

6 TOP TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION!

'One of the best things we can do to develop our children is to have interesting and enjoyable conversations with them'. (Michael Rosen, Children's Laureate) Learning to communicate takes determination by the children and adults who are willing to support and listen to their children!

Try these six top tips with your child – they will make a great deal of difference!

Get the child's attention first

Crouch down to the child's level and gain their attention before speaking or asking a question. Young children find it difficult to listen and carry on with an activity at the same time. Saying their name first encourages them to stop and listen.

Rather than criticise, demonstrate

Praise the child's efforts, even if the results aren't perfect. If a child makes an error in a word or sentence, simply say the correct version rather than pointing out the mistake. For example, if the child says, 'I goed to the park', you might say 'Wow, so you went to the park'.

Give the child time to respond

Children often need time to put their thoughts together before answering, so give them longer to respond than you would with an adult. Make sure to maintain eye contact as you wait for them to complete their remark.

Make learning language fun!

Play around with words, sounds and sentences. Don't be afraid to talk in funny voices or have daft conversations. The more children see you experimenting with language, the more likely they'll be willing to do it themselves. And experimenting with language is a vital aspect of learning and is great fun!

Be careful with questions

Try not to ask too many questions, especially ones that sound like you're constantly testing the child. The best questions are those that challenge the child to think rather than give an instant answer, like yes or no. Too many questions can easily block the flow of natural conversation.

Use the full range of expression

Speak in a lively, animated voice and use gestures and facial expressions to back up your words. You'll be giving more clues about what your words mean, which can be very useful if the child is struggling to understand language. You'll also be demonstrating the vital importance of non-verbal communication.

We hope that you have found these Top Tips helpful. Remember 'Chatter Matters'!

Why not have one night a week with no television or electronic games? Make this your 'chatter night' and play games, read stories and talk to your child!

You will have great fun and don't forget to let us know how much you have enjoyed it!