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**Merton’s Language group level**

**Assessment Tool**

Practitioners can use the below audit to help them assess the right language group pack for a child based on their current communication and language skills.

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| **Child’s development all or mostly in** | **Appropriate language group** |
|  | Language group 1 |
|  | Language group 2 |
|  | Language group 3 |

| **EYFS** | | **Attention & Listening** | **E** | **D** | **Understanding** | **E** | **D** | **Talking (Expressive Language)** | **E** | **D** | **Social Skills & Play** | **E** | **D** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0-11 months | Birth | Startled by loud noises. Turns to familiar sound. |  |  | Responds to adults voice tone – calmed or alarmed. |  |  | Frequently cries when unhappy or uncomfortable. Makes cooing/gurgling sounds. |  |  | Gazes at the faces of others & makes eye contact. Copies facial movement – sticking tongue out. |  |  |
| 3 months | Watches face when someone talks. |  |  | Responds by turning head towards familiar adult talking. |  |  | Cries to express different needs. Makes sounds back when talked to. |  |  | Smiles, laughs and shows pleasure. |  |  |
| 6 months | Turns towards familiar everyday sounds, door bell, telephone, clock. |  |  | Responds to pointing, gesture, facial expression and body language of others. |  |  | Uses a variety of double sound pattern babble e.g. ‘baba’ ‘dodo’. |  |  | Copies blowing ‘raspberries’. Exploratory play – mouthing & chewing objects. |  |  |
| 8-20 months | 9 months | Shows fleeting attention/highly distractible. Stops and looks when hears own name. |  |  | Understands and responds to words used in daily routines. |  |  | Combines different sounds in strings with intonation e.g. ‘badade’. Lifts arms to be picked up. |  |  | Exploratory play using different senses. Takes turns in ritualised games e.g. ‘peep boo,’ clapping. Takes communicative turn with looks and glances. |  |  |
| 12 months | Brief attention (guide approx. 5 minutes) on own choice of activity. Pays attention to dominant stimulus TV, musical/popup toys. |  |  | Will react to a phrase with an action e.g. ‘wave bye bye’. |  |  | Uses pre words – the same sound pattern is always used for an object or event e.g. ‘noo noo’ for blanket/sleep. |  |  | Relational play – stacking cups/rings/bricks. Realises making sounds get a response |  |  |
| 15 months | Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions and sounds. |  |  | Selects familiar objects by name & will go & find objects when asked or identify objects from a group e.g. cup, ball, key (1 Key word level). |  |  | Uses symbolic/representational sounds e.g. brmm for car, woof for dog etc. Uses 10 single words spontaneously & reliably (not copied). |  |  | Uses pointing, gesture and eye gaze to make requests & share interest. Looks for hidden objects. |  |  |
| 16-26 months | 18 months | Moves whole body to sounds they enjoy e.g. music with a rhythmic beat. |  |  | Shows body parts on request e.g. eyes, nose, hair etc. |  |  | Understands more words than they can say. Frequently imitates many single words after an adult |  |  | Relates a real object to self e.g. brushes own hair, has pretend drink from empty cup. Plays alone. |  |  |
| 21 months | Rigid attention to own choice of activity. Can not tolerate adult direction |  |  | Will select doll’s house sized toys by name. Can recognise a toy as a symbol for the real thing e.g. toy car, farm animals. |  |  | Uses different types of early everyday words – nouns, verbs, adjectives e.g. ball, go, hot. |  |  | Pretend play developing with toys e.g. feeding a doll, driving car on pretend road. |  |  |
| 24 months | Shows single channelled attention – can attend to adult choice of activity if under the adult’s control. Using the child’s name helps focus attention. |  |  | Can relate a choice of 2 objects together e.g. ‘Put the **doll/teddy** on the **chair/bed’ (2 keyword level).** |  |  | Uses 50+ words spontaneously. Puts 2 words together spontaneously e.g. ‘Daddy gone’ ‘more bubbles’. |  |  | Frequently throws tantrums & less easily distracted |  |  |
| 22-36 months | 27 months | Listens to a story with pictures. Listens and waits with interest to noises e.g. animal noises when read stories. |  |  | Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture from a choice of pictures e.g. ‘who’s jumping?’. |  |  | Talk is centred with in the here and now. Learns new words very rapidly. |  |  | Watches others play, may join in for a few minutes, but little notion of sharing toys or adult attention. |  |  |
| 30 months | Recognises & responds to environmental sounds e.g. aeroplane. |  |  | Understands the use of objects. Can select, from a choice ‘which one do we sit on ‘ ‘which one do we cut with’ etc. |  |  | Uses 200+ words spontaneously and links 3-4 words together e.g.’ mummy gone to work’. |  |  | More sustained pretend play e.g. feeding doll and putting doll to bed, driving cars under bridges and to the shops etc. |  |  |
| 33 months | Is independently able to follow instructions and directions. |  |  | Understands simple concepts – Colour: red, blue, green, yellow. Size: big, little. Position: in, on, under. |  |  | Beginning to use word endings e.g. for present tense going and regular plurals cats. |  |  | Enjoys being with & talking to adults and other children. Responds to the feelings of others. |  |  |
| 30-50 months | 36 months | Shows single channelled attention but under the child’s control – will automatically look up if adult speaks. |  |  | Understands sentences involving 3 key word choices ‘put the **pen/book** **in/on** the **box/bag’.** |  |  | Uses 500+ words & links 4-5 words together in sentences e.g. ‘me want to play with cars’. |  |  | Affectionate and confiding. Starts conversations. Forms friendships with other children. |  |  |
| 39 months | Listens to others in 1:1 or small groups. Attends to adult led activity (guide approx. 10 minutes). |  |  | Understands questions in the following order what? Who? where? |  |  | Asks lots of questions particularly what? & why? |  |  | Talks freely about their home and culture. |  |  |
| 42 months | Independently joins in with repeated refrains & anticipates key events in stories and rhymes. |  |  | Able to follow a story without pictures or props. Recognises past & future tenses. |  |  | Uses past and future tenses & can retell a simple past event in correct order e.g.‘went down slide, hurt finger’. |  |  | Likes to ‘make believe’ a sequence of play with invented people and objects. |  |  |
| 45 months | Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall. |  |  | Understands positional words – on top, behind, in front, beside by carrying out an action or selecting the right picture. |  |  | Uses complex sentences including – ‘and, so, but, because’ to coordinate sentences & link thoughts. |  |  | Joins in make believe play with other children. |  |  |
| 40-60 months | 48 months | Shows integrated attention for short spells. Can listen & do at the same time. |  |  | Understands sentences involving 4 key word choices. ‘Put the **big/small red/blue** **cup/plate** in the **box/bag’.** |  |  | Uses 1000+ words & links 6 + words together in sentences e.g. I played with Ben at lunch time’. |  |  | Understands sharing Shows concern for others. |  |  |
| 51 months | Listens & responds with relevant comments, questions & actions. |  |  | Understands question words why? how? When? |  |  | Uses complex well formed sentences and gives explanations. Describes why certain objects are similar or different. |  |  | Likes dramatic make believe play & dressing up |  |  |
| 54 months | Shows an interest in sounds and words that rhyme (guide approx. 20 mins). |  |  | Understands many abstract concepts and comparatives – long/longest short/shortest, tall, hard, rough, smooth. |  |  | Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking feelings & events. Uses 5000+ words. |  |  | Shows an awareness of the listener when speaking in conversations. |  |  |
| 57 months | Maintains concentration. Concentrates and sits quietly during appropriate activities. |  |  | Understands instructions with sequencing words – first, after, last. |  |  | Able to tell their own story/narrate recount events. Predicts what might happen next. |  |  | Expresses needs, opinions & feelings appropriately. |  |  |
| 60 months | Shows fully integrated attention – can listen &do in a range of situations with a range of people. |  |  | Understands humour e.g. nonsense rhymes & jokes. |  |  | Using high level words eg. toad, owl, etc. Language used as a tool for problem solving, thinking, learning &imagining. |  |  | Independently works as part of a group or class taking turns. Shows sense of humour in talk & activities. |  |  |