

Communication and Language



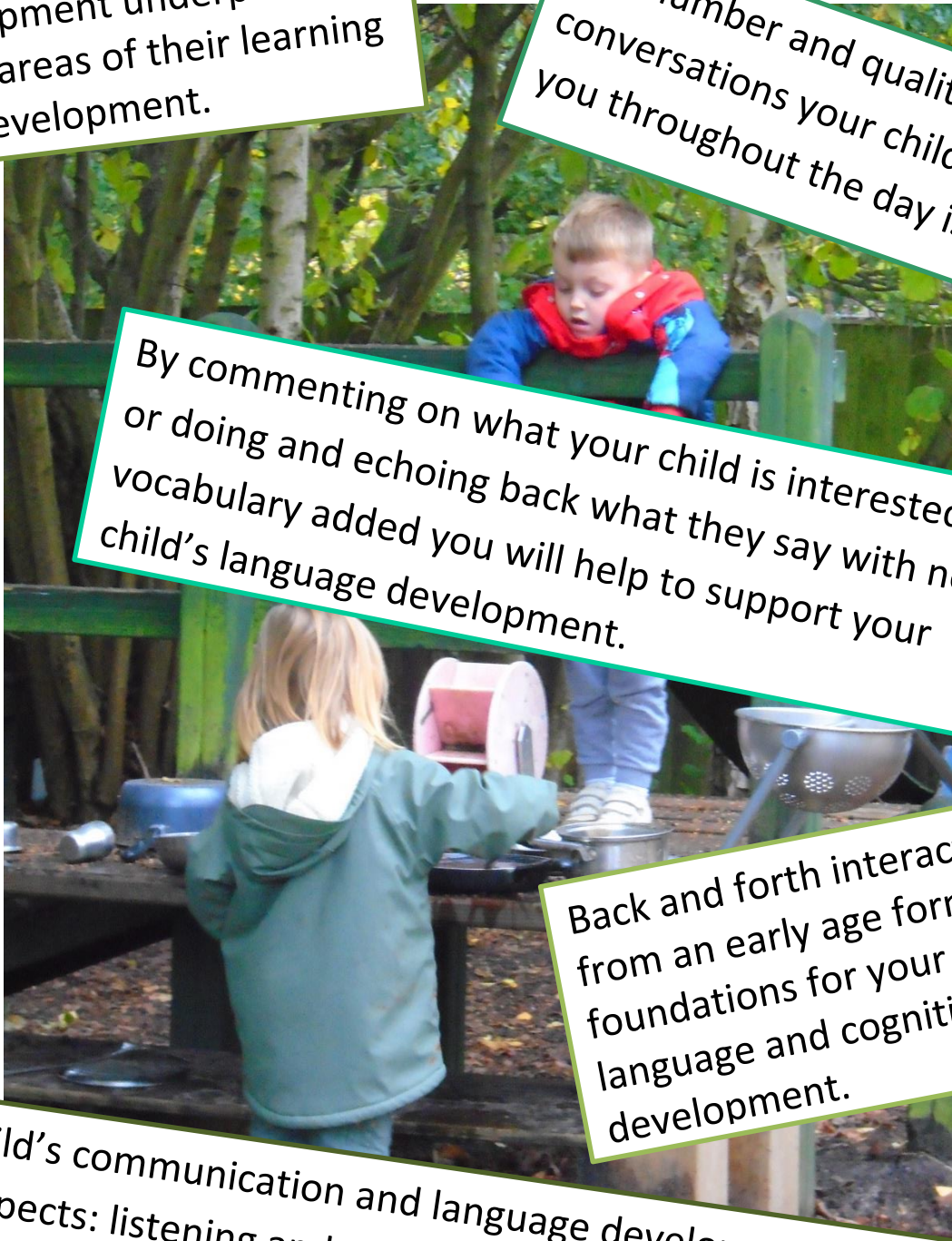
Your child's spoken language development underpins all seven areas of their learning and development.

The number and quality of the conversations your child has with you throughout the day is crucial.

By commenting on what your child is interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added you will help to support your child's language development.

Back and forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for your child's language and cognitive development.

Your child's communication and language development involves three aspects: listening and attention, understanding and speaking. Here are some ways that you can support your child's communication and language development at home.



Listening and Attention

Share lots of stories, rhymes, poems, songs and music.



Aim to share stories with your child every day. Don't worry if they repeatedly ask for the same story, this shows the high level of their interest and engagement. Talk about the characters and their feelings, the setting and what might happen next?

Look at non-fiction books with your child and talk about what you see. Try to choose subjects that you know your child is interested in such as dinosaurs or aeroplanes, adding new vocabulary in context like this will help to support your child's language development.



Talk to your child as you play together, modelling speech for them, for example, when playing alongside them with playdough you might say "rolling, I'm rolling my dough into a long shape." Problem solve together e.g. "How might I make it longer?"



Play listening games such as closing your eyes and naming all of the sounds you can hear together, or making sounds behind the sofa for your child to guess by rattling keys, scrunching crisp packets, clicking a pen on and off.



Understanding

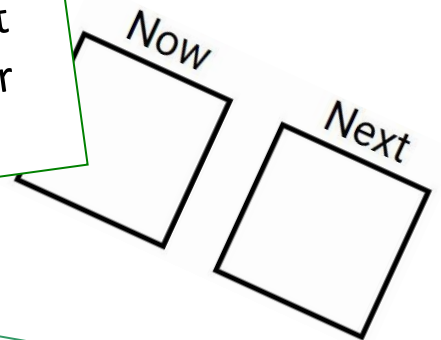
Use actions alongside songs, music and rhymes.



If your child is learning English as an additional language be sure to maintain their first language at home as this is the language they will be thinking in, English will develop alongside.



Encourage your child to listen to and follow your instructions. Keep it simple at first e.g. "Put your coat on the hook", then add in another part e.g. "Put your coat on the hook and then take off your shoes."



Ask your child considered questions to encourage them to think about what they are doing and what they might do next. This helps them to plan, do and review their play.



Introduce a range of new vocabulary through stories. Extend your child's language through your everyday interactions e.g. Child "eating grass!", Adult "Yes, the rabbit's eating the juicy green grass."



Speaking

Encourage your child to babble and talk to you, give them your full attention and respond to them, repeating what they say and extending it.



Follow your child's lead to talk about what they are interested in. Give them time to think about what they want to say before jumping in too soon.

Model language one step beyond your child's current level of speech. Don't correct their speech, simply model it back with the correct pronunciation.

Talk about what you can see, hear, smell touch and taste whilst out and about, offer your child a wide range of experiences that motivate them to speak. Talk about photographs of things you've enjoyed doing together.

Don't pressure your child to talk, use and respond to gestures. Your child may be silent at first but then choose to talk about an activity later. Use words, songs, rhymes and model language for them.

If your child is learning English as an additional language, encourage them to communicate in their home language as well.

