

Please speak to the link Speech and Language Therapist at your school for more information and advice.

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Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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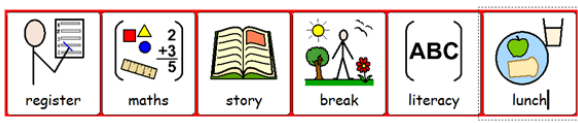
Strategies to support speech, language and communication skills in the classroom

Speech and Language
Therapy Service to
Mainstream Schools in
Islington



Attention and Listening

- Gain the child's attention before giving instructions. Check they have understood by asking them to explain what they have to do.
- Have clear rules for speaking and listening with visual supports. Give specific praise for good speaking and listening behaviours e.g. 'well done for looking at me, now I know you are listening'.
- Use a visual timetable to help children to know what activities are now, next and through the day. This will help to reduce anxiety, support attention and help children to understand and talk about their daily routine.



- Support children to actively listen for key information (for example give a word or specific information to listen out for).
- Plan a variety of activities in each lesson including speaking and listening, practical tasks and movement breaks.
- Try to keep the classroom environment clear to reduce distractions and support children to find what they need independently (e.g. labelling drawers with pictures and the written word).


Understanding

- Be aware of the complexity of language you use in the classroom. Keep verbal information to the minimum, simplify vocabulary and break instructions down into steps. Give the child time to process each part of the instruction before more information is given.

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

- Use visuals to support understanding and use of language, for example pictures, symbols, video, natural gesture and written key words.

- Show a finished example of the task and demonstrate the steps to achieve it.
- Create an 'ask friendly' environment where children are encouraged to ask for help and are praised for doing so.
- Frequently revise the meaning of new vocabulary. Children with language difficulties need additional exposure to understand and use new words.

Speaking

- Pair children with language and social difficulties with peers who will provide a good model. Make paired and group work expectations clear and where necessary provide adult support.
- Plan specific questions at the right level for the child. Give children extra time to think and answer questions. Provide choices or sentence starters if the child is finding it difficult to answer.
- Repeat back and extend the children's sentences, modelling correct use of grammar and vocabulary.
- Plan specific opportunities for thinking and speaking in pairs or small groups so that children can prepare and verbally rehearse ideas before sharing with the class or writing (e.g. 'think pair share').

