

## 5: How to develop non-verbal communication

### Targets

- The child will wave hello/goodbye to other people
- The child will point to what they are interested in
- The child will clap independently
- The child will look at you when playing a game

### What is it?

Non-verbal communication is the means of getting a message across without using words and we all do it every day. These are important skills and make up the foundation blocks of language learning and development. These skills can be developed through interaction and play.

- **Waving:** practice waving 'hello' to people visiting, to teddy and toys. Take them by the hand and help them hand over hand to wave and say 'hello'. When someone leaves or you are tidying up the toys take their hand and practice waving saying 'bye bye'.
- **Pointing:** support the child's pointing skills by pointing at objects you both see and recognise e.g. 'it's a ball', 'look, a dog!', 'see the bird!' Putting your hand on top of theirs and pointing their finger in the same direction as yours can help reinforce how pointing works. Pointing to picture books provides lots of opportunities for modelling pointing. Once they see you pointing at something they remember and recognise, they will want to point that way too. Label the things they point to.  
Try helping them to point to your eyes/nose/mouth and their own face to learn parts of their body.
- **Clapping:** model clapping when the child does something nice and make sure they can see you. Take the child's hands in your hands and practice clapping together, then try and just bring their hands together and see if they attempt to do it on their own.
- **Eye contact:** when playing, get down on the floor to make sure the child can see you face to face. Use bubbles and blow balloons: blow and wait to see if the child will look at you to keep it going. Hold the toys up to your face and if the child looks at you or shows interest in what you are doing. Try copying their actions or sounds they are making; this may make them stop and take notice of you. Pee-Po games are motivating and good for developing eye contact. Taking items on and off your face (e.g. scarves/sunglasses) also encourages the child to look more closely at you. The child might enjoy playing with these and looking in the mirror. Children enjoy looking through items such as cardboard tubes; you can take it in turns to look through them and at each other.

**Name:**

**Date Target Set:**

**Outcome: Achieved = 2   Partially achieved = 1   Not achieved = 0**

Date	Outcome	Comment