

SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION MONITORING TOOL FOR CHILDREN AGED 5 AND OVER

Use this table to help you identify a child's current level of communication.

AGE	ATTENTION AND INTERACTION	UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE	EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY	SPEECH SOUNDS
6 MONTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child's attention flits from one object, person, or event to another. • Stops and looks when hears own name. • Shows enjoyment of interaction and attention from familiar adults e.g. smiles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to different sounds and tones of voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babbles for attention and interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babbles with a range of sound combinations • Uses simple vowel sounds e.g. 'ah', 'ee' • Uses some consonant sounds e.g. 'm', 'd', 'p', 'b'. 'n', 'w' • Some sounds at end of words are not used • May sometimes be unclear to familiar people
1 YEAR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes some words when used in context e.g. "drink" when mum walks in the room holding a cup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses simple words related to their surroundings. • Child will look from an object to an adult, or point to make request. • Child uses about 1 to 5 words e.g. "all gone", "bye bye", "mum", "dad" 	
18 MONTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends to self chosen activity. • Is easily distracted by noises or other people talking • Gradually able to engage in imaginative play with toys e.g. give doll a drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can select single object, from a choice, on verbal request, for example "where's the <u>ball</u>?" • Beginning to recognise photos of people and objects • Understands more than they can say 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single words used in different ways. • Child creates personal words as they begin to develop language • Uses around 10-20 single words although these may not be clear • Beginning to use words for a range of purposes, for example requesting and rejecting 	
2 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not usually enjoy adult joining in • Prefers own choice of activity • Responds to own name and can move attention briefly then re-focus • Developing the ability to take turns, for example rolling a ball to and fro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing ability to follow instructions containing 2 key words. e.g. "give <u>dolly</u>/<u>teddy</u> the <u>brush</u>/<u>cup</u>". • Knows basic body parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using 2 word phrases. e.g. "mummy car", "ball gone", "more juice". • Uses different types of everyday words, including nouns, verbs and adjectives • Uses up to 50 words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some sounds at the end of words are starting to be used
2 ½ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finds it difficult to respond to verbal instruction if not fully attending to the adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify objects by their use, e.g. "which one can you eat?" • Enjoys simple, familiar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines 2 - 3 words together, e.g. "Holly eat (dinner)". • Begins to use negatives, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sounds 'm, n, p, b, t, d, w, h' • Immaturities heard, e.g. "tar" for "car",

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in and will engage in others play. 	<p>stories.</p>	<p>adjectives and past tense e.g. "me falled over".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses action alongside language, e.g. reaches towards a toy and says "I have it". Uses about 200+ words. 	<p>"pu" for "spoon"</p>
3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can attend to adult's choice of activity for short time. Can concentrate on a self-chosen activity for up to 15 minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning to understand some concepts e.g. big/little, in/on/under Developing understanding of instructions containing 3 key words, e.g. "put the <u>key/plate</u> in/<u>under</u> the <u>box/bag</u>". Can identify objects by use e.g. "which one do we eat?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can link 3 to 5 words together to form sentences e.g. "me go bike" Asking "who/what/where?" questions Beginning to use word endings (e.g. <u>going</u>, <u>cats</u>) Uses about 500-1000 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing use of the sounds 'f, s' 3 ½ years = beginning to use sounds 'k', 'g' Speech usually understood by most people
4 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can control focus of attention, for example will sit and listen to stories with increasing attention Listens to others in small groups when conversation interests them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding 3 to 4 key word instructions, e.g. "put <u>dolly</u> in the <u>big</u> <u>cupboard</u>". Understanding increasing number of "describing" words e.g. "cold", "wet" Beginning to understand negatives, e.g. "no", "not" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child tends to use sentences of around 4 to 5 words but can use longer utterances. Beginning to join sentences together with 'and'/'because'. Asks lots of questions. May not be fluent when excited. Uses 1000-1500 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses sounds 'f, s and sh' consistently Blends continue to be simplified e.g. "sp" → "p"
5 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attention is more flexible and able to listen and do at the same time Initiates interaction and asks appropriate questions Works as part of a group or class, taking turns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands most everyday conversations Can understand instructions given to a group of children Begins to understand jokes. Beginning to understand time in relation to past, present and future Understands instructions with sequence words e.g. "first ...next...last" Developing an understanding of the question words "how?" and "why?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child using longer sentences of about 5+ words used in sentence Can explain meaning of simple words. Beginning to use past, present and future verbs Most sentences are grammatically correct Fluent in most speaking situations Child uses about 1500-2000 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses sounds 'ch, j, v, z' Starting to use blends e.g. "sp, st, sk". Child may still have difficulties producing the sound 'l'.
6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is able to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can listen and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using blends e.g. "sp,

	<p>the focus of their attention independently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of emotions in self and how to express them using words and sentences • Realises that people can experience different emotions to the same event 	<p>sequence of 3 commands, for example, 'put the paints away, wash your hands then sit on the carpet'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands concepts of time e.g. 'before', 'after', 'later', 'yesterday' • Can differentiate fantasy from reality 	<p>retell a simple familiar story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses pronouns appropriately e.g. "he, she, they, him, her, their" • Constructs complex sentences using more difficult conjunctions e.g. "so, that, because" • Starts to re-word a sentence to repair a conversational breakdown 	<p>st, sk".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'r' and 'th' may still sound immature.
7 to 11 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of rules better established e.g. board games • Can use language to explain a problem but may still need adult support to resolve the issue • Realises that people can experience more than one emotion to one event, e.g. excited and scared when starting a new school • Can compare themselves to others and become concerned about own abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to understand sarcasm • Begins to empathise • Is able to understand hidden meanings e.g. "shouldn't you take an umbrella?" • Understands more abstract words e.g. "disaster" • Can understand more curriculum vocabulary that is subject specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can stick to topic of discussions. • Can use imagination to create stories based on a familiar idea. • Uses language for different purposes, e.g. to ask questions, negotiate or persuade. 	
11 to 14 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts to resolve own problems independently • Expresses emotions e.g. anger, excitement freely but may be inappropriately done • Can change style of talking to suit different situations, for example when talking to a friend or teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands that words can have multiple meanings in different situations e.g. "table" → actual object or a grid with information in (in Maths) • Understands the difference between fact and opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to use simple sarcasm and idiomatic language • Can use complex conjunctions e.g. although, even though 	

It is important to remember that the age norms included here are a guide only, and all children develop their skills at slightly different stages.