

# Intensive Interaction

An approach to teaching communication to children at an early stage of communication development

## Intensive interaction can develop the following interaction skills:

- Participation and shared enjoyment
- Building relationships
- Using and understanding eye contact (e.g. looking)
- Using and understanding facial expressions (e.g. smiling)
- Turn taking in communication through exchanges of behaviour (e.g. copying actions)
- Using vocalisations



## How to do Intensive Interaction:

- Use incidental and planned opportunities to spend time with the child to engage in Intensive Interaction.
- Make sure the child can see your face - get down to their level.
- Give them your full attention.
- PAUSE – wait, be patient and observe what the child is doing. This will give the child time to process your response and to give them an opportunity to respond to you.
- Let the child lead and direct the interaction – join in and copy their behaviours (e.g. facial expressions, vocalisations, movements).
- Follow the pace of the child. Remember, the focus of the interaction is the child.
- The interaction should be fun and relaxed!
- Stop the interaction when the child has had enough.
- It is ok for sessions to be short or repetitive.
- Copy significant actions (not every action) so that the child learns that actions gain a response from the adult.
- You don't need to use other objects during the interaction, but follow the child's interest if they uses objects (e.g. toys) during the interaction session.
- Through many positive experiences from these interactions, the child will begin to learn that engaging with others can be enjoyable and rewarding.

**Links to EYFS:** C&L, PSED

**Links to SEND Code of Practice:** C&L, C&I, SEMH

## Try this at home:

- Intensive interaction strategies can be used anytime, anywhere. Make time for quality interactions with your child
- Begin with short bursts of interaction, and build up the duration of sessions.
- Follow your child's interests.
- You may feel self-conscious at first, but persevere, it's worth it!