

Supporting language skills

Links should be made between school and parents to help keep each other updated on any new strategies or vocabulary they have introduced so that parents can reinforce new words at home



Communication is a skill like any other – the more it is practiced, the better it gets! Children and young people benefit from practicing having conversations with adults as well as people their own age. You can try 'side-by-side' activities to promote chatting e.g. during craft activities/cooking/walking/sharing a tv programme. Let them take lead in conversation and listen to what they say

Where possible, use visual support strategies e.g. signing/ symbols/ photographs/ objects/ diagrams/ written information to support any verbal instructions that are given



When teaching new vocabulary, use a multi-sensory approach. This means inducing the 5 senses- taste, touch, vision, hearing, smell. You can also help by:

- Focusing on just 2 or 3 words at a time
- Drawing a Word Map
- Thinking and talking about what the word means
- Think about how the word sounds e.g. "it starts with a 'd' sound"
- Using the word in a sentence together

When you ask a question, give "10 seconds thinking time" before repeating what you have said. This will allow the young person to think about what you have said and then plan their answer



If you have repeated a question/instruction, and the young person continues to struggle to understand it, consider the following:

- Does he understand the word you are using?
- Does he understand the sentence or grammar?
- Did you use any ambiguous language that could be misinterpreted?

This will help you to change your language to suit the young person's needs

