current Skill:** Child understands lots of single words.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to understand two word sentences.

### Activities:

- Use a teddy, a doll and a variety of clothes. As you and the child dress the toys up talk about what you are doing, such as '**hat** on **teddy**'. Make sure you stress the two key words.
- Use two toy animals (for example, a cat and a frog), play food and/or pictures. As you feed the animals, talk about what is happening, such as '**cat** eating **cake**'. Make sure you stress the two key words.
- Play a posting game using two boxes (each featuring a different familiar TV character, such as Bob and Dora) and objects or picture cards. Together with the child, post an object or card into one of the boxes and talk about what is happening, such as '**Bob's** got the **car**'. Make sure you stress the two key words.
- Use two toy animals and/or character dolls (such as a dog and Fifi). Show the child how to make the animal/doll do different actions, such as '**Fifi's** **jumping**' or '**dog's** **sleeping**'. As the child plays with the toys, talk about what is happening using two key word sentences.

- Use a character doll and furniture in the nursery. Make the doll do different actions on different pieces of furniture, such as '**sleeping** on the **chair**', '**jumping** on the **box**', '**standing** on the **table**'. As you and the child play with the doll, talk about what is happening. Make sure you stress the two key words.
- Throughout the nursery day, talk about what belongs to who using two key word sentences, such as '**Katie's hat**' and '**Jordan's milk**'.

**Current Skill:** Child understands two word sentences.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to understand three word sentences.

**Activities:**

- While sharing a book and/or throughout the nursery day, talk about what a child is doing or interested in by using a three key word language model, such as '**Charlie's washing** his **hands**' or '**Chloe's pushing** the **pram**'.
- Use a teddy, a doll and a variety of clothes where you have both big and little examples of each item (so you have both a big sock and a little sock for example). As you and the child dress the toys up, talk about what you are doing, such as '**big hat** on **teddy**' and '**little sock** on **doll**'. Make sure you stress the three key words.
- Use two character dolls and furniture in the nursery to play a hiding game. Make one doll hide either 'on' or 'under' a piece of furniture. As you and the child find the doll, talk about where it is, such as '**Bob's under** the **chair**' and '**Fifi's** on the **box**'. Make sure you stress the three key words.
- Use play with a doll's house to provide three word level language models, such as '**mummy's jumping** in the **kitchen**' and '**baby's sleeping** on the **table**'. Make sure you stress the three key words.
- Use two character dolls, a sponge, water and a towel. As you wash and dry the dolls, talk about what you are doing, such as '**washing Milo's foot**' and '**drying Bella's tummy**'. Make sure you stress the three key words.

## Expressive Language

### What Is 'Expressive Language'?

- Expressive language is 'talking'.
- Expressive language involves putting together words and ideas into sentences to ask questions, make statements, make comments, make suggestions and to maintain a conversation.

### How Does Expressive Language Develop?

Age	Child:
0-1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coos by two months old.</li><li>• Babbles by eight months old.</li><li>• Echoes some sounds.</li><li>• Waves bye-bye.</li></ul>
1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has six-eight single words by 18 months old.</li><li>• Child has single words and learned phrases continue to develop.</li><li>• Has 50 single words by two years.</li></ul>
2-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses two word combinations.</li><li>• Uses a range of action words.</li><li>• Begins to use some three word combinations.</li></ul>
3-4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develops three and four word combinations.</li><li>• Develops use of articles (a, the), pronouns (he, she) and plurals (cars).</li></ul>
4-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses complex constructions.</li><li>• Begins to uses irregular grammatical constructions.</li></ul>

### How Can I Tell if Expressive Language is a Difficulty?

- Child uses few or no words.
- Child uses lots of gesture.
- Child makes up words.
- Child misses out words.
- Child is inappropriate in how and when they speak.
- Child uses speech that is unclear.
- Child has difficulty explaining or describing.

## **What Can Go Wrong?**

- Child has difficulty with vocabulary and concepts.
- Child has word-finding problems.
- Child has difficulty with grammar.
- Child has limited experiences, opportunities and experiences.
- Child lacks confidence.
- Child has speech problems.

## **How Can I Help Develop a Child's Expressive Language Skills?**

### **General Strategies**

- Follow the child's lead by talking about what they are doing, looking at or interested in.
- Listen to the child to have an idea about how long their sentences are, then provide language models of a similar length. For example, if the child uses two word sentences, make sure what you say is no more than three words long.
- Give the child time to respond and allow for silences.
- Repeat and expand what the child says, such as:
  - child: 'car gone'
  - adult: 'daddy's car's gone'.
- If a child makes mistakes with words or grammar, provide a correct model for them to hear, such as:
  - child: 'her runned away'
  - adult: 'yes, she ran away'.
- Remember to use lots of 'real' words. Avoid words like 'this', 'one' and 'doing', instead use words like 'car', 'elephant' and 'painting'. Child will only learn new words if they hear them.

## Speech Sounds

### How Can I Help Develop a Child's Expressive Language Skills

#### Developing Specific Skills

**Current Skill:** Child uses open vowel sounds.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to use babble.

#### Activities:

- Encourage activities which involve using the lips, such as kissing a teddy, blowing small pieces of tissue paper, blowing bubbles, blowing a recorder.
- Encourage activities which involve using the tongue, such as licking lollies, licking gummed paper, licking food from different positions around the outside of the mouth.
- Use fun sounds in everyday activities, such as '**mmm**' as you rub your tummy at mealtimes; '**brrmm**' as you play with cars together; '**splish splash**' in water play, '**pop, pop, pop**' as you pop bubbles, '**bang, bang, bang**' as you hit a drum.
- Look into a mirror together. Use the sounds '**m**', '**p**', '**b**', '**t**' and '**d**' and encourage a small group of children, including the child you are targeting, to look at your mouth and copy you by doing the same in the mirror.
- Use a puppet to make a copying game. You make the puppet say a 'silly sound' and encourage the children to copy the sound.

**Current Skill:** Child uses babble.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to use single words.

#### Activities:

- Sing action songs and rhymes which introduce early words, such as 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', 'Wind the Bobbin', 'Wheels on the Bus', 'Row the Boat', 'Old MacDonalld'. As the child becomes very familiar with the song, leave the last word off a line for them to say, such as '**Heads, Shoulders, Knees and .....**'.

- Use a colourful feely bag of familiar objects, such as a cup, a ball, a teddy, a shoe, or a car. Encourage the child to put his hand into the bag, feel and take out an object. As he takes out each object, say and repeat the single word for the child, such as '**ball ... ball**'. When you are confident that the child is familiar with the objects and the words you have introduced, encourage him to feel and take out an object and wait for him to say the word. Remember to look as if you are expecting him to say something and **wait**.
- Use a simple inset puzzle with the child. Place the pieces into a bag. Pull out one piece at a time to complete the puzzle. As you pick up each piece, say and repeat the single word for the child, such as '**car ... car**'. When you are confident that the child is familiar with the activity and the words you have introduced, pull out the pieces and wait for him to say the word. Remember to look as if you are expecting him to say something and **wait**.
- Play a 'Simon Says' game and include a small group of children. Use two or three action words, such as '**jump, sit, and sleep**'. When the child is familiar with the actions, encourage him to give instructions to the group of children. Give him a picture to represent the action as a prompt. You say '**Simon Says .....**', point to the picture and wait for the child to give the action word to complete the instruction.
- In pretend play, talk about the actions that the toys are doing, such as '**eating**', '**sleeping**' and '**jumping**'. Use single words and repeat what you say. As the child becomes more familiar with the words, encourage him to say the word by completing your sentence as you say '**Look! Teddy's .....**'. Remember to look as if you are expecting him to say something and **wait**.

**Current Skill:** Child uses single words.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to use two word sentences.

**Activities:**

- Use two character toys and several real objects. In play, make the character toy pick up an object and talk about who the object belongs to, such as '**Dora's ball**' or '**Bob's car**'. When the objects have been shared out, point to each object and repeat what it is and who it belongs to, such as '**Dora's shoe**'. Then point to each object and encourage the child to say what it is and who it belongs to. If **the** child says only one word, such as '**ball**', repeat and expand with, such as '**Dora's ball**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.

- While sharing a book, talk about what is happening in each picture using two word sentences, such as '**dog's eating**'. Then point to the pictures for the child to talk about what is happening. If the child says only one word, such as '**dog**', repeat and expand with, such as '**dog's eating**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.
- Play a posting game using two post boxes, one with a picture of a cat on it and one with a picture of a teddy on it. Use objects or pictures. Take an object/picture and tell the child what you have and who you are giving it to, such as '**ball, teddy**'. Encourage him to do the same. If the child says only one word, such as '**ball**', repeat and expand with, such as '**ball to teddy**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.
- Throughout the nursery day, talk about what is happening using two key word sentences, such as '**Chloe's jumping**'. Encourage the child to describe what is happening by pointing at someone and saying '**Look! .....**'. Remember to look as if you are expecting him to say something and **wait**. If the child says only one word, such as '**Chloe**', repeat and expand with, such as '**Chloe's jumping**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.

**Current Skill:** Child uses two words sentences.

**Skill to Develop:** Child to use three word sentences.

**Activities:**

- Use play with a doll's house to provide three word level language models, such as '**baby's jumping on the bed**'. Stress the three key words. Encourage the child to do the same by bringing his attention to the activity and saying 'Look! What's happening?'. If the child says only two words, such as '**baby jumping**', repeat and expand with, such as '**baby's jumping on the bed**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.
- Use two character dolls and furniture in the nursery to play a game. Make the doll do an action on a piece of furniture and talk about it, such as '**Fifi's sleeping on the chair**'. Encourage the child to pick a doll and make it do an action on a piece of furniture and talk about it. If the child says only two words, such as '**Bob's sitting**', repeat and expand with, such as '**Bob's sitting on the table**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.
- Throughout the nursery day, talk about what is happening using three key word sentences, such as '**Tom's eating apple**'. Encourage the child to describe what is happening by pointing at someone and saying '**Look! .....**'. Remember to look as if you are expecting him to say something and **Wait**. If the child says only two words, such as '**Tom eating**', repeat and expand with, such as '**Tom's eating apple**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.

- Use a teddy, doll, two bags and a selection of objects where you have a big and little example of each item. Share the objects out between the teddy and doll, putting the objects into the bags. Then talk about who has what using three key word sentences, such as '**teddy's** got a **big hat**', stressing the key words. Encourage the child to take out an object and talk about who has what. If the child says only two words, such as '**teddy hat**', repeat and expand with, such as '**teddy's** got a **big hat**'. **Wait** so that he has an opportunity to copy you.

### **Speech Sound Advice**

- Do not draw too much attention to the problem. Show the child you are interested in **what** he says not **how** he says it.
- Do not ask the child to repeat words correctly.
- Provide a good speech model for the child to learn from. If he says it incorrectly, say it back correctly, such as:
  - Child: 'It's a tat'.
  - Adult: 'Yes, it a cat'.
- If you don't understand what a child says, say what you have understood so the child has less words to say by completing your sentence, such as '**you went to see** .....?'
- If unsure, refer to the checklist 'Is a Referral Needed?'

## **Useful Websites**

[www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk](http://www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk)

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

[www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org)

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

[www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk](http://www.speech.derbys.nhs.uk)