

Understanding language – older children

Children need to understand language to learn, socialise, make friendships and engage with everyday activities.



There is a relationship between behaviour and understanding of language – look behind the behaviour and see if it is related to poor understanding

Contact us:

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TOP TIPS

Adults need to be aware of their own use of language

- Use the child's name before asking questions or giving instructions
- Simplify sentences and vocabulary
- Use concrete language, not abstract
- Demonstrate what you mean
- Give information in short 'chunks'
- Emphasise key words, pausing before and after
- Check he has understood
- Sum up information
- Allow time for him to think and prepare his answer
- Support what you say with visuals e.g. visual timetable, signing

More information

Environmental Strategies

- Use a visual timetable to support understanding
- Signing and pictures support understanding
- Make it practical – children are more likely to learn through doing and experiencing
- Reassure the child its ok to say they don't understand
- Use routine and structure to develop independence and confidence in learning
- Praise effort

Child Strategies

- Get the child's view on what is hard for them and what helps them to understand.
- Encourage the child to make up his own dictionary of new words. He can draw pictures to help him remember information.
- Help him to identify key points and make notes.

If you are concerned about a child's understanding of language please contact the Children's Speech and Language Service

