

Sherburn Hungate
Primary School
Learning through Experience



Nursery

Pre-School Communication Booklet

Communicating, Listening And Understanding

Going to and moving through Nursery is a big step for any child and if they don't find talking easy, it can present some difficulties. Even little chatterboxes will need to learn how to interact in a larger group where there is more noise and more distraction. Communication is the foundation for just about every aspect of a child's development. Helping build good speech and language skills is one of the most important jobs you can do as a parent. The activities outlined in this booklet will help your child with:

- . Paying attention and listening
- . Understanding what is said
- . Learning new words
- . Making longer sentences
- . Talking socially

We hope you find these activities fun and informative.

Top tips for helping children with their language and communication skills.

Get your child's full attention

Use your child's name and get down to their level before speaking to them. Use eye contact to encourage them to listen to you and talk about subjects that interest them in order to hold their attention.

Make learning language fun

Don't be afraid to be silly, put on funny voices, sing funny songs, pull funny faces, and make up nonsense words. Often the funnier you are the more they will pay attention and remember.

Imitate children's language

Repeat a child's sentence back to them to show you are listening, and to show you value what they are saying. Repeating a sentence also allows them to hear what it sounds like, and if it makes sense.

Use a full range of expressions

Facial expressions and gestures are big clues for young children to help them understand meaning. Talking with an expressive voice and using intonation will also provide the children with a good example of how to speak in an interesting way that engages the listener.

Use simple repetitive language

Use short sentences to explain what you are doing or what you want or what you can see. "We are walking to the shops"; "You are building a tower".

Make it easy for your child to listen and talk

If your child uses a dummy, make sure it is not in the way of their talking. **Keep dummies for sleep time.** Have times when the television is off and there is no music to distract your child. Share a book or talk as you play and encourage your child to respond and share their thoughts and ideas.

Build on what children say

Build up your child's vocabulary gradually. If they say "Look a car", repeat to them, "Yes, look a blue car".

Give children time to respond

Children often need a little thinking time as they put their thoughts and words together. So give them more time to respond than you would another adult.

Be careful with questions

Try not to ask too many questions or your child can feel like you are constantly testing them. Try to share thoughts and ideas and don't always know the answer, "I'm not sure, what do you think"?

Demonstrate the right way to talk

Praise your child's efforts to communicate, even if they aren't perfect. Simply repeat what they say using the correct words, e.g. "Look at that tat", you reply "Yes, look at the cat". Wanting to communicate is a natural instinct, so praise and encouragement will create a confident talker.

www.cbeebies.co.uk is a useful website you may wish to look at, either for ideas or to play games with your children.

For speech / children's development advice contact

Sherburn Children's Centre, Finkle Street, Sherburn in Elmet, LS25 6EA

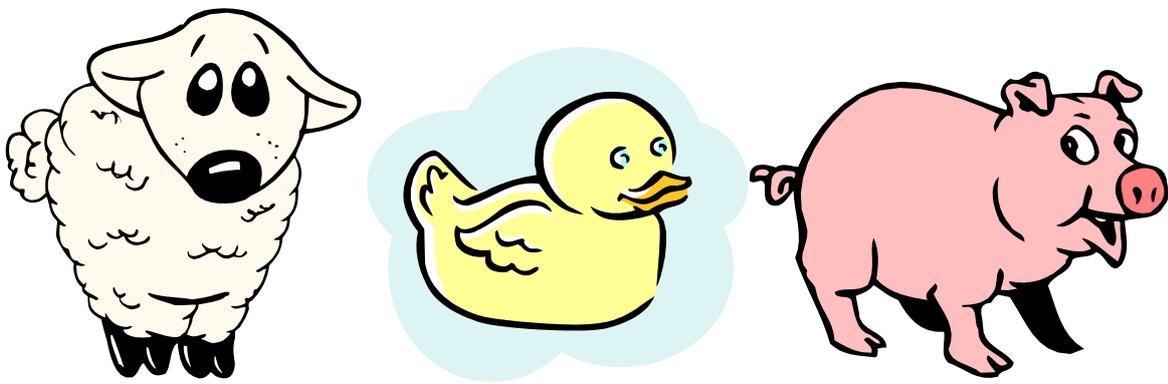
or for more information telephone 01904 724367.

Activities and Games

Which animal am I?

Make the sound of one of the animals in the picture and get your child to point to the one that matches your sound and say its name. To make it harder, do two or three sounds and then get them to tell you them in the right order.

(Listening to and distinguishing sounds makes it easier for your child to tune into voices, such as their teacher's voice.)



I went shopping and I bought....

Use real objects and a bag or pictures. Take it in turns to go shopping and put one item at a time in the bag each time. "I went shopping and I bought an apple." Build up to five or six items, can they remember them without looking? Unpack the bag and check.

(This will help the children to take in more than one piece of spoken language at a time, i.e. "Can you wash your hands and then sit on the carpet".)

Things that go together

Cut out some pictures from magazines, etc, that go together, i.e. things we drink, things we wear, things we find in the kitchen, etc, and then get the children to group them together. You could even stick them in a scrap book so they can look back at them if they want to.

(Knowing the names of everyday objects helps when in pre-school. It will also build up their vocabulary and help them organise information.)

What do you hear?

You can play this game wherever you are; at home, in the garden, at night when they go to bed, at the supermarket. Just take a couple of minutes to stop and listen to all the environmental sounds they can hear; do they know what is making these sounds?

(This game develops listening skills and helps them tune in to what is important and what they mean.)

Tell me a story

Encourage your child to listen to a simple story that you tell. For example, "There was once a little bear who wanted his daddy to take him swimming, so he went to get his swimming things ready." You could ask your child what he would need to take, and then carry on the story a bit further. "They got in the car but the traffic was really slow so they..."; again asks your child to say what happens next. If they are reluctant then give them a couple of options to choose from. The story can be as realistic or fantastic as you like, let your imaginations run wild.

(Story telling is a huge part of what we do at nursery, making them up, having our favourites, changing the endings. The more familiar your child is with this medium the better.)

Play eye spy

Play using colours rather than initial sounds.

(This encourages children to look around and communicate what they see, as well as learning their colours.)

The name game

You can use any picture snap cards. Have one set spread out face up and another in a pile face down. You pick one from the pile tell the child what you have and they then point to the matching card.

(This game encourages them to listen and learn new words and match them to the object and learn to take turns.)

Sharing Stories

Read and share stories with your child. They may want to read the same one again and again, that is fine as they develop an understanding of story structure and they can then retell a familiar story back to you. Talk about the pictures, look at the characters' faces to see how they are feeling, ask what they think could happen next, point out objects in the pictures.

(Sharing stories helps develop your child's vocabulary, understanding of story structure, listening and communication skills. It is the beginning of becoming a reader.)

What will I do today?

Nursery may be the first time your child has been left on a regular basis, so helping them sequence events in their day will help them understand what is happening, and what will happen next. Talk to them about their routine, ie, we get up, get dressed, have breakfast, brush our teeth and then go out, and the same at bedtime. It will make them feel secure and in control of their world.

I hope that these activities help you and your child to prepare for starting nursery. If you have any worries about your child's communication skills, you can always talk to any of our Nursery staff.