Speech, Language and Communication in EYFS and KS1

Small changes make a big difference for every child!

GREAT CHART SCHOOL

Speech

The sounds we make and how we say words.



Language

How we understand and use words and sentences (receptive and expressive).



Communication

The social use of language – sharing ideas, taking turns and understanding others.



Strong speech, language and communication skills help children to:

- understand lessons
- follow instructions
- build relationships
- develop vocabulary
- access the curriculum
- succeed in reading and writing

6 Simple and Effective Strategies for Everyday Practice

These inclusive strategies benefit all children, especially those with speech, language and communication needs.

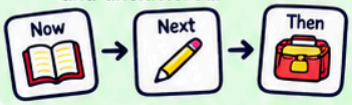
1 Reduce the language load

- Give one or two instructions at a time.
- Use short, clear sentences.
- Pause to give thinking time.
- Support with a gesture, object or visual.



2 Use purposeful visuals

- Use visuals to support and clarify language (e.g. now/next, timetables, sequences, diagrams).
- Point to the visual as you speak.
- Keep visuals relevant and uncluttered.



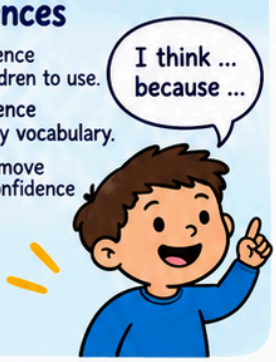
3 Teach and build vocabulary

- Choose 3–5 key words per lesson or topic.
- Explain the meaning clearly. Show the word (picture, object or action).
- Use it in sentences and across different contexts.
- Revisit and encourage children to use the words themselves.

evaporate · smooth · sturdy

4 Model and scaffold sentences

- Say the sentence you want children to use.
- Provide sentence stems and key vocabulary.
- Gradually remove support as confidence grows.



5 Build talk into lessons

- Give thinking time.
- Use talk partners to rehearse ideas.
- Involve everyone through paired or small group talk before whole-class responses.
- Provide sentence stems and key vocabulary.



6 Check understanding differently

- Ask children to show, tell or demonstrate what they need to do.
- Ask them to explain in their own words.
- Use practical tasks, visuals or examples instead of just 'Do you understand?'



Remember...

Behaviour and attention difficulties can sometimes be a sign of a communication challenge rather than non-compliance.

A simple way to extend children's language

Child: "Dog running." → **Adult:** "Yes, the big dog is running quickly."

Acknowledge what they say, then add a little more.

The big picture

Good speech, language and communication skills help children to learn, access the curriculum, build relationships and feel confident – now and in the future.

Talk • Listen • Understand • Learn • Belong