

Language Top Tips

Making understanding easier

- Try to break down instructions into chunks and allow time for your child to process each part before giving the next one.
- Use visual supports to help your child to remember, process and complete tasks, such as checklists, pictures and symbols.
- Use lots of gestures and other non-verbal prompts when giving instructions or asking questions, alongside the visual supports
- Encourage your child to tell you when they don't understand an instruction or a word you said.
- Say your child's name and ensure that you have their attention before giving them an instruction.
- Reduce background noise and distractions when talking to your child, for example turning off the radio or tv.
- If you use language which is non-literal, explain what the words mean.

Making talking easier

- Give your child time to plan and organise what they want to say.
- Model sentence structure, grammar and vocabulary by modelling your child's language back to them in the correct way.
- Use prompt words if your child is struggling to describe something, to help them express what they want to say.

Learning new words

- Ensure that topic words are shared between home and school.
- Give opportunities for multisensory learning. For example, use real life experiences, pictures and objects to reinforce the meaning of new words.
- Provide opportunities for your child to use new words in context, to help them practise using them in a sentence.
- Say an object's name while helping your child to look at it. This helps them to learn and remember names for objects that they haven't seen before.
- Repeat key words throughout the day, in a range of situations. Children need to hear a word many times before they can begin to learn and use the word themselves.
- Talk about how words go together and how they link to words they already know. Talking about these things helps reinforce the meaning of the word.
- Model lots of different types of words such as:
 - Action words (e.g. walking, running, jumping)
 - Describing words (e.g. big, heavy, red)
 - Naming words (e.g. pencil, ball, bag)