School Start Sound Awareness

Description:

School start is a programme comprising of 30 group sessions for developing language skills. It is written by speech and language therapists and is designed to be delivered by Teaching Assistants. Using speech (also known as expressive language) is the use of words, sentences, gestures and writing to convey meaning and messages to others. Speech (expressive language) skills include being able to label objects in the environment, describe actions and events, put words together in sentences, use grammar correctly (e.g. "I had a drink" not "Me drinked"), retell a story, answer questions and write short stories. Remember that speech sound development is a gradual process. It begins in infancy and continues through a child's seventh or eighth year. Children develop speech abilities at different rates and ages. Some children develop faster or slower than the average. It is best to think about age ranges rather than specific ages for the mastery of specific speech sounds. It is also important to remember that learning to produce a speech sound correctly in all words and phrases is a gradual process.

Intended Outcomes:

- To listen for a word and respond appropriately
- To identify noises and sounds in the environment
- To join in with a familiar nursery rhyme
- To identify which instruments are playing
- To understand the concepts first, last, middle, word,
- To identify and give examples of rhyming words
- To listen carefully to others
- To separate the syllables in words
- To blend and segment the sounds of a short word
- To follow 3 part instructions
- To identify initial, medial and final sounds
- To listen to and copy a rhythm
- To identify sounds in a nonsense word.

What can you do to help?

- Singing nursery rhymes
- Making up silly rhymes e.g. 'the cat has a hat'
- Clapping out syllables e.g. 'di-no-saur'
- Try not to distort the sound or word by over-emphasising it. It is better to draw the sound or word to the child's attention by saying it repeatedly e.g.' that was a good kick, a really good kick'.
- Model tricky sounds back to them. So if they substitute 'k' for 't' and they say 'tat' you model back 'yes, it's a cat' without any pressure for them to repeat it back for you.
- Play games like 'I spy' focusing on words that begin with the sounds they are having difficulty with. Make sure you also include the sound they are substituting the correct one with – for example, if a child substitutes 'f' with 'p', play the game focusing on 'f' and 'p' words. The aim behind this is to draw their attention to the differences between the sounds. It will also let you know that they are hearing the difference.
- Make u difficulty with. This draws on the same idea that we are raising their awareness of the differences between the sounds without asking them to make the sounds, as they find this tricky.
- Model m d about how you are making the sounds e.g. 'I'm putting my tongue up at the back of my mouth' (for 'k').