

## What is Communicating Matters?

Communicating Matters is a set of training materials aimed at all early years foundation stage practitioners. Its main aims are to deepen practitioners' understanding of children's communication and language; to deepen practitioner understanding of how their own communicative behaviour affects children's use and display of communicative behaviour; to help practitioners reflect on and develop their practice to promote children's communication and language more effectively.

Communicating Matters modules can be accredited at Level 3 via CACHE.



## Useful Websites:

Birth to Five Service

[www.birthtofive.org.uk](http://www.birthtofive.org.uk)

LCC Ethnic Minority  
Achievement Service

[www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/  
section.asp?docId=29150](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/section.asp?docId=29150)

The ICAN 'Talking Point'  
website

[www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)

For parents of under-threes

[www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk](http://www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk)

Inclusion Development  
Programme

[www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/116691](http://www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/116691)

Multi-lingual books &  
resources

[www.mantralingua.com](http://www.mantralingua.com)

Birth to Five Service

Supporting  
Parents and  
Carers of children  
who have English  
as an additional  
language



**Guidance for Early Years  
Foundation Stage Settings**

**Developed by Lincolnshire  
Early Years Practitioners  
Communicating Matters 2009**

Birth to Five Service

Birth to Five Service

The Old School

Lamb Gardens

St Giles, Lincoln

LN2 4EG



Managed Service on behalf of

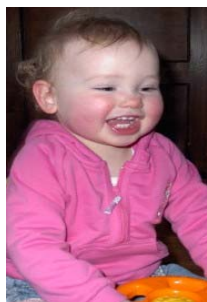


**Children are individuals. They have different abilities, different experiences, different cultures and different interests. Thus, any child's development in communication and language is likely to differ in some respects from that of any other child.**

English as an additional language refers to children who already have one or more languages and are learning English in addition to their other language or languages. A bilingual child is one who has access to more than one language at home and at school.

Most of these children will already be efficient communicators in their first language at a level appropriate for their age. In general, these children's communication and language needs are usually met by the same rich communicative environments as for any monolingual children.

Practitioners need to ensure that they seek to make every child's pathway an integral and valued part of the collective communication and language experience in the setting.



Communicating Matters Module 3 Focus 1 and 2  
Sure Start Primary National Strategy 2005

This guidance has been put together by Lincolnshire practitioners engaged in Communicating Matters 2009 to support Early Years settings in working effectively with parents to support children's communication and language needs.

Make parents aware of the importance of sharing information about their child in order for you as a setting to plan for their child's individual needs and to support them as parents in developing their child's communication and language.

Encourage parents to continue speaking with their child in their home language to develop fluency and proficiency. These skills will transfer when learning English and strengthen their child's understanding of language use.

Work together with parents to help their child build up a collection of words and phrases that they can use and understand. Use shared and consistent names for key objects/phrases (put your coat on; I need the toilet) to help their child express their needs.

Ask parents to translate key phrases and words into their child's home language for use in the setting. These can be learned by all staff and children to communicate with their child.

Ensure access to important information is possible by translating prospectuses, newsletters, messages, dates where possible. Be aware of colleagues or friends of the family that can act as translators at meetings.

Provide parents with books and rhymes translated into their child's home language. Encourage them to share stories with their child before they are shared in the setting. This will help their child to better understand the story and context for discussing afterwards.

Suggest that parents maintain their child's friendships outside of the setting, for example, having a friend to play after school; going to the park with other parents and children. Not only will this help their child develop relationships but also in learning English through their peers.

Make parents aware of support groups in their local area. Draw their attention to activities at their local Children's Centre. There may be organized groups where they can meet other people who share their nationality and language.

If their child goes through a 'silent phase', reassure parents that this is normal behaviour for many children as they learn a new language. Their child will be understanding more than they are saying and continuing to learn throughout. Such phases can last several months.

During transitions to other settings, recommend that parents share information with new practitioners. Encourage them to share their child's full learning record with their next setting.

Try to have any transition books translated into the child's home language so this can be shared at home. This also helps parents know what to expect when their child starts school as their own experience of school may be very different.

Ask parents to translate written captions of stories or for photographs and daily routines for use in the setting. Provide copies to share at home so parents can discuss with their child.

**Practitioners have a key role in reassuring parents that maintaining and developing their home language will benefit their children and support their developing skills in English.**

Primary National Strategy *Supporting children learning English as an additional language: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage*  
2007