

3.5-year SLCN screening checklist

Please read these carefully, some of these qualities alone may not indicate speech, language and communication needs but the overall picture will give some indication of any support needed.

Play and Social Skills	
Does the child . . .	Please tick as appropriate
Take turns	
Take more notice of their peers, are they beginning to interact with them more	
Listen to stories and look at pictures	
Begin to engage in make believe play with others	

Attention and Listening	
Does the child . . .	Please tick as appropriate
Concentrate on a chosen activity for a short time	
Listen one-to-one or in small groups when the subject interests them	
Listen to and remember simple stories with pictures	
Respond to their name when engaged in an activity	

Receptive Language (understanding)	
Does the child . . .	Please tick as appropriate
Understand instructions with 3 key words e.g. give pizza and chips to pig	
Understand some simple concepts e.g. big/little, on/under	
Understand simple who, what, where questions	
Understand and recognise simple feelings e.g. happy / sad	

Expressive Language (talking)	
Does the child . . .	Please tick as appropriate
Speak using at least 3 word combinations	
Use a range of vocabulary e.g. nouns (naming words) verbs (actions words) and some simple adjectives (describing words)	
Speak clearly most of the time to familiar adults. Note – unfamiliar people may still find it difficult to understand them at times	
Use p, b, m, n, w, h, t and d sounds clearly	

Useful Strategies

Play and Social Skills

- **Get down to your child's level** so they can see your face and know you are interested in what they are doing
- **Sing nursery rhymes** especially ones with actions such as "incy wincy spider", "wind the bobbin up"
- **Play simple turn taking games** such as pairs, snap, simple board games
- **Make the most of everyday activities** by interacting and playing with your child at bath time – singing songs, splashing and water play, bedtime – read a story

Attention and Listening

- **Listening while walking:** When you're out and about, ask your child what sounds they can hear – can you hear the tractor, the birds, the bus?
- **Play and sing nursery rhymes** – listening to beat and rhythm will help with their listening skills. You could even play instruments along with the beat of the song.
- **Quiet play times** without television, radio or constant background noises to help develop your child's attention and listening skills.
- **Play 'ready, steady go'** and **'stop and go'** with games using bubbles or rolling a ball – remember to be on their level.
- **Share books** talk about the story and characters. Encourage children to join in with repetitive lines in the story

Receptive Language (understanding)

- **Keep all instructions short (a single word or short phrase)**, such as "get your coat", "find shoes", "snack time", "tidy toys". This will ensure that your child understands what they have been asked to do.
- **Try to avoid asking lots of questions** about what your child is doing e.g. "what's that?", "what can you see?", "where are we going?", "can you say ___?". Instead talk about the activities you and your child are doing.
- **Talk about what your child is doing when playing and in daily activities, using familiar words and short phrases.** Follow their lead, and comment on things that they are focused on. This will help them to link the words to the objects or activities they are involved in. For example: "driving the red car", "the dinosaur is big" "look, a train...you're pushing the train...the train's going under the bridge, choo choo", "the boy's eating an ice cream, he looks happy" etc

Expressive Language (talking)

- **Repeat common words frequently**, as children need to hear new words lots of times before they start to use them. Make sure you name a variety of words (including objects e.g. socks, scooter, grapes, actions e.g. running, jumping, eating, and describing words e.g. cold, fast, little), feelings e.g. happy, sad, angry.
- **Create opportunities for your child to use language** follow their interests, talk about things that the child is doing or playing with, offer choices e.g. shall we play in the sand or read a book? Practise "sabotage" - put something that you know your child might want out of reach e.g. a favourite toy or a drink. This will provide them with a reason and an opportunity to use a word, and encourage them to communicate.
- **Repeat back any words or phrases that your child uses, and add another word.** This will show them how they can continue to extend their sentences, and will give them a good model of accurate speech sounds.
- **If your child says an unclear word** (e.g. they miss off a sound, or get a sound wrong), then repeat the word correctly back to them with slight emphasis on the sound they struggled with (e.g. "tat" – "yes, it's a cat").