SCIL Team

Help Sheet

How to support language difficulties in the classroom

What you might see in the classroom

- Changes in behaviour as the language demands of the curriculum increase.
- Difficulties expressing themselves verbally.
- Language may sound immature.
- Word finding difficulties and use of non-specific vocabulary, e.g. 'thingy.'
- Lack of understanding and poor recall.

How?

- **Reduce language demands of the curriculum:** Rate of speech, don't overload, use simple sentences (reduce the amount of language to process), repeat key information, pay attention to body language.
- **Make time for conversation** - this should be planned for individual children to increase the number of conversations they are having. Use open questions, repeat/model back what the pupil has said, expand on what they have said, and explain ideas or concepts.
- **Scaffold talk** - support the pupil by offering the vocabulary, syntax and support they need to express their ideas in different ways.
- **Teach vocabulary explicitly** – (For some children this may need to be prior to a lesson) Teach new vocabulary, provide objects of reference and or visuals, incorporate activities to consolidate and embed understanding – Word Wise Whizz, Word Connections, Word Bluff, Word Choice and Word Map.
- **Visuals** – to support language throughout the curriculum.
- **Provide a language-rich environment** – display key vocabulary with visuals or symbols,
- **Consider the complexity of questions -** e.g. The Blank Language Scheme Elklan Training Ltd