

Social Communication Developmental Milestones

Age	Social communication	Strategies to develop use of language
Up to 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning to respond to familiar adults' voice. • Show an interest in looking at faces, particularly when being spoken to. • Vocalises differently to indicate happiness and unhappiness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (Birth to Five) • Make eye contact when speaking to your child. • Play 'peek-a-boo' or similar games.
By 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitating sounds (babbling). • Copying actions such as blowing raspberries and clapping hands. • Anticipates and shares enjoyment playing a people game together such as 'peek-a-boo'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (Birth to Five) • Respond to your child's attempts to communicate.
By 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pointing towards items of interest and back to the adult to show and share the enjoyment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (Birth to Five) • Watch and comment on what your child is doing. • Engage in activities together such as looking at a picture book or playing 'ready, steady, go' type games.
By 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating primarily with words supported by other means including gestures and pointing. • Able to shift their attention from a toy to a person when playing. • Beginning to show an awareness of their own feelings and the feelings of others. 	
By 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining in play with other children and beginning to engage in more spontaneous pretend play. • Able to take turns in conversations although they may find it difficult to stay on topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (Birth to Five) • Engage in conversations with your child and use more comments rather than questions.
By 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share toys with other children. • Take turns in games without assistance from an adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (Birth to Five)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate and join in play with other children. • Engage in imaginative play and role play. • Able to use language for different social reasons such as greeting, commenting, asking questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games that encourage turn taking such as 'Pop Up Pirate' or 'Buckaroo'. Take turns with other activities such as blowing bubbles, building a tower from bricks or posting shapes/pictures. • Encourage imaginative play by providing your child with dress up clothes or toys for example toy food and plates to play at working in a restaurant.
By 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose their own friends and begin to develop friendships. • Take on different roles within imaginative play. 	
Between 5 and 11 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to take turns in group conversations. • Beginning to demonstrate an understanding of jokes, sarcasm and metaphors. • Join in and organise role play with friends. • Adapts their language and interaction skills with different people in different social situations with some adult guidance. • Able to communicate about their own and other people's feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (5-11) • Explicitly teach behaviours necessary to engage in group work or conversations including waiting for a turn to speak, listening to other pupils, commenting and asking questions. • Social stories can be used to teach some pupils about appropriate communication in different situations. • Identify pupils within the class group who are willing to help and could act as "buddies" or a circle of friends to help develop peer relationships.
Between 11 and 16 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts their language to suit the situation and/or the listener independently. • Able to negotiate with friends to resolve conflicts. • Understands sarcasm and uses slang terms within their speech. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally Speaking (11-16) • Explicitly teach behaviours necessary to engage in group work or conversations including waiting for a turn to speak, listening to other pupils, commenting and asking questions. • Social stories can be used to teach some pupils about appropriate communication in different situations. • Identify pupils within the class group who are willing to help and could act as "buddies" or a circle of friends to help develop peer relationships.

Social communication skills are not present in 2 age categories below their actual age e.g. not initiating, joining in play or sharing toys with other children at 6 years



Social communication skills are not present in 1 age category below their actual age e.g. not taking on different roles within imaginative role play or beginning to develop friendships at 6 years

Social communication skills are age appropriate

