

## **Checklist for a communication friendly environment**

### **EYFS, KS1 & KS2**

The environment is important for supporting communication as well as learning, social and emotional development. A communication friendly environment provides opportunities for everyone to talk, listen, understand and take part. A communication friendly environment benefits all children, not just those with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

You can use this checklist to see how communication friendly your setting already is and identify areas to develop. You can find more information on supporting communication here:  
<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/>

Setting name:

Class/room name:

Date:

Completed by:

#### **Checklist summary:**

What's working well:

Areas to develop:

Date to review checklist:

There are some simple things you can do to make your environment more communication friendly. Below you can find some suggestions of things to consider.

## 1. The communication environment:

### Noise levels:

- ☐ Background noise is kept to a minimum (e.g. windows closed where appropriate).
- ☐ Adults ensure they are not carrying out jobs in view or in ear shot during group times.

### Space, light and layout:

- ☐ There are quiet areas available in the setting where children can retreat to have 'down time' or engage in smaller group activities. These areas are less visually distracting.
- ☐ There are clearly defined spaces, including imaginative role play - both indoors and outdoors (if appropriate for age group).
- ☐ There are areas where natural light is maximised, windows are not restricted by paintings/displays or blinds.
- ☐ The furniture is arranged to promote eye contact and face to face communication.
- ☐ Resources are easily accessible and organised clearly (e.g. in clear boxes or neutral baskets).
- ☐ Displays are not excessive; the use of colour is not overpowering.
- ☐ The setting is calm, organised and clutter free.

### Using visual support:

- ☐ Visual timetables use pictures that are appropriate for the children. They are used consistently throughout the day.
- ☐ Objects, pictures and symbols are used to teach vocabulary, explore stories and make activities interactive.
- ☐ Photographs or symbols are used to support routine (e.g. washing hands, getting ready for outdoor play).
- ☐ Resources are clearly labelled (e.g. with words, pictures, or symbols as appropriate).

## 2. Interactions

### Adults support positive interactions by:

- ☐ Getting down to the child's level when interacting with them.
- ☐ Modelling language related to the child's focus of attention.
- ☐ Pausing to allow children time to process and respond.
- ☐ Commenting on what is happening or what children are doing.
- ☐ Giving choices (e.g. "Would you like to read a story or play in the home corner?").
- ☐ Using non-verbal communication to support what they say (e.g. gesture, pointing).
- ☐ Gaining a child's attention before speaking to them (e.g. by calling their name).