

# School Start Language



## 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. It addresses aspects of attention, following instructions and social communication as well as language development.

Understanding of language (also known as receptive language) is the ability to understand words and language. It involves gaining information and meaning from routine (e.g. we have finished our breakfast so next it is time to get dressed), visual information within the environment (e.g. mum holding her keys means that we are going to get in the car, a green light means go), sounds (e.g. a siren means a fire engine is coming down the street), words (e.g. the word ball means a round bouncy thing we play with), concepts such as size, shape, colours and time, grammar (e.g. regular plurals: cat/s, regular past tense: fetch/ed) and written information (e.g. signs in the environment like “no climbing”, written stories).

## Intended Outcomes:

- To work as part of a group taking turns and sharing.
- To sustain attentive listening
- To find named objects on request using a 3 word description e.g. the big, red dog.
- To match two pictures that are the same.
- To follow rules in a group
- To extend word knowledge (using Yes/No, the pronoun I, a and an (if preceding a vowel) before an item, the word and, asking what is it, my, mine, your, plural forms (book/books), he, she, his, her, him, her, yours, describe objects saying it is..., it is not...)
- Understand the concepts...same, different, first, last, big, middle, small, bigger, quick, slow, top, bottom, push, pull, full, empty, happy, sad, many, here, there
- Use prepositions (on, under, behind, in front of, above, below)
- Link 2 verbs together
- Ask questions using who, where, what, is it?
- Name a range of toys, clothes, parts of a house, fruit and vegetables, animals, baby animals, 2d shapes, body parts, parts of plants, tools.
- Categorise objects
- Perform 2 actions in order and remember 2 items after a time delay

## What can you do to help?

- **Reading story books** that have flaps and discuss locations (He is behind the door).
- **Following instructions:** In play ask the child to follow instructions containing age appropriate concepts (e.g. “Let’s feed the big bear” or “Drive your car under the table”).
- **Play games** where you take it in turns to hide toys around the room (e.g. “Put the car on the table” or “Hide your teddy behind the couch”).
- **Hide and Seek:** Once you locate the child or they locate you, get them to say where they were hiding (e.g. In the cupboard, under the bed, behind the curtain).
- **Sing songs** that involve concepts
- **Teaching colours:** Place the child’s favourite snack or toy in containers with different coloured lids. To get the item they have to name the colour correctly.
- **Scavenger hunt:** Go on a scavenger hunt and find items that are all a particular colour (e.g. find a bucket of red items – apple, car, and crayon).
- **Wash dishes:** (Teaching wet/dry) Wash the dishes and encourage your child to either make the dishes ‘wet’ or ‘dry’.
- **Simon Says:** Gradually increase the length of the command when playing this game (e.g. “Simon Says pat your head”; “Simon says first pat your head, then touch your nose”).