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| **Communication and Language – Understanding**  *Developing Knowledge and Skills Sequentially* | | | |
| **Range/Knowledge** | | **Positive Relationships** | **Enabling Environments** |
| 1. | • Turns when hears own name  • Starts to understand contextual clues, e.g. familiar, gestures, words and sounds | • Look at the baby and say their name. Make eye contact and wait for  them to react.  • Interpret and give meaning to the things young babies show interest in, e.g. when babies point to an object tell them what it is.  • Use an animated, enthusiastic face when interacting with children.  • Observe children as they watch their environment.  • Look out for strategies babies use to attract your attention, such as seeking eye contact, gestures such as pointing, facial expressions and intentional physical movement.  • Talk to babies about what you are doing and what is happening, so they will link words with actions, e.g. preparing lunch.  • Use actions including hands and finger plays to support your words, e.g. waving when you say *bye bye.*  • Speak clearly. Babies respond well to a higher pitched, sing-song voice.  • Use and repeat single words while you share attention to an object or event, so the baby can gradually link the word to its meaning. | • Let babies see and hear the sequence of actions you go through as you carry out familiar routines.  • Provide resources and spaces that stimulate babies’ interests such as a shiny bell, a book or a mirror on the floor or on your lap.  • Find out from parents how babies make themselves understood at home.  • Confirm which is their home language.  • Display lists of words from different home languages, and invite parents and other adults to contribute. Include all languages in the community since seeing their languages reflected in the setting will encourage all parents to feel involved and valued.  • When singing rhymes and songs use actions to support children’s understanding of words and their relation to wider life. |
| 2. | • Is developing the ability to follow others’ body language, including pointing and gesture  • Responds to simple questions when in a familiar context with a special person (e.g. *Where’s* *Mummy?, Where’s your nose?)*  • Understanding of single words in context is developing, e.g. *cup, milk, daddy* |
| 3. | • Understands different situations - able to follow routine events and activities using nonverbal cues  • Selects familiar objects by name and will go and find objects when asked, or identify objects from a group  • Understands simple sentences (e.g. *Throw the ball*) | • Use gestures and facial expression to help show your meaning.  • Be aware that young children’s understanding is much greater than their ability to express their thoughts and ideas. For example, a child may be able to go and hang their coat up when asked but say only  *coat up* to explain what they did.  • Recognise young children’s competence and appreciate their efforts when they show their understanding of new words and phrases (*Yes, that is a little flower*).  • Use language appropriate to the child’s level of understanding.  • Stay with the child while they play, taking time to watch their movements and react to their initiations and adding words to describe what the child is doing. | • Plan play activities and provide resources which encourage young children to engage in symbolic play, e.g. putting a “baby” to bed and talking to it  appropriately.  • Plan real world shared experiences such as visits, everyday tasks, or preparing activities in the setting.  • Use pictures, books, real objects, and signs alongside your words. |
| 4. | • Identifies action words by following simple instructions, e.g. *Show me jumping*  • Beginning to understand more complex sentences, e.g. *Put your toys away and then sit on the carpet*  • Understands who, what, where in simple questions (e.g. *Who’s that? Who can? What’s that? Where is?*)  • Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. *fast/slow, good/bad*) | • Be attentive and respond to children’s talk in an appropriate and  positive way.  • Use talk to describe what children are doing by providing a running  commentary, e.g. *Oh, I can see what you are doing. You have to put the*  *milk in the cup first*.  • Provide opportunities for children to talk with other children and  adults about what they see, hear, think and feel.  • Talk slowly enough for the child to understand.  • Provide words by labelling objects, actions and abstract things like  feelings.  • Stay with the child while they play, play alongside the child and  show attentive companionship as you share conversations. | • Include things which excite young children’s curiosity, such as hats, bubbles, shells, story books, seeds and snails, which reflect their wider living and non-living communities.  • Provide activities, such as cooking, where talk is used to anticipate or initiate what children will be doing, e.g. *We need some eggs. Let’s see if we can* *find some in here* |
| 5. | • Understands use of objects (e.g. *Which one do we cut with?*)  • Shows understanding of prepositions such as *under, on top, behind* by carrying out an action or selectingcorrect picture  • Responds to instructions with more elements, e.g. *Give the big ball to me; collect up all the blocks and* *put them in the box*  • Beginning to understand *why* and *how* questions | • Prompt children’s thinking and discussion through involvement in their play.  • Talk to children about what they have been doing and help them to reflect upon and explain events, e.g. *You told me this model was going* *to be a tractor. What’s this lever for?*  • When you need to give children directions be clear and help them to  deal with those involving more than one action, e.g. *Time to come and*  *wash your hands and then we’ll set the table for lunch*.  • When introducing a new activity, use mime and gesture to support language development.  • Showing and talking about a photograph of an activity such as hand washing can help to reinforce understanding.  • Make playful “silly mistakes” deliberately to prompt reaction and allow children to explore being the “expert”.  • Be aware that some children may watch another child in order to know what to do, rather than understanding what you’ve said  themselves.  • Embed sustained shared thinking approaches to extend language and conversational moments to help increase the child’s awareness and understanding of speech. | • Set up shared experiences that children can reflect upon, e.g. visits, cooking, or stories that can be re-enacted.  • Help children to predict and order events coherently, by providing props and materials that encourage children to re-enact, using talk and action  • Find out from parents how children make themselves understood at home; confirm which their preferred language other modes of communication are.  • Tune into children’s preferred modes of communication – perhaps direct questions feel confronting but shared making or an exchange of funny expressions or gestures creates a connection more effectively.  • Provide practical experiences that encourage children to ask and respond to questions, e.g. explaining pulleys or wet and dry sand.  • Alongside books, introduce story props, such as pictures, puppets and objects, to encourage children to retell stories and to think about how the characters feel.  • Displays, power-point presentations, looking back through Learning Journals and display books in your classrooms can connect experiences across places or provide reminders of previous trips, events or seasons, for example. |
| 6. | • Understands a range of complex sentence structures including negatives, plurals and tense markers  • Beginning to understand humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes  • Able to follow a story without pictures or props  • Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion  • Understands questions such as *who; why; when; where* and *how* | • Ask children to think in advance and predict how they will accomplish a task. Talk through and sequence the stages together.  • Enjoy sharing stories with individual children and small groups.  • Engage in sustained shared thinking with them to extend their thinking and use of vocabulary.  • Use appropriate vocabulary during play with children to encourage them to think about stories and cultural narratives.  • Use stories from books to focus children’s attention on predictions and explanations, e.g. *Why did the boat tip over?*  • Help children to - identify patterns, e.g. what generally happens to good and wicked  characters at the end of stories  - draw conclusions: *The sky has gone dark. It must be going to rain*  - explain effect: *It fell over because it was too tall.*  - predict: *It might not grow in there if it is too dark.*  - speculate: *What if the bridge falls down?* | • Set up displays that are interactive so children can touch, pick up etc and talk about/reflect on their  experiences  • Provide for, initiate and join in imaginative play and role-play or real life storytelling encouraging children to talk about what is happening and to act out the scenarios in character. |