



School/Setting:

Date of completion:

'with thanks to The Communication Trust'

SLCN Pathway Review Checklist

A pathway for supporting SLC and SLCN in the early years begins at home and in settings. It is supported by a clear and strategic plan to integrate services across education, health and care that support the development, monitoring and intervention for children’s SLC and SLCN.

The tables below link directly to the five priority areas for the development of an SLCN pathway in settings.

It is anticipated that completion of this review at a settings level will lead to suggested ideas for your Action Plan, first through your role as a Local Action Lead, and subsequently through your role in Local Action Learning Sets, as part of broader authority wide action.

You may also decide to use the checklist to identify further areas of work in the longer term in order to maintain development work beyond the lifetime of the project.




It is suggested a member of the team in a leadership role takes responsibility for the review process, and that the checklist is discussed with key members of staff in order to ensure a cohesive review process, enabling the most appropriate and impactful Action Plan for your setting/authority. Whilst going through the checklist, we recommend you consider the following questions to help you to decide whether your setting is at a **Red**, **Amber**, **Green** level currently:




Questions	RAG rating explanation
1. Is this something we already do?	Red - e.g. we don't have this in place at all. It was in place but has lapsed
2. Do we do it well? Not very well?	Amber - e.g. in place but not embedded; not everyone aware of it; evidence of effectiveness not known
3. How do we know? What is our evidence?	Green – e.g. Robustly in place; clear evidence of impact of

Priority area	Actions	R ●	A ●	G ●	Evidence for rating <i>Comment here on how you currently support this area and/or whether it might be one of your chosen actions</i>
Leadership	1.1. We have someone within our setting(s) in a leadership position with the responsibility for leading on speech, language and communication policies				
	1.2. Settings have clear and explicit actions linked to children’s early language development in their short, medium, and long-term planning.				
	1.3. We actively support an understanding of early language development and speech, language and communication needs in all staff.				
	1.4. We are confident in our strategy for identifying children who are struggling with communication				
	1.5. Our data indicates the prevalence of children with speech and language needs in our settings matches evidenced expectations, considering our local context.				
	1.6. Our data is used effectively to identify the right level of support for children (Universal, Targeted or Specialist) and track the effectiveness of our support at each level.				

Priority area	Actions	R ●	A ●	G ●	Evidence for Rating <i>Comment here on how you currently support this area and/or whether it might be one of your chosen actions</i>
Staff development	2.1. All staff are aware of the importance of early language development for learning, literacy development, social interaction and school readiness (as evidenced on the Universal Level of SLCF)				
	2.2. We have key members of staff who undertake professional development activities focussing on early language and communication (as evidenced by the Enhanced and Specialist levels of the SLCF) and pass these skills on to other staff members.				
	2.3. Our staff implement a range of strategies to support communication across the setting. Strategies are monitored through peer to peer and staff development observations. Strategies are regularly reviewed for their evidence base and effectiveness.				
	2.4. Settings have systematic ways to share best practice for supporting early language and communication both throughout the staff team and across our networks, capitalising on expertise.				

Priority area	Actions	R ●	A ●	G ●	Evidence for rating <i>Comment here on how you currently support this area and/or whether it might be one of your chosen actions</i>
Communication supportive settings	3.1. We have at least one evidenced communication-supportive strategy that is used throughout settings, e.g. adults support small group work to enable every child to have a talking turn; adults use comments and open questions to support language; adults support interactive book sharing activities; adults provide good models for children				
	3.2. We have at least one evidenced visual support strategy that is used throughout settings, e.g. use of visual timetable(s) for the setting's routine(s), use of props or objects for stories or songs, use of signs and symbols.				
	3.3. Settings have procedures for planning that ensure systematic inclusion of appropriately structured speaking and listening activities relevant to the session and based on good practice.				
	3.4. Settings know how to and actively do support learning of new words and concepts development. This is achieved through a range of opportunities and multi-sensory activities to embed learning, including during self-chosen and adult led activities, snack/meal times and when we are out and about in our community.				

Priority area	Actions	R 	A 	G 	Evidence for rating <i>Comment here on how you currently support this area and/or whether it might be one of your chosen actions</i>
Supporting children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs	4.1. All staff have a basic understanding of SLCN, both for children with long-term needs and those with delayed early language development (as evidenced by all staff meeting at least Universal competencies of the SLCF)				
	4.2. Most staff are confident they would be able to identify a child with speech, language and communication needs and know the process for flagging concern, both internally and to external agencies (as evidenced by most staff meeting Enhanced Level competencies of the SLCF)				
	4.3. Staff are aware of a range of evidenced interventions currently used in early years settings to support children with speech, language and communication needs.				
	4.4. There are at least two people within the setting in leadership roles who know where to go for additional support and how to source the most effective interventions for children who are struggling.				

Priority areas	Actions	R 	A 	G 	Evidence for rating <i>comment here on how you currently support this area and/or whether it might be one of your chosen actions</i>
Engagement with parents and other early years professionals	5.1. Our settings help all parents to become more aware of the importance of early language development and the process for flagging any concerns.				
	5.2. Communication and Language progress is shared with parents in our settings e.g. through learning diaries and regular face to face conversations to ensure a healthy, continuous dialogue. Staff in our settings are confident to raise concerns about language development in these interactions.				
	5.3. Settings work with our families to help to develop their skills to support their child's speech, language and communication development at home. Consideration is made of the needs of the family and expectations are realistically set.				
	5.4. Settings share information , knowledge and skills in early language development with our early years colleagues. Settings actively engage with and learn from professionals with expertise in this area, such as Health Visitors, Early Years Advisors and Speech and Language Therapists.				

Black Country Early Outcomes - SLCN Pathway Review Action Plan

SLCN Pathway Review Action Plan					
Setting name:					
Room name:					
Lead Staff name:					
Targets	Start date	Start RAG Red Amber Green	Review date	Review RAG Red Amber Green	Review notes Has the target has been achieved or not and how/why Record progress/next steps for the long term target
Short Term SMART Target					
Long Term SMART Target					
Revisit the checklist and make notes here to inform the next target(s) Your Long Term Target may carry over with new short term targets until achieved					

Black Country Early Outcomes - EAL/SLCN Checklist

First - talk to parents to gain a picture of how the child is presenting at home, and observe what the child is like at home. Ask parents if their child understands little instructions at home, if they can label objects, and if they can put words together. Have the English typical norms in mind (e.g. a 2 year old will typically understand a 2 key-word instruction, like: give daddy the phone; and regularly put two words together, like 'more juice'), but be aware that there will not be an exact correlation with the home language. The English norms will just give you a rough idea. If possible – do an **initial** screen in the home language.

Use this checklist alongside your observations in setting. If you are seeing any of the indicators in the right column - consider referring the child to Speech and Language Therapy or to other appropriate services.

Question	Yes	No	Strategies	Possible indicators of a communication need
Do you or parents suspect there is a problem with the child's hearing?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and refer for a hearing test if necessary Consider where the child is sitting, can they see your face/ lips, body language from where they are sitting? Make these considerations when devising your seating plan Use lots of visual prompts to support understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child often shouts Child is not responding to their name being called Child doesn't seem to locate where the sound/person's voice is coming from Child gets lots of colds/ear infections
Has the child been exposed to English language for at least 6-8 months?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide non-verbal ways to support communication e.g. modelling the use of sign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress not related to development or exposure to English Play skills and other developmental milestones also delayed

Black Country Early Outcomes - EAL/SLCN Checklist

			<p>and gesture, using objects, visual timetables, cue cards, choice boards, ALDs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify your language. Give the child time to process. • Do not pressure the child to interact with you or use their voice • Provide close adult support • Consider a buddy for the child. Is there someone who speaks the child's home language in your class? • Provide time for child to become familiar with English language and their new setting – then re-visit this document 	
<p>Does the child struggle to respond to greetings e.g. hello and bye?</p> <p>Does the child struggle to join in</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise the child for responding to greetings - verbal or non-verbal • Find out about cultural norms • Accept any form of communication e.g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not respond to greetings using non-verbal communication • Does not make appropriate eye contact (within cultural norms) • Child shows limited interest in peers • Others may describe child as passive • Does not stop and look when hearing own name

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Does the child respond and use non-verbal language or first language during interaction and play?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use single words to label accompanied by gesture/visual aid e.g. object, pic, ALD • Offer choices with visuals every day • Use the commenting approach • Play games which involve listening and repeating words • Use tone of voice to aid child's understanding • Build in opportunities for group or paired work with children/ an adult with good language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not able to express basic needs by 'doing' e.g. reaching , climbing, or using first language and gesture • Solitary repetitive play • Parents report similar skills set in home language • Family history of SLCN • Not able to take turns in a simple turn taking game e.g. rolling a ball back and forth • Not seeking adult attention
Do parents/ staff member that speaks the same language feel the child's talking and communication in their home language is developing as expected?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible do initial screen e.g Wellcomm in home language • Observation of child in home setting • Become familiar/ research cultural norms and consider versus British norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child is not making any noises or using words at all at school (or only with certain people) but parents report making sounds/using words at home • Difficulties evident in both languages - not much disparity between skills in home language and English
Do parents report they struggle to understand			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat words that are mispronounced with clear models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any reported / observed problems with chewing and swallowing. Is the child a messy eater? • The child loses their voice lots/ sounds croaky/ hoarse • Child is unable to produce a range of sounds in isolation

Black Country Early Outcomes - EAL/SLCN Checklist

pronunciation in the home language?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not get a child to repeat the word back once it is modelled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the child is talking they look like they are struggling to move their mouth • Often reported as clumsy
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Black Country Early Outcomes - Communication Friendly Environment Checklist

Do you have a communication friendly environment that supports children to become confident and skilled communicators? This checklist is designed to help you and your colleagues think about the environment you provide for your children so that it is developmentally appropriate, supportive and stimulating and a place where children can enjoy experimenting with communication, language and literacy.

Does your setting provide a learning environment which supports children's speech, language and communication development that includes:-

	RED	AMBER	GREEN
<p>1. Displays that are of interest/topical so that children want to talk about them <i>Use a plain background so the displays are the main focus of attention and are at child height. If the children have the opportunity to help with a display they are more likely to talk about it</i></p>			
<p>2. Toys and resources at child height so that children can reach them <i>Spaces should be viewed from the child's perspective. Look around your space from the height of the children who use it. What do your babies/toddlers really see?</i></p>			
<p>3. Toys and resources in that are labeled with pictures or symbols <i>Too much choice can be overwhelming. Do the children know what the symbols mean?</i></p>			
<p>4. A well-planned environment where it is clear to the child what happens there <i>Well-presented resources can encourage curiosity and experimentation. Children are more likely to comment and ask questions when resources are exciting to them</i></p>			
<p>5. Quiet, comfortable areas where practitioners can devote time to bonding with and being close to young children. <i>A place where adults and children know they can relax and enjoy a chat together away from the hustle and bustle of the busy areas of the setting</i></p>			
<p>6. Some areas that do not have much on display on the wall so that the children can concentrate on the adult talking to them, rather than having their attention taken with what they are looking at on the wall <i>Think about what is behind you when you are talking with children, or what is behind the book you are sharing</i></p>			

Black Country Early Outcomes - Communication Friendly Environment Checklist

<p>7. Quiet areas for storytelling and reading, making opportunities to reread favourite books <i>Soft cushions and furnishings will help give the message that this is a comfortable area for sitting and sharing stories</i></p>			
<p>8. No continuous background noise such as a radio/music <i>Being in a noisy environment makes it really difficult for children to concentrate. This can have a negative impact on their speaking and listening skills</i></p>			
<p>9. Play equipment in the outside environment as well as the inside environment that encourages shared play <i>The outside space is a rich source of opportunities for language skills</i></p>			
<p>10. An environment reflecting the culture and ethnicity of the children <i>Ensure that children have the opportunity to speak in their home language(s) if English is not their first language. Include play and learning resources that positively reflect the children's cultural and linguistic identity and experiences</i></p>			
<p>11. Resources that are stimulating and at the appropriate developmental level for the child <i>Provide every day, fun and interesting activities based on next steps/interests that support adults to have interesting and enjoyable conversations with children</i></p>			
<p>12. Planning to both sing and say rhymes with the children either as a planned group activity or spontaneously when children choose to <i>Include songs and rhymes you use all the time that are familiar to the children and also introduce new ones as part of everyday routines. Draw attention to the actions, rhyming sounds/words.</i></p>			
<p>13. Enhancing stories and songs with props such as objects or puppets and supporting them with actions <i>This will help to focus children's attention which is essential for the development of language</i></p>			
<p>14. Showing children how spoken language and written language are linked <i>If writing is modelled in different situations children will attempt to do the same and may talk about their writing</i></p>			

<p>15. Having flexible planning so it is possible to be responsive to spontaneous events <i>So you can talk with children as things are happening e.g. it starts to snow/a spiders web is sparkling with dew/a child has a new sibling or pet etc.</i></p>			
<p>Developing your Communication Friendly Environment</p> <p>Using the above information from the checklist, what are your priorities for the developing a communication friendly environment? Consider each of the rooms your children access separately</p> <p>Development Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the checklist in each room 2. Set long term and short term SMART targets for each room 3. Set review dates for the targets – put these dates in your calendar 4. Have named staff allocated to complete the review(s) 5. At each review decide if the target has been achieved or not and comment why 6. Review the checklist and set new target(s) <p>An example action plan format is attached</p> <p>Target examples Long Term SMART target e.g. Toddler room will score green across all areas using the communication environment checklist</p> <p>Short Term SMART target e.g. Staff in preschool to evaluate resources in their room and identify whether they are stimulating and at the appropriate developmental age for children aged 3-4 years old, keep a record of this and complete by the end of September 2020</p>			

With reference to: Every Child a Talker (ECAT)

RAG rating explanation

- Red** - e.g. we don't have this in place at all. It was in place but has lapsed
- Amber** - e.g. in place but not embedded; not everyone aware of it; evidence of effectiveness not known
- Green** – e.g. Robustly in place; clear evidence of impact

Communication Friendly Environment Action Plan					
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