**Universal Provision for Speech, Language and Communication Needs**

**Developing a communication supporting environment:** [**(Dockrell, Bakopoulou, Law, Spencer & Lindsay)**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdebbie.hewings%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CWC3VI3DF%5C%28Dockrell%2C%20Bakopoulou%2C%20Law%2C%20Spencer%20%26%20Lindsay%29)

“Activities to scaffold language development need to be provided in a regular and deliberate manner. These experiences should include more advanced language learning interactions that have been shown to develop oral language, including grammatical skills, vocabulary and narrative. Together, these techniques constitute high-quality verbal input by adults.

All school staff should fully understand, appreciate and develop quality use of these language learning interaction techniques.” (p8)

***A communication-supporting classroom needs:***

* **An effective language learning environment**

An effective language learning environment is one in which “highly focused everyday personalised and interactive teaching takes place” (p10)

ICAN has derived general strategies that can be used to support schools become “Communication Friendly”. These include:

* An audit of the environment (www.ican.org.uk/talkingpoint, Primary National Strategy: Speaking, Listening, Learning).
* Improving knowledge of language development, the language skills of individuals and the language demands of the environment (Martin & Miller, 1999).
* Adapting adult language so that it is not a barrier to learning.
* Facilitating communicative opportunities for children to interact appropriately with a range of individuals
* Creating an ethos where it is acceptable ‘not to know’ and teaching children how to monitor their own understanding.
* Raising children’s awareness of their strengths and needs.
* Careful planning and information sharing, particularly at times of transition.
* **Language learning opportunities: these are the structured opportunities for language development. They should include:**
	+ Small group work and paired discussion facilitated by adults in which all children are encouraged to participate
	+ Interactive reading sessions with younger children that generate discussion
	+ Positive social interactions with adults who have stronger language skills in which the adult is deliberately scaffolds the child’s communication skills
* **Language learning interactions: how adults talk to children and young people**
	+ using children’s names
	+ using natural gestures
	+ confirming, imitating, using open questioning
	+ pacing and pausing
	+ extending, modelling, encouraging use of new words
	+ using contrasts
	+ supporting listening skills
	+ encouraging turn-taking
	+ scripting
	+ praising non-verbal communication
	+ providing clear language choices
	+ encouraging discussing, collaborating and problem solving

**Senior leadership should arrange regular staff training from SENSS Teams and self-audit of practice**