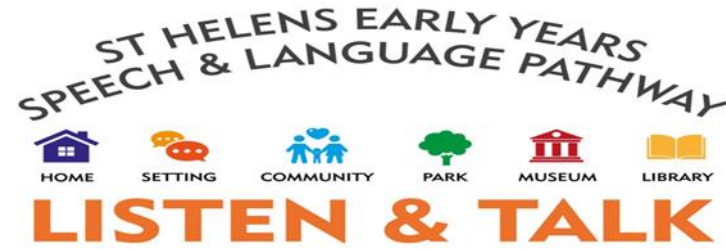


# Early Support Step

St Helens Council

## Stage: 0-3



**Early Support-**  
**means support for**  
**SOME children,**  
**who need a short**  
**time support**

Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!

### Listening and Attention

Respond to baby's vocalizations by making sounds back

- Take turns with baby making sounds & facial expressions
- Discourage use of dummies as they prevent the baby from making sounds
- Share books that are colourful and interactive

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

Spend time playing on the floor with baby e.g. bouncing, tickling, singing, peek-a-boo

- Talk to your baby throughout the day
- Imitate actions & vocalisations that baby makes
- Share books with baby that are colourful, interactive & robust
- Reduce the use of TV & electronic devices in the home
- Access books & toys

Follow baby's lead, giving lots of eye contact

Engage baby with action songs or songs to soothe

Turn television & other background noises OFF for some time in the day.

- Involve baby in family activities as often as possible

### Language-Understanding

Talk to baby during daily routines & activities, commenting on what you are doing together

- Talk using lots of intonation or in a song-song voice
- Respond to baby's sounds
- Use home language with baby if not native English speaker
- Range of toys with different properties - texture, shape, colour

## Stage: 3-12 months



Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!

### Listening and Attention

Reduce background noise  
Follow baby's lead & interest

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

- Making sounds back, taking turns with sounds & faces
- Discourage excess use of dummies
  - Adult / carers to model different shapes with lips and tongue
  - Share books that are colourful and interactive
- Follow the baby's lead giving lots of eye-contact.
- Initiate simple actions & vocalisations.
  - Play games such as peek-a-boo.
  - Provide toys that are large, colourful & easy to handle.
  - Provide toys with different properties i.e. textures, shapes & colours.
  - Engage with books that are colourful, interactive & robust
  - Demonstrate play to parents

- Adult / carer spending time playing with the child
- Encourage lap games & peek-a-boo
- Respond to the baby's smiles and facial expressions
- Imitate the sounds baby makes
- Playing simple turn-taking games, copying child's actions
- Follow the child's interest
- Access to everyday objects during play
- Demonstrate play
- Provide appropriate toys & equipment

### Language-Understanding

Adult / carer responds to sound baby makes  
Talk to baby during daily routines & activities commenting on what you are doing together  
Use home language with baby

Access to big toys that child can manipulate and explore  
Toys that are noisy  
Share books that are colourful and interactive  
Promote communication friendly environment e.g. reduce background noise, muted colours, objects with texture

Use of appropriate tone of voice  
Talk to the child about everyday things e.g. getting dressed – talk about what you are doing  
Comment during play, making words sound interesting  
Use gesture to support words  
e.g. waving bye bye  
Adults using simple short phrases

### Speech sounds

The child uses speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adult / carers; says sounds like 'ba-ba', 'no-no', 'gogo' and stops babbling when he hears a familiar adult / carer voice.

- The child uses gestures such as waving & pointing to help communicate.
- By nine months child shouts to gain attention waits then shouts again
- At around 12 months the child begins to use single words e.g. 'mummum', 'dada', 'tete' (teddy)



**Early Support-**  
**means support**  
**for SOME**  
**children,**  
**who need a short**  
**time support**

## Stage: 12 months



### Developmental Checkpoints



**Early Support-  
means support  
for SOME  
children,  
who need a short  
time support**

Development Matters Checkpoints at 12 months		Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Communication and Language	Does the baby 'take turns' by babbling and using single words?			
	Does the baby point to things and use gestures to show things to adults and share interests?			
	Is the baby beginning to use single words like: mummum, dada, tete (teddy)?			
	Can the baby choose between two objects: "do you want the ball or the car"?			
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Does the baby start to be shy around strangers and show preferences for certain people and toys?			
Physical Development	Can the baby pull to stand from a sitting position and sit down?			
	Can the baby pick up something small with their first finger and thumb (such as a piece of string)?			
ECAT Checkpoints (Every Child a Talker)				
Understanding Language	Stops and looks when hears own name. (by 12 months ☒)			
Speaking	Gradually develops speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'baba', 'nono', 'gogo'. (by 11 months ☒)			
Social Communication	Uses voice, gesture, eye contact and facial expression to make contact with people and keep their attention. (by 12 months ☒)			

**If you have ticked 'Rarely' move on to the Targeted Support to find your possible next steps**

## Stage: 12 -18 months



Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!



### Listening and Attention

- Demonstrate how objects are used and label objects & actions for child.
- Child has access to a range of every day objects for play
- Follow the child's lead where possible in play
- Reduce background noise
- To spend at least 5-10 minutes per day playing with child
- Engaging child's interest by offering a wide range of activities in & outside the house

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

- Repeat words the child says to show they were understood and to model accurate production
- Use symbolic noises for animals, cars etc
- Offer choices,
- Encourage commenting rather than questioning
- Repeat key words frequently during play or stories or any regular activities
- Share books that are colourful and interactive
- Offer alternatives such as 'juice or milk?' to encourage verbal response
- Continue to comment on chosen play
- Continue to model familiar language in simple sentences repetitively through songs and stories
- Use gesture or sign to support verbal communication
- Discourage use of dummy
- Back up simple instructions with gestures such as pointing etc
- Adult / carers/carers to comment during play and name the objects during play
- Play simple 'where is' games, e.g. 'where is mummy'
- Reduce background noise

**Early Support-**  
means support for  
**SOME** children,  
who need a short  
time support

### Language-Understanding

- Adult / carers to use simple language when giving instructions focusing on key words e.g. 'coat on' rather than 'its time to put your coat on to go outside'
- Adult / carers to support spoken word with gesture or sign
- Share books that are colourful and interactive

### Speech sounds

Uses most vowels, and m,p,b,n,t,d,w,h

Stage: 12 -18 months



Developmental Checkpoints



Early Support-  
means support  
for **SOME**  
children,  
who need a short  
time support

Development Matters Checkpoints at 18 months		Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Communication and Language	Is the Toddler listening and responding to a simple instruction like: “put on your shoes”?			
	Can the baby say around 10 words at about 15 months? (They may not all be clear)			
	Does the toddler understand lots of different single words and some two-word phrases, such as “give me” or “shoes on”?			
	At 18 months is the toddler using a range of adult like speech patterns (jargon; gibberish) and at least 20 clear words?			
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Is the toddler increasingly curious about their world and wanting to explore it and be noticed by you?			
ECAT Checkpoints (Every Child a Talker)				
Speaking	Uses single words. (by 16 months ☒)			
Social Communication	Uses pointing with eye gaze to make requests and to share an interest. (by 18 months ☒)			

If you have ticked ‘Rarely’ move on to the Targeted Support to find your possible next steps



## Stage: 18- 24 months



Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!



Model and support imaginative play with boxes etc  
Model joining play sequences together e.g. cook for then feed dolly  
Model & support small world play using familiar scenes from home -life

Encourage child to focus on activity for increasing lengths of time e.g. using sand timer as visual prompt  
Reduce resources available to enable child to choose.

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

Consider impact of colour,  
noise & light as distractions in the environment  
Share books that are colourful and interactive

### Language-Understanding

Name objects and actions for child in context /during play  
Use simple two word phrases which child will copy when ready  
Repeat child's two word utterance and add extra word e.g. 'car gone' becomes 'yes, blue car gone'  
Repeat words clearly for child to hear but don't insist on child repeating back

Encourage choice making by pointing & looking  
Encourage turn taking in games such as bubble blowing  
Encourage child to join in action rhymes e.g. 'here we go round the mulberry bush'

### Speech sounds

Uses most vowels, and m,p,b,n,t,d,w,h

Early Support-  
means support for  
**SOME** children,  
who need a short  
time support

Stage: 18- 24 months



Developmental Checkpoints



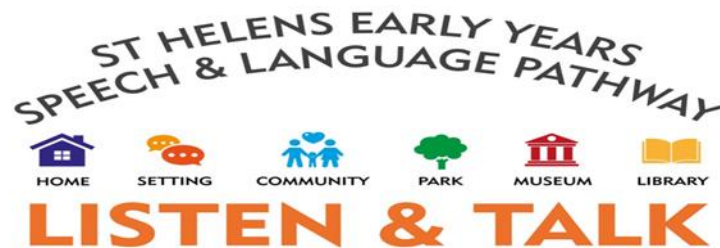
Early Support-  
means support  
for **SOME**  
children,  
who need a short  
time support

Development Matters Checkpoints at 2 years		Rarely	Some times	Always
Communication and Language	Is the child showing an interest in what other children are playing and sometimes joins in?			
	Towards their second birthday, can the child use up to 50 words?			
	Is the child beginning to put two or three words together: “more milk”?			
	Is the child frequently asking questions, such as the names of people and objects?			
	Can the child understand many more words than they can say – between 200-500 words?			
	Can the child understand simple questions and instructions like: “where’s your hat” or “what’s the boy in the picture doing”?			
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Does the child start to see themselves as a separate person? For example, do they decide what to play with, what to eat, what to wear?			
	Between the ages of 2 and 3, does the child start to enjoy the company of other children and want to play with them?			
Physical Development	Can the toddler run well, kick a ball, and jump with both feet off the ground at the same time?			
ECAT Checkpoint (Every Child a Talker)				
Speaking	Beginning to put two words together (eg ‘want ball’, ‘more juice’. (by 24 months ☒)			

If you have ticked ‘Rarely’ move on to the Targeted Support to find your possible next steps



## Stage: 2-3 years



Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!

### Listening and Attention

- Use simple language and gain child's attention before speaking
- Encourage child to focus on activity for increasing lengths of time e.g. using sand timer as a visual prompt
- Ensure environment supports listening e.g. reduce background noise
- Whilst playing with child to model extended sequences of play
- Create/ seek opportunities for child to socialise with other children in groups
- Use everyday objects / clothes for role play and dressing up with adult / carer commentary
- Initiate imaginative/ symbolic play with familiar objects e.g. large box becomes a castle

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

- Give your child access to range of experiences to develop vocabulary
- Repeat sentences back to child adding in grammatical elements
- Do not insist on child repeating sentences back to you
- Model sounds in words but not to ask child to repeat back
- Share books that are colourful and interactive
- Talk about every day events as they do them using simple language
- Introduce basic concept words e.g. size & position
- Encourage child to tell familiar stories to organise sequences of language

### Language-Understanding

- Ensure opportunities to socialise with other children
- Opportunities to develop turn taking skills in a range of activities
- Model appropriate listening & talking
- Use language of emotions with child
- Prepare child for change in routine either verbally or supporting with picture or signs

### Speech sounds

Emerging sounds including k,g,f,s,z,l,y.



**Early Support-  
means support  
for SOME  
children,  
who need a  
short time  
support**

## Stage: 2-3 years



## Developmental Checkpoints

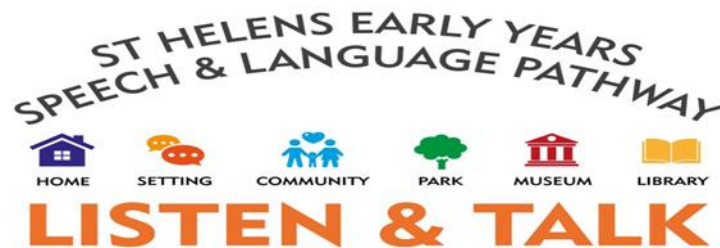


**Early Support-  
means support  
for SOME  
children,  
who need a short  
time support**

Development Matters Checkpoints at 3 years		Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Communication and Language	Can the child shift from one task to another if you get their attention. Using the child's name can help. "Jason, can you stop now? We're tidying up".			
	Can the child use around 300 words? These include descriptive language. They include words for time (for example: now, later), space (for example, over there) and function (for example, they can tell you a sponge is for washing)			
	Is the child linking up to five words together?			
	Is the child using pronouns (me, him, she), and using plurals and prepositions (in, on, under) – these may not always be used correctly to start with.			
	Can the child follow instructions with three key words like: "can you <b>wash dolly's face</b> ?"			
	Can the child show that they understand action words by pointing to the right picture in a book. For example: "who's jumping?"			
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Can the child shift from one task to another if you fully obtain their attention, for example, by using their name?			
	Does the child start to enjoy the company of other children and want to play with them?			
	Can the child sometimes manage to share or take turns with others, with adult guidance and understanding 'yours' and 'mine'?			
Physical Development	Can the child settle to some activities for a while?			
	Can the child climb confidently, catch a large ball and pedal a tricycle?			
ECAT Checkpoints				
Listening & Attention	Singled channelled attention. Can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus. (by 36 months ☒)			
Understanding Language	Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture, e.g. "Who's jumping?" (by 30 months ☒)			

**If you have ticked 'Rarely' move on to the Targeted Support to find your possible next steps**

## Stage: 3-4 years



Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!



**Early Support-  
means support for  
SOME children,  
who need a short  
time support**

### Listening and Attention

Access to dressing up box for role play  
Access to everyday objects for imaginative play  
Opportunities to socialise with peers e.g. pre-school/groups

Adult / carers sit with child doing puzzles etc to extend attention span

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

Giving child opportunities to talk  
Repeat child's immature sentences or pronunciations so he hears good models  
Opportunities to play with sounds • e.g. snakes says sssss, quiet shhhh

Create/Seek opportunities for child to socialise with other children  
Encourage child to participate in small group activities  
Develop turn taking skills in a range of activities

### Language-Understanding

Opportunities for a range of different & interesting activities, e.g. sorting & matching activities  
Labelling early concepts during conversation  
Talk about every day events as they happen

### Speech sounds

Uses a range of tenses (e.g. *play, playing, will play, played*)  
Speech mostly can be understood by others even in connected speech.  
Emerging use of ng, sh, ch, j, v, th, r – may be inconsistent.  
Sound clusters emerging (e.g. pl in play, sm in smile) though some may be simplified (e.g. 'gween' for 'green').

## Stage: 3 -4 years



### Developmental Checkpoints



**Early Support-  
means support  
for SOME  
children,  
who need a short  
time support**

Development Matters Checkpoints at 4 years		Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Communication and Language	Is the child using sentences of 4-6 words – “I want to play with cars” or “what’s that thing called?”			
	Can the child use sentences joined up with words like ‘because’, ‘or’, ‘and’? for example: “I like ice cream because it makes my tongue shiver”.			
	Is the child using the future and past tense: “I am going to the park” and “I went to the shop”?			
	Can the child answer simple ‘why’ questions?			
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Does the child play alongside others rather than always wanting to play alone?			
	Does the child take part in pretend play (for example being ‘mummy’ or daddy’?)			
	Does the child take part on other pretend play with different roles – being the Gruffalo, for example?			
	Can the child generally negotiate solutions to conflicts in their play?			
	Is the child reliably dry during the day? Support children who are struggling with toilet training , in partnership with their parents. Seek medical advice, if necessary from a health visitor or GP.			

**If you have ticked ‘Rarely’ move on to the Targeted Support to find your possible next steps**

## Stage: 4-5 years



**Early Support-**  
means support for  
**SOME** children,  
who need a short  
time support

Check recommendations and play suggestions from the universal section!

### Listening and Attention

- Invite friends to play
- Opportunities to develop imaginative play e.g. role play doctors surgery

- Support to listen e.g. calling name before giving instruction
- Ensure child has opportunity to learn from good peer models of listening within large / small groups

### Language for Communication (Social Communication)

- Repeat immature sentences correctly but not expecting child to repeat back
- Break up complex words or sound combinations and model to child

- Create/seek opportunities to engage in conversation with peers - group discussions and activities

### Language-Understanding

- Encourage group games such as 'Simon says'
- Look at family photographs, DVDs etc and encourage talk about present & future
- Share humorous books
- Talk about cause & effect relationships with appropriate games

### Speech sounds

- May be still developing r and th.
- May simplify complex clusters (e.g. skr, str)