

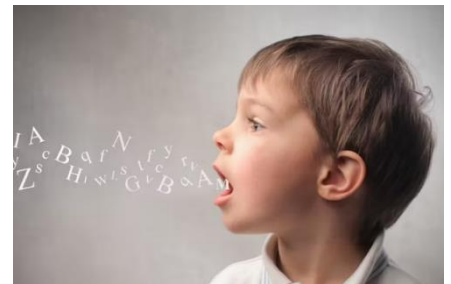
Berkeley Primary School
SEND Newsletter January 2024
By Teresa Suddaby and Jenna King
FOCUS: Communication



Hello and welcome to our next SEND newsletter. Each term we produce a newsletter to help develop your knowledge of SEND. We will share information in regards to what support is available in school, locally and information about the teams that we work alongside. Alongside these newsletters we will also be planning and facilitating a range of workshops and information sessions whilst continuing to host SEND coffee mornings.

Key Message

Communication is not just about a child's ability to speak. We must remember that children are communicating all the time through their body language, facial expressions, listening and speech. This means from an early age we need to be attentive and available when children are trying to share their needs with us. There are many things which affect a child's ability to speak but there are a few things we can do to help them develop their speaking:



- Communicate at their level (get down and face the child so they can see and hear you).
- Take notice of their body language and facial expressions and share your interpretation of these with children to help teach the language and make them feel heard.
- Introduce new words at all given opportunities e.g. in routine establishment and play. Ensure these words are repeated in different contexts to help develop that secure understanding.

How can we help early speech?

There are many different factors which can affect a child's early language development. The three we will explore in this newsletter are: Oral habits, attention & listening and screen time.



1. Oral habits – thumb sucking, dummies, sippy cups and bottles should be used at the appropriate time for its purpose and then removed if we are to limit the chance of physical changes to a child's mouth which can in turn effect their future speech skills due to structural changes caused.

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2. Attention & Listening – Children begin developing their attention from birth to 1 and by age 2 to 3 years we should expect a child to begin listening if they are not engaged in an activity. It is not until 4 – 5 years that we expect children to be able to shift their attention and listen between a task and a speaker. We can help children to develop their early attention and listening to focus on a speaker by addressing them by name, repeating instructions and using simple attention grabbing phrases such

as 1,2,3 eyes on me. These age milestones will vary between children but these are the expected ages for each skill. Helping children to develop their attention and listening is a skill which we should keep working on to ensure it remains a priority.

3. Screen time – Research suggests that excessive screen time can be one of the causes of many health issues, language delay and attention issues just being one. The world health organisation strongly suggests that children under 1 are not exposed to screens at all whilst 2,3 and 4 year olds have no more than 1 hours screen time a day. For children above aged 4 it is advised that screen time may take place for more than 1 hour a day but should not replace quality human interactions.



If you have any concerns about your child's communication please do not hesitate to get in touch so that we can discuss your concerns and assess your child's communication.

WHO TO CONTACT IN THE SCHOOL?

Teresa Suddaby (SENDCO)
Jenna King (SENDCO Support)

If in doubt ... talk to someone

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