

# CRACKING THE CODE!

Speech, language and communication needs and the SEND Code of Practice



We all know that speech, language and communication are foundation skills for life. Everyone has a responsibility to identify and help children who are struggling - early support leads to better outcomes.



## How do I know if a child needs more support? **Be alert...**

...to emerging difficulties. Keep an eye out for children who:

- Might be struggling with settling in, joining in with others, understanding setting routines and instructions or expressing themselves
- Aren't where you would expect them to be when you look at expected development for their age
- Aren't reaching their early learning goals for communication and language

For more info on identifying emerging difficulties, go to [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/early-years](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/early-years)

'All those who work with young children should **be alert** to emerging difficulties and **respond early**.'  
(SEND Code of Practice, p.79)

## What do I do if they do need more help? **Respond early.**

The 2014 SEND Code of Practice says that effective support for children with special educational needs should follow a graduated approach – this means regularly planning for, implementing and reviewing the support that you give using an 'assess-plan-do-review' process.



### **Assess.** Use your observations to:

- Identify what the child is struggling with, but also make a note of their strengths – "I love playing with other children but I struggle to use my words"
- Begin or continue conversations with others (e.g. parents, professionals, SENCo) about what you can do to help



### **Plan.** Have a discussion or meeting to:

- Speak with parents, colleagues or any specialists who are involved to plan for what support will be put in place.
- Make your plan outcome focused – what do you all want to improve for the child?



Keep the child and their family at the centre of your planning and support. Use the graduated approach resource on our website to help you with this process.

### **Review.** How have things gone?

Discuss with others involved about how effective your support has been. Check back against your observations and planned outcomes. At this stage think about any further colleagues or specialists who might be able to help before you begin the process again.

### **Do.** Put your support in place:

Implement support as planned and continue with your observations so you can see how the child is responding to your support.