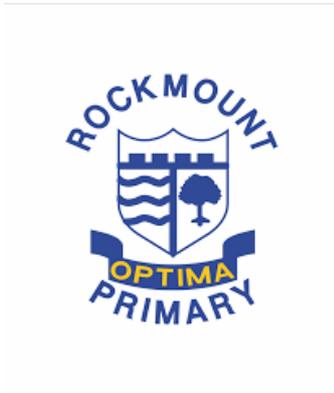




Love to Communicate

INDEPENDENT SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY



Supporting speech and language skills at school and home

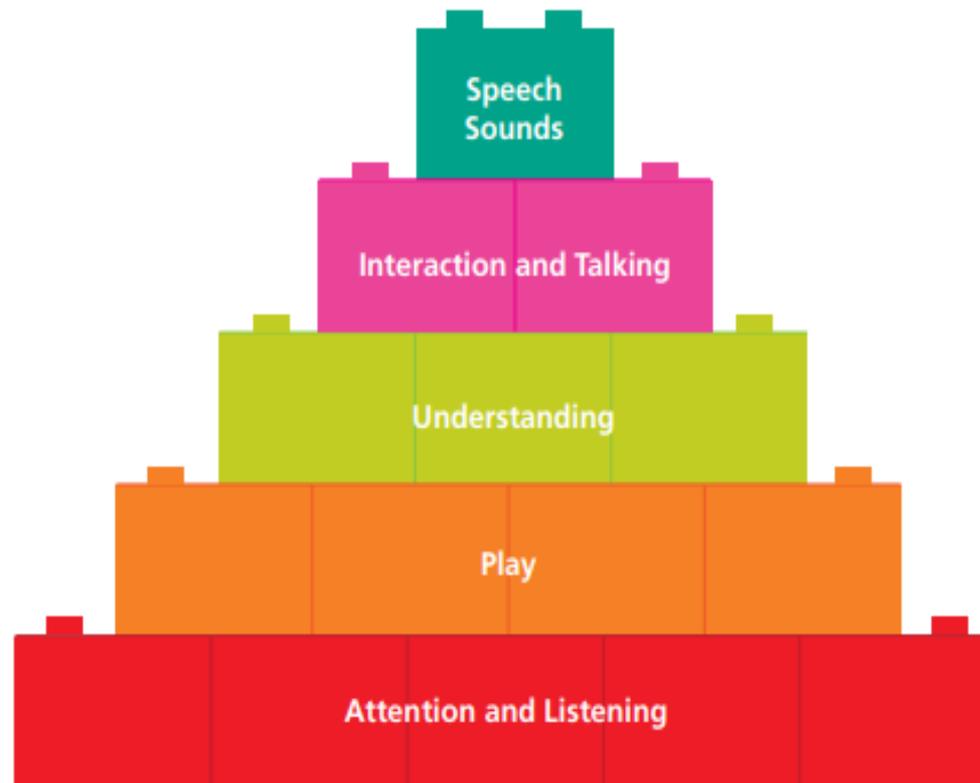
Downsview Primary School & Rockmount Primary School



Love to Communicate

INDEPENDENT SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Being able to communicate is not just about talking.....



Neurodiversity



Love to Communicate
INDEPENDENT SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

What is Neurodiversity?

- Neurodiversity is an umbrella term used to describe a number of these variations.
- It is estimated that around 1 in 7 people in the UK have some kind of neuro difference.

Most common types of neurodiversity

You may have heard of many of these types of neurodiversity.

- Autism, or Autism Spectrum Conditions
- ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder
- Dyscalculia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia, or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)



What is Attention & Listening?

- Listening is a skill that young children need to learn.
- There are different levels of attention and listening which children move through as they develop.
- By 3 years of age, a child should be able to give their full attention to an adult's instructions.
- By 4/5 years of age, they should be able to listen to an adult's instructions without stopping what they are doing – a helpful skill in the classroom





Supporting attention & listening skills

- Keep **noise level low** and **distractions** to a **minimum** when engaging in joint activities e.g. turn the TV/ radio off to get their full attention
- **Gain your child's attention** before giving instructions – call their name or touch their arm to help them to focus
- **Use timers, now/next prompts** to support attention to tasks
- Allow them to have **breaks** after completing a certain number of questions/ parts of a task
- **Demonstrate & model active listening** - when children are speaking to you, stop, make eye contact and fully concentrate on what they are saying
- Reinforce, catch them and **give specific praise for showing good attention and listening**



Activity ideas

- **Listening walk:** Tell your child you're going on a listening walk. Explain that they must listen very carefully to the sounds they can hear around them. Walk for a while and then stop. Ask your child to be very quiet and to say what they can hear.
- **Remembering games** e.g. "I went shopping" - Start by saying: 'I went shopping and bought some milk.' Ask your child to repeat what you said and add another item e.g. "I went shopping and bought some milk and some bread". Take turns to keep adding items. See how many you can remember!
- Ask your child to make **noises** in songs and **stories** whenever certain characters or actions are mentioned. E.g. every time the Wolf is mentioned in Little Red Riding Hood, they must make a sound like a wolf.
- **Sing songs** and **nursery rhymes**, pausing for your child to fill in missing words.



Play

- Play is a really important part of children's learning and development.

Children learn all kinds of skills through play:

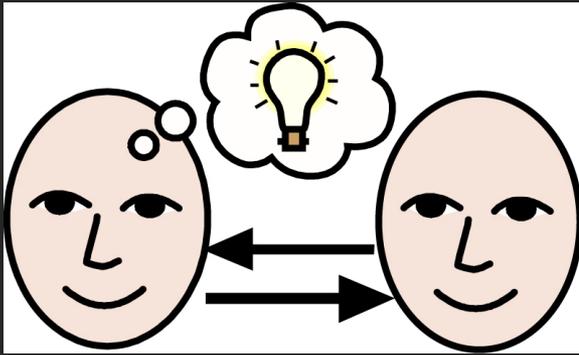
- how things work
- how to interact and share with other children
- how to enter a world of imagination

Supporting play skills:



- Join in with what your child is playing and follow their lead
- Practice taking turns – your turn, my turn
- Practice pretend play e.g. pretend to have a tea party/picnic/shop
- Stories – act out parts of your child's favourite story books or stories they have watched on TV/ in films

Supporting understanding



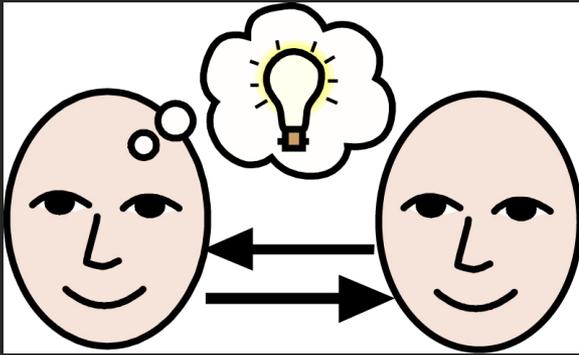
• **Instructions:**

- Be aware of how many key words you are using in an instruction
- Break instructions down into a few small parts rather than saying them in one long sentence.
- Practice following instructions with games e.g. Simon says, shopping, drawing games

Questions:

- Focus on simple who, what, where and when questions. Emphasise these concepts when looking at books and throughout the day e.g. "where is your bag?" - "it's on the peg", "who is sleeping?" - "It's Goldilocks"
- Once your child is able to answer these questions, move on to why and how. Always model the correct answers e.g. "how are they feeling?" - "they're smiling so they are feeling happy"

Supporting understanding



Vocabulary:

- Link spoken words with pictures or real items
- Find out what topics or vocabulary your child is learning at school and practice using new words at home. Explain the meaning of new words e.g. 'by tomorrow I mean the day after today, after you've had one more sleep.'
- Build in lots of repetition of new words in different situations throughout the day e.g. when walking down the street, at the shops, or at home. This will help children learn new words more easily.
- Play guessing games with new vocabulary you have been learning e.g. give clues about the meaning and see if your child can guess the answer e.g. it's an animal, it has stripes, it's black and white / it's a food, it's round, it's crunchy, it grows on trees, it begins with "a".
- **Asking for help:**
- Check regularly that your child has understood what you have asked them to do
- Encourage your child to ask for help when they have not understood something

Supporting using language



Encouraging use of language:

- Give choices throughout the day to support requesting
- Allow your child plenty of time to produce language
- Use sentence starters to support children to give answers to questions e.g. 'it's a
- Give choices of answers and always model back the correct answer
- **Model language to your child:**
 - Get down to your child's level and comment on what your child is doing with short phrases
 - If they have said a few words, add 1 or 2 extra words
 - If they have made a sentence, model back correct grammar and vocabulary
 - Use specific language (e.g. 'the green chair') rather than empty words (e.g. 'the one over there')
 - Look at books with your child as often as you can. Talk about what you can see in the pictures and what might happen next. Talk about new words and their meanings.

Supporting social skills



- Practice taking turns. Play any simple game where you need to take turns e.g. take turns to add a brick to a tower you're building... take turns to play a simple board game like snakes and ladders... take turns to throw a ball...
- Emphasise that it does not matter if you win or lose a game but acknowledge your child's feelings e.g. "I can see you're feeling upset that you didn't win this time. We can play again another time"
- Be a good model - children learn how to interact appropriately from watching how adults interact with other adults and children
- Use emotions vocabulary throughout the day e.g. "I'm feeling tired", "I can see that you are feeling angry, let's take some time to feel calmer"
- Have strategies that your child can choose from to help them to feel calmer

Supporting social skills



- **Conversation:**
 - Make sure that your child has plenty of opportunities to interact with you, the rest of the family and friends without technology. Have technology-free talk time where you give your child your full attention and model how to listen to what somebody is saying and how to respond appropriately.
 - Start by talking about what your child is interested in- this will be more motivating for them.
 - When going to or from school, talk about what you can see around you or what your child will be doing/ has done at school.
 - Three good things - share some time with your child to talk about what they have enjoyed in their day. Ask if they can think of 3 good things they did in the day. Share good things that have happened in your day.
 - Look together at the photos you've saved on your phone/ tablet – can your child remember the story behind the photo? e.g. when you went to the park/ saw family/friends.

Speech sounds



- **By age 6** their speech should be clear even to unfamiliar people, but children may make little mistakes, especially when saying long words.
- If your child makes a mistake with their speech sounds e.g. says “I want to sit on the tair”, don't correct them, but do repeat back the correct way to say the word e.g. “you want to sit on the **ch**air”.
- Your child's speech and language therapist will provide support to develop specific speech sounds that your child may be finding difficult to make. Activities should be carried out daily in order to see progress.
- Play games to help your child notice the different sounds in words e.g.
 - I spy – find something you can see and give your child the first sound and ask them to guess what it is e.g. “I spy something starting with ssssss...”
 - Odd one out – say 4 words - 3 starting with the same sound and 1 with a different sound - ask your child to spot the 1 that doesn't start with the same sound e.g. “chips, chicken, chair, dog - which doesn't have a ch sound”?
 - One more.... - say 3 words beginning with the same sound, ask your child to think of 1 more e.g. “cat, cake, car..what else begins with c”?

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For more information and activity ideas:

Lots of brilliant free resources available

Speech & Language UK:

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/information-and-support/>

BBC – Tiny Happy People:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

Speech & Language Link – Parent Portal:

<https://speechandlanguage.info/parents>

What to do if I am concerned?

-
- Speak to your child's class teacher to gain their views
 - Discuss any further concerns with Special Educational Needs Coordinators:

Ms. Hearne-Reed

Ms. Gorman

- Speak to GP who can support referral to relevant professionals & services

- Self-referrals can be made via this email address:

CH-TR.SLTcroydonchildren@nhs.net

- ASLTIP – list of independent speech & language therapist (can search by location)

