**Audit to support practice and provision for effective communication**

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| **Setting name / address** |  | | | | |
| **Registration number** |  | **Current Ofsted outcome** |  | **Date of completion** |  |

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| **People involved in completing this audit** | |
| **Name** | **Role** |
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**Further information:**

Local offer speech and language page, including screening tools:

<https://localoffer.cumbria.gov.uk/kb5/cumbria/fsd/advice.page?id=RrlMcq6WEnw>

[Supporting children s speech, language and communication development (cumbria.gov.uk)](https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/1459/7037/38477/38486/45264122129.pdf)

WAF Early Years website for access to Chat, Play Share rhyme sheets:

[Support for Childminders, Early Years and Childcare Provision | Westmorland and Furness Council](https://legacy.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/childrensservices/childrenandfamilies/cfis/earlyyearsandchildcare/supportforearlyyearsandchildcareprovision.asp)

EAL guidance document

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/1459/7037/17792/43777124926.pdf>

| **Communication and language friendly environment** | | | | |
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| **Criteria** | **Emerging** | **Developing** | **Established** | **Comments / identified actions** |
| The setting promotes parent and child conversation as they enter the setting. |  |  |  |  |
| The entrance to your setting is well-organised and welcoming to children, parents and visitors. |  |  |  |  |
| All families receive a warm welcome from their key person. |  |  |  |  |
| You have explored your setting at child level to see what the environment looks and feels like to a young child. |  |  |  |  |
| Spaces in your environment meet individual children’s communication and emotional needs both indoors and outside. This could include quiet areas, spaces to talk calmly and self-regulate or spaces to run, shout and use energy. |  |  |  |  |
| The environment enables opportunities for everyone to hear and be heard. Music is limited to specific activities in the sessions (not background music). |  |  |  |  |
| When planning the environment colour schemes which may avoid over-stimulation and acoustics are considered. |  |  |  |  |
| Interesting and stimulating resources are available to promote speech, communication and language. These include small world and role play resources, puppets, cause and effect toys, open-ended and natural materials. |  |  |  |  |
| There is an inviting book area with a variety of high-quality books and related props for storytelling. This matches the needs and interests of the children and may include hard cover, soft cover, fiction, non-fiction, nursery rhymes, poems, lift the flap and sensory books. |  |  |  |  |
| Children have access to open-ended role play and dressing up resources which promote interaction and storytelling. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners make an informed choice when considering which books to use with each age group. |  |  |  |  |
| Literature is available in most areas of your provision (magazines, comics, posters/plans, books, signs). |  |  |  |  |
| Parents are encouraged to share books and rhymes at home. Some books may be available for sharing at home. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners model quality book sharing for parents to repeat at home. Considering the child’s level of development, for example simplifying the story for some children or just turning the pages and looking together at pictures. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners prioritise learning with children in areas of provisions and understand how to support children to develop effective communication skills. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are aware of and utilise the wealth of communication opportunities within the daily routine e.g., changing times, transition times, mealtimes. New vocabulary and correct pronunciation of words is routinely modelled. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners sit with children whilst they eat and see this as an important time to model language, engage in conversation and promote other leaning opportunities. |  |  |  |  |

| **Role of the adult in helping children to become effective communicators** | | | | |
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| **Criteria** | **Emerging** | **Developing** | **Established** | **Comments / identified actions** |
| Children are provided with things they want to talk about and someone they can talk to. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are interested in what children have to say and are knowledgeable of their interests so these can be used as starting points for conversation and learning. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners spend most of their day talking and communicating with children in the setting. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners identify and prioritise children who do not seek out quality two-way communications throughout the day. This includes with adults and other children. |  |  |  |  |
| There are daily opportunities for every child to share a book with an adult. Practitioners are aware of which children may not have these opportunities at home and offer extra support. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners limit their use of questions (but are skilled at using open-ended questions) to one question for every four comments / repetition/expansion or explanation. This makes interaction a two-way conversation. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners provide a running commentary for children who are in the early stages of learning to speak. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners routinely model sounds, words and phrases in play, linked to the child’s level of development. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners model correct vocabulary and pronunciation when speaking to and with children. |  |  |  |  |
| Familiar and unfamiliar resources are available that are exciting for the children to discover and talk to practitioners about. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners know how to develop children’s language and communication in their play. They get down to the child’s level and make eye-contact. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners use a child’s name to get their attention before giving instructions or starting conversations. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners add words to those a child already has, for example if a child uses a noun, the practitioner is heard to use a different type of word to describe this noun. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand the stages of communication and language development and how to develop communication skills in all children. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are confident to talk to parents about their child’s communication and language needs supporting them with strategies and ideas. |  |  |  |  |
| Children are taught how to listen and pay attention in an age-appropriate way through specific activities and in provision. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are observed to repeat words that a child uses. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are observed to comment on what a child is doing, they may watch a child play for a short while and make comments about their play e.g. ‘you’ve made a tower’. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners enable children to have time and space to process and respond to adult interactions. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners enjoy singing with all the children every day and use actions alongside songs. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners see story time as a valued opportunity, not as a holding activity or something to do at the end of a session when children are tired. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners model positive interactions when communicating with colleagues, other professionals and parents. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand the use of dummies for sleeping/comforting and have strategies to help parents lessen dummy use. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand the building blocks of language and can use this to support children to become effective communicators. For example, practitioners may be able to identify that a particular child’s language skills may be being impacted on by their attention and listening skills or play skills. |  |  |  |  |
| Children are given opportunities to express their emotions by staff asking them how they are or how they feel about a certain activity. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are seen to offer children choices throughout the day as a way of modelling new language for the child. |  |  |  |  |
| When appropriate to a child’s level of language practitioners are seen to ask children about past events. |  |  |  |  |
| When appropriate to a child’s level of language practitioners are seen to ask a child ‘why’ they might think something had happened (e.g. in a story). |  |  |  |  |

| **Overview of practice and provision** | | | | |
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| **Criteria** | **Emerging** | **Developing** | **Established** | **Comments / identified actions** |
| Practitioners communicate home learning ideas and share materials with families. This could include ‘Time Together at Home’, ‘Chat Play Share’ rhyme sheets and communication websites (see links above). |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are aware of and understand how to use the screening tools available on the local offer website. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand when a referral to the Speech and Language Therapy service is appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| If a child is receiving support from a speech therapist, their advice is followed, and episode goals included in their EY SEN support plan. |  |  |  |  |
| All practitioners are aware of the Speech Therapy advice line in county. |  |  |  |  |
| Information about the Speech Therapy advice line and Facebook page is displayed for parents. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners have access to continuous professional development to support their understanding of communication and language quality practice.  This could include training, website research, on-line courses, books and in-house discussion. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners regularly promote and plan activities which develop children’s phonological awareness.  (Consider using additional audit tool for developing early phonological awareness) |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are aware of and have accessed guidance documents and CPD available via the CCC Early Years website. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners follow children’s interests when deciding how to encourage individual children to become effective communicators. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are aware of individual children’s barriers to language development which may include glue ear, hearing impairment, poor listening skills. |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand how to help children for whom English is an additional language (EAL) to acquire language and communication skills, whilst valuing and promoting use of their home language. |  |  |  |  |

This audit tool does not need to be completed in one go and ideally all staff should be able to input their thoughts and reflections. Some points will only be appropriate for practitioners working with older children, not in baby rooms, so sections can be left blank if not relevant. Managers may also choose to use it as an observational tool when identifying strengths and areas for development in rooms, which can then be discussed with practitioners.

| **Improvement priorities** | **Agreed support** | **Timescale (from – to)** | **Success criteria** | **Evaluation** |
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