

SPEECH LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES

What's Typical Talk at Secondary?

This section gives information to teachers about language and communication development in secondary pupils. It may help teachers identify those pupils who have an underlying speech, language and communication need.

By 11 Years

Pupils may fail to develop age-appropriate language skills for a range of reasons including:

- They may have general learning difficulties
- They may have had less support at home to develop their language and communication skills fully
- They may have a specific difficulty with language which is out of step with their potential to learn
- Children with English as an additional language are at the same risk of speech, language and communication needs as any other child, however, this can be more difficult to spot.

Understanding and reasoning

- Can follow complex directions:
Get the rectangular box that's on the bottom shelf of the stationery cupboard.
- Understands common, simple 'sayings' in context.
I couldn't keep a straight face.
- Starting to get someone else's point of view when discussing
- Understands factual information. Still finds it harder to understand inferred information:
What is said: Getting noisy in here...
What is implied: You need to be quiet.
- Starting to understand sarcasm when exaggerated:
You're such a talented singer...



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Vocabulary

- Instruction words are hard to understand:
Estimate • Research
- Understands some words have multiple meanings
Hot • Bright
- Beginning to use 'dictionary type' instead of 'personal' definitions to explain words, for example, '*Brave*'
Dictionary: When you do something even though you're scared.
Personal definition: When I fall over and don't cry.
 Uses more interesting vocabulary when prompted:
'Worried' becomes 'Anxious'

Sentence structure and narration

- Uses a range of joining words in speech and writing:
Because • So • Also • Before
- Tells interesting, entertaining and original stories with stories within stories
- Explains the rules of a game or a sequence of events in a simple but accurate way
- Average length of spoken sentences = *7 to 10+ words*

Social Interaction

- Understands jokes based on double meanings though isn't always able to explain them:
I said to the Gym instructor, "Can you teach me to do the splits?" He said, "How flexible are you?" I said, "I can't make Tuesdays."
- Adjusts the politeness of their language to who they are talking to:
Soz mate... chill man.
Sorry Mr Jones. I didn't mean to make you angry.
- Is able to talk through problems with peers
- Is aware when someone doesn't understand and tries another way to get information across.
- Moves from topic to topic quite often in conversations

