



Helping your child at home

Promoting and encouraging communication

Communication is an essential part of our everyday lives and is a key component in our overall development. It affects everything we do. This includes:

- Speaking: chatting with friends, saying what we like and do not like, asking for a drink or something to eat....
- Listening: responding when someone says your name, enjoying a story or focussing on a book whilst the phone is ringing.
- Understanding: comprehending what is said, for example 'where are your shoes?' or 'please put your cup on the table?'

All three are equally important.

At Oaklea Montessori we recognise and celebrate that every child is unique and children will often develop at different rates. Around 1 in 10 children have a speech, language and communication need and a few simple strategies that you can put in place at home could really help to support and encourage your child's communication.

- Keep your language simple! As adults we tend to speak in long, wordy sentence which children can find difficult to follow
- Use gestures to support your language e.g. point to the object you are referring to and use animated facial expressions

- Offer your child choices to promote their language and give them a reason to communicate. For example, rather than saying 'would you like a drink' say 'would you like milk or water (point to each one in turn too).
- Model language back correctly: if your child points to the milk and doesn't say anything or says something that is unclear say 'you would like milk'.
- Try not to ask too many questions! Comment on what your child is doing: 'the train is going under the tunnel' or 'you're eating a sandwich'.
- Slowly develop your child's language and understanding by adding more information. For example: 'you're **drinking** milk' or 'let's go in the **blue** car'
- Work on one concept at a time. For example focus on lots of **big** items for a few weeks (big pan, big pig, big books...)and then when you feel your child is secure in this move onto finding lots of **small** things.

Supporting your child using these strategies at home and at nursery will make a difference to their confidence, their relationship with you and their friends. Communications benefit their overall development. If you would like any further information please feel free to contact the Nursery SenCo or your child's key person.