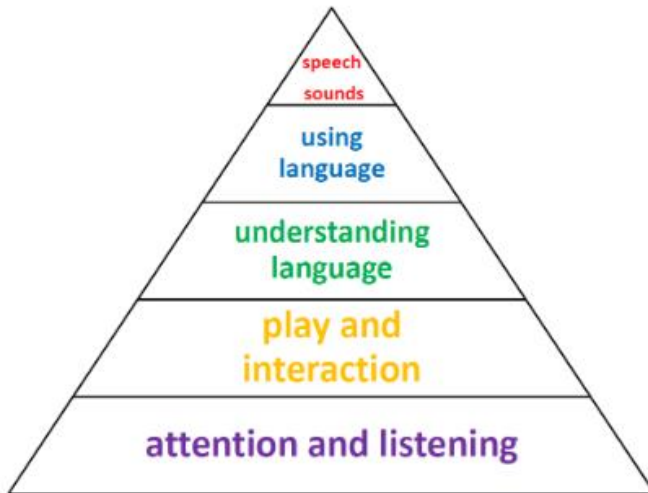




## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool (ECLMT)

The ECLMT outlines key milestones in speech, language and communication development to support identification of children's needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The purpose of the ECLMT is to help assess a child's level of development to make informed decisions about what the child needs to learn and be able to do next. The tool can help practitioners to notice whether a child is at risk of falling behind in their development and supports early identification of the need for referral for specialist support.

The ECLMT can be used as an ongoing record of a child's communication and language development. Practitioners should reflect on each developmental milestone and record the child's age when that milestone is achieved. This will provide a chronology of the child's development. The ECLMT reflects the different aspects of speech, language and communication development as shown in the Language Development Pyramid below.



**The Language Development Pyramid** shows the different skills needed to communicate effectively, verbally, and non-verbally.

The aspects at the base of the pyramid build the foundations for those nearer the top (also see Page 14)

Judgements of a child's stage of development are made through a process of ongoing observational assessment. Check across each aspect of speech, language and communication to ensure a holistic review. Observation involves noticing what children do and say in a range of contexts and includes information from the family about what children do and say at home.

For children learning **English as an additional language**, it is important to find out from families about how children use their home language and how they communicate at home. Families should also be encouraged to continue to communicate with their child(ren) in their first language.



Red flags are statements which serve as an alert for close monitoring. Where a child has not reached a red flag by the age indicated, this is not necessarily a sign of difficulty but should prompt further discussion with the family, additional assessment, and possible referral for specialist support.

**NB** If there are concerns at any point you may wish to complete a more detailed check with parent / carer using the Speech and Language UK Children's Progress checker: [Child's progress checker \(speechandlanguage.org.uk\)](https://speechandlanguage.org.uk)

## Early identification at 2 years

The ECLMT can be used to inform the statutory progress check at age two:

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners must review their progress, and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. ([EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) page 20 & [EYFS statutory framework for childminders \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) page 13)

As part of the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two (when health visitors gather information on a child's health and development), health visitors will be using the [Early Language Identification Measure \(ELIM\)](#).

If the child is 2 to 2½ years old and the early years practitioner identifies that they have concerns about the child's language, the ECLMT can be used to support integrated working between health and education professionals to identify any support from which they think the child/family might benefit.

**Providers must have the consent of parents and/or carers to share information directly with other relevant professionals.**

### Early Communication and Language Overview

This is the summary sheet to bring together the observations recorded using the grids found from page 4 onwards. It provides an overview of a child's communication and language at a point in time. It can be used to summarise the outcome of the detailed assessment against the milestones in each aspect of communication and language development.

<b>Child's name:</b>					<b>D.O.B:</b>			
<b>Languages spoken:</b>								
<b>Date of review:</b>				<b>Age at time of review:</b>				
<b>AGE</b>	<b>ASPECT OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE</b>							
	ATTENTION AND LISTENING	PRETEND PLAY	SOCIAL PLAY	SOCIAL INTERACTION	UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE	USING LANGUAGE	PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS	SPEECH SOUNDS
0-3 months								
Around 6 months								
Around 12 months								
Around 15-18 months								
Around 18 months								
Around 2 years								
Around 2½ years								
Around 3 years								
Between 3 & 4 years								
Between 4 & 5 years								
<b>Action:</b>								
<b>Date of completion and comment:</b>								

<b>Date of review:</b>				<b>Age at time of review:</b>				
<b>AGE</b>	<b>ASPECT OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE</b>							
	ATTENTION AND LISTENING	PRETEND PLAY	SOCIAL PLAY	SOCIAL INTERACTION	UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE	USING LANGUAGE	PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS	SPEECH SOUNDS
0-3 months								
Around 6 months								
Around 12 months								
Around 15-18 months								
Around 18 months								
Around 2 years								
Around 2½ years								
Around 3 years								
Between 3 & 4 years								
Between 4 & 5 years								
<b>Action:</b>								
<b>Date of completion and comment:</b>								

## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool ATTENTION AND LISTENING

Attention and listening skills are key to communication and interaction. A child's attention needs to be gained before they can listen. Good attention and listening skills ensure a child's engagement, concentration, and ability to take turns in conversation.



Age	Attention and listening	Yes/No	Date / age in months
Around 6 months	Does the child respond to familiar voices?		
Around 12 months	Can the child move attention from one activity to another? They may still be easily distracted by a new event.  <i>This is known as Fleeting attention.</i>		
Around 15-18 months	Can the child focus on a task of their own choice ignoring everything else?  <i>This is known as Rigid attention.</i>		
Around 2 years	📌 By 2 years – Is the child responding to speech and/or sounds with adult support?		
Around 3 years	📌 By 3 years - Is the child is starting to control their attention; they can change activity with minimal adult support? For example, when playing they can stop when requested and follow instructions to 'tidy up'. Using the child's name can help.  <i>This is known as Focussed attention.</i>		
Between 4 and 5 years	Does the child listen for and respond to instructions while they are busy with something else? For example, ask them to get their coat and shoes while they are playing, not watching TV or using a computer, they are too absorbing.  <i>This is known as Two-channelled attention.</i>		


## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool PLAY AND INTERACTION





Pretend Play, Social Play and Social Interaction are all linked but separate skills. Social interactions skills start very early e.g. a baby tunes in to an adult. Social rules are different and develop later e.g. turn taking within a group, following the rules of a game.



Age	Pretend Play Pretend play refers to symbolic understanding and imaginative play	Yes/No	Date / age in months
Around 6 months	Does the child explore objects using their senses?		
Around 12 months	Does the child link familiar objects with everyday routines? For example, they may smile or reach out towards a drink.		
Around 15 months	Does the child show that they recognise familiar objects and how they are used in routine situations? For example, the child picks up a cup and puts it to their mouth or uses a brush to brush hair (rather than explore with the mouth).		
Around 18 months	Does the child pretend to use familiar objects on them self? For example, the child pretends to eat from an empty bowl.		
Around 2 years	Does the child use objects on a doll or teddy? For example, the child carries out everyday actions such as feeding a teddy, putting a doll in bed.		
Around 3 years	Does the child act out routines and simple sequences of play? For example, the child undresses a doll, prepares the bath, washes and dresses the doll.		
	Does the child take part in pretend play? For example, being 'mummy' or 'daddy'		
Around 4 years	Does the child plan their play, talking or showing what they are about to do?  For example, says "teddy wants a drink" then picks up teddy and gives it a drink.		
	Does the child take part in other pretend play with different roles? For example, being the Gruffalo or acting out the role of a superhero.		
Between 4 and 5 years	Does the child engage in elaborate make-believe play with friends, often in role and negotiating how play will develop? For example, a child may play in role, then come out of character to discuss how the play is to develop, then return to the role once again.		

<b>Age</b>	<b>Social Play</b> Social play begins to develop from around twelve months. Until this point children will be exploring and learning about themselves (their own body) and the world around them.	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Date / age in months</b>
Around 12 months	Does the child engage in play of their own choice?  <i>This is known as Solitary play.</i>		
Around 2 years	Does the child watch other children's play?  <i>This is known as Onlooker play.</i>		
Around 2 ½ years	Does the child play alongside another child without an adult present?  <i>This is known as Parallel play.</i>		
	Does the child copy other children's play?		
Around 3 years	Does the child usually play alongside other children, occasionally talking to them?  For example, ask to use a toy that a friend is playing with.		
Between 3 and 4 years	Is the child starting to play with other children? For example, by sharing toys and talking about what they themselves are doing.  <i>This is known as Associative play.</i>		
Between 4 and 5 years	Is the child able to play together with other children, with a shared goal and organised roles?  <i>This is known as Co-operative play.</i>		

Age	<b>Social interaction</b> This involves tuning in to other people, initiating interaction and responding with or without words.	Yes/No	Date / age in months
0-3 months	Can the child focus their eyes on faces, particularly the main carer?		
	Is the child comforted by familiar soothing voices and close body contact?		
	Does the child smile and make noises in response to talk?		
	 Contact health professional for advice if there are any concerns.		
Around 6 months	Does the child respond to their name?  For example, turns head, smiles.		
	Does the child respond to the voices of familiar adults?		
	Does the child smile in social situations?		
	Does the child engage in hiding games with an adult such as peekaboo?		
Around 12 months	Does the child 'take turns' by babbling and/or using single words?		
	Does the child start to be shy around unfamiliar adults and show preference for certain people and toys?		
	Does the child repeat actions, sounds etc when adult responds positively to them? For example, waving, clapping, poking tongue out.		
	Does the child initiate interactions with others?  For example, dropping objects for an adult to pick up or smiling.		
Around 18 months	Does the child seek to be noticed when exploring, looking to see if the adult is watching?		
	Does the child engage in simple activities involving give and take?  For example, will roll a ball to an adult and wait for it to be rolled back.		
	Does the child engage in face watching during interactions with a familiar person?  For example, looking at the adult's face.		

	<p>Can the child follow an adult’s gaze to look at the same object?</p> <p><i>This is known as Joint attention.</i></p>		
	<p>Does the child bring something of interest to show the adult?</p> <p>Does the child use gestures, sounds and then words to attract attention, greet people, ask for things, name things, reject things?</p>		
	<p> Contact health professional for advice if there are any concerns.</p>		
Around 2 years	<p>Does the child show care towards others?</p>		
	<p> By 2 years – Does the child try to interact with others?</p>		
Around 3 years	<p>Is the child frequently asking questions such as the names of people and objects?</p>		
	<p>Can the child make their needs known through words, actions, use of visuals?</p>		
<p> Watch out for children who get extremely upset by certain sounds, smells or tastes, and cannot be calmed. Or children who seem worried, sad or angry for much of the time. You will need to work closely with parents and other agencies to find out more about these developmental difficulties. (Ref: Development Matters: PSED Observation checkpoint 0-3 years)</p> <p><i>N.B – this may also be trauma related.</i></p>			
Between 3 and 4 years	<p>Is the child less dependent on adults in general; able to organise them self, decide what to do and who to play with?</p>		
	<p>Does the child participate in group activities?</p>		
	<p>Does the child show concern if a friend is upset?</p>		
<p> Watch out for children who seem worried, sad or angry for much of the time, children who seem to flit from one thing to the next or children who seem to stay for over-long periods doing the same thing and become distressed if they are encouraged to do something different. You will need to work closely with parents and other agencies to find out more about these developmental difficulties. (Ref: Development Matters: PSED Observation checkpoint 3-4 years)</p> <p><i>N.B – this may also be trauma related</i></p>			
Between 4 and 5 years	<p>Does the child join in with group conversations and games?</p>		



## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE

**Understanding language is receptive language.** This is the “input” of language; the ability to understand information. It involves understanding the words (vocabulary), sentences (grammar) and meaning of what others say or what is read. For example, a child's ability to listen and follow directions such as “put on your coat” relies on the child's receptive language skills. In typical development, children can understand language before they are able to produce it.





Age	Understanding	Yes/No	Date / age in months
Around 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/> By 12 months - Does the child turn to their own name?		
Around 12 months	Can the child identify an object from a choice of 2? <i>If there are 2 objects in front of the child, can they find the object you ask for, just by understanding the word you say, without you pointing, looking or nodding to help them. For example, “show me the teddy” or “which one is the apple?”. The child does not need to be able to say the word themselves. This is looking at whether they understand when you say the word.</i>		
Around 15-18 months	Does the child understand lots of different single words and some short phrases, such as “give me” or “shoes on”, “stand up” “sit down”?		
	Can the child point to simple body parts on request. For example, “Where’s your nose?”		
Around 2 years	Does the child understand many more words than they can say – between 200 - 500 words? <i>Please note that the numbers give an approximate idea of the size of a child's vocabulary. At this stage of development there is no expectation that practitioners will count every word a child understands.</i>		
	Can the child understand simple instructions with two key words? For example, “Find a big spoon” or “Give the brush to mummy”.		
Around 2 ½ years	<input type="checkbox"/> By 30 months – Can the child show that they understand action words by pointing to the right picture in a book? For example, “Who’s jumping?”		
Around 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/> By 3 years - Can the child follow instructions with three key words? For example, “Wash dolly’s face.”		
Between 4 and 5 years	Is the child beginning to get the idea of time? For example, “Mummy will be here after lunch.”		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the child understand a longer list of instructions? For example, “First get your lunchbox, then sit at the red table.” Note if they have to watch another child in order to know what to do, rather than understanding it themselves. This might indicate difficulties in hearing or understanding.		
	Can the child answer simple ‘why’ questions?		





## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool USING LANGUAGE

**Using language is expressive language.** This is the “output” of language, the ability to express your wants and needs through verbal or nonverbal communication. It is the ability to put thoughts into words and sentences in a way that makes sense and is grammatically correct.

**N.B.** When the tool refers to a child using a given number of words, this would be when the child uses the words spontaneously, without being prompted (e.g. this would **not** include when the adult says a word such as “bus” and the child copies back.)



Age	Communication	Yes/No	Date / age in months
Around 6 months	Does the child ‘take turns’ in conversations with babbling?		
Around 12 months	Is the child beginning to use single words like mummum, dada, tete (teddy)?		
	 Does the child point to things and use gestures to show things to adults and share interests?		
Around 15-18 months	 By 16 months - Can the child say around 10 words spontaneously (they may not all be clear)?		
	Is the child using a range of adult like speech patterns (jargon) and at least 20 clear words?  <i>Jargon is when the child puts sounds together with rhythm and tone in a way that sounds like speech, using a mix of babble and real words.</i>		
Around 2 years	Can the child use up to 50 words spontaneously?		
	Is the child beginning to put 2 or 3 words together, for example “more milk”?		
	Is the child asking questions such as the names of object and people?		
Around 3 years	Is the child frequently asking questions, such as the names of people and objects?		
	Can the child use around 300 words? These include words to describe actions (verbs), descriptive language, words for time (for example, ‘now’ and ‘later’), space (for example, ‘over there’) and function (for example, they can tell you a sponge is for washing).  <i>Please note that the number gives an approximate idea of the size of a child’s vocabulary. At this stage of development there is no expectation that practitioners will count every word a child uses.</i>		

	<p>Is the child linking up to 3-4 words together?</p>		
	<p>Is the child using pronouns ('me', 'him', 'she'), plurals and prepositions ('in', 'on', 'under')?  These may not always be used correctly to start with.</p>		
	<p> Does the child speak fluently, without stammering?  Children can go through a phase of being non fluent. Please contact your Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service if the child is stammering.</p>		
Between 3 and 4 years	<p>Is the child linking up to 5 words together?</p>		
	<p> Does the child speak fluently, without stammering? Children can go through a phase of being non fluent. Please contact your Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service if the child is stammering.</p>		
Between 4 and 5 years	<p>Is the child using sentences of 4 to 6 words?  For example, "I want to play with cars" or "Daddy eated my strawberry yoghurt?"  <i>It is very common for young children to use some incorrect word endings such as 'eated'.</i></p>		
	<p>Can the child join sentences using words like 'because', 'or', 'and'?  For example, "my knee hurts because I falled over".</p>		
	<p>Is the child using the future and past tense?  For example, "I am going to the park" and "I went to the shop."</p>		
	<p>Can they create simple sequenced stories and put longer sentences together?  For example, "I went to Jamilia's house, I had spaghetti for tea and Daddy picked me up in his car".</p>		
	<p> Does the child share their thoughts and ideas confidently in well-formed sentences?  <i>A child may be struggling if they regularly get frustrated or give up trying to tell you something, regularly forget the words or miss out important pieces of information or sound muddled and disorganised in their talking.</i></p>		
	<p> Does the child speak fluently, without stammering?  Children can go through a phase of being non fluent. Please contact your Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service if the child is stammering.</p>		

## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

**Phonological awareness** involves the knowledge that voice sounds (phonemes), are the building blocks of words. It is the ability to reflect on the sound structure of a word rather than its meaning. It enables children to be able to understand and talk about words. Phonological awareness skills are critical for the efficient decoding / reading of printed words and the ability to form connections between sounds and letters when spelling.

**Phonemic awareness** is one aspect of phonological awareness and refers to the skill of manipulating the smallest unit - phonemes. For example, isolating the initial sound 'd' in 'dig'.

Before they are ready to begin phonics learning (linking letters to sounds) children need Phonemic Awareness; the ability to:

- Tune in to phonemes
- Hear the difference between phonemes
- Blend phonemes
- Segment phonemes

**N.B.** Phonological awareness is dependent upon the ability to listen, which is different to hearing. Listening is a skill that develops over time (Please see Attention and Listening – page 4)



Age	Phonological Awareness	Yes/No	Date / age in months
Around 6 months	Does the child enjoy songs and rhymes, tuning in and paying attention?		
Around 12 months	Does the child join in with songs and rhymes, copying sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempo?		
Around 15-18 months	Does the child attempt to say the words in songs and rhymes?		
Around 2 years	(24 - 30 months) Does the child show awareness of rhyme? For example, fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme and joins in with favourite rhymes.		
Around 3 years	Can the child remember and tell the difference between familiar sounds they have heard?  For example, identifies a doorbell ringing, a bird singing, a plane flying over.		
	Can the child sing songs and say rhymes independently, for example, singing whilst playing?		

	Can the child continue a rhyming string using real or nonsense words? For example, <i>log, dog, frog, cog, mog, sog, pog</i>		
	Does the child show awareness of alliteration? For example, selects objects that start with the same sound and recognises the odd one out.		
	Does the child recognise rhythm in spoken words? For example, can clap the number of syllables in their name or remember and repeat a simple rhythm.		
Between 3 and 4 years	Can the child hear and say the initial phoneme in words? For example, gives the picture of a 'sun' in answer to the question, "Which picture begins with 's'?" or produces words with the same initial sound.		
	Can the child count the number of syllables in a word?		
	Can the child recognise when words have the same final phoneme? For example, identifies that 'top' and 'cap' end with the same sound.		
	Are they beginning to orally blend phonemes in simple words? For example, selects correct object in response to adult's "Sound talk".		
	Are they beginning to segment phonemes in simple words? For example, joins in with "Sound talk" of simple consonant-vowel-consonant words such as <i>cat, hot, big</i> .		
Between 4 and 5 years	At 4 years old, is the child able to say which words rhyme? For example, which is the odd one out, <i>dog, cat, log</i> , or match <i>dog</i> with <i>log</i> .		
	Can the child distinguish between different phonemes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great difference (for example, points to object representing /s/, /t/)?</li> <li>• minimal difference (for example, points to object representing /p/, /b/)?</li> </ul>		
	Can they confidently orally blend phonemes in CVC words? For example, selects correct object in response to adult's "Sound talk".		
	Can they confidently orally segment phonemes in CVC words? For example, says simple CVC words using "Sound talk".		


## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool SPEECH SOUNDS

As children are learning to talk their speech sounds develop gradually over time, starting with gurgling, cooing and babbling.

NB If a child has difficulties in this aspect, check other aspects of the pyramid as those need to be in place first.



Age	Speech Sounds	Yes/No	Date / age in months
<p> Contact your Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service for advice if at any age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there are concerns with air escaping down the nose when speaking or liquids/foods coming out of the nose when feeding or being unable to copy speech sounds (nasality /palate concerns)</li> <li>- a child is dribbling frequently. This may indicate weak muscles of the mouth or possible problems with ENT e.g. adenoids or swallowing.</li> </ul>			
Around 12 months	Does the child babble using a range of sounds with changes in pitch, rhythm and loudness? A baby's babble will reflect the intonation and rhythm of their home language.		
	If the child is not babbling by 1 year, talk to the child's Health Visitor		
Around 2 years	By 2 years, is at least 50% of the child's language understood by unfamiliar adults?		
Around 3 years	By age 3, is at least 75% of the child's language understood by unfamiliar adults?		
	Is the child's speech clear? * <b>If the answer is NO please see guidance below.</b>		
<p>*At this age there may be many immature speech patterns, so speech may not be clear. The child may leave out last sounds or substitute sounds (e.g. 'tap' for 'cap') in single words. Lots of children will do this at this age but it will need to be monitored to ensure this develops over time.</p> <p> Contact your Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service for advice if children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appear to be talking in short phrases/sentences which are made up of vowel sounds only e.g. 'eye uh eye a' = my mum likes cats</li> <li>- replace one vowel sound with another e.g. pig = pog</li> <li>- use a limited range of sounds and a preferred sound e.g. 'de dod den dard' (the dog went park)</li> <li>- miss out the first sounds in words e.g. 'ig' = pig, 'og' = dog</li> <li>- use sounds at the back of the mouth rather than the front e.g. tea – key, doll – goll</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider whether a hearing test might be needed.</b></p>			
Between 3 and 4 years	Can the child consistently use the following sounds in words?	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Date / age in months</b>
		<b>m</b>	
		<b>n</b>	
		<b>p</b>	

		<b>b</b>		
		<b>t</b>		
		<b>d</b>		
		<b>f</b>		
		<b>v</b>		
		<b>s</b>		
		<b>z</b>		
		<b>h</b>		
	 Are the child's speech sounds almost as clear when they are talking in phrases or sentences compared with when talking in single words?			
Between 4 and 5 years	Is the child beginning to use the following sounds in words?			
		<b>k</b>		
		<b>g</b>		
		<b>w</b>		
		<b>l</b>		
		<b>y</b>		
		<b>ng</b>		
		<b>sh</b>		
		<b>ch</b>		
		<b>j</b>		
		<b>v</b>		
		<b>th</b>		
		<b>r</b>		
	Is the child beginning to use sound clusters? For example, pl in play, sm in smile. Some may be simplified such as 'gween' for 'green'.			
	By age 4, is at least 90% of the child's language understood by unfamiliar adults?			

To support a more detailed speech sounds check for a child 3 - 5 years please go to:  
<https://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Speech-screener-record-form-and-pictures.pdf>



## Early Communication and Language Monitoring Tool (ECLMT)

### CHRONOLOGY

Child's name:

D.O.B:

Languages spoken:

Further information, advice discussed with child's parent/carer, agreed next steps:

DATE	COMMENT

#### References:

- Development Matters Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage, Department for Education, Sept 2021
- Universally speaking from birth to five, I CAN and the Communication Trust, March 2015 (Now Speech and Language UK)
- The National Strategies Early Years, Every Child a Talker: Guidance for Early Language Lead Practitioners, Department for children schools and families, 2008
- Best start in speech, language and communication – supporting evidence, Public Health England, Department of Health and Social Care & Department of Education, October 2020
- Early Language Builders, Henrietta McLachlan, Liz Elks and Jo Belsten, Elklan, 2016



## Useful websites

[Plymouth Graduated Approach to Inclusion for Early Years](#)

[Plymouth Council - Ordinarily Available Provision for Early Years by The Education People - Issuu](#)

[Devon's graduated response - Support for schools and settings](#)

[Torbay-early-years-graduated-approach.pdf](#)

[Speech & Language | Livewell Southwest](#)

[Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)

[Learning to talk 0 to 6 months - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Learning to talk 1 to 2 years - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Learning to talk 2 to 3 years - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Learning to talk 3 to 5 years - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Words for Life | National Literacy Trust | Words for Life](#)

[Communication and language - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](#)

[EEF | Communication and Language \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

[Progress check at age 2 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)