

TOP TIPS FOR SUPPORTING SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Attention and Listening

- Gain your child's attention before speaking to them by:
 - Saying their name.
 - Gently touching their hand or arm.
 - Getting down to their level.
- Reduce distractions as much as possible.
- Remind your child to use good listening skills (looking at the speaker, not interrupting, not fidgeting).
- Support what you say with visuals e.g. gesture, signing, now and next boards, reward charts.
- Praise your child for positive attention and listening behaviours.

Receptive (Understanding) Language

- Ensure you have your child's full attention before speaking to them.
- Speak clearly and not too quickly.
- Use familiar vocabulary.
- Split up information or instructions into small chunks.
- Ask your child to repeat instructions back to you to ensure they have understood.
- Emphasise the key words when giving information (e.g. get the RED BOOK and the BLUE PEN).
- Give your child extra time to process what you have said before giving them more information.

Expressive (Use) Language

- Provide a good model by repeating what your child has said emphasising the correct word order and grammar. E.g. Child: "the boy falled off the roof" Parent: " yes the boy fell off the roof".
- Extend your child's sentences by adding something extra (e.g. for younger children: if the child says 'there's a bus', you could say 'there's a big, red bus'. For older children: if the pupil says 'the man is digging', you could say 'the man is digging and the woman is planting').
- Give your child plenty of time to say what they mean.
- Provide opportunities for language use (e.g. re-telling a story or describing a recent activity).

Social Communication

- Give positive instructions (e.g. 'sit down' rather than 'stop jumping').
- Avoid using non-literal language (e.g. 'pull your socks up') or try to explain what you mean.
- Talk about your child's emotions (e.g. what makes them happy, frightened, sad).
- Teach your child play skills by modelling them.
- Model appropriate turn taking. Play turn taking games e.g. pop up pirate, simon says
- Develop reasoning skills by asking questions where your child has to consider "what if ? / what might happen next? / why?".
- Use visuals, e.g. Now and Next boards, visual timetables and timers to support your child's understanding and supporting changes in situations/ places.

If you are worried about your child's speech and language, speak to the class teacher or the SENCo at your child's school or contact the Bexley Joint Communication Team, via telephone 0203 004 0092 or email oxl-tr.BexleySCS-SPA@nhs.net