

PROMOTING AND NURTURING EARLY COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language Indicators**
- 3. The Self Evaluation and Validation Process**
- 4. Mentoring and Support**
- 5. Promoting and nurturing early communication and language:
Early Years Indicators**
- 6. Self-Evaluation Framework**
- 7. Action Plan**
- 8. Appendices**
 - Appendix 1 Self Evaluation and Validation Process**
 - Appendix 2 Key Practitioners**
 - Appendix 3 Resources**

Introduction

East Renfrewshire Education and the Speech and Language Therapy Department have committed over the last three years to training all early years workers on Hanen principles of language and literacy. This is in recognition of the importance of early language development on child development, wellbeing and learning. Save the Children highlighted in 2015 that in Scotland there remains a stubborn gap in language skills between poorer children and their peers. Our ambition is therefore to build upon the already established work of Hanen to enable early years establishments to provide learning experiences which are language enriching and support all the children of East Renfrewshire to develop their speech, language and communication skills.

Together, East Renfrewshire Education Department, East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde have introduced a programme which aims to develop the capacity of all early years establishments to promote and nurture the language and communication development of all children.

Early years establishments will be validated as Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language when they can provide evidence of good practice in developing speech, language and communication.

Validation will be achieved through a self-evaluation and supportive assessment process. This will provide a multi-agency endorsement of an establishment's capacity to support the development of all children's communication skills.

Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language Framework

There are 5 key indicators which form the basis of supportive practice:

- Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech language and communication for all children
- Indicator Two: Adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners.
- Indicator Three: Adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs
- Indicator Four: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills
- Indicator Five: The establishment can demonstrate a strong commitment to staff training and development to meet the speech, language and communication needs of all children and their families.

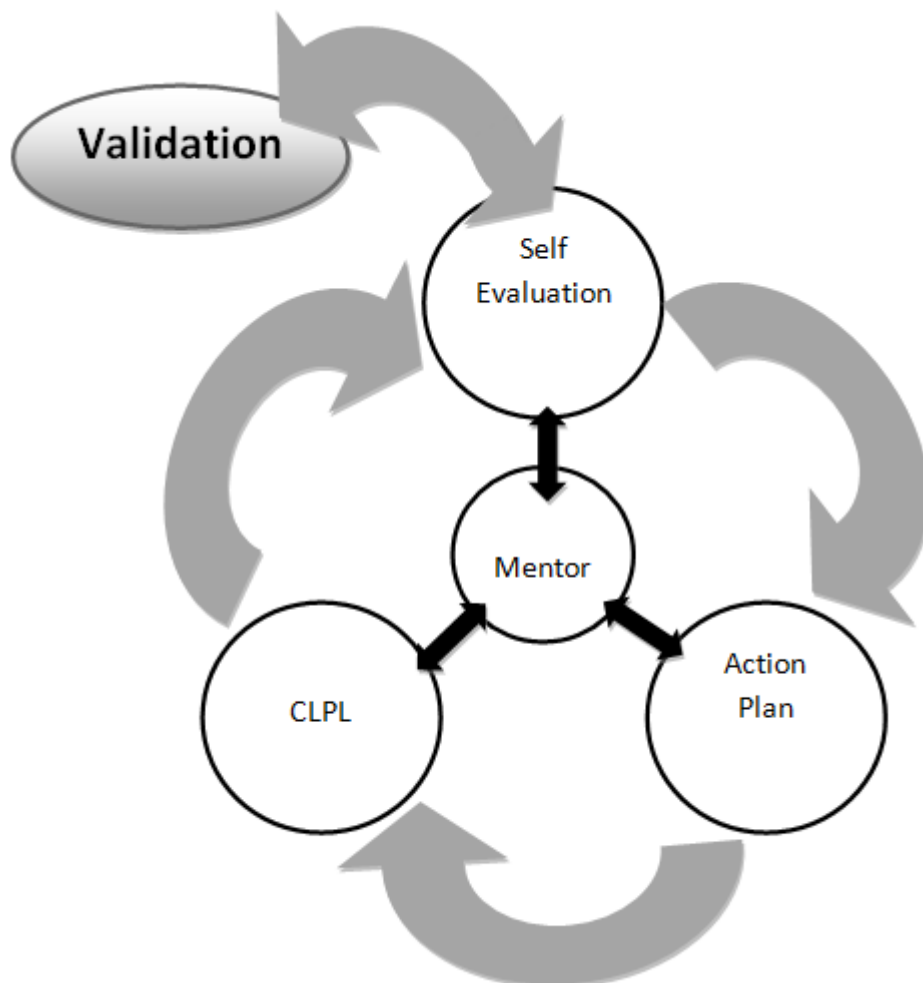
This document contains practical suggestions on good practice which, if implemented, will provide evidence of how each indicator is being met.

The Self Evaluation and Validation Process

This is a three part process:

1. Completion of a self-evaluation framework and action plan identifying the establishment's strengths and development needs.
2. Engagement with a mentoring and, if necessary, a practice development process. This may include identifying and accessing training/career-long professional learning opportunities. As practice and experience across establishments is likely to be varied, there is no single pathway or suggested training programme. However, it is recommended that practitioners in all early years establishments will undertake relevant professional learning.
3. On site visit by 2 appointed assessors (Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist or Head Teacher) for observations and interviews with staff and evaluation of a 'portfolio of evidence' based on the 5 key indicators of good practice. Assessors will seek evidence that practice has developed as a consequence of career-long professional learning and training/professional enquiry.

Completing the [self-evaluation framework](#) regularly before and during the mentoring period will allow you to keep on track with progress towards meeting the key indicators of good practice.



Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language Validation

Each of the Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language Key Indicators will be rated by assessors as follows:

1= not achieved, 2= developing or 3= achieved.

To be validated, an establishment must score 3 (achieved) in three out of five indicators and 2 (developing) in the remaining indicators. **Indicator Two must be achieved for successful validation.**

Mentoring and Support

Mentoring and support from key health and education practitioners is a core component of this framework. The role of the mentor is to support and encourage practitioners to manage their own learning and skill development to maximise the learning environment in supporting speech language and communication. They will not necessarily deliver direct training or provide intervention in your establishment but will guide you to access the support you need. A mentor could be your link Educational Psychologist, link Speech and Language Therapist, QIO or peer from another establishment. When considering who can provide mentoring, you should think about who can best help you achieve the evidence requirements identified in your self evaluation. A list of key contacts is available at Appendix 2. Contact one of your local practitioners to discuss mentoring and who can best support you with this.



**Promoting and Nurturing Early
Communication and Language
Key Indicators for East Renfrewshire's
Early Years Establishments**



Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language and communication for all children:

Evidence:	Displays that include items that invite comments from children
	Resources that are accessible and encourage child led learning experiences
	Equipment that is accessible and is clearly labelled with a picture or symbol
	Well defined learning areas indoors and outdoors
	Quiet areas or areas used for story time that are less visually distracting
	Outdoor play that includes imaginative role play some of the time
	Symbols/pictures are used to aid children's understanding

Aspects which will be observed by the assessor

The assessor will look at the environment of your setting to assess the evidence supporting this Key Indicator.

Portfolio evidence

You may wish to include photographs of your setting in your portfolio to demonstrate your understanding of this Key Indicator especially as displays and outdoor play can vary according to the season. Remember that if your photographs include children you should get parental permission before submitting them. You may wish to include a copy of your plans if they include descriptions of displays or show how imaginative role play or language rich activities are planned for.



**Promoting and Nurturing Early
Communication and Language
Key Indicators for East Renfrewshire's
Early Years Establishments**



Indicator Two: Adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners.

Evidence:	Adults who demonstrate an approach to communication consistent with the Hanen principles:
	Use simple repetitive language during everyday activities
	Gain children's attention before delivering instructions
	Talk at an appropriate rate using short sentences
	Adapt language to the level of the child
	Model correct language when they hear a child's incorrect vocalisation
	Extend the child's vocalisations
	Encourage children to ask questions
	Use vocabulary the children can understand in everyday instructions
	Give children time to respond
	Give a running commentary on the child's activity rather than asking questions most of the time
	Use natural gesture, facial expression and tone of voice to support language
	Support verbal language with gestures and visuals cues
	Utilise a range of types of questions
	Support play by modelling language based on child's activities and encouraging peer interaction
Get down to the child's level and establish eye contact when communicating	

Aspects which will be observed by the Assessor:

The assessor will spend some time observing how adults in the setting adapt their language and communication to encourage children's language development.

Portfolio evidence

You may wish to include information on how you develop adult-child interaction in your setting. Evidence could include information on training and development the setting has undergone in a relevant area; using peer observation to reflect on how staff in the setting use communication strategies such as those outlined above.



**Promoting and Nurturing Early
Communication and Language
Key Indicators for East Renfrewshire's
Early Years Establishments**



Indicator Three: Adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs

Evidence:	Adults in the learning environment who use supportive approaches including:
	Ensuring that all children have the opportunity to interact individually with an adult if they wish
	Speaking sensitively to shy or unsettled children
	Helping children to settle when they arrive
	Playing alongside children without always directing their play
	Encouraging children's independence and self-confidence by responding positively to all efforts
	Facilitating shared turn taking and play
	Modelling activities and talking about what they are doing
	Modelling a range of positive behaviour and language
	Developing children's emotional vocabulary by naming and describing emotions and feelings
	Helping children to develop and extend imaginary play
	Supporting outdoor play by modelling language based on the child's activities and encouraging peer interaction
	Applying a flexible use of questioning appropriate to child's stage of development (eg forced choice/closed/open)
	Responding positively to children's efforts to communicate
	Giving clear expectations of boundaries
	Preparing children for expected changes to the day e.g. visit of dentist
	Actively supporting children in solving their problems and disputes
	Setting clear expectations of learning outcomes and success criteria
	Respecting the child's other languages i.e. home language (if not English), sign language

Aspects which will be observed by the assessor

The assessor will spend some time observing the approaches used by adults in the setting; they may also discuss some of these approaches with staff. As part of the observation of the adults, the assessor will notice how the children use language as well. The assessor may wish to speak to you if evidence for some of this Key Indicator is not observed.

Portfolio evidence

Include information in support of this Indicator in your portfolio. Examples include: copies of policies such as how new children are settled in, planning documents and visual support for routines.



Promoting and Nurturing Early
 Communication and Language
 Key Indicators for East Renfrewshire's
 Early Years Establishments



Indicator Four: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills.

Evidence:	Adults in the learning environment who use supportive strategies consistent with the Hanen principles including:
	Re-reading favourite stories with children
	Saying rhymes and singing songs with children in various group sizes
	Frequently supporting songs and stories with actions, objects or puppets
	Explicitly introducing new concepts and vocabulary
	Seeking opportunities to repeat and reinforce new vocabulary
	Linking children's spoken language with written language
	Checking children have understood instructions
	Accepting non-verbal communication as well as verbal
	Ensuring that all children (including the least verbal) have a turn at expressing themselves in a group
	Encouraging children to talk about their interests
	Supporting children to speak within groups as well as during free play
	Providing children with opportunities for supported conversation with their peers as well as opportunities to interact with their peers without adult intrusion
	Providing opportunities to share books with their peers
	Providing opportunities to use and experience their mother tongue if this is not English
Communicating responsively with all parents	
Encouraging hands on and experiential learning for all children	
Utilising multisensory approaches to learning	

Aspects which will be observed by the assessor

The assessor will spend some time observing members of staff in the setting. The assessor will be looking at how well this Key Indicator is being met.

Portfolio evidence

Include a copy of your plans showing the planning for story telling, rhymes and singing.



**Promoting and Nurturing Early
Communication and Language
Key Indicators for East Renfrewshire's
Early Years Establishments**



Indicator Five: The establishment can demonstrate a strong commitment to staff training and development to meet the speech, language and communication needs of all children and their families.

Evidence:	Staff have participated in relevant professional learning on child development and demonstrate a good understanding of speech and language development
	Consultation opportunities with specialists
	Reflective practice and internal support mechanisms
	Informal learning activities
	Practice changes based on self-evaluation undertaken
	Partnership working with parents (e.g. PoPP, Hanen workshops, curriculum groups)
	Self-improvement through evaluation and CLPL leads to positive impact on children
	CLPL leads to positive and sustained changes in practice

Aspects which will be observed by the assessor

The accreditor will speak to you and your staff to determine the nature of any CLPL in the area of speech, language and communication and how you have used this to develop staff and improve outcomes for children.

Portfolio evidence

Include documentation of any of the above activities e.g. Training Packs, Hanen ABC, minutes from JSTs, use of Educational Psychology and Speech and Language Therapy Consultation, policies on parental engagement, etc.



**Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language
Self Evaluation Framework**



Use this framework to measure whole establishment or individual practitioner progress towards meeting the Key Indicators.

You will need to think about and record the **evidence** for your current level of practice and to identify any next steps. There is a measure of progress for each indicator (1= not achieved, 2= developing, 3= achieved).

Name/ Establishment:		Date:	
---------------------------------	--	--------------	--

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language and communication for all children.

Level	Evidence	Next Steps
1 2 3		

Indicator Two: Adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners.

Level	Evidence	Next Steps
1 2 3		

Indicator Three: Adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs

Level	Evidence	Next Steps
1 2 3		

Indicator Four: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills.

Level	Evidence	Next Steps
1 2 3		

Indicator Five: The establishment can demonstrate a strong commitment to staff training and development to meet the speech, language and communication needs of all children and their families

Level	Evidence	Next Steps
1 2 3		



**Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language
Action Plan**



Use this framework to formulate a whole establishment or individual practitioner action plan to help progress towards meeting the Key Indicators.

Name/ Establishment:		Date:	
---------------------------------	--	--------------	--

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech language and communication for all learners.

Current Level	What do we need to do?	Where will we get help?
1 2 3		

Indicator Two: Adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners

Current Level	What do we need to do?	Where will we get help?
1 2 3		

Indicator Three: Adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs.

Current Level	What do we need to do?	Where will we get help?
1 2 3		
Indicator Four: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills.		
Current Level	What do we need to do?	Where will we get help?
1 2 3		
Indicator Five: The establishment can show a strong commitment to staff training and development to meet the speech, language and communication needs of all children and their families		
Current Level	What do we need to do?	Where will we get help?
1 2 3		

Appendix 1: Key Practitioners

Educational Psychology

Eilidh Lanzani
Educational Psychologist
East Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service
211 Main Street
Barrhead
G78 1SY
Tel: 0141 577 8510
Eilidh.Lanzani@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Speech and Language Therapy

Katie Walters
Speech and Language Therapist
Department of Speech and Language Therapy
Barrhead Health and Care Centre
213 Main Street
Barrhead
G78 1SW
Tel: 0141 800 7117
Katherine.walters2@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

East Renfrewshire Education Department

Rosamund Rodriguez
Quality Improvement Officer
211 Main Street
Barrhead
G78 1SY
Tel: 0141 577 3222
Rosamund.Rodriguez2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendix 2: Resources

Useful Websites:

Talk to your baby

www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby

I CAN

www.ican.org.uk

AFASIC

www.afasic.org.uk

Learning and Teaching Scotland

www.ltscotland.org.uk

Talking Point

www.talkingpoint.org.uk

British Stammering Association

www.stammering.org

Bookbug

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug>

Hanen

<http://www.hanen.org/Programs/For-Educators/ABC-and-Beyond.aspx>

Bounce Back

<http://www.bounceback.com.au/>

Educational Psychology Service

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/PsychologicalService/>

Fun Friends

<http://www.pathwayshrc.com.au/fun-friends-4-7-years/>

Play@Home

<https://www.careandlearningalliance.co.uk/our-services/family-supporttoddlers/playhome/>

Play Talk Read

<http://playtalkread.scot/>

PoPP

<http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/psychology/multiprofessional-psychology/psychology-of-parenting-project.aspx>

Pre-birth to Three Guidelines and multimedia resource

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/earlylearningandchildcare/prebirthtothree/nationalguidance/index.asp>

Professor Colwyn Trevarthen videos

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/earlylearningandchildcare/prebirthtothree/nationalguidance/conversations/colwyntrevarthen.asp>

Suzanne Zeedyk

<http://www.suzannezeedyk.com/about/>

The Science of Parenting – Dr Margot Sunderland

http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Baby_Friendly/Conference/Presentations/2012/Parenting_Margot_Sunderland_BFI_Conf_2012.pdf

Useful Documents:

Issue 9 | CAN Talk 9: Children with severe SLCN
http://www.ican.org.uk/~media/Ican2/Whats%20the%20Issue/Evidence/ICAN_TalkSeries9.ashx

Issue 7: Speech Language and Communication Needs and the Early Years
<http://www.ican.org.uk/~media/Ican2/Whats%20the%20Issue/Evidence/7%20Speech%20Language%20and%20Communication%20Needs%20and%20the%20Early%20Years.ashx>

Issue 4: Language and Social Exclusion
<http://www.ican.org.uk/~media/Ican2/Whats%20the%20Issue/Evidence/4%20Language%20and%20Social%20Exclusion%20pdf.ashx>

Issue 3: The Cost to the Nation of Children's Poor Communication - Scotland Edition
<http://www.ican.org.uk/~media/Ican2/Whats%20the%20Issue/Evidence/3%20ICT%20Cost%20to%20the%20nation%20Scotland.ashx>