The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

words up

Key Message	Post Training	Next Steps	Embedded
	When interacting and playing with children, adults may:	When interacting and playing with children, adults may:	When interacting and playing with children, adults may:
Face to Face *Being face-to-face helps children to listen and copy. They can see your facial expression and body language.*	☐ Begin talking to children before sitting or bending down ☐ Reflect on how face to face looks within their setting and contexts where they may not be using it e.g. during morning greetings, outdoor play, table top play ☐ Focus on using face to face in a particular context e.g. snack, story or small group play ☐ Reflect that some children may not always give eye contact when listening	☐ Are more consistent at sitting or bending down before communicating and interacting with children ☐ Feel confident in the contexts they have chosen to develop face to face and are beginning to expand its use e.g. during morning greetings, outdoor play etc ☐ Recognise times when children are not face to face but still listening	☐ Consistently sit or bend down so the child can see them, before they start talking ☐ Be face to face when interacting or playing and talking together consistently. This could include, morning greetings, outside play, snack, behaviour management time, story, free play, other group interactions ☐ Understand that children may not always give direct eye contact when listening
Play and Talk Together *In order to learn words children need to hear the language alongside the experience up to 50 times in context; they can only do this if adults join their play and add language.*	☐ Make time to join the children's play in some contexts e.g. role play, art and craft or construction ☐ Begin to follow the children's lead in play rather than directing ☐ Reflect on their awareness of where children are in their vocabulary development ☐ Reflect on the range of contexts where play and talk together can take place e.g. putting on coat and shoes, sharing news, during conflict resolution, tooth brushing	☐ Begin to have more confidence in following the children's lead in play and use vocabulary and language to support this at the children's level, e.g. a child outside playing with leaves. Adults could use comments for children at each level: **First Words** 'Leaves up', 'throw', 'noisy', 'wow', 'look, this is fun' etc **Words together** – 'The leaves are noisy', 'I'm throwing the leaves.', '…crunchy leaves' **Talking together** – 'Let's walk in the crunchy leaves' or 'Look, the wind is blowing the leaves' **Chatting now** – 'Look, this leaf is russet. Russet is a reddy brown colour. I wonder what other colours we can see?'	☐ Use planned opportunities for vocabulary development across the setting, by providing depth and breadth in experiences in order to support repetition e.g. provide language that matches the experience at the right time where adults can comment on a child's interest and follow their lead ☐ Provide a language rich environment which engages children and promotes interactions to develop conversations ☐ Confidently follow the children's lead in play ☐ Know the children well and respond appropriately to meet their needs
Quiet Time to Talk *Children need quiet time to hear language without distractions; this supports listening and attention.*	☐ Reflect on distractions within the environment e.g. adults talking during story time, location of resources (music box next to a quiet area) ☐ Begin to notice the impact distractions can have on children	☐ Begin to implement some changes to reduce distractions within the environment e.g. not tidying up or making snack during quiet time to talk ☐ In a supportive environment, remind each other to adapt their own actions to minimise distractions e.g. adult conversations during quiet time to talk	☐ Consistently plan the learning environment to include opportunities for quiet time to talk ☐ Consistently ensure distractions are minimised and will have a flexible approach for when unexpected situations occur

Pause and Wait *Children need time to process information and to work out what they want to say and do.*	☐ Reflect on responses received, when they pause and wait, from children at different developmental levels e.g. some children will take their turn in a sentence, some children will respond non-verbally ☐ Attempt to pause and wait but are unsure how to respond next ☐ Start to put in a pause and wait in a particular context or time, this could be at one to one times or in groups e.g. story, snack or together time	☐ Start to put in a pause and wait for longer periods and have an understanding of what the children's responses may look like ☐ Use pause in wait in more context e.g. free play, outdoors or in small groups	☐ Pause and wait…count up to 10 in their heads, listen and watch and then respond to whatever the child says or does ☐ Pause and wait allowing children time to show what they're interested in and then follow their lead ☐ Use pause and wait throughout the setting in a range of contexts
Be Careful with Questions *Questions don't teach language. Children learn new language through comments.*	☐ Reflect on the questions they are asking e.g. 'I asked a question and didn't get a response, why?' ☐ Try out comments and notice the children's responses. Responses may be verbal or non-verbal	☐ Use more comments e.g. labels exclamations, describing what children are doing, describing from their own perspective, **see hand graphic** ☐ Overuse 'I wonder…' comments ☐ Move from one comment to the next with a shorter pause and wait in the middle	☐ Use a range of comments, followed by a pause and wait e.g. exclamations, labels, describing what children are doing, describing from their own perspective, see hand graphic. ☐ Ask questions at the right developmental level when appropriate. *See Question Steps.*
Copy and Add *Copy and Add lets adults use language at each child's language level, teaching new words and concepts to build on their skills.*	☐ Often copy but not always add another word ☐ Often not pause and wait after their copy and add ☐ Often add too much information or ask a question ☐ Reflect on their use of copy and add	☐ Ask questions about how they support children at different developmental stages ☐ Chose a specific time to develop copy and add e.g. free play, small group activities or role play ☐ Use pause and wait after a copy and add more frequently	☐ Consistently be able to expand on children's utterances at every child's level e.g. single word (labelling) for a child who is pre-first words or adding new words to a child who is at the chatting now stage ☐ Model the correct vocabulary and grammar without asking the child to repeat it back ☐ Use copy and add across the setting in a variety of contexts

Guidance Notes:

- ✓ This document can be used by managers and/or other ELC Practitioners to monitor how the six key Words Up Early messages are being embedded
- ✓ It is recommended that one document is completed for each staff member to monitor progress over time
- ✓ Tick off statements as they are observed by a manager or other member of staff with responsibility for monitoring
- ✓ Use the statements to look for consistency for each key message before looking at the next stage
- ✓ The data collection forms can be used alongside this document to monitor progress over time for individual ELC staff or whole teams
- ✓ Please remember the key messages take time to embed so no change between certain months for some key messages is to be expected