

Stages of Speech and Language Development

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Age	Listening and attention	Understanding	Speech sounds and talk	Social Communication
Up to 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turns towards a familiar sound Startled by loud noises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises parent's voice Often calmed by familiar, friendly voice e.g. parent's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently cries especially when unhappy or uncomfortable Makes vocal sounds, e.g. cooing, gurgling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gazes at faces and copies facial movements e.g. sticking out tongue Makes eye contact for fairly long periods
3 - 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watches face when someone talks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows excitement at sound of approaching voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes vocal noises to get attention Makes sounds back when talked to Laughs during play Babbles to self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senses different emotions in parent's voice and may respond differently, for example smile, quieten, laugh Cries in different ways to express different needs
6 - 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locates source of voice with accuracy Focuses on different sounds e.g. telephone, doorbell, clock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands frequently used words such as 'all gone', 'no' and 'bye-bye' Stops and looks when he hears own name Understands simple instructions when supported by gesture and context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'ba-ba, no-no, go-go' Stops babbling when hears familiar adult voice Uses gestures such as waving & pointing to help communicate Around 12 months begins to use single words e.g. 'mum', 'tete' (teddy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys action rhymes and songs Tries to copy adult speech and lip movements Takes 'turns' in conversations (using babble)
12 - 15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends to music and singing Enjoys sound-making toys/ objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands single words in context, e.g. 'cup', 'milk', 'daddy' Understands more words than they can say Understands simple instructions in context, e.g. 'kiss mummy', 'give to daddy', 'stop' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May say around 10 single words, although these may only be recognizable in context and to a familiar carer. Reaches or points to something they want whilst vocalizing. Enjoys babbling and copying sounds and words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likes being with familiar adults Likes watching adults for short periods of time Learns that their voice and actions have effects on others
15 - 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listens and responds to simple information/ instructions e.g. 'Ben, put on shoes', 'Mohammed, give to Daddy' Likes to explore their environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands a wide range of single words and some two-word phrases, e.g. 'give me', 'shoe on' Recognizes and points to objects and pictures in books if asked Gives named familiar objects to adult, e.g. coat, car, apple, book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still babbles but using some single words correctly, although may not be clear Copies gesture and words from adults Uses sounds and words to communicate for a range of purposes e.g. requesting, naming, refusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple pretend play Developing interaction with adults and enjoys sharing experiences
16 - 26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on an activity of their own choice but finds it difficult to be directed by an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of single words develops rapidly during this stage. Understands instructions with fewer clues e.g. 'get mummy's shoes' (without pointing at or looking at the shoes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses an increased range of single words Starting to put words together e.g. "more juice", "daddy car" Requesting information using words/intonation e.g. the names of people and objects (towards two years old) Uses speech sounds p,b,m,w, d 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend play developing with toys such as feeding a doll or driving a car Sometimes becomes frustrated when unable to make self understood – this may result in tantrums Interprets adult body language including pointing, gesture and facial expression Looks to others to check responses to their words or actions

<p>22 - 36 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single channelled attention • Child can either concentrate on instructions or on task. • Can concentrate on only one speaker • Adult must direct where to attend, using child's name helps focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture e.g. "Who's jumping?" • Developing understanding of simple concepts including in/on/under, big/little • Understands phrases like 'put teddy in the box', 'get your book, coat and bag', 'draw a big brown dog' • Understands 'who' and 'what' and 'where' questions but not 'why' • Understands a simple story when supported with pictures, individually or in a small group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may often use actions or physical means of getting their message across rather than using appropriate language e.g. taking toy and saying "I have it" • Links four to five words together • Learning to engage others in their play • Able to use pronouns (me, him, she), plurals and prepositions (in, on, under) • Speech sounds are still developing and speech may be unclear to an unfamiliar listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds a conversation but jumps from topic to topic • Interested in others' play and will join in • Expresses emotions towards adults and peers using words, not just actions e.g. saying "no" in a cross voice • Responds to the feeling of others
<p>30 - 50 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to others in one to one or small groups when conversation interests them • Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall • Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories • Focusing attention – still listen or do, but can shift own attention • Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands use of objects (e.g. "What do we use to cut things?") • Understands questions or instructions with two parts, e.g. 'get your jumper and stand by the door' • Shows understanding of prepositions such as "under", "on top", "behind" by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture • Beginning to understand "How?" and "Why?" questions • Aware of time in relation to past, present and future, e.g. "today we are having banana, yesterday we had rice cakes. I wonder what we'll have tomorrow?" (towards four years) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. using <i>and</i>, <i>because</i>) • Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. "went down slide, hurt finger") • Uses talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next, recall and relive past experiences • Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks <i>who</i>, <i>what</i>, <i>when</i>, <i>how</i> type questions • Uses a range of tenses (e.g. play, playing, will play, played) • Speech should be able to be understood. Some immaturities may persist e.g. 'wed' for red, 'byder' for spider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands turn-taking as well as sharing with adults and peers, may need some adult support with this • Initiates conversations • Enjoys playing with peers and forms friendships • Beginning to express needs/feelings – uses words, not just actions • Talks freely about home and community
<p>40 – 60 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions • Maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly when appropriate • Two-channelled attention – can listen and do for short span • Integrated attention – can listen and do in range of situations with range of people; varies according to the demands of the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to follow a simple story without pictures or props • Understands instructions containing sequencing words; 'first... after... last' • Understands more abstract concepts - soft, hard, smooth, rough, long, short, tall etc • Demonstrates understanding of "how?" and "why?" questions by giving explanations • Understands humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses well formed sentences e.g. 'I played with Ben at lunchtime' but there may still be some grammatical errors • Easily understood by adults and peers, with only a few immaturities in speech sounds, for example 'th' and 'r' and three consonant combinations, e.g. 'scribble' • Frequently asks the meaning of unfamiliar words and may use them randomly • Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play • Uses language to imagine & recreate roles and experiences in play situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has confidence to speak to others about their own wants, interests and opinions • Initiates conversation, attends to and takes account of what others say • Explains own knowledge and understanding, and asks appropriate questions of others • Shows awareness of the listener when speaking • Expresses needs/feelings in appropriate ways • Forms good relationships with adults & peers and chooses own friends • Works as part of a group or class, taking turns