

ECAT Monitoring Tool (Revised Nov 2018)
(Stages of speech, language and communication development in the early years)

Setting
Name:

Childs
Initials:

Date of
Birth:

EAL: Yes / No

Gender: M / F

S.E.N. Yes / No

SALT support Yes / No

Stage and age	Listening and attention	Understanding of language	Speech, sounds and talk	Social skills
The early communicator 12 months	Turns towards a familiar sound then locates range of sounds with accuracy.	Recognises parent's voices and begins to understand frequently used words such as 'all gone', 'no' and 'bye-bye'. Stops and looks when hears own name	Initially uses cries to communicate. Gradually develops speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'baba, nono, gogo'.	Gazes at faces and copies facial movements, e.g. sticking out tongue. Increasingly aware of other people and taking turns in interactions using babble.
The attentive communicator 18 months	Interested in music and singing. Easily distracted by noises or other people talking.	Understanding of single words in context is developing, e.g. 'cup', 'milk', 'daddy'. The child can understand more words than they can say.	Progresses from using babble and around 10 single words, although these will often not be clear. Uses non-verbal communication (NVC) to make wants and needs known e.g. points, nods and shakes head, facial expression	Likes being with familiar adult and watching them. Developing the ability to follow an adult's body language, including pointing and gesture.
The innovative communicator 24 months	Starting to focus on an activity of their choice, although finds it difficult to be directed by an adult. Using the child's name helps them to attend to what the adult says e.g. 'Ben, drink juice', 'Aysha, coat on'	By 24 months understands simple instructions in context following the routine of the day e.g. 'get mummy's shoes', 'put your bricks away', 'Tell dad tea's ready'. Beginning to understand instructions with 2 key words e.g. 'give the <u>ball</u> to <u>teddy</u> '.	Using up to 50 words and is beginning to put 2-3 words together. Frequently asks simple questions, e.g. 'Where's my drink?', 'What's that?' (towards two years of age) Uses speech sounds p, b, m, w.	Gradually able to engage in 'pretend' play with toys e.g. feeding teddy. Frustrated when unable to make themselves understood.
The developing communicator 3 years	Beginning to listen to talk with interest, however easily distracted. Listens to 'talk' addressed to self, but finds it difficult if prompts are not provided, e.g. use of name, 'stop and listen'	Developing understanding of simple concepts including in/on/under, big/little. Understands simple 'who' and 'what' and 'where' questions but not 'why'. Understands a simple story when supported with pictures. Beginning to understand instructions with 3 key words in a play context e.g. 'Can you make <u>teddy</u> <u>kick</u> the <u>ball</u> '?	Uses up to 300 different words including descriptive language, space, function. Uses a range of 3 – 4 key word utterances (shows awareness of grammar but some grammatical immaturities present) e.g. 'daddy go work' and 'she falled down'. Should be using t, d, k, g but speech not always clear. <i>May still find it difficult to say some speech sounds; l, r, y, f, th, s, sh, ch. j.</i>	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 and actions.
The questioning communicator 4 years	Enjoys listening to short stories Still finds it difficult to attend to more than one thing at a time, so can't easily listen to a speaker while still carrying on an activity e.g. child may ignore the adult speaking if focused on an activity	Understands more complex questions or instructions with two parts ' <u>put your hat on the table</u> and go and <u>find a puzzle</u> ' Or 'Can you jump and clap?' Now understands 'why' and 'how' questions and is aware of more abstract ideas including time in relation to past present and future e.g. including words such as 'yesterday' or 'tomorrow'.	Uses sentences of four to six words, e.g. 'I want to play with cars', 'what's that thingy called?' Able to remember and enjoys telling long stories or singing songs. Now using s and f in words in consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words e.g. sun or fan. May still find difficulty with r, j, th, ch, sh. Speech is easily understood.	Understands turn-taking as well as sharing with adults and peers and can initiate conversations. Enjoys playing with peers and will argue if they disagree. Holds simple conversations about something that has happened or is going to happen.
The skilled communicator 5 years	Attention is now more flexible – able to understand spoken instructions related to a task without stopping the activity to look at the speaker	Able to follow a simple story without pictures Understands instructions containing sequencing words; 'first... after.... Last'. Aware of more complex humour, laughs at jokes that are told Understands and enjoys rhyme	Uses well formed sentences e.g. 'I need my coat because it's raining'. Is easily understood by adults and peers. Frequently asks the meaning of unfamiliar words and may use them randomly Only a few immaturities in speech sounds, 'th', 'r', 'l' and the three consonant combinations ' <u>scribble</u> '	Chooses own friends and is generally cooperative with playmates Can plan play activities. Takes turns in longer conversations and uses language to gain information, negotiate, discuss feelings/ideas and give opinions.