

# Parent Workshop: Speech and Language Development in the Foundation Years

Presented by: Rachel Dickson, SLT

Sacred Heart PS

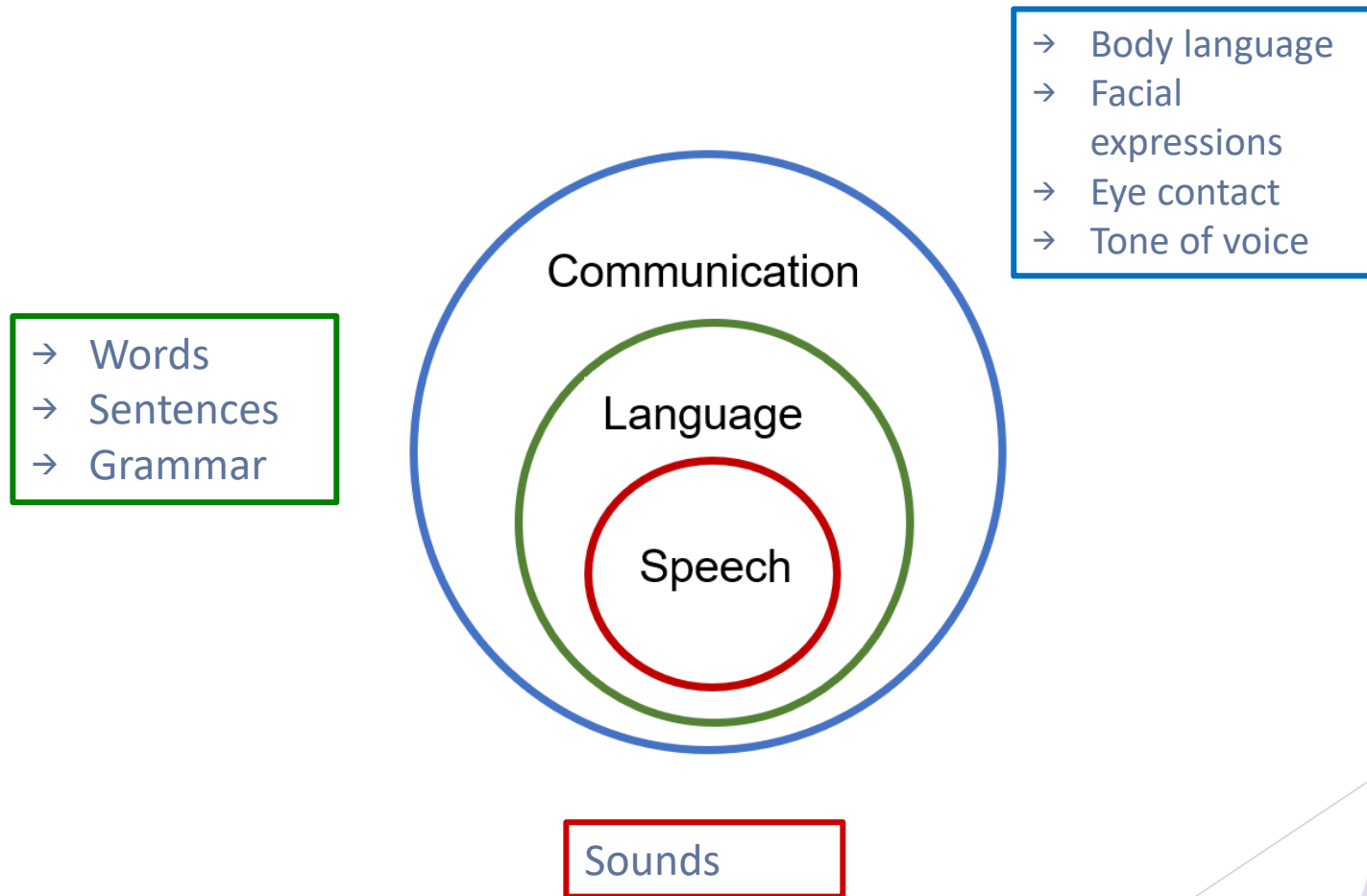
15<sup>th</sup> January 2025

An illustration on the left side of the slide shows three children. A girl with blonde hair and pink bows is in the center, wearing an orange and white striped dress. To her right is a boy with orange hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and black shorts, waving. To the left, a boy with brown hair is partially visible, wearing a blue and white striped shirt. Above them is a large, yellow, irregular speech bubble. The background features a stylized orange tree and a blue sky with a pink cloud. The entire slide is framed by a purple geometric design on the right and bottom.

# What to expect:

- ▶ How do speech, language and communication skills develop?
- ▶ Speech and language skills your 4- to 5-year-olds are beginning to use.
- ▶ Ways to support your child's speech and language development.

# What do we mean by Speech, Language and Communication (SLC)?



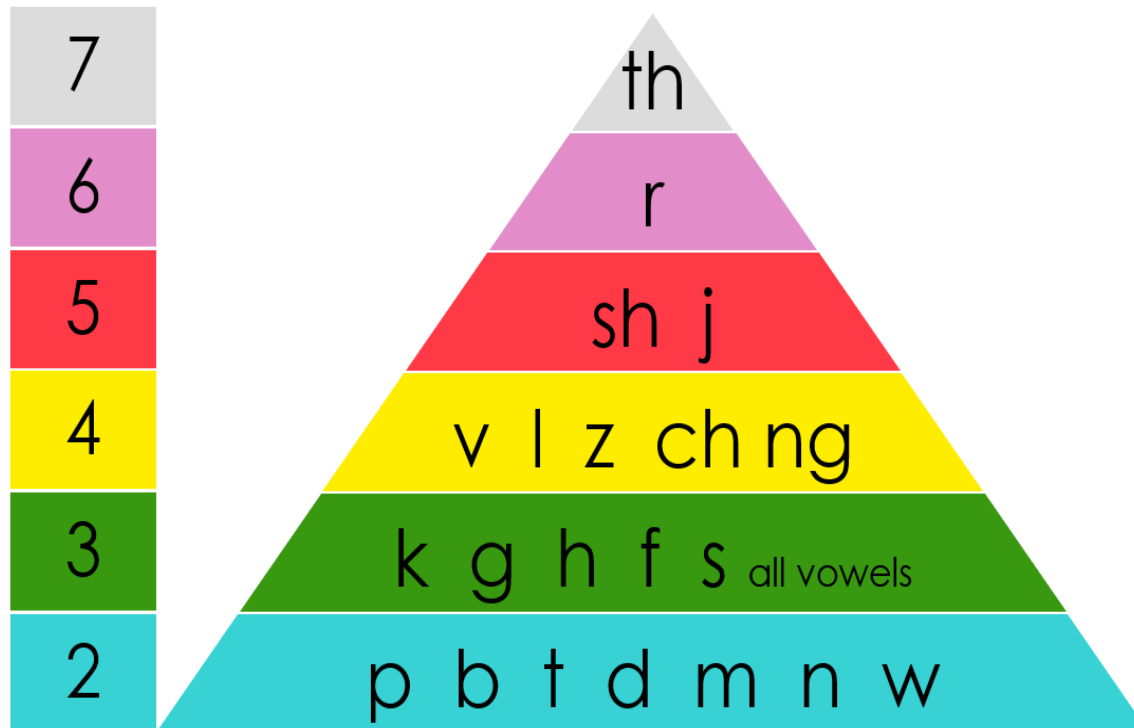
# What is Speech?

- ▶ When we use the term 'speech', we are referring to the **speech sounds** we use to form words.
- ▶ We use our teeth, tongue, lips and different parts of our mouth to create different sounds.
- ▶ Speech sounds are not the same as letters. For example, the word 'sheep' has five letters, but only three sounds: 'sh' 'ee' 'p'.



# Guide to speech sound development:

Typical speech sound development follows a pattern:



By the time your child starts school the majority of what they say should be clear and easy to understand.



# What is Language?

- ▶ Language is how we express needs, thoughts, wants and ideas with others.
- ▶ This can be through speech, signs, written words, picture symbols, gestures or any alternative means

This involves both:

- ▶ The **understanding** of language (Receptive language).
- ▶ The **use** of language (Expressive language).

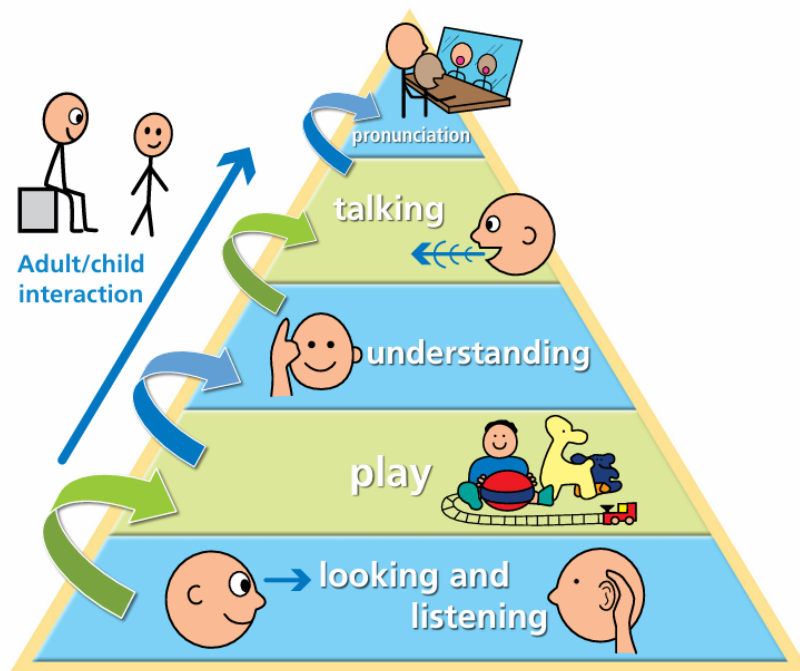
# How speech and language skills develop:

Parent-Child  
Interactions  
are crucial for  
language  
development.



# The Communication Pyramid

The communication pyramid highlights the foundational skills required and 'building blocks' needed to develop speech and language skills.





## Top Tips to help with Speech and Language Development:

- ✓ Talk with your child.
- ✓ Talk face-to-face. Look at your child.
- ✓ Get down to their level.
- ✓ Get your child's attention AND make sure you give your child your attention.
- ✓ Speak slowly and pause to allow thinking time.

# Top Tips continued...

- ✓ Break instructions into chunks.
- ✓ Balance questions to comments.
- ✓ Match your language to your child's level.
- ✓ Model new words and sentences.
- ✓ When your child makes a mistake model new word (don't correct).





# Supporting Language at Home

- Encourage conversation – talk with your child about their day.
  - Frequently talk and interact with your child during everyday activities like mealtimes, playtime, bathtime and bedtime.
  - Enjoy books together – this can be either reading the words or by talking about the pictures.
  - Enjoy listening to music and singing songs together.
  - Play board games and word games together.
  - **Limit your child's time on screens and tablets.**
- 

## Language skills for 4-to 5- years old:

- ▶ Can listen to and follow requests.
- ▶ Can understand longer instructions.
- ▶ Can have a vocabulary between 5, 000 – 10,000 words
- ▶ Can understand and use: opposites, mathematical concepts, time concepts and sequence words





## Language Skills continued..

- ▶ Can use long sentences with lots of describing words.
- ▶ Can tell or retell a story and answer simple questions.
- ▶ Can use grammatical markers like verb tense.
- ▶ Can take turns in longer conversations and stay on the same topic.

It is common for children in early years to go through a period of stammering.



# Games and Ideas...

## Listening Games:

- ▶ Simon Says
- ▶ Guess the sound e.g.  
Listening lotto / phonics
- ▶ Musical Chairs/Statues
- ▶ Listening Walk
- ▶ Match the Sound  
(Instruments)
- ▶ Clap out words

# Games and Ideas...

- ▶ What's in the box?
- ▶ Name and describe games e.g. Headbanz
- ▶ I Spy...
- ▶ Memory games e.g. I went to the shop, I bought...
- ▶ Role play
- ▶ Outdoor scavenger hunt
- ▶ Story chain





## REMEMBER:

- ▶ **Limit** your time on your phone or tablet.
- ▶ Be a **good communicator** modelling these skills for your child.

# Thank You for Listening!

## Helpful Websites:

- ✓ Speech and Language UK
- ✓ BBC Tiny Happy People
- ✓ [RISENI - RISENI/parents](#)

Should you require further support contact your local Speech and Language Therapy department.