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| **Learning EAL in the Early years**Guidelines for Supporting Expressive Language Development**At all stages*** It is important to model language, while playing alongside a child.

Use **descriptive commentary** – talking about what you or the child is doing. **Modelling language and using descriptive commentary should make up about 80% of your interactions, and no more than 20% should be direct questioning.*** Allow **time** for children to formulate responses.

**How can adults support and extend language?*** Continued talking even when children do not respond
* Persistent inclusion in small groups with other children
* Use of varied questions
* Inclusion of other children as the focus in the conversation
* Use of the first language
* Acceptance of non-verbal responses
* Praising of minimal effort
* Expectations to respond with repeated words and/or counting
* Structuring of programme to encourage child to child interaction
* Provide activities which reinforce language practice through role play

 From: Guidance for EYFS Practitioners on Assessing and Supporting Young Children, Oxfordshire CC, 2009  |

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| **Stage**  | **Speaking Listening and Understanding**  | **Language used by the child**  | **Examples of what you might hear** | **What suport can the adult give?** |
| **Stage One:** New to English  | * Makes contact with another child in the class
* Joins in with other children but may

not speak* Uses non-verbal gestures to indicate

meaning – particularly needs, likes or dislikes* Watches carefully what other children

are doing and often imitates them* May talk in first language to other

children who share it | Greetings and simplesocial conventionsYes/NoNaming single objects or actions that canbe seenNaming something seen in immediatepast using visual clues | Raza was looking fora missing piece of a puzzle - “Butterflies?”Rafiq gestured when he wanted an adult to do up his zip – “Please?”Hajra pointing, whenoffered a choice of cups – “That one.” | Use visual prompts such as visual timetables, and props to support stories.Use descriptive commentary.Model simple sentence structure in routines and activities:“It’s snack time now.”“Come and sit down.”Talk about routines, what is happening orhas just happened. “You’re doing a puzzle.”Name the pictures on the puzzle indescriptive commentary:“Butterfly, balls, cats…”Model gestures and actions and respondto child’s gestures. “Shall I do your zip up?”Respond and extend – add to the child’slanguage. “Now you can go in the garden!”**Few questions at these stages**: ask simple questions in context, that can be responded to with gestures or single words. Offer forced alternatives and use gestures to show what you are referring to: “Do you want the **red cup** or the **blue cup**?”Where’s? e.g. “Where’s Mummy Bear?”Who? e.g. “Who broke the chair?”What? e.g. “What is Goldilocks eating?” |
| **Stage Two**: Becoming familiar with English  | * Listens attentively for short periods of time (see EYFS 30-50m)
* Uses non-verbal gestures to respond

to greetings/questions about self* Joins in repeating language in a story or rhyme (see EYFS 30-50m)
* Echoes words and phrases of other

children and adults, particularly usedin social interaction* Shows confidence in speaking in first

or other language* Able to express self in English, using one or more common words
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| **Stage**  | **Speaking Listening and Understanding**  | **Language used by the child**  | **Examples of what you might hear** | **What suport can the adult give?** |
| **Stage Three:** Becoming more confident with English  | * Understands simple conversational English
* Understands more words than can express
* Listens and responds to classroom

instructions and explanations where there are non-verbal cues and illustrations (see EYFS 30-50m)* Copies talk that has been modelled and

begins to use short phrases* Spoken language shows English word order
* Can generally understand pronunciation
* Can name a range of common objects

in the home/school environment | Naming objects and adding a simple descriptionDescribing things that are the same and things that aredifferent/ describingpicturesRecalling simpleinformationTalking aboutnumber, possessionand feelingsTalking about where things areExpressingsimple actions | Hamsa was making playdough cakes with candles – “You one, not four, you one.”Safah was doing a puzzle – “Where this go? Raza, where’s numbers?”Hamsa replied to a question: “Has your bear got arms?”– “Yeh, he’s got.”Ikram was looking at a book alone - “This Thomas!Funny, funny this.Funny, funny,funny Thomas!” | Simplify the language so the child can respond/ copy, emphasising the key word and modelling sentence structure.“Holly’s got one candle, and Hamsa’s got4 candles!”“One… two butterflies. Where’s the number 2?”Model the sentence structure and extendthe vocabulary (descriptive): “Your bear has got furry arms.”“Thomas is stuck in the snow!”Some questions requiring a verbal answeror gestures that show child’s comprehension:Who? What? Where?Snack time: Where’s the red cup?Reading a story: What is Goldilocks doing?Which is Daddy Bear’s chair?Cooking: What did we put in our cakes?Playtime: Who are you going to play with? |
| **Stage Four:** Threshold | * Can speak about matters of immediate

interest in familiar settings, using 4-5word sentences* Can convey meaning through talk and gesture
* Can answer simple questions about self and objects around
* Uses some personal pronouns correctly

e.g. he/she/I* Can extend what they say with support
* Increasingly confident in taking part in activities with peers in English
* Listens attentively during whole class

teaching time (see EYFS 40-60m) * Uses some common prepositions correctly e.g. in, under, on, next to, behind, in front
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| **Stage**  | **Speaking Listening and Understanding**  | **Language used by the child**  | **Examples of what you might hear** | **What suport can the adult give?** |
| **Stage Five:**Becoming more fluent | * Uses basic sentences with a widening range of vocabulary and some correct grammar e.g. articles (a the), plurals, possessive adjectives (his, her)
* Able to follow and understand what others say in a group discussion
* Can speak confidently to individual, friends and small groups about things that are of interest
* Can ask questions to clarify understanding
* Can describe an event/personal

experience using simple sentences | Talking about things, stories and events in context:Following a set of directions.Giving simpledirections or explanations.Talking about events in the past and future.Sequencing pictures or recent and significant events and retelling in a logical order.Predicting | Sammy – “We were just looking you. Can we come in please?”Vincenzo to a friendin a guided drawing activity.– “Look, don’t draw… look what you do.”Sammy – “There’s too much, you can’t eat all of that.” | Listening to understand what the child is trying to express, and giving time for the child to express complex thinking.Genuine conversations and discussion about what the child is doing. Questions such as:How did you come to school?What did daddy bear do next?Can you find some things that are yellow and put them in this box?Which car will go the fastest? |
| **Stage Six:**Secure | * Can tell a familiar story in simple language and in correct sequence to a small group
* Is beginning to use appropriate tenses in speaking
* Use of connectives such as when or because to express relationships between ideas and sequences of events
* Can make verbal inferences
* Uses language to solve problems aloud
* Can explain why something happened or might have happened
* Can justify predictions and decisions
 | Talking about things **in abstract:**Justify predictionsJustify decisionsSequence events/ elements of a storyExplain whysomething happenedor why it might have happenedSolve problemsMake inferences | Claudia – “Christmasgive me an umbrella,I have, I have had it.”Hamsa, writing a story “Everyone…children... they’re the teacher. They go play park. They sit in a big balloon, they go up there, they come down, they come home. Every night they go to sleep.” | Listen carefully to understand what the child is trying to express. Give time for the child to express complex thinking.Genuine conversations/ discussion about what the child is doing.Talk about objects you can’t see/touch, recall/retell/early reasoning/use imagination: “Did Father Christmas give you an umbrella? That’s good, so you won’t get wet if it’s raining!”“I wonder what it’s like in a balloon up in the sky?”Develop reasoning skills further. Use questions ‘Why?’ ‘What if.?’ (with future and conditional tenses): “What will happen to him if he eats all that fruit? Will he have a tummy ache, like the Hungry Caterpillar?”Why was Baby Bear upset? Where shall we put the seeds to help them grow?How do you think Goldilocks felt when she saw Daddy Bear?Why shouldn’t Goldilocks have gone to the bears’ house? |