Waltham Forest Early Years Guidance

**Self-Evaluation Tool**

**This tool is designed to be used to:**

* Support managers and practitioners in identifying their key strengths and areas for improvement in promoting all children’s language and communication development.
* Help practitioners monitor their progress in supporting children’s communication development, through a continual process of self-evaluation, improvement planning and review.
* Provide settings with a framework for creating a quality communication environment
* Provide an outline on how to actively involve parents and carers in their children’s communication development

**Setting Name: Lead Practitioner:**

**Date Completed: SLT:**

**Develop the skills links to the EYFS:**

**A Unique Child**

* Evaluating how your setting supports the unique speech, language and communication skills of **every** child.

**Positive Relationships**

* Evaluating the frequency and quality of interactions between staff and children to support children’s speech, language and communication.

**Enabling Environments**

* Evaluating how the environment that your setting creates supports the speech, language and communication development of the children.

**Learning and Development**

* Evaluating how the activities and set-up of your Early Years setting support the speech, language and communication of children child.

**Area of focus - Inspiring spaces create talking places**

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| The setting is organised with learning areas clearly defined |  |  |  |  |
| Quiet, comfortable areas are available where children can retreat to have privacy and ‘down time’ |  |  |  |  |
| Background noise levels are managed, and children and adults are able to hear one another with ease |  |  |  |  |
| Transition times are minimised, so children’s play is not interrupted, and waiting is avoided |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities for role play are available inside and outside |  |  |  |  |
| Book areas contain a range of different books including non-fiction and those of specific interest to children e.g. homemade photo books of their own experiences |  |  |  |  |
| Displays are age appropriate and interesting to children and are interactive e.g. including photos of children, based on their interests, including natural resources |  |  |  |  |
| Visual support i.e. use of photos, objects and gestures are used throughout the setting to support all children’s understanding and participation |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

The learning environment is rich in opportunities to communicate, and care is taken in planning and organisation to support children’s listening, play and participation.

**Area of focus - Anytime is talk-time**

Opportunities for language and communication development are maximised throughout all aspects of the settings routines and activities

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| Everyday routines e.g. using the toilet, putting coats on, washing hands etc. are used by all staff as opportunities for communication |  |  |  |  |
| Children are given opportunities to make real choices throughout all activities and routines |  |  |  |  |
| Adults sit with children at snack and mealtimes to model conversation and support all children to participate |  |  |  |  |
| Groups are of an appropriate size and length to allow all children to maintain attention and participate |  |  |  |  |
| Planning ensures that opportunities for communication are considered in all activities |  |  |  |  |
| Adults use stories of their own experiences to model and encourage children to share their own experiences |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

**Area of focus** - **Responsive adults build confident communicators**

Practitioners actively listen to children and use a range of strategies to support and extend children’s language and communication development

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| Adults are actively seen to be engaging with children for the majority of the time (not spending time in routine tasks) |  |  |  |  |
| Adults get down to the child’s level when interacting with them |  |  |  |  |
| Natural gestures and some key word signing are used in interactions with children |  |  |  |  |
| Adults use language at an appropriate level for the child |  |  |  |  |
| Adults use questions carefully i.e. asking genuine (not testing) questions which extend children’s thinking and language |  |  |  |  |
| Social interaction skills such as turn taking are modelled and encouraged during conversations |  |  |  |  |
| Processes are in place to allow peer-to-peer support, observation and feedback of areas of development |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

**Area of focus - Parents and practitioners supporting together**

Settings demonstrate effective partnership working with parents and carers

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| Parents are actively encouraged and supported to participate in setting activities on a regular basis. This includes a range of different opportunities e.g. staying and playing with their child, bringing in something of interest, leading an activity, cooking sessions, story telling |  |  |  |  |
| Parents are regularly consulted on planning and encouraged to share their children’s interests |  |  |  |  |
| A range of communication methods are used with parents to i.e. written information, displays, verbal feedback, photos, digital methods |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners take additional steps to engage with families who may be hard to engage e.g. offering home visits, signposting to other support, using interpreters |  |  |  |  |
| Accessible information is given to parents around practical ways to help their child’s communication development e.g. strategies for home, minimising screen time, importance of play, using home language |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

**Area of focus - Keeping home language alive**

Settings welcome the diversity of Waltham Forest and actively encourage home language use

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| Welcome policies include gathering information on home language use |  |  |  |  |
| Interpreters are used when needed in discussion with parents |  |  |  |  |
| Messages about use of home language are clear and parents are encouraged to speak their home language with their children |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners understand the difference between children with delayed language and a child learning EAL |  |  |  |  |
| Parents and children are encouraged to share words, songs and information of cultural importance to them |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

**Area of focus - Learning and reflecting together**

Practitioners are encouraged to reflect on their practice and knowledge, and are supported in finding ways to develop this

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| **Criteria** | **Limited**  **1** | **Developing 2** | **Consistent**  **3** | **Observations/comments** |
| Practitioners can describe children’s communication skills and needs accurately |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners know what steps to take if there is a child in the setting whose communication skills are causing concern |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioners are given time and support to reflect in their practice and develop their skills and knowledge |  |  |  |  |
| **Areas identified for development:** | | | | |

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| **Area of focus** | **Total Score** | **Percentage** | **Priority area** | **Target** | **Additional Support Needed** | **Achieved By** |
| **Inspiring spaces create talking places** | /24 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Anytime is talk-time** | /18 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Responsive adults build confident communicators** | /21 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Parents and practitioners supporting together** | /15 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Keeping home language alive** | /15 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Learning and reflecting together** | /9 |  |  |  |  |  |

**Evaluation**

**References:**

* National Strategies- Every Child a Talker <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110809091832/http:/teachingandlearningresources.org.uk/early-years/every-child-talker-ecat>
* Anita McKiernon (2010), Supporting All Children’s Communication Development: Ealing Quality Indicators
* Better Communication Research Programme (2012) Communication Supporting Classrooms Observation Tool