

Social Interaction

- Starts conversations with adults and children they don't know.
- Makes and maintains friendships, and is aware of the needs of others.
- Knows that the person they're talking to has different perspectives and their knowledge differs from their own.
- Fully understands the difference between the words and style of talk used with friends and the different style of talk needed in the classroom.
- Stays on one conversational topic for long periods and moves sensibly from one topic to another.
- Switches easily between informal and formal styles of talking, E.g. "Yeah, whatever, you numpty...Oh evening Mr Johnson, how are you?"
- Understands sarcasm by the situation and without the need for a sarcastic tone of voice.
- Uses sarcasm in humour (e.g. a sarcastic comment for someone who can't sing might be "What a great singing voice you have, you should enrol on X factor").
- Takes part in group social interactions, knowing appropriate times to join in conversations.
- Uses metaphors and sarcasm appropriately in different social situations

HOW CAN I HELP?:

- Adults need to explain how to repair interactions and conversations by helping children/ young people to understand what has happened.
- Making the rules of conversations explicit.

WHAT NEXT?:

- Providing opportunities for unstructured conversations between peers and adults (e.g. on school trips, afterschool clubs, sports events).
- At home include children/ young people in more adult led conversations at times, so they can practise their emerging social skills

Listening and Understanding

- Understands sarcasm - knows when others are being sarcastic and how to use sarcasm.
- Knows that they talk differently to friends than to teachers and are able to adjust this easily.
- Understands and uses slang terms with friends.
- Shows more understanding of idioms e.g. "beat around the bush!"
- Understands complex language in academic settings.
- Follows complicated instructions in groups.
- Knows when they haven't understood something so will ask to be told again or have something be explained.
- Understands well the words that are used in questions in exams and in the classroom.
- Understands and explains words and sayings with double meanings (e.g. "Lemons can leave a bitter taste" / "It was a bitter experience" / "The cold was bitter").
- Is skillful in discussions and uses a range of arguments to persuade others.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

- Use strategies to support word finding (e.g. what does it start with, can you think of another word that is similar, where might you see it, etc).
- Adults need to be aware that they should check understanding regularly and don't assume that children/ young people have understood.
- Use visual supports to support understanding (e.g. visual timetables, task lists, written instructions).

WHAT NEXT?:

- Provide opportunities for children/ young people to offer their own opinions, and discuss how opinions may differ.
- Regularly enable discussions on topics that require children/ young people to form their own opinions.
- Encourage children/ young people to defend their opinions based on research that they have gathered

Speech Sounds

- Speech is clear and adult-like.
- Some speech sound differences across individuals can be accent-based.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

- If a child/ young person is having difficulties with producing speech sounds consider a referral to specialist speech and language therapy services.



Talking/Expressive Language

- Uses longer spoken and written sentences, using a range of joining words (connectives/conjunctions) e.g. 'however' 'except', 'furthermore' to convey complex ideas.
- Is able to change topic well in conversations.
- Easily adapts the way they speak depending on who they're talking to/what the environment is.
- Takes turns easily in conversations.
- Tells long and complicated stories.
- Has approximately 30,000 words in their vocabulary by the end of school.
- Uses spelling rules and patterns in words to get clues to understand word meaning (e.g. unreliable – 'un' means 'not' so this person isn't very reliable).
- Confidently explains the meaning of technical words in different subjects.
- Young people and adults will continue to learn new words into later life. This is really important for learning and development as vocabulary has been shown to be key in how well young people do beyond school or college and into the workplace.

HOW CAN I HELP?:

- Continue to teach new words and revise the meanings of those you have taught.
- Encourage child/ young person to match definitions to new words, play around with descriptive words adding more to discussions in conversations, introduce new phrases and expressions, continue to teach new conjunctions, etc.
- Highlight your top 10 words for a topic and teach these explicitly.

WHAT NEXT?:

Encourage child/ young person to reflect on their own use of language – how could they make their argument stronger, what other words and phrases could be used, how could they clarify their point?

