

## Supporting a child's communication during their play

Play is a child's natural learning process. As adults we can support children during their play to develop their language skills, interactions with other children and turn taking skills.

- Follow the child's interest and let them take the lead.
- The role of the adult is to model language and interactions with others, by providing a running commentary. Learning moments are to be modelled by the adult with no expectation for the child to repeat what you say.
- Adults should provide a running commentary of the play. **DO NOT ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS.** Use a running commentary, repeat what the child says (modelled language), expand what the child says and offer a simple explanation to one question used by the adult. Though using no questions is ideal.

Using a running commentary will develop a child's understanding of language, name of objects and simple concepts.

- For a child making sounds the adult should replicate the noise being made. While playing with the child name the objects/resources using single words.
- For a child who is babbling, the adult should model simple language using one or two words. Adults may need to use the context of the play/objects to understand what the child has said.
- For a child using simple language, adults should model language back. There will be occasions when adults can expand their language by adding a verb or adjective.
- Give the child time to respond to your comments. This can be difficult for an adult to do. It can be helpful to sing a nursery rhyme in your head.

**Child** making a noise while playing with car.

**Adult** "brrrrrm, brrrrrm.....car"

**Child** using babble talk. "ar"

**Adult** "car" and continue with simple running commentary.

**Child** using simple language. "I car"

**Adult** "yes you have a car" "a green car".

Links to EYFS: CLL, PSED, LIT, MATHS, KU. SEND Code of Practice: C&L, C&I, SEMH, P&S.

### At home

- Follow your child's lead in their play and interests.
- Plan your day so when you join their play it should not be interrupted and you can give your full attention.
- Provide a running commentary and try not to ask too many questions. See the above strategies.
- Use simple language and provide moments where you can introduce a new word.
- Use objects with simple language to give your child a choice. "red car or the green car"?