



Early Years Setting Audit for a 'Communication Friendly Environment'

- This tool can be used to reflect on aspects of your Early Years setting and the practitioners' role within it.
- The first section looks at aspects of the learning environment that support the development of children's speech, language and communication.
- The second section focuses on the practitioner's approach to supporting communication.
- Working together as a staff group, the "Enabling environment" section can be used to identify the strengths and needs of your setting and provide a starting point for discussion and change.
- The "practitioner" section can be used either as a self reflective tool or as a focus for peer observation to heighten practitioner's awareness of practice that encourages speech, language and communication development.
- Having used the tool, an action plan can be devised to identify strengths and needs which could be included in the Focused Improvement Plan. Further training needs can also be identified and included.

Name of person completing this audit:

Date:

Enabling Environment:	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
Materials and resources are easily accessible and clearly labelled with a picture or symbol				
There is sufficient space for children to sit and move comfortably				
There are quiet, well-defined areas for individuals and small groups				
Background noise is minimal (e.g. radio, TV should not be on all day)				
There are areas within the setting where visual distractions are minimised				
Routines, instructions or changes are supported with objects, pictures or photographs e.g. visual timetable				
Quiet areas are available for story time that are less visually distracting				
There are stimulating and interesting resources that extend and develop play				
Favourite stories are read and reread to children				
Work is done in partnership with parents				
Practitioners.....	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
are sensitive to the needs of all children e.g. on arrival or if particularly shy				
encourage independence and self confidence				
position themselves where they can easily make eye-contact				
tune into child's focus and models language to support				



watch and see what the children do first before intervening				
join in with the children's play inside and out				
facilitate shared play and turn taking where age appropriate				
use a range of nonverbal communication, including gesture and facial expression				
use a range of visuals e.g. real objects, photographs or pictures				
gain children's attention before speaking				
vary the voice to make it interesting for children				
give children time to respond e.g. "Ten second rule"				
respond positively to children's communication attempts, including non-verbal communication				
uses more comments than questions/ instructions				
comment on the <u>child's</u> actions e.g. "You've made a lovely red train!"				
use language matched to the child's language level e.g. shorter sentences				
give specific praise e.g. Fantastic! Good listening				
encourage turn-taking in conversation				
model appropriate communication behaviour e.g. avoids talking over the children's heads				
accept child's language and model back the correct form e.g. child says: "I goed to the shop", and adult says: How lovely – you went to the shop.				
help their language develop by expanding on children's utterances e.g. child says "Car!" Practitioner says "Car goes fast!"				
use simple repetitive language during everyday activities				
give opportunities for children to ask their own questions				
use open ended questions that invite conversation and encourage reasoning rather than yes/no answers				
break complex sentences, including instructions, down to manageable chunks				
actively support children in solving their problems and disputes				
give opportunities for children to use their first language				
make time throughout each day to say rhymes as well as sing with individuals				
make time throughout each day to say rhymes as well as sing with groups of children				
generally support songs and stories with actions, objects or puppets				
link children's spoken language with written language				

