

## Enabling Environments

*Evaluating how the environment that your setting creates supports the speech, language and communication development of the children.*

*EYFS Principle: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.*

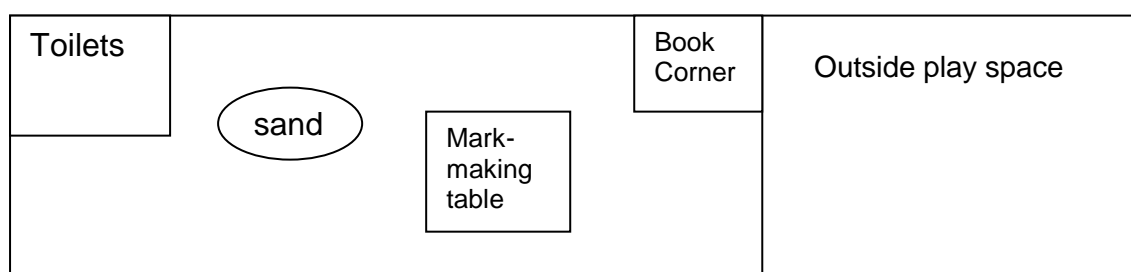
### Core activity

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Resources:** large piece of paper; black, green, red and blue pens

Make a drawing of the layout of your setting, including inside and outside space.

It might look a bit like this:



The environment in which children play and learn can increase the opportunities for communication, using and understanding language. Other aspects of the environment can discourage talking, for example if a CD is playing music loudly.

Stand back and watch the setting/room. Look at the places in the setting where good talking takes place (this may be places where children initiate talk or where lots of talking takes place by children). Every time you see good talking between an adult and a child put a red cross in the area where the talking took place. Mark good talking that you see between children with a blue cross.

Look at your sheet. Circle the talking 'hot-spots' with a green pen. (talking 'hot-spots' are places where adults and children engage in conversation or where children talk to each other.) Circle blue where talking sometimes takes place, and red where talking rarely takes place.

Discuss the outcomes as a team. What alterations do you need to make to ensure all areas could be circled green?

### Outcomes

- A record of the number of green 'areas where talking occurs' and red 'areas for improvement' markings.
- A list of the places where talking could be taking place but does not at present and ideas on how to improve communication in the low talking areas.

### Additional resources

- *The Communication Friendly Spaces toolkit: Improving speaking and listening skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage* contains an audit workbook that could help you to plan and further improve your setting environment.