Siarad Gyda Fi
Talk With Me

Supporting the Development of Speech, Language and Communication in the Early Years

Section 4:
Guidance for
2 years – 2 years 11 months

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Supporting the Development of Speech, Language and Communication in the Early Years

Section 4: Guidance for 2 years – 2 years 11 months

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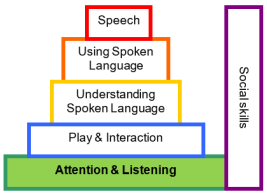
Throughout this guidance, references have been made to typical development of SLC. It is important to support the child at their *developmental stage* rather than their age.

Attention and Listening

2 years – 2 years 11 months



Attention and listening skills are the foundation of speech, language and communication. Children need to develop these essential skills to be able to understand the world around them, develop social skills, understand routines, learn new words and develop speech sounds.

Many children of this age can attend to adult direction but may not cope doing one thing and listening to an instruction about something else. Adults can support listening skills by talking about the child's interests and focus. It is important to make sure children are attending before expecting them to listen.

Between 2 years and 2 years 11 months you may notice the child…

- focusses on one thing at a time (single channelled attention)
- listens to talk directed to them but needs prompts such as calling their name
- begins to listen to talk with interest but is easily distracted
- listens to a short story with pictures and a simple sequence of events
- attends to a joint activity for 5 minutes

Creating an enabling environment:

- ☑ Reduce distractions e.g. movement, noise, visual distractions.
- ☑ Label areas with visual signs.
- ☑ Have clear and consistent routines using visual timetables.
- ☑ Limit the amount of resources out at a time.

Strategies to develop attention and listening:

- Get down to the child's level - face-to-face.
- Use the child's name to gain their attention.
- Follow the child's lead and comment on their play.
- Wait until the child is looking at you before speaking.
- Speak clearly, calmly and slowly. Allow thinking time.
- Use an interesting tone of voice and facial expression.
- Reward attention to a shared activity.
- Use short, simple sentences.

Make sure all adults MODEL and PRAISE good attention and listening behaviours.

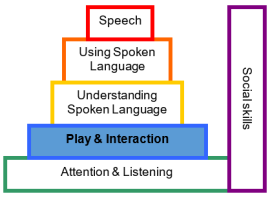
PLAY WITH ME… have a look at some suggested activities on page 78

Wait for Go!

Listen for sounds

Play and Interaction

2 years – 2 years 11 months



Play is how children make sense of the world and it is crucial to support brain development in the early years. Through play, children develop and learn to use their speech, language and communication skills. Play is the essential context for learning about social skills for children under the age of five.

Interaction includes the ability to play cooperatively with peers and take turns. Through play and interaction, children learn to understand and regulate their emotions and develop their social skills.

Between 2 years and 2 years 11 months you may notice the child…

- sequences pretend play e.g. bath dolly, dress dolly and put dolly to bed
- shows interest in other children's play and will gradually join in
- uses some objects imaginatively during play e.g. pretends that a box is a car or a bed
- interacts with others in comfortable, familiar situations
- holds a conversation but will jump from one topic to another

Creating an enabling environment:

- ☑ Have a range of resources available to support character play and acting out routines.
- ☑ Have a range of resources to support acting out stories and scenarios in small world play.
- ☑ Have clearly defined areas of provision, indoors and out.
- ☑ Observe how children interact with the physical learning environment.

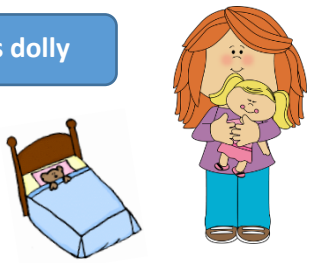
STRATEGIES to develop play and interaction:

- Let the child lead the play.
- Describe what the child is doing in their play.
- Model the next stage to develop sequence play e.g. if the child gives dolly a bath, you can then model dressing dolly.
- Talk about what you are doing using 'now' and 'next'.
- Encourage them to notice other children's play and join in a pair or take turns with another child.

Adults may need to model the 'play' and encourage interaction.

PLAY WITH ME…have a look at some suggested activities on page 80

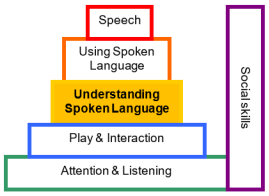
Dress dolly



Let's join in

Understanding Spoken Language

2 years – 2 years 11 months



Understanding spoken language (receptive language) is essential for children to make sense of the world around them. It includes the ability to understand the words, sentences and the non-verbal communication of others. Children learn to develop an understanding of words and sentences in stages, first one word, then a number of individual words, then short sentences and longer more complex sentences.

Between 2 years and 2 years 11 months you may notice the child…

- develops an understanding of simple concepts including *'in/on/under'* and *'big/little'.*
- understands simple instructions e.g. 'put teddy in the box'.
- understands simple *'who?', 'what?'* and *'where?'* questions but not *'why?'* questions
- understands everyday verbs (action words) by showing or telling you e.g. *sleeping, walking, running*
- understands a simple story when supported with pictures

Creating an enabling environment:

- ☑ Label resources clearly with photos/pictures.
- ☑ Use visual instructions with clear pictures to support understanding e.g. hand washing.
- ☑ Use visual support to transition between activities e.g. 'Now and Next' pictures.
- ☑ Use simple visual timelines to support everyday routines.
- ☑ Use real situations and objects to introduce new vocabulary.

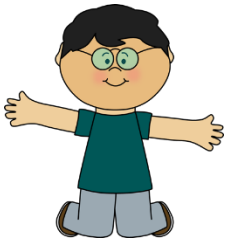
STRATEGIES to develop understanding of spoken language:

- Get the child's attention before talking with them e.g. use their name.
- Simplify your language when engaging in child-led play and interaction.
- Give short, clear instructions.
- Emphasise the key words using your voice, gestures or a sign.
- Show the child what to do if they do not understand an instruction.
- Check that the child knows the names of objects before you give an instruction.

10 Second Rule!
Give the child time to process an instruction or question.

PLAY WITH ME…have a look at some suggested activities on page 82

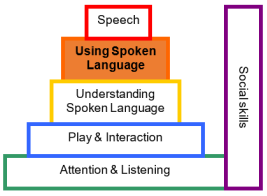
Simon says run!



Simon says jump!

Using Spoken Language

2 years – 2 years 11 months



Using spoken language (expressive language) is the ability to recall words and information and use language, body language and gestures appropriately in given situations e.g. to label/name objects, describe actions and events, ask and answer questions and retell a story.
A good vocabulary is essential for children to express their thoughts, needs and wants.

Between 2 years and 2 years 11 months you may notice the child…

- puts 3 - 4+ words together to make a sentence e.g. 'me want more milk'
- uses some describing words e.g. *big, dirty, hot*
- starts to use some grammatical structures e.g. *he, she, I, me* and *plurals*
- uses some prepositions e.g. *in, on, under*
- asks simple *who? what? where?* questions

Creating an enabling environment:

- ☑ Notice the child's interests – add resources to develop their play and encourage language.
- ☑ Have different types of books available e.g. sensory books (noisy, feely); interactive books with flaps; rhyming stories; board books….
- ☑ Say stories and sing songs and rhymes regularly - add puppets, props and musical instruments and encourage children to join in e.g. with repetitive phrases.

STRATEGIES to develop using spoken language:

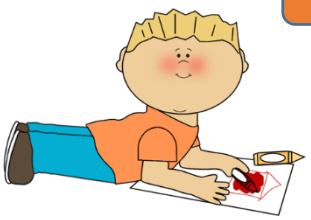
- WAIT! Give the child time to process and organise their thoughts.
- Encourage the child to initiate talking i.e. let them talk first.
- Name objects during shared play, rather than asking '*What is this*?'
- Add an extra word to what the child says e.g. if they say, '*car*' you can say '*Yes, it is a **big** car.*'
- Model the correct grammar rather than telling the child they are wrong e.g. if they say, *'What that there?'*, you can say, *'What's that under the chair? That's a…'*

Follow the child's lead.

PLAY WITH ME… have a look at some suggested activities on page 84

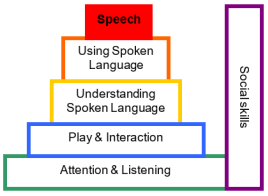
What's in the bag?

Everyday play



Speech

2 years – 2 years 11 months



Speech (phonology) refers to being able to say speech sounds to make yourself understood. When we are listening to a child talk, we can think about how clear their words are. *Speech* is not the same as *talking*.

By the age of 2 ½ years, a child's speech can typically be understood by his close family. By the age of 3 years, familiar adults outside the home can typically understand a child's speech but it will not be perfect.

Use the **English Speech Sound Development Poster** on page 75 and Speech acquisition - Multilingual Children's Speech (csu.edu.au) to support your observations.

Creating an enabling environment:

- ☑ Reduce distractions e.g. movement, noise, visual distractions.
- ☑ Have quiet, distraction-free areas/activities for children to focus on listening to sounds.
- ☑ Include songs and rhymes as part of the daily routine.
- ☑ Share lots of stories - encourage children to join in as they listen.

STRATEGIES to use to develop clear speech:

- Do not tell the child they said it wrong or pressure them to repeat it.
- Repeat unclear words using the correct sounds for the child to ***hear*** the correct way to say it e.g. if a child says '*tat*' the adult says '*yes, it's a cat*'.
- Don't pretend to understand - encourage the child to use actions to help get their message across and ask them to show you what they want.
- Get down to the child's level, face-to-face so the child can see how you make sounds – don't expect them to copy you.

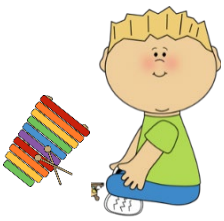
Respond to the words they are saying, not how clear they are.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES to support the development of speech:

- Go on a listening walk (listen and talk about environmental sounds).
- Listen to sounds around the setting.
- Tune into rhymes – say and sing rhymes every day.

Rain, rain go away…

Make loud and quiet sounds



Activities suggested in all other areas of communication will support the development of speech at this age.

Attention follows a developmental sequence:

0 – 11 months	8 – 20 months	22 – 36 months
Fleeting Attention Easily distracted and attention flits from one thing to another.	**Rigid Attention** Can concentrate on one task of own choice, cannot tolerate interruption from an adult.	**Single channelled attention** Will attend to an adult direction. Cannot cope doing one thing and listening to an instruction about something else.
30 – 50 months	**40 – 60 months**	**60+ months**
Focusing attention Beginning to control own focus. Can only concentrate on one thing at a time (the task or the unrelated instruction). Can shift focus of attention independently.	**Two channelled attention** Can do a task and understand an instruction at the same time. Concentration span may be short but can now be taught in a group.	**Integrated attention** Attention is controlled, sustained and well established across different situations, with different people.

- **Some children may be functioning at a level below their chronological age**
- **Children cannot develop their speech, language and communication skills if they are unable to attend or listen**

Play skills follow a developmental sequence:

Exploratory play (birth to around 5 months): Shakes, mouths, bangs and turns over toys and other objects to try to work out what they are. At around 9 months will look for an object that has been hidden away (understands object permanence).

Recognising objects (around 12 months): Shows an understanding of the appropriate use of an object without pretending e.g. uses a brush on their hair.

Object play (between 8-20 months): Pretends to use an object on themselves e.g. using a toy cup to pretend to drink.

Character play (between 16-26 months): Involves character toys in their play e.g. gives toy dinosaur a drink.

Acts out routines (around 22 - 36 months): Acts out simple routines through play e.g. baths and dresses dolly ready for bed. Small world play becomes more complex as the child acts out scenarios and stories. Uses objects imaginatively e.g. a box could be a car or a bed.

Role-play (around 3 to 4 years): Simple dressing up to begin with, gradually taking on more imaginative role of the whole character.

Complex and co-operative imaginative play (4 years+): Acts out sequences observed in their environment, books and TV e.g. household routines.

Interaction skills build from play and include the ability to play cooperatively with peers and take turns:

0 – 9 months	9 – 18 months	18 months – 3 years
Interactions begin and end with baby's eye contact, e.g. games such as peekaboo.	Interactions initiated by child both verbally and non-verbally e.g. pointing, giving and showing. Interaction may end by child moving away. Interactions limited to 1 or 2 turns per partner.	Interactions may be initiated using a name e.g. *'Mummy'*. Child begins to respond to questions verbally. Repeats or changes their utterance if not understood. Interaction may be restricted to comfortable, familiar situations.
3 – 4 years	**4 – 7 years**	**7 years+**
Has a variety of strategies to initiate conversation e.g. *'Guess what?'* Number of turns in conversation increases. More able to communicate with strangers. Can participate in pretend conversations. Uses language for a wide variety of functions e.g. asking questions, making suggestions, directing others.	More able to initiate and end conversations and take turns. Learns to choose most appropriate timing to join in other people's conversation. Child still assumes the listener shares his/her background knowledge. Learns to adapt styles of conversation for a variety of listeners e.g. family, friends, and teachers.	Becomes more aware of the listener and his/her background knowledge. Conveys subtleties with intonation and stress. Uses language to persuade, convey disapproval and for politeness. Develops social appropriateness.

Understanding Spoken Language (receptive language) follows a recognised progression:

Birth	6 months	12 months
Responds to sound (spoken or non-spoken). Responds to intonation and emotion in voices.	Understands whole phrases when used in familiar routines.	Understands key words in familiar situations (often called situational understanding).
18 months	**2 years**	**2 ½ years**
Understands names of absent objects whenever used in familiar sentences at any time.	Can relate two named objects. Can identify objects from a description of their use.	Understands simple actions and properties not related to themselves. Understands simple prepositions, e.g. *in, on, under* and basic size concepts, e.g. *big, little*, when used in simple sentences. Begins to understand 'time' as a reference to the immediate past and future.
3 years	**4 years**	**5 years +**
Relates up to three key words in a sentence when there are no other clues to help. Begins to understand tense, e.g. *We <u>went</u> to the shop; We <u>will go</u> to the shop*. Understands simple concepts of shape and colour when used in simple sentences.	Follows a simple story sequence. Understands most straightforward sentences. Continues to benefit from situational clues.	Gradually understands more complex sentences out of context. Receptive vocabulary continues to develop.

Using Spoken Language (expressive language) follows a recognised progression:

9 months	18 months	2 years
Babble, early attempts at words e.g. '*Dada*'.	Uses approximately 50 - 100 words with more recognisable words. Sometimes uses 2-word learnt phrases e.g. '*all gone*'	Uses approx. 200 – 300 words. Puts 2 and 3 words together in short sentences e.g. '*Me go home*'.
2 ½ years	**3 years**	**3 ½ years**
Puts 3- and 4-word sentences together using different sorts of words. Starts to use 'question words' e.g. '*Me go there*?'	Links more than 4 words together. Starts to use *'and'* to link ideas. Starts to use pronouns *'I', 'he', 'she'* and plurals e.g. '*I want juice and sweets*.'	Links ideas together using *'cos'* (because) e.g. '*I put wellies on 'cos it's raining*.' Asks more complicated questions using *'why'* and *'how'*.
4 years		**4 ½ years**
Uses language for a variety of reasons e.g. to retell favourite stories, play make-believe games and retell events. Uses talk to problem-solve and form friendships. Asks many questions to find out information.		Children have a vocabulary of about 5000+ words.

Typical Development of Speech

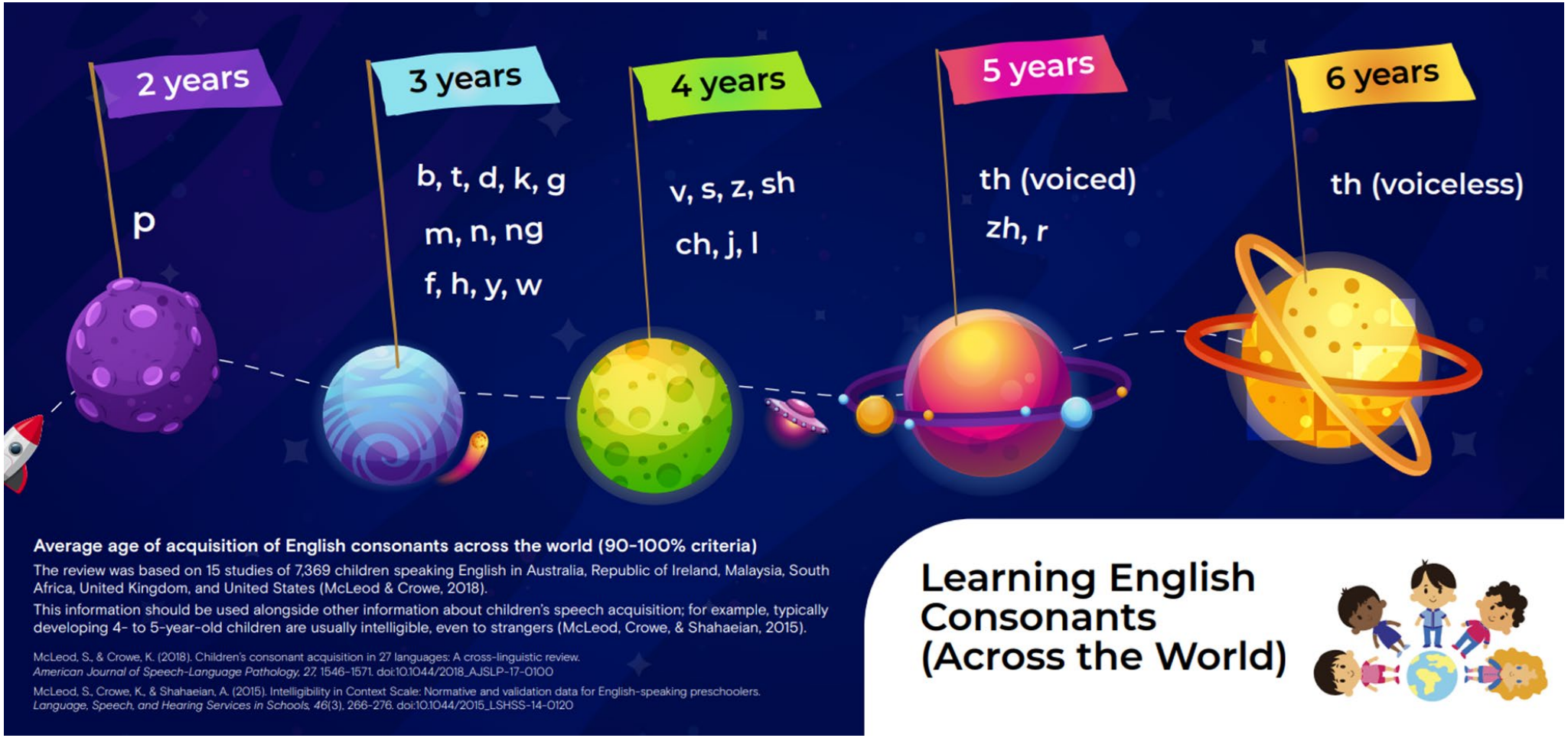
2 years 10 months – 3 years 10 months	3 years 10 months – 5 years 1 month	5 years 2 months – 7 years 3 months
50% of a child's speech is understood by unfamiliar adults	75% of a child's speech is understood by unfamiliar adults	90% of a child's speech is understood by unfamiliar adults

Hustad, Mahr, Natke and Rathouz (2021)

- **Speech sounds follow a developmental progression**
- **Speech sounds vary across languages.**
- **Children learning more than one language may develop speech sounds in a different order.**
- **For further information, please refer to** Speech acquisition - Multilingual Children's Speech (csu.edu.au)

English Speech Sound Development

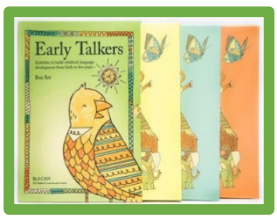
(There is no information on the norms for speech sound development in Welsh)



Strategy Posters and Suggested Activities

In this section, you will find some strategy posters and suggested activities to guide you when planning to develop certain aspects of the child's speech, language and communication.

The activities are suggested as examples - please use your own experiences and ideas to enhance them. The grids are not intended to be a prescriptive programme; however, the ideas can be used to support personalised targets, as appropriate. You can refer to the *'Early Talkers'* boxset for more ideas (available from **speechandlanguage.org.uk**).



Strategies to develop attention and listening:

- Get down to the child's level - face-to-face.
- Use the child's name to gain their attention.
- Follow the child's lead and comment on their play.
- Wait until the child is looking at you before speaking.
- Speak clearly, calmly and slowly. Allow thinking time.
- Use an interesting tone of voice and facial expression.
- Reward attention to a shared activity.
- Use short, simple sentences.

Make sure all adults MODEL and PRAISE good attention and listening.

Each strategy is shown on a poster.

You may want to share these posters with parents.

IMPORTANT:

Use the suggested strategies in your interactions throughout the day.

You may want to use the suggested activities to support skills in this area.

Target	Attention and Listening - Suggested Activities (2 years - 2 years 11 months)	Too difficult?	Too easy?
To focus on one thing at a time (single channelled attention).	**Jack in the Box:** ***listening for a sound/word directed to them before responding with an action.*** Starting to wait for an instruction by listening out for a single sound directed at them. **How to play:** Play a game where a child climbs into a box or basket. Choose a sound that the child has to listen out for, as a signal. When they hear the sound, they can jump up - like a Jack in the box! You could play this game outside and easily vary it e.g. hide and jump out from behind trees.	Use a louder and more distinguishable sound.	Use a quieter sound as this will develop their listening skills further.
To listen to talk directed at them, with prompts such as calling their name.	**Go!:** ***to encourage the child to listen to an instruction before completing an activity.*** Paying attention and listening to a single instruction before carrying out the activity. Learning to 'wait' for the instruction. **How to play:** Have a selection of different objects and a box or basket. Let the child choose an object. Each time you say *'go'*, they throw the object into the box/basket. Praise the child for listening (even if they do not get the object into the box) e.g. *'Good listening'; 'Good waiting'.*	Use a gesture/visual signal and call their name before you say 'go'. Gently hold their hand with the object and let go as you say 'go!'	Give the child a few objects. They have to listen for you to say which one they should throw into the box.
To begin to listen to talk with interest.	**Listening to Sounds:** ***To pay attention to, listen to sounds, and talk around them.*** Becoming aware of sounds and language around them. Before understanding and attending to words, it is important that children learn to build interest in sounds around them. **How to play:** Go on a 'Listening Walk' around the setting and local area. Point out particular sounds from machines, objects, animals etc and the sound of people talking. Name the sounds and encourage the children to mimic them.	Keep to quieter areas where sounds are more noticeable.	Move to noisier areas. Can the children identify different sounds?
To listen to a short story with pictures and a simple sequence of events.	**Storytime:** ***Listening to a familiar, repetitive story.*** Joining in with gestures, words or phrases. **What to do:** Read a favourite story with a simple sequence of events e.g. 'The Gingerbread Man', or 'We are going on a Bear Hunt.' Encourage the children to join in with the repeated phrases. You could pause to encourage the children to complete a familiar phrase e.g. *'Run, run as fast as you___'.*	Use visual prompts to signal to child when to fill in a word. Make your pause longer and use emphasis in your voice.	Use lolly stick or finger puppets/ masks for the children to hold up when their character speaks.
To attend to a joint activity for a short time.	**Shopping Game:** ***Joining in with a simple shopping game.*** Listening to instructions from others and taking turns. **How to play:** Set up a pretend shop with toys and real items to buy. Encourage the children to take turns to be the shopkeeper/shopper. Encourage the shopper to ask for items. You may need to model this first. You could adapt this game and play a treasure hunt outdoors – using visual lists of 'treasures' to find e.g. a feather, leaf, stick. Children could collect their treasures to show others what they have found.	Give the children a visual shopping list. Reduce the number of items to help the children make a choice.	Ask for an item that is not available or put a 'silly' word in to see if they notice and correct you!

Attention and Listening – KEY STRATEGIES 2 years – 2 years 11 months

Make sure all adults MODEL and PRAISE good attention and listening behaviours.

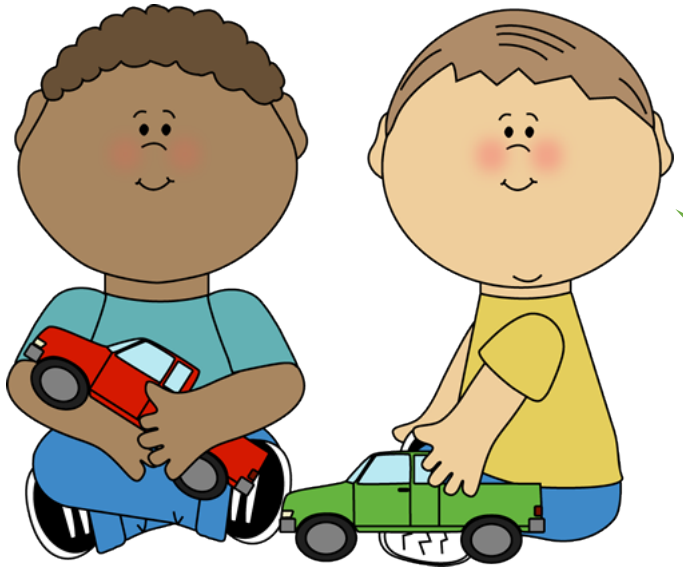
Follow my lead and comment on my play.

Use an interesting tone of voice and facial expression.

Wait until I am looking at you before speaking.

Speak clearly, calmly and slowly and give me thinking time.

Use my name to gain my attention.



Help me to join in a shared activity.

Get down to my level – face-to-face.

Use short, simple sentences.

Activity	Attention and Listening - Suggested Activities (2 years - 2 years 11 months)	Too difficult?	Too easy?
Jack in the Box!	***Listening for sounds before responding with an action.*** **How to play:** Choose a sound that the child has to listen out for, as a signal. Encourage the child to crouch down or curl into a ball. When they hear the sound, they can jump up - like a Jack in the box! You could play this game outside and easily vary it e.g. hide and jump out from behind trees.	Use a louder and more distinguishable sound.	Use a quieter sound.
Go!	***Encouraging the child to pay attention and listen to an instruction before completing an activity.*** **How to play:** Have a selection of different objects and a box or basket. Encourage the child to choose an object. Each time you say *'go'*, they throw the object into the box/basket. Praise the child for listening/waiting (even if they do not get the object into the box) e.g. *'Good listening'; 'Good waiting'*.	Use a gesture/visual signal and call their name before you say 'go'. Gently hold their hand with the object and let go as you say '*go*!'	Give the child a few objects. They have to listen for you to say which one they should throw into the box.
Listening to Sounds	***Paying attention to sounds in the environment.*** Before understanding and attending to words, it is important that children learn to build interest in sounds around them. **How to play:** Go on a 'Listening Walk' around the setting and local area. Point out particular sounds from machines, objects, animals etc and the sound of people talking. Name the sounds and encourage the children to mimic them.	Visit quieter areas where sounds are more noticeable.	Move to noisier areas. Can the children identify different sounds?
Storytime	***Listening to a familiar, repetitive story.*** Joining in with gestures, words or phrases. **What to do:** Read a favourite story with a simple sequence of events e.g. 'The Gingerbread Man', or 'We are going on a Bear Hunt.' Encourage the children to join in with the repeated phrases. You could pause to encourage the children to complete a familiar phrase e.g. *'Run, run as fast as you___'.*	Use visual prompts to signal to the child when to fill in a word. Make your pause longer and use emphasis in your voice.	Use lolly stick or finger puppets/masks for the child to hold up when their character speaks.
Shopping Game	***Joining in with a simple shopping game.*** Listening to instructions from others and taking turns. **How to play:** Set up a pretend shop with toys and real items to buy. Encourage the children to take turns to be the shopkeeper/shopper. Encourage the shopper to ask for items. You may need to model this first. You could adapt this game and play a treasure hunt outdoors using visual lists of 'treasures' to find e.g. a feather, leaf, stick. Children could collect their treasures to show others what they have found.	Give the child a visual shopping list. Reduce the number of items to help the child make a choice.	Ask for an item that is not available or put a 'silly' word in to see if they notice and correct you!

Play and Interaction – KEY STRATEGIES 2 years - 2 years 11 months

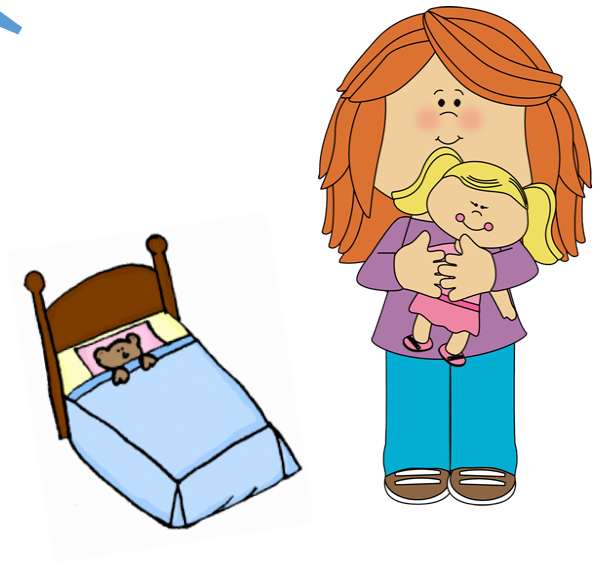
Adults may need to model the play and encourage interaction.

Model the next stage of sequence play to me.

Describe what I am doing.

Talk with me about what you are doing now and will do next.

Let me lead the play.



Encourage me to take turns.

Activity	Play and Interaction - Suggested Activities (2 years - 2 years 11 months)	Too difficult?	Too easy?
Can you do what I do?	***Developing and extending pretend play.*** Learning to put play sequences together *e.g. bath dolly, dress dolly and put dolly to bed.* **How to play:** You will need two sets of resources e.g. dollies, baths and bedclothes. Model getting dolly ready for bed and encourage the child to join in with their dolly e.g. 'Let's give dolly a bath; now let's get her dressed ready for bed…'**.**	Reduce the sequence to two steps.	Add more steps into the play sequence e.g. brush hair etc.
Let's join in.	***Learning to play together – playing group games.*** Learning to take turns and play with their peers. **How to play:** Gather a small group of children together. Have a selection of props to match familiar rhymes or songs e.g. Ring-a-ring-o'-roses; The Farmer's in his den etc. Support children to take turns to choose a prop - everybody sings and does the actions together. You may need to model carefully at the start and talk to the children about taking turns and joining in.	Play with a smaller group of children. Have the child next to you so you can help them.	Extend to taking two or three turns each.
Let's explore!	***Learning that objects can represent other things.*** Developing imaginative and symbolic play. **What to do:** Provide a range of everyday objects e.g. cardboard boxes, tubes, sticks etc. Discuss and model different uses and things the objects could represent e.g., a box could be a boat.	Demonstrate and use one object at a time in a variety of ways.	Provide added materials e.g. string, elastic bands, fabric to extend the play.
Roll the ball game.	***Taking turns and sharing.*** Interacting with others in a comfortable, familiar situation. **How to play:** Gather a small group together, either inside or outside, and sit in a circle. Call the child's name, wait for them to look at you and roll the ball to them. Ask them to name a child they want to roll the ball to.	The child could choose who to roll a ball to by looking at another child rather than using their name.	Keep the turns going and encourage children to choose different people to roll the ball to.
Pass the teddy	***Group circle time activity where children take turns sharing something they like.*** **How to play:** Sit with a small group of children in a circle - select children who are familiar with each other. Take turns to pass around a teddy and encourage the children to share things that they like when they are holding the teddy.	Use choices and model the language to the child.	Include different children in the group.

Understanding Spoken Language – KEY STRATEGIES 2 years - 2 years 11 months

Use the 10 Second Rule! Give the child time to process an instruction or question.

Give me short, clear instructions.

Check I know the names of objects before you give me an instruction.

Use simple language when you play with me.

Use your voice, gestures or a sign to emphasize key words.

Get my attention before you talk with me.

SHOW me what to do if I don't understand.

Activity	Understanding Spoken Language - Suggested Activities (2 years - 2 years 11 months)	Too difficult?	Too easy?
Teddy Wants	***Beginning to understand turn taking and simple concepts e.g. big and little.*** **How to play:** Have a big teddy and a little teddy and a selection of everyday items. Play a simple turn taking game to give the teddies an item e.g., *'Big teddy wants the spoon'. 'Little teddy wants a banana.'*	Focus on one concept at a time (not opposites). Use *'big'* and *'not big'*. Once they understand 'big' then introduce 'little'.	Introduce other concepts such as 'in/on/under'.
Hide the object	***Beginning to understand simple phrases.*** **How to play:** Have a few objects e.g. a car, train, teddy, dolly and a box. Play a simple game by asking the child to put dolly in the box etc. You may need to show the children *'in'* and use the word to support the actions. Move on to use 'on' and 'under' in the same way. You can also give simple instructions in other areas of the setting e.g. put the cow in the field; put dolly on the chair.	Limit the objects available to put in/on/under the box.	Introduce a couple of places to hide the object e.g. add a basket or a bag.
Share a picture	***Looking at a picture together.*** Supporting understanding of ***who, what*** *and* ***where*** questions. **What to do:** Choose picture books with scenes of a beach, park, home etc with families in. Look at the book together, narrate what you can see in the pictures e.g., *'I can see the boy playing with a ball', 'I can see the girl building a sand castle.'* After you have talked about the pictures, begin to ask simple questions e.g., *'**Who** is building a sandcastle?', '**What** is the boy holding?'* Encourage the child to show you – they don't need to explain. You can use everyday situations in the setting to ask questions too e.g., *'**Where** shall we look for snails?'*	Focus your comments on ***who*** initially.	Introduce ***who***, ***what*** and ***where*** questions.
Simon Says	***Helping the children to understand basic verbs (action words).*** **How to play:** Play a game of Simon Says to focus on verbs (action words) e.g. *'Simon says **jump**; Simon says **walk'**.* You could also ask the child to show you teddy or dolly ***sleeping/jumping/sitting*** etc. This is a great game to play outside.	Model the action, yourself or with a dolly or teddy. Check the child can one verb before adding others.	Move onto two verbs e.g. 'Clap your hands *and* stamp your feet.'
Story Time	***Sharing books and stories.*** **What to do:** Share familiar picture books and stories together. Use puppets and props and ask simple ***'who, what, where'*** questions to support the children's understanding of the story.	Choose very familiar, favourite books and stories.	See if they can tell you the story, in their own words, with visual support e.g. props and pictures.

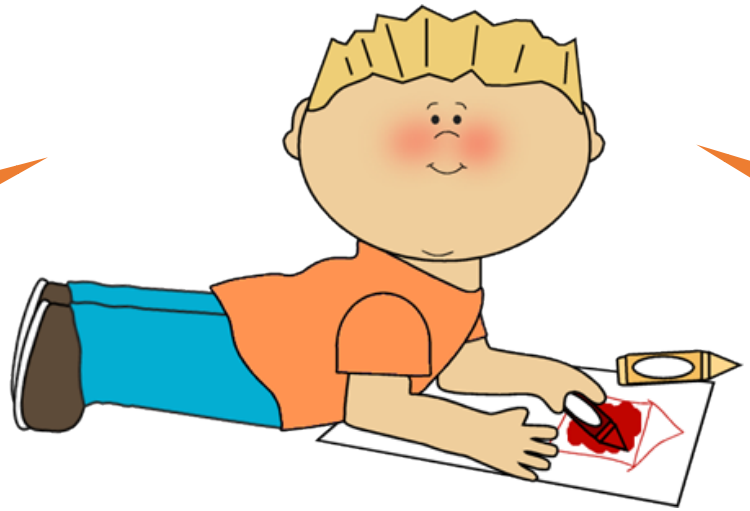
Using Spoken Language – KEY STRATEGIES 2 years - 2 years 11 months

Engage in authentic conversations that are meaningful to the child.

Let me ***hear*** the correct way to say something - do not tell me I am wrong.

WAIT!
Give me thinking time.

Let me tell you what I want to say.



Let me lead the play.

Add an extra word to what I say.

Activity	Using Spoken Language Suggested Activities (2 years - 2 years 11 months)	Too difficult?	Too easy?
What's in the bag?	***Encouraging the child to combine words.*** **How to play:** Have a bag and a selection of everyday objects. Take turns to pull something out of the bag and name the object e.g., *'I've got a toothbrush.'* You can develop this by adding the colour or size of the object e.g., *'It's a yellow plate.'*	If the child says one word, repeat it back and add an extra word e.g. if the child says ***'cup'*** you could say ***'red cup.'***	Talk about the function of the object e.g. *'A toothbrush, to clean our teeth.'*
Everyday play	***Using describing words in play.*** **What to do:** Focus on describing words during different play situations e.g., in the home corner you can talk about ***hot*** food, ***dirty*** dishes; in the large sandpit you can make ***big*** or ***little*** sandcastles.	Give the child a choice e.g. *'Is it **big** or **little**?'*	Extend the range of describing words.
Toys' Tea Party	***Using appropriate pronouns e.g. he, she, I, me.*** **How to play:** Set up a toys' tea party with a doll, teddy and any other favourite toy. Give each toy a plate, fork, cup etc and some pretend food. Model the use of the correct pronoun e.g. '***She*** has an apple'. Encourage the child to say what each toy has (using the correct pronoun) e.g. '***He*** has a banana.'	Focus on one pronoun e.g. ***he***	Extend the range of pronouns used.
Hide the object	***Beginning to use prepositions e.g. in, on, under.*** **How to play:** Have a few objects e.g. a car, train, teddy, dolly and a box. Play a simple game by asking the child to put 'dolly' ***in*** the box etc. Then ask the child to tell you where to put dolly. Move on to use '***on'*** and '***under'*** in the same way. You can use everyday activities to encourage the children to use prepositions e.g. children could tell you to put the 'plate ***on*** the table'.	Focus on one preposition e.g. ***on***	Introduce ***in, on*** and ***under.***
Talking telephones	***Encouraging the use of who, what and where questions.*** **How to play:** Have fun talking on the telephone together – model simple conversations and include questions such as *'**Where** are you?' '**Who** did you see?'* Encourage the children to ask you simple questions as they talk on the phone.	Start with one question word and use your voice to emphasize the word e.g. *'**Who** is there?'*	Encourage the children to use ***who, what*** and ***where*** questions.

Speech - KEY STRATEGIES 2 years - 2 years 11 months

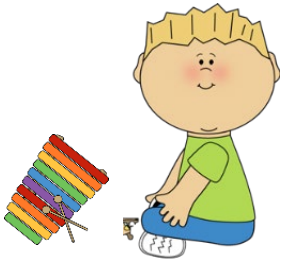
Repeat the child's unclear words back using the correct sounds.

Repeat my unclear words using the correct sounds so I can ***hear*** it.

Don't pretend to understand. Ask me to use actions or show you what I want.

Do not tell me I said something wrong or ask me to repeat it.

Get down to my level so I can see how you make sounds. Don't expect me to copy you.

Respond to the words I am saying, not how clear I am.

Speech Suggested Activities (2 years – 2 years 11 months)
Activities suggested in all other areas of communication will support the development of speech. Here are some everyday activities which can also help to develop children's speech:
Go on a listening walk (listen to environmental sounds).
Listen to sounds around the setting.
Tune into rhymes – say and sing rhymes every day.
Clap out syllables in familiar words e.g. children's names
Set up a noisy area/feely bags with sound makers and musical instruments.
Read lots of stories with easy-to-hear rhyming patterns. Encourage the children to predict the rhyming word when you pause.