

Summary of Key Age and Stage Language Development Milestones **One to Five Years**

AGE	WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE CHILD	WHAT TO DO TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
12 months	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make eye contact; use joint attention to share objects / activities • Recognise familiar people/objects • Respond to name • Recognise greetings/gestures <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to babble • Use gestures – point, wave • May start to use a few single words • Copies sounds/actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to what the child is interested in (observe, wait, listen) • Talk in simple sentences about the things you can see, do, hear... • Play simple games like peek-a-boo • Copy the child's sounds/actions • Sing songs and rhymes • Look at books together • Offer simple play – blocks; pots and a spoon; farm animals; doll or teddy to feed, wash and put to bed.
18 months	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand around 50 words • Understand simple instructions • Point to familiar objects/pictures <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say 6 – 20 words • Copy lots of words/sounds • Use objects in pretend play, e.g. feed teddy 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat words back clearly • Add words, e.g. child says ball, you could say throw the ball, it's a big ball, oh oh where's the ball gone? • Use lots of gesture (pointing, showing, nod/shake head) • Play with the child – follow their lead. Respond with interest. • Discuss screen time with families – interactions with people are most important for a child of this age
2 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow simple 2-step instruction, e.g. please give me the ball and the car • Respond to what and where questions • Understands in and on <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say more than 50 words • Put two words together, e.g. bye teddy, no ball • Use tone of voice to ask a question • Say no to indicate they don't want something • Use the words 'my' and 'mine' • Use most vowel sounds correctly and some consonants – m, n, w, h, p, d, t, d • Speech is clearer but often family members understand child better than others 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ideas like big/little; fast/slow; hot/cold in play • Involve child in everyday tasks to model language and build understanding, e.g. sorting washing, setting the table, going to the supermarket • Model pretend play – feeding doll or teddy, driving a car to fill up with petrol, a pretend picnic • Reading stories/looking at books offers new language/ideas and helps with listening and attention • Playdough can be a simple fun activity to make and use • Encourage outdoor play • Have fun and show the parents how to continue this when you are not there.
3 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow more complex 2 step instructions • Understand where, what and who? • Sort items into categories • Recognise basic colours <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 3 – 5 words in a sentence • Use a variety of words – names, actions, location, description • Ask questions • Begin to have a conversation but may not take turns/stay on topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to label and explore emotions to build the child's emotional vocabulary • Read stories that involve emotions and talk about how the person is feeling and why. Match facial expressions with emotions. • Play games that involve sorting objects into categories • Provide opportunities for drawing and writing, especially for children who are less interested. Make it fun.
4 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand most "wh" questions • Understand some numbers • Understand concepts like size, shape, colour <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use words like 'but', and, 'because' to make longer sentences (4 – 7 words) • Describe recent events • Ask lots of questions • Use pronouns – I, me, you, he, she • Speech should be clear 90% of the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for pretend play – simple props like a hat, a scarf, pretend money etc can stimulate imagination and language • Use longer sentences and more complex ideas with children whose language development is progressing well. • Repeat and model sounds and words that are not yet correct. • Provide some direct modeling – e.g. when I talk about myself I say the word "I" if the child is receptive to this approach.
5 years	<p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a 3 step instruction • Understand time related words like before/after • Develop a sense of humour • Begin to recognise sounds, letters, numbers <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use well formed complete sentences • Take part in longer conversations • Tell a simple story – with beginning, middle & end • Speech mostly clear. Sounds like s, l, th, r, still developing for some children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to follow the child's interests • Have conversations – children this age love to talk • Participate in more complex imaginary play where roles are assigned and the action is narrated by the child • Extend interest in stories and books. Get the child to tell the story. • Play with sounds and words – rhyming and words that begin or end with the same sound • Provide opportunities for "writing" • Tell simple jokes. Get the child to tell you a joke if they know some.