

Waltham Forest Early Years Guidance

Support for Communication and Language Needs

Scaffolding Language



‘Scaffolding’ is a useful way to support children to move on to the next stage of language development. It is particularly helpful in supporting speaking skills as practitioners can build on the language a child is already using and help them to extend it. There are two ways practitioners and parents can do this.

Modelling Language

Listen to what the child is telling you

“biderman felled”

Repeat back what they said, giving a model for the child

“Yes! Spiderman fell down!”

Remember:

- ✓ Be positive and encouraging so the child doesn't feel 'corrected'
- ✓ If the child just points or uses a gesture, model the word they could use next time - for example, if they pull you to something, say “come”
- ✓ Emphasise sounds or words the child finds difficult

Extending language

Listen to what the child is telling you

“car”

Repeat back what they said, adding an extra word or two

“Wow! The Car's fast!”

Remember:

- ✓ Only add 1 or 2 extra words otherwise the child may not understand or be able to copy
- ✓ If a child is only using nouns (names of things), try adding a verb (action word) to what they say to help them start to build sentences- for example, “nana” - “yum, eat banana!”