

Checklist

For ages 5-11

Use this checklist if there is a child in your care who you think may have speech, language and communication needs. Read each statement and then tick the 'R' (red) column if the child strongly matches the statement, 'A' (amber) column if they occasionally match the statement and 'G' (green) if they do not match the statement.

Talking difficulties – what you might see and hear	R	A	G
1. Do they have a limited vocabulary? Do they...			
a. Use less words than other children their age			
b. Over-use general words – 'thingy', 'that', 'put', 'get'			
c. Use the wrong words for things – 'shark' instead of 'whale', or make up their own words like 'cuttergrasser' (lawnmower)			
d. Use lots of fillers or hesitates a lot – 'um', 'er', 'y'know... like'			
2. What are their sentences like? Do they...			
a. Miss out the small words in sentences that carry less meaning – 'a', 'the', 'is/was', 'and'			
b. Miss off the endings of words – 'ing', 'ed', 's'			
c. Sound muddled or disorganised when talking in longer sentences			
d. Recall and re-tell events in a way that makes them difficult to follow			
3. Is their speech unclear? Do they...			
a. Miss out sounds from the beginning, middle or end of words, or use only a limited range of different speech sounds in their talking			
b. Substitute one sound for another – 'a tup of toffee' (a cup of coffee), 'lellow' (yellow)			
4. Do they have a stammer or stutter? Do they...			
a. Prolong or repeat some sounds or words, e.g. (b__all, or b-b-b-ball, or ball-ball-ball) or get 'stuck' on a word and no sound comes out			
b. Try to hide their difficulties by avoiding speaking in certain situations, or change what they were going to say mid sentence to avoid a word they find difficult			
5. Do they have literacy difficulties? Do they...			
a. Struggle to recognise initial sounds or sound out words			
b. Struggle with organising text in written work, with words missed out, and lots of grammar errors you wouldn't expect for their age			
6. Do they have behaviour difficulties? Do they...			
a. Have low self-esteem, seem withdrawn, do not initiate speaking in class, or become frustrated			
7. Do they have social interaction difficulties? Do...			
a. Other children find it difficult to understand them or possibly tease them about their talking			

Listening difficulties – what you might see and hear	R	A	G
1. Do they find it difficult to listen or understand? Do they...			
a. Fidget or not engage with tasks			
b. Struggle to follow long or complex sentences			
c. Watch other children so they can work out what to do or are the last to follow instructions			
d. Concentrate on non-verbal tasks for much longer than verbal ones			
2. Can they understand questions? Do they...			
a. Answer with an irrelevant comment			
b. Repeat part of the question			
c. Answer a slightly different related question			
d. Not respond			
3. Does new or less frequently used vocabulary take a long time to learn?			
4. Do they struggle to distinguish the difference between sounds in words? Do they...			
a. Struggle to break up words in order to read or spell			
b. Struggle to count out syllables in words			
c. Struggle to match sounds and letters			
5. Do they have literacy difficulties? Do they...			
a. Have difficulty understanding what they've read and making inferences			
6. Do they have behaviour difficulties? Do they...			
a. Have disruptive behavior or do they withdraw from activities/conversations			
7. Do they have social interaction difficulties? Do they...			
a. Have difficulties making friends or joining in with group activities			

Difficulties taking part – what you might see and hear	R	A	G
1. Do they find it hard to understand the rules of conversation? Do they...			
a. Avoid eye contact or stare at people when they are talking			
b. Struggle to take turns, interrupt too much, take over conversations or struggle to get involved			
c. Misunderstand other people's feelings and facial expressions			
2. Do they struggle to talk and listen with other children? Do they...			
a. Have difficulties joining in with group conversations, games and activities			
b. Fail to notice what others are doing or fail to pick up clues about how they are feeling			
c. Take over, get things wrong, or disrupt games			
d. Have situations when other children do not want to play or partner with them			
3. Do they take things literally? Do they...			
a. Struggle to understand jokes, idioms, sarcasm or metaphors			

On completing the checklist, if a child rates amber or red, this may be a cause for concern, so in the first instance you may find it useful to refer back to the Universally Speaking booklet to check their development in more detail and talk to their parents about your concerns. Universally Speaking may also be useful in supporting you to monitor progress. Where children have mainly red and amber ratings, it will be important to consider further assessment, so discussing this with your SENCo and the child's parents will be an important next step.

You could also consider other assessments (there is a range of assessments on Pearson Assessment's website: www.psychcorp.co.uk) or use a Progression Tool to help identify where children are at in relation to their age and how they are progressing with developing these vital communication skills. The Progression Tools will give information to help you decide whether a child would benefit from a targeted intervention or whether they may need more specialist assessment and support and need referring to a speech and language therapist. More information about the Progression Tools can be found at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources/resources/resources-for-practitioners/progression-tools-primary/

Visit www.talkingpoint.org.uk for more information or use the more detailed checklist in the publication *Don't Get Me Wrong* available at www.talkingpoint.org.uk/resources/dont-get-me-wrong

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