

Observation Checkpoints for Communication and language

Developing conversations and pretend play -

- By around 2 years old, is the child showing an interest in what other children are playing and sometimes joins in?
- By around 3 years old, can the child shift from one task to another if you get their attention. Using the child's name can help: "Jason, please can you stop now? We're tidying up".

Using speech sounds -

- 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? Towards their third birthday, can the child use around 300 words?
- These words include descriptive language. They include words for time (for example, 'now' and '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 5 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 wash dolly's face?"

Understanding questions -

- Around the age of 2, can the child understand many more words than they can say – between 200–500 words?
- Around the age of 2, can the child understand simple questions and instructions like: "Where's your hat?" or "What's the boy in the picture doing?"
- Around the age of 3, can the child show that they understand action words by pointing to the right picture in a book. For example: "Who's jumping?"