Communication friendly environments – checklist

You can use this simple checklist to think about how your environment supports children's communication.

Elements to consider

- **Space, light and layout**

  ☐ Is there good light, with a comfortable temperature and not too many visual distractions

- **Noise levels**

  ☐ Are noise levels conducive to learning – what can be done to minimise unnecessary noise?

- **Use of visual support, this may include**

  ☐ A colour coded map of school or setting , colour coded directions, photographs of staff members, photographs/ symbols used to support routines, eg washing hands, getting ready for PE

  ☐ Visual timetables used for daily / weekly activities

  ☐ Objects, pictures and symbols used to teach vocabulary, to make stories more active and support engagement in other lessons

  ☐ Displays are used throughout school or setting to support learning

- **Adults who can prioritise communication, this may include adults who**

  ☐ Have knowledge of language development.

  ☐ Understand the language levels of the children and the language demands in the environment.

  ☐ Can adapt their language so it is not a barrier to learning or communication.

  ☐ Give children strategies to say when they don't understand

- **Routines**

  ☐ Are children aware of rules and expectations?

  ☐ Do they know daily routines; could these be supported visually?

  ☐ Are children given opportunities within lessons to say when they don't understand?

  ☐ Are they explicitly taught how to listen, how to work together in groups?

  ☐ Are there opportunities for children to interact and use language in different situations, with different people at an appropriate level?