

Portsmouth Early Language Plan on a Page

November 2018

In Portsmouth we believe that every child deserves the very best start and that language development is at the heart of this.

We know that, by age 4, a child from a disadvantaged background has heard 30million fewer words compared to their more advantaged peers.

We know that a child with a poor vocabulary when they are five is more than twice as likely to be unemployed in their thirties and one and a half times more likely to have mental health problems as a similar child with a good vocabulary.



In Portsmouth we will:

Ensure the early year's workforce understand early language development and support children to achieve their very best.

Ensure that families understand the importance of early language development and the vital role they play.

Ensure that investment in early years services is a local priority for all and strengthens activity to develop early language.

Portsmouth children will:

Be able to develop spoken communication skills which underpin their learning and support life-long achievement.

Communicate confidently with peers and those around them.

Be ambitious for their future.



Family's will:

Take an active interest in supporting children to develop a wide vocabulary.

Provide lots of opportunities for children to talk about the world around them, their family, their interests and what they want to do.

Be ambitious for what children can achieve and understand the vital role parents have as their child's first and most enduring educator.

Work in partnership with the early years provider or school, because when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.



The local authority will:

Develop a data-led approach to the delivery of early language programmes across the city.

Develop appropriate tools, training and practice sharing that support schools and early years providers to deliver robust and effective approaches to all children's early language development.

Ensure that language acquisition is an important part of any planning for the child by the local authority.

Review commissioning activity at relevant opportunities to ensure that language and communication development is reflected in all priorities for children under 5 years.

Services will recognise the importance of community and family assets; peer support, community development and the role of parents as a child's first educator.



Health Service providers will:

Using a range of resources and tools, share key messages about language development with families at every contact.

Develop mechanisms to share best practice across the health workforce, supporting families at all levels of the Healthy Child Programme.

Work with PCC Early Years and Childcare team to deliver a consistent, robust CPD programme across the workforce.

Working within the agreed information sharing framework, share data to support holistic needs analysis that identifies vulnerable cohorts.



Early years providers and school will:

Ensure key staff are trained in a way which provides them with a high level of understanding around the acquisition of early language.

Ensure that the provision has a culture in which early language and communication development is a primary focus and integrated into all activity.

Promote engaging and stimulating language rich environments.



Cultural and leisure partners will:

Ensure that the environments young children use are rich in opportunities to engage with language.

Provide opportunities for children to engage with each other in meaningful conversation about activities.

Ensure that activities provide informal opportunities for parents to continue learning at home.



All partners will:

Review strategy and policy documents to ensure that early language development is sufficiently reflected. In doing so, resources will be allocated which allow services to meet the needs of their youngest children.

Actively promote the importance of the home-learning environment, supporting parents to understand what they can do to improve opportunities to develop language skills.