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## Prioritise the development of communication and language



Language provides the foundation of thinking and learning and should be prioritised.

High quality adult-child interactions are important and sometimes described as talking *with* children rather than just talking *to* children.

Adults have a vital role to play in modelling effective language and communication.

Use a wide range of approaches including shared reading, storytelling, and explicitly extending children's vocabulary.

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## Develop children's early reading using a balanced approach



Early reading requires the development of a broad range of capabilities.

Using a number of different approaches will be more effective than focusing on any single aspect of early reading.

Promising approaches to develop early reading include storytelling, activities to develop letter and sound knowledge, and singing and rhyming activities to develop phonological awareness.

Prior to the introduction of systematic phonics teaching, activities to develop children's phonological awareness and interest in sounds are likely to be beneficial.

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## Develop children's capability and motivation to write



Writing is physically and intellectually demanding.

Expressive language underpins writing and should be prioritised.

Provide a wide range of opportunities to communicate through writing and develop children's motivation to write.

Support children to develop the foundations of a fast, accurate, and efficient handwriting style.

Monitor the product and process of children's handwriting and provide additional support as necessary.

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## Embed opportunities to develop self-regulation



'Self-regulation' refers to children's ability to manage their own behaviour and aspects of their learning.

A number of approaches to developing self-regulation exist, including the 'Plan-Do-Review' cycle.

Embed opportunities to develop self-regulation within day-to-day activities.

Monitor the development of children's self-regulation and ensure activities remain suitably challenging.

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## Support parents to understand how to help their children learn



Effective parental engagement is challenging but has the potential to improve children's communication, language, and literacy.

Promising strategies include:

- encouraging parents to read *to* children before they can read, then to begin reading *with* children as soon as they can; and
- running workshops showing parents *how* to read and talk about books with their children effectively.

Less promising strategies include occasional home visits or homework tasks.

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## Use high quality assessment to ensure all children make good progress



Ensure clarity of purpose about the different assessments used in your setting.

Collect a small amount of high quality information to ensure that

- children who are struggling receive the right type of support; and
- time is used efficiently by avoiding rehearsing skills or content that children already know well.

Use assessments to inform, not replace, professional judgement.

Monitor children's sensory needs to ensure they do not impede learning.

Avoid using assessments to label children and split them into fixed groups.

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## Use high quality targeted support to help struggling children



High quality targeted support can ensure that children falling behind catch up as quickly as possible.

Small-group support is more likely to be effective when:

- children with the greatest needs are supported by the most capable adults;
- adults have been trained to deliver the activity being used; and
- the approach is evidence-based and has been evaluated elsewhere.

In addition to using evidence-based programmes, some specialist services are likely to be best delivered by other professionals, such as speech and language therapists.