

6.1: The development of play and interaction skills

Language and play develop alongside each other and the development of one supports the development of the other. Play gives the child an opportunity to use language within a social context.

Children learn play skills in the following stages:

Stage 1: People play

Stage 2: Sensory and Exploratory play

Stage 3: Cause and Effect play

Stage 4: Physical play

Stage 5: Creative play

Stage 6: Pretend and role play

Ages and stages of play and interaction:

Age	Play and interaction
By 6 months	Mouthing, hitting, banging, shaking, exploring objects.
12 months	Relates two objects together e.g. puts spoon in cup/brushes own hair
18 months	Recognises miniatures and self-pretend play e.g. feeding self with spoon. Enjoys peek a boo (people games).
2 years	Simple pretend play leading onto sequenced pretend play e.g. washes teddy and puts it to bed. Enjoys symbolic play e.g. using a banana as phone.
3 years	Pretend action in sequence. Basic imaginative play with roles e.g. kisses dolly, puts dolly in cot, covers dolly, rocks cot.
4 years	Co-operative play with peers. Imaginative play with roles.
5 years	Highly imaginative and extended play sequences. Co-operative play with other children in games with simple rules.

6.2: How to play People Games

Target: **The child will request another turn at a People Game using sign, gesture, looking at you or a saying a word.**

What are people games?

People Games are simple, repetitive routines that require the involvement of at least two people in order to be fun (for example 'peekaboo' or 'tag'). People Games make playing with a parent easier for a child with social communication difficulties and they're a great way to have fun together and to help the child learn to communicate.

Important tip: Play your game all the way through many times, and use the same main word/sign and actions each time you play. Once the child knows the game well, you can begin to pause at key moments in the game and **wait** for a response. When you wait, the child has a chance to join in by looking at you, touching you, smiling, doing an action or even saying something. Remember to play the game all the way through many times before you start waiting!

In people games children can learn to:-

- pay attention e.g. smile at you, look at you
- take a turn e.g. do something within the game
- continue taking turns e.g. ask for more of the game to keep it going
- start the game e.g. jump up and down to start a jumping game
- end the game e.g. walk away or say 'finished'
- start a new game

In people games children aren't distracted by toys; they focus on the adult. The back and forth nature of people games is similar to that of a conversation, only with fewer words/signs.

How to play people games:

Start the game in the same way each time: finding a way to signal the game will start with objects, actions and a word/sign e.g. say 'let's play tickles' and hold up your hands saying 'tickle'.

Repeat the game in exactly the same way each time using the same word/sign and actions, and pause and finish in the same way. Repeat the game often with different people.

Offer opportunities for the child to take their turn. Pause so the child has an opportunity to take their turn. Plan when you will offer the child a turn. This needs

to be the same turn in the same place each time. Plan what turn the child can take e.g. could they wiggle to request that the game continues, make a sound or say a word/sign? Pause for the child to take their turn.

Cue the child to take their turn: once you have decided what the child's turn will be, you may need to give obvious clues about when they should take it. Give them models or demonstrations of what they should do. You can cue the child by looking expectantly, leaning towards them and perhaps in taking breath.

Keep it fun and keep it going: be lively and animated and keep the interaction going as long as possible. Most children like games that involve some form of physical play.

Ideas for people games:

Tickling

Peek a boo/hiding games

Chase

Singing favourite songs

Spinning, rocking or swinging games

Squeezing games with a cushion

Up and down games and horsey ride

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.3: How to develop sensory and exploratory play

Target: The child will develop their exploratory play (holding and manipulating objects).

Strategies:

- Present the child with an item. Have a similar item in your hand. Model how to play with such items e.g. shaking a rattle. Say 'shake shake' alongside the action.
- You can also model banging items together. Use simple language alongside the action e.g. 'bang bang'.
- Then give both items to the child and encourage them to bang the items together independently.
- Gather together objects that have different textures, such as rough, smooth, spiky, feathers for the child to feel and explore. You could present this in a 'treasure basket'.
- Give child toys they can squeeze and shake.
- Play with a range of messy activities such as sand, water, play-dough.
- Help the child explore touch and feel books.
- Use baby oil to massage the child's hands and feet.
- Play with toys and objects that are brightly coloured/shiny/light-up.
- Make shakers using pots filled with dried pasta or rice.

Name:

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

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.4: How to develop relational play: cause and effect

Target: The child will develop their cause and effect play skills.

Strategies

In order to develop cause and effect play, introduce activities which encourage the child to initiate. This is important when children start to learn that their actions can have an effect on something else and encourages the beginning of problem solving. Such activities also give opportunities for building on simple repetitive actions and interactions with others.

Activities

- peekaboo/pee-po: the child has to pull down towel to reveal the adult.
- sound and light games: the child has to push buttons in order to hear/see something.
- singing teddies: the child has to push teddy's hand (or other toy) to start a song.
- sing songs with actions: model hand over hand actions and encourage the child to copy these independently.
- stack cups or blocks into a tower then knock them down.
- react to the child's actions and sounds with a fun familiar response; for example, every time the child drops a toy, say 'uh oh!'
- play with pop-up toys such as a jack-in-a-box, pop-up-animals, push button toys.
- Wind-up toys.
- lift the flap books and books that make noises.

Name:

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Outcome: Achieved = 2

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Not achieved = 0

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6.5: How to develop physical play skills

Target: **The child will physically participate in games.**

Physical play helps to develop movement and co-ordination and is particularly good for those children who struggle to sit and concentrate. This will mean the child can participate in a fun and motivating activities and will find it easier to listen to the language associated with the play.

Activities

- Sing and act out action songs such as: Row, Row, Row your boat. Sit facing the child, holding on to their hands and pull and push back to 'row' as you sing the song. Use this as an opportunity to support communication by pausing at the end of song and waiting to see if they pull your arms to go again or maybe even say 'row' to tell you they want to go again.
- Take the child to your local park and play on the swings, slide and climbing frames. Again, use this to help develop communication by saying 'ready steady.....go!' before you push them down the slide or push them on the swing. After a few models of this, pause after 'ready steady....' and see if they look at you, make a sound or attempt to say 'go!' to show you they want to move.
- Encourage the child to kick or splash in puddles outside or at bath time. As they are doing this, it's a good time for you to model the word/sign e.g. 'splash!'. You could even use 'ready steady.....splash!' when coming up to a puddle or 'ready steady jump!'. Always try to pause, after you have modelled this a few times, to see what they do to make you splash or jump.
- Play bouncing games on your knees where you can make some big bounces and small bounces. Again, you can use these games to stop and wait to see

what the child does to request more of the bouncy game. You can make up your own songs with these games and use simple words/signs while you're doing it e.g. 'bounce, bounce, stop', 'big bounce, little bounce, stop'.

Name:

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Outcome: Achieved = 2

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Not achieved = 0

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6.6: How to develop creative play skills

Target: **The child will join in creative play.**

Creative play helps children to develop their imagination, encourages feeling and learning about different textures and sequencing skills. Modelling language alongside creative play will also support language learning and development.

Activities

- Cooking together: make biscuits and use icing to draw faces on them.
- Make animal faces from masks: use paper plates and paint or draw different animals on them e.g. dog, cat, tiger. This is also good way to practice your animal noises together!
- Potato printing: cut out shapes into a potato e.g. square, circle, triangle, star. Use different coloured paints and card/paper and do some 'printing' with the potato. You can use this to practice modelling colour and shape vocabulary. This is good for messy hands too!
- Sticking and gluing: gather a range of coloured tissue paper, card, sweet wrappers, bottle tops, foil, uncooked pasta etc. and encourage the child to stick these onto a piece of paper. You can be modelling language around textures e.g. 'furry', 'smooth', 'rough'; actions e.g. 'stick', 'press', 'cut', 'pull'.
- Playdough: you can make or buy playdough and use it to make different objects e.g. house, ball, dog, cup. Label what you are making so the child can match what they see to what you are saying.
- Hand/feet drawing: draw around your hands and feet or do prints with paint. Talk about the different parts e.g. hands, fingers, thumbs, nails. You can even compare hands and feet e.g. 'big foot, little foot', 'big hand, little hand'.

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

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6.7 How to develop pretend play skills

Target: The child will develop their functional and symbolic pretend play (e.g. using a brick and pretending it is a phone).

This is important for developing the understanding of what objects are used for and for developing the idea that a word/sign can represent or symbolise an object. Pretend play also develops flexible thinking and imagination. Language often develops alongside pretend play.

Strategies

- **Stage 1 (functional)** Using toys that look like real objects: encourage the child to hug a doll or toy animal. Gather a range of objects and show what to do with them e.g. get a hairbrush and brush your hair, pretend to eat toy food, pretend to drink from a toy cup. Encourage the child to copy and move them on to help them to relate them to other people e.g. help the child brush your hair.
- **Stage 2 (functional)** Using toys that look like real objects/people: the toy is treated as if it can do actions: show the child that dolly or teddy can eat pretend food. The child will then be more willing to get teddy and make them eat the food/drink from the cup etc.
- **Stage 3 (sequences)** Encourage the child to copy everyday activities such as sweeping, washing cups, washing clothes. Model simple play sequences such as washing dolly's face and brushing dolly's hair. Extend these sequences as the child becomes more confident.

- **Stage 4 (small world)** Move on to introduce small world play, such as houses, barns, fields, doctors' surgeries. This helps play move on to become more imaginative and less reliant on objects. Model characters in the small world interacting with each other e.g. kicking a ball to one another.
- **Stage 5 (symbolic)** Using toys that have no resemblance to real objects: support the child to create a bed out of building blocks and put the toy animal to bed. Using play dough, show the child that they have made a pancake and put it in a toy pan.

Name:

Date Target Set:

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

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.8: How to develop role play

Target: The child will develop their role play (e.g. acting the role of something else).

Activities

- When playing with a pretend kitchen, encourage the child to pretend to be a cook using toy food. You could also support the child to pretend to be a policeman with toy badges and fancy dress costumes; the adult can take the role of the 'baddie' being taken to jail.
- Model taking on roles such as a doctor, patient and nurse, while playing with dolls or toy animals.
- Using blocks or play dough, show the child that you can construct the objects needed for the pretend setting they are working on, such as a farm with blocks, and farm animals from the play dough. They can pretend to be the builder and then the farmer.
- When the child is confident using role play, encourage them to do this in small groups with other children e.g. a group of children use the doctor's surgery toys and play pretend roles such as doctor, patient and nurse. This can also be developed without toys and by encouraging children to create items that resemble real objects (symbolic play) using Lego, play dough etc.

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.9: How to develop early turn-taking skills with an adult

Targets: The child will develop their early turn taking skills with an adult.

Taking turns is important because it engages two or more people in communicative interaction.

Strategies

- Keep turns short so that the child does not lose interest while waiting for their turn.
- Include the child's interests so that they will want to take more turns in the interaction.
- Encourage the child to take 'one more turn', just as you think they are losing interest, then finish the activity.
- Support the child to remember to take turns by saying '[child's name]'s turn' '[adults name]'s turn'.
- Give the child time to respond; do not be afraid to wait.

- Use turn taking within your daily routine. For example, at meal time if the child bangs the table, copy the noise and bang the table back, then wait for a response.
- Introduce new actions/vocalisations/sounds and encourage the child to copy them.
- Praise the child e.g. 'good sitting', 'good waiting'.

Activities

- Copy the child's actions/vocalisations/sounds straight after them.
- Sit opposite the child and introduce simple turn taking games such as taking turns to roll a ball or building a tower and then knocking it over.
- Take turns banging an instrument, blowing bubbles or making splashes in the bath/water play. Make your turn gradually longer over time as the child's ability to wait for their turn develop.
- Introduce 'ready, steady, go' into activities if the child is able to wait for longer.

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2 Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.10: How to develop turn-taking skills in a group activity

Targets:

- **The child will be able to take X turns in a paired/small group activity with a prompt**
- **The child will be able to take X turns in a paired/small group activity without a prompt**
- **The child will be able to wait for their turn with a prompt**

Strategies

- Begin with a small number of children in the group and increase this as the child's attention, listening and turn taking skills develop.
- Try and include the child's interests and be realistic about the number of turns necessary to complete the game successfully!
- Emphasise taking turns by asking 'whose turn is next?' after every turn. After the child's turn, ask 'whose turn now?'
- Use gesture to encourage the child to wait for their turn such as a hand signal. You may need to hold the child's hand on their lap at first to help them to wait.
- Use praise e.g. 'good turn taking'.

Activities

- Take turns to say/sing/sign 'hello'.
- Pass a bag/box around the circle and each child has a turn to pick out an object to explore, play with or talk about.
- Take turns to choose a song by pointing to the object which represents the song/nursery rhyme (e.g. spider for 'Incy Wincy Spider', a bus for 'The Wheels on the Bus' etc.) and then sing the song/nursery rhyme as a group.
- Each child in the circle has a turn choosing whether they would like the adult to blow the bubbles or balloon.
- Take turns rolling a ball to each other, saying whose turn it is e.g. 'Poppy's turn' then rolling the ball to Poppy.

Name:

Date Target Set:

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

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.11: How to develop playing with peers

Target: The child will develop their social play skills with peers.

Activities

- Encourage the child to play an identical game with another child such as drawing, jigsaw puzzle or sticking/printing on a page at the table or on the floor.
- Step this up by making the activity more interactive such as taking turns building a tower or placing a ball/car down a ball/car run. First explain and guide the activity then, as the game continues, gradually phase yourself out of the activity.
- Give the child a role during play that will encourage other children to come up and communicate with the child; for example, if the home corner is 'hairstresser week' then give the child the role of cashier, encouraging their peers to come to them and give them the money when the haircut is finished.

Again, the adult should first explain and supervise the activity then gradually phase out of the play.

- Set up equipment that requires two children e.g. see-saws, double swings and toys that require 'help' e.g. pushing a bike.
- Play hide and seek, ball games and other games that require another child. You can set this up with an adult helping first and then gradually withdrawing to allow the children play by themselves.
- When the children become used to the activities, you can help start them off by offering a choice of what they want to play with.
- Refer to other children in the room e.g. 'look, Liam is drawing with Oliver' to encourage the child to join in.

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment

6.12 How to develop the understanding and use of emotions

EYFS Communication and Language Development: ELG 07 Managing feelings and behaviours

Target: The child will identify an emotion from a facial expression.

Emotions:

- o Happy
- o Sad
- o Scared
- o Surprised
- o Angry

Strategies:

- Children learn words for emotions best when they are *feeling* the emotion and *hearing* the word at the same time e.g. 'you're sad'.
- Use real life scenarios, as they arise, to model words for emotions e.g. 'Lily is angry'.
- Model words for emotions when looking at a book or when telling the child a story.
- Use pictures from catalogues/magazines/photographs to model words for emotions e.g. 'look, the girl is scared'; 'this boy is angry'.
- To check if the child understands words for emotions, place pictures/photographs of different emotions in front of them and ask 'who is sad?', 'who is happy?' etc. Remember, it is more challenging for children to identify an emotion in someone else, particularly when there is no context.
- When managing behaviour at this age, it is not helpful to ask questions like 'why are you angry?' or 'how does Poppy feel now?' Instead, it is more helpful to make simple comments to *tell* the child about the situation e.g. 'you're angry....oh, you want to play with the train too', 'you took Poppy's car. Poppy is sad'.

Name:

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment