

SIX PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

Principle 1

Comment More, Question Less

Use comments and statements rather than questions.
Full sentences provide meaningful language models.
Reduces pressure on quieter children.
Instead of: "What's that? What colour?"
Say: "You're making a tall tower. You've chosen the big block."

Principle 2

Use SHREC Approach

Evidence-based strategy for language development:

Sh - Share attention

Be at child's level, focus on their interest

R - Respond

Follow their lead, comment briefly

E - Expand

Repeat and add words to build sentences

C - Conversation

Extended back-and-forth, give time to reply

Principle 3

Teach Words Practically

Introduce vocabulary through multisensory experiences
Use real objects, actions, and contexts
Children need approximately 12 encounters to secure a new word
Repeat target words across different contexts and interactions

BIG – Find and compare objects that are genuinely big

Principle 4

Use Key Interaction Strategies

Naming & Labelling - Give clear words for objects/actions

Explaining & Showing - Demonstrate and describe

Repetition - Repeat key vocabulary multiple times

Recasting - Improve child's sentence ("Him fall" → "He fell down")

Extending - Add new information to their ideas

Commenting - Describe what they're doing, not questioning.

Principle 5

Mathematise During Play

Make natural maths in play visible through talk:

Spot opportunities: Counting, comparing, discussing shapes

Use precise vocabulary: "longer", "heavier", "more than", "pattern", "tallest"

Gentle prompts: "How many now?" "Which is tallest?"

Not formal teaching - notice and name the maths already happening.

Principle 6

Interact, Don't Interrupt

Interacting means: joining child's thinking, following interests, enhancing play

Interrupting means: stopping focus, asking too many questions, taking over play

Step in at moments of struggle, curiosity or need.

Step back when children are deeply absorbed.

Timing is key.