

A Unique Child

Evaluating how your setting supports the unique speech, language and communication skills of every child.

EYFS Principle: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Core activity

Time: 30 minutes

Resources: pen, paper, list of children

Think about all of the children in your Early Years setting and the ways in which they express themselves or communicate. Every child is different, although children can share similarities. Some of the 'types' of communicators you may have in your setting are listed below (you may be able to think of more or different categories).

- *Early communicator:* a child whose communication needs to be interpreted by adults, e.g. a baby who is crying because she is hungry.
- *Attentive communicator:* a child who is using some gestures and some words to communicate, e.g. pointing and saying 'mummy gone'.
- *Developing communicator:* a child who can communicate but finds it difficult to make sentences or pronounce some sounds in words.
- *Questioning communicator:* a child who uses simple sentences to communicate and asks questions to find out more.
- *Skilled communicator:* a child who communicates in the way that you would expect for his/her age (using words, using sentences, telling stories).
- *English as an Additional Language learner:* a child who can communicate effectively in their own language but has not yet learnt English.
- *Reluctant communicator:* a child who needs lots of encouragement to communicate or who is 'shy', but is otherwise a competent communicator.

Try to place each of the children in your setting under one of these headings. Which children do you think you are supporting well in their speech and language development? Which children are making good progress? Underline their names in red. Which children need more support than is currently provided? Underline their names in blue.

Discuss which communication strategies would best support children in each of the categories.

Outcomes

- A record of the number of children who are red (well supported) and blue (need further support).
- An improved awareness of the top tips that would be useful to support children in different communication categories

Additional resources

- For more information about the individual communication skills of each child, access staff observations or reports written by other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapists, educational or clinical psychologists, portage workers).