Talking Together

The development and use of speech, language and communication are central to young children's learning

What a Skilled Communicator is learning to do

- Be flexible and attentive, and able to listen and do at the same time.
- Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and use this in their play.
- Consistently understand a simple story, explanation or series of questions asked about the story.
- Extend their vocabulary, exploring the meanings and sounds of new words.
- Understand stories without pictures.
- Extend their vocabulary especially by grouping and naming e.g. can tell you lots of animal names.
- Use a range of simple grammatical structures.
- Use sentences and be usually understood by adults and their peers.
- Be confident in speaking to others about their own wants and interests.
- Initiate conversations and listen to what others say.
- Use language for a range of purposes.
- Use talk to pretend and for imaginary situations e.g. playing 'super heroes'.
- Use language to recreate roles and experiences.
- Choose their own friends and play together.
- Speak clearly with confidence!

'Developing Confident Communicators for Life'

What you can do to help

- Give time for children to start discussions from shared experiences and have conversations with each other.

- Read a new book to your child and explain unfamiliar words. Repeat the same story several times. Remember to use the new vocabulary when discussing the story and in other situations throughout the day.

- Talk to children about what they have been doing and help them reflect upon and explain events e.g. "Tell me about your new baby".

- Do things with your child that they can remember and talk about later - such as visits to the farm, doing cooking, or making up stories that can be re-enacted.

- While pretending, introduce language about emotions. "I'm so excited about going on the aeroplane, are you excited too?'

- Ask your child to predict what will happen next in a story.

- Describe a problem and invite your child to think of possible solutions. "We don't have enough red paint. What should we do?".