Practical Strategies to support children with SLCN

Amanda Baxter
Communication Advisor
abaxter@ican.org.uk
• *Learning*: in engaging with the teacher, peers, the ideas.

• *Socialisation*: what to say, when and to whom, negotiation, debate, social problem solving.

• *Emotion development and regulation*: emotional literacy is language based.
Negative consequences of SLCN

- Literacy
- Social isolation
- Social emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Mental health difficulties
- Independence
- Exclusion and offending
What’s in a name?

• SLCN general term used post-Bercow
• Covers a range of strengths and needs
• Need to profile children’s needs individually
• Children can have ‘spikey’ profiles
• No ‘one size fits all’
Children with identified SLCN/SEN

Children with delayed language up to 80% in some areas - Targeted

All children – Universal
Universal support

• Quality First teaching supports all children
• Whole school approaches ensures success in putting targeted and specialist approaches in place
Creating Communication Supportive Environments

- **Environment** – physical environment and learning context
- **Opportunities** – structured opportunities to support children’s language development
- **Interactions** – ways in which adults in the setting talk with children
- **Research**: more challenging creating language learning opportunities and developing interactions
What’s up your sleeve?

- What strategies are you using already to support children with SLCN?
Environment: Visual support

• Objects, pictures, photos, diagrams
• Gestures and signs
• Timetables
• Reminders

How would you feel without your diary/phone/life organiser?
Why do they work?

• Promotes independence
• Reduces the language demands of the task
• Supports different learning styles
• Reinforces learning
Vocabulary

Pupils with SLCN need more **time** to pay attention both to

*Phonological* aspects

and *semantic* aspects

They need more **repetition**
What helps

• Key words on the board – a limited number revisited
• Pupils becoming word learners
• Key words in advance for pre-teaching
• Vocabulary introduced with explicit phonological and semantic information
• Teaching the language of learning – process vocabulary
• Mind maps
Pupils with SLCN

- Find it difficult to listen to and understand lots of spoken language
- Need more time to process spoken language
- Can find it hard to separate out sounds, words, phrases
- Can have visual strengths
• Cut down the amount of language
• Build in time for processing answers to questions – thinking time
• Slow down
• Think visual
• Modelling positive interaction
Thinking time

• Warn you’re going to ask a question
• Talk to partner before answering
• Teach clarification questions
• TA modelling asking questions
• Specific time for questions
• Snow-balling
• Flag up questions at the beginning
• Key questions in advance
• Draw/write down answer before hand up
Creating an ‘ask friendly’ environment

1. Know what good listening is
2. Developing language skills & confidence to say when you don’t understand
3. Have language skills & confidence to say what speaker should do – e.g. repeat / slow down / use easier words
4. Have language skills & confidence to ask about the bit causing confusion e.g. “what does ‘recount’ mean?”

Children need to be taught these steps & given opportunities to practice; combined with encouragement & praise for doing so.
Opportunities: Talk for learning

- Creating opportunities for children to use language as a means for learning, discussing & developing ideas
- Variety of structures e.g. Talking Partners
- Different feedback methods
What young people say

• Ensure everyone is targeted to say something – recognise who is shy and encourage them to join in
• The best teachers – the lesson revolve around discussion
• They ask a question, talk about it, re-word the question and it becomes a discussion. It really helps our learning
• They don’t speak for hours and hours
• They pick people in the class to explain it – helps everyone to understand a bit more
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities to ask questions</th>
<th>Drawings and diagrams</th>
<th>Teacher explains what you need to include in your answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning the words you need to know before a lesson</td>
<td>Lessons where the teacher talks a bit and them you work in groups</td>
<td>Bullet points instead of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults giving me thinking time</td>
<td>Mind maps</td>
<td>Using a planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with a partner</td>
<td>Lessons where there is something to do</td>
<td>Lesson where I can ask questions</td>
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What schools have done

- Language Map of the school
- Staff audit of confidence – e.g. SLCF
- Whole school strategy of the week
- Consistent start to lessons
- Peer observations
- Short project – building in thinking time
- Plenary at the end of lesson or lesson section
- Pupils reflecting on what helps them
- Word walls and special words
What would your pupils say?

Think about a young person in your school with SLCN...
What would they say works for them at school?
What would they say could make it better? (1 or 2 wishes)
How can you make this happen?
Targeted approaches

• Small groups e.g. Language groups
• Specific programmes e.g. Talk Boost, Nuffield Early Language Intervention or specific to local area
What can help you help children with SLCN?

• Evidence-informed training
• Online resources
• Other resources
• Colleagues and networks
Primary Talk

A programme which supports schools in becoming communication supportive

- Accreditation and good practice indicators
- Consultancy and support
- CPD

- 3 levels: Supportive, Enhanced and specialist

Contact primarytalk@ican.org.uk for further information
• Whole school approach
• Consultancy and school improvement support
• CPD

• secondarytalk@ican.org.uk
Talk Boost: Targeted Intervention

- TA-led small groups, 3x weekly for 10 weeks for 4-7 yr olds
- Whole class activities
- Evidence shows progress for targeted children
CAN’s Progress Checker
www.talkingpoint.org.uk
Call 020 7843 2544 to book your free and confidential call-back from a speech and language therapist or for an email response, email your enquiry to: 
enquires@ican.org.uk
Talking Point is run by I CAN, working with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and Afasic. www.talkingpoint.org.uk

Information about speech, language and communication and SLCN: ages and stages, articles, online forums, links to relevant organisations, regular newsletter.
What next?

• Identify 2 next steps

• How can you make these happen?

• Talk to us if you want support!!
References

• Better Communication Research Programme
  www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cedar/better

• Department for Education
  www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/research/better
Questions?