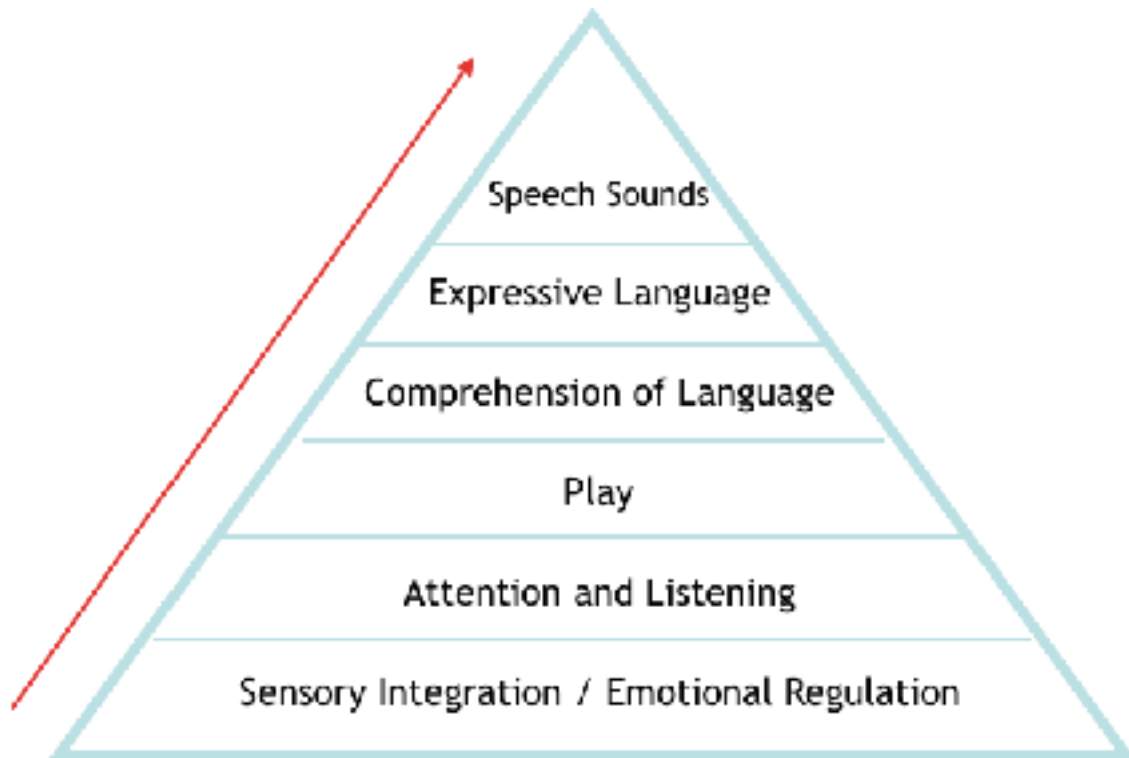# Speech and Language Therapy at Maplewell Hall School

Advice and strategies on how to identify and support students with speech, language and communication needs in school.

Speech, Language and Communication Awareness and Strategies

Speech and Language Communication Pyramid

Speech Sounds

Expressive Language

Comprehension of Language

Play

Attention and Listening

Sensory Integration / Emotional Regulation

Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTS) support all area's of the communication pyramid. Competent speech, language and communication ability depends upon a number of different skills. We often describe these skills in terms of a pyramid as the stronger the skills are at the bottom of the pyramid the more competent the communicator. That is the upper skills in the pyramid depend heavily on the competence in the lower levels of the pyramid.

The aims of this booklet…

- To briefly outline what areas speech and language therapy cover

- To help you understand how the speech and language needs impacts on the child's ability to learn

- To give you a few ideas about how to help.

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Sensory Integration / Emotional Regulation

Research has found that children who learn to manage (i.e. regulate) their emotions have an easier time relating to others, forming peer relationships, and engaging in positive peer interactions (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)

What does dysregulation look like?

Difficulties in managing emotions may manifest in a number of ways and differs for each student:

- Verbal and physical aggression
- Screaming / Shouting / Yelling
- Throwing themselves to the floor (tantrums)
- Throwing and destroying items
- Crying
- Accusations
- Engaging others in negative behaviours
- Disrupting
- Absconding
- Avoiding
- Running
- Climbing
- Overexcited behaviour
- Not listening
- Not learning
- Self harming (cutting, pulling out hair or nails, hitting, biting etc)
- Shutting down

How do we support Emotional Regulation?

Sensory Supports

Calming Techniques

Thinking Strategies
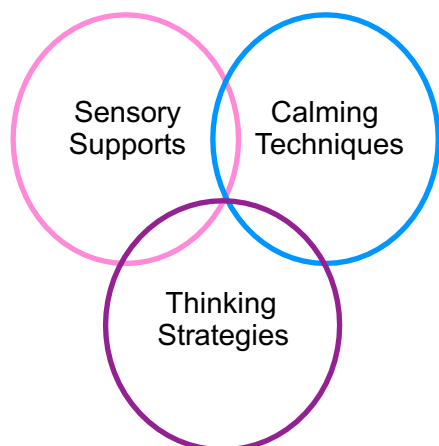
Sensory Supports

- Heavy work task – carry heavy bag/books, move chairs etc.
- Jump (on a trampet)
- Push, pull, lift objects
- Bounce or lie on a large inflatable ball
- Gentle swinging/rocking
- Deep pressure – use a weighted toy or a large inflatable ball for gentle squashing
- Massage – use vibrating massager
- Movement breaks
- Chewy/crunchy or sour snacks, ice lolly, eat fruit eg. Crunchy apple or tangy orange
- Cold drink out of sports bottles (where they have to suck)
- Jumping Jacks
- Change seating
- Wall pushes
- Rowing machine, treadmill, stepper etc.
- Sit ups, Plank, Push ups, etc.

Calming Techniques

- Music
- Walk and talk
- Stretching
- Have a drink of water
- Mindfulness
- Breathing ('Draw' number 8 lying on its side in the air, breath in as you draw one circle and breath out as you draw the other)

Thinking Strategies

Stop and Think

Figuring out the size of the problem is the first step in being able to match our emotional reaction accordingly.

When we talk about the 'size of problems' we can classify them as small, medium or big on a number scale.

Big = 8 - 10 →

Medium = 5 - 7 →

Small = 1- 4 →

Zones of Regulation® (Leah Kuypers)

Uses colours instead of emotional vocabulary to support students to understand their feelings. There are four zones to describe how your brain and body feel.:

BLUE Zone – When our body is running slow, such as when you are tired, sick, sad or bored.

GREEN Zone - When you feel "good to go." You body may feel happy, calm, content and focused.

YELLOW Zone - When you start to loose control, such as when you are frustrated, anxious, worried, silly or surprised. *Use caution when you are in this zone.*

RED Zone - This zone is for big emotions such as anger, terror, aggression and extreme excitement *In this zone, you are out of control, and can't make good decisions and must STOP!*

Why use the Zones of Regulation®?

• For children to be able to identify their feelings
• To have a toolbox of regulation tools
• To know when and how to use the tools
• To be able to develop problem solving skills
• To start to understanding how their behaviour influences others thoughts and feelings.

Strategies

• Different strategies work for different students, best thing to do is to 'know you student' and what works best for them. Often if they are older and mature they can communicate with you what helps what they are emotionally dysregulated.

• Help the student to examine their thoughts and consider how accurate and realistic they are by looking at the evidence.

• Get student to identify which zone they're in and what tools they can use (if you have used a zones of regulation approach).

• Give the student space.

• Encouraging them to 'check it out' with a trusted student or adult.

• Challenging what they believe the consequence will be.

• Examining different ways of interpreting situations - present them with alternative interpretations.

• Worry Books, Encourage students to write down the things that are on their mind. You can work out what to do with the worries they have written in the book. Good ways to let go of these is to discuss together, identify a solution and then Shred/ rip up the paper its written on. Visualise ripped up paper/ worry blowing away in the wind.

Attention and Listening Skills

> I've already told you that once!

> Please can you tell me that again?

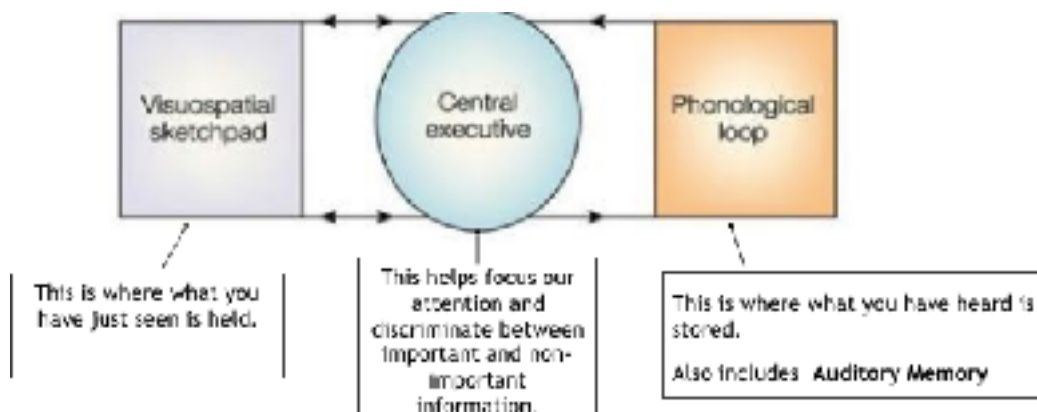> I don't know what I need to do.

- Attention and listening skills are necessary for language skills to develop. They underpin all learning.

- Some children need help with learning to tune in to the most important sounds rather than the less important ones.

- Children need to be able to concentrate on activities and people for long enough to learn from the experience.

- Attention may be affected by:
  - Hearing e.g. glue ear
  - Environmental issues e.g. distractions
  - Illness, tiredness
  - Developmental level

Children with speech, language and communication difficulties have poor memory for what they hear and therefore have difficulties concentrating and following directions.

Working Memory - Where information is held briefly, while something is done, e.g. instructions are remembered while they are carried out.

- Visual Support systems allow children more time to process information if their auditory memory or phonological loop fails them. (see image below)

- Information in the working memory is easily lost through distraction or overload.

- Working memory can fail for some children - 'catastrophic failure' where everything is lost.

- If there are no external reminders of what they need to be thinking about and original verbal instructions have been forgotten, they might guess, become distracted, or give up!

- Good attention is the ability to focus the eyes and/or ears on something specific for a certain length of time.

- The ability to attend to something or someone is important for all types of learning, particularly speech and language development. A child must be able to listen and attend to what is happening around him in order to understand it. The same skill is necessary to understand what words mean and how they are used.

Attention is the basis of ALL learning. Children must learn to 'listen' and 'look' appropriately and to control their own focus of attention.

Visuospatial sketchpad	Central executive	Phonological loop
This is where what you have just seen is held.	This helps focus our attention and discriminate between important and non-important information.	This is where what you have heard is stored. Also includes Auditory Memory

How do I know if a child has attention and listening difficulties?

The following behaviours can be indicative of listening and attention problems, either in isolation or a combination of many

- Easily distracted from listening.
- Difficulty listening in noisy environments.
- Difficulty in following verbal instructions.
- Slow or delayed responses to verbal stimuli.
- Frequently asks for repetition of instructions or questions.
- Often misunderstands what is said.
- Localisation problems – can't follow who's talking in a group.

What causes attention to wonder and how to tackle it?

Something else is going on at the same time:

- Find a quiet space where you won't be disturbed
- Turn off the TV/music/games etc
- Pack away toys which could be distracting
- Try to give him/her frequent reminders/ visual cues to focus his attention. Use his/ her name, or a phrase such as "Look at this" before speaking

-

Boredom

- Choose activities which interest him/her and that s/he enjoys
- Play for short periods but often, rather than having long sessions that lead to battles
- Gradually lengthen the time s/he does an activity

Not understanding what is going on being said

- Encourage the child to look at you when you speak to him/her
- Introduce activities clearly, using visual cues e.g. a visual timetable
- Keep activities/explanations simple

Finding activities too difficult

- Adapt the game to the child's ability
- Show the child by example
- Reward the child's attempts e.g. "That was a good try!"

• Feeling threatened or under pressure

- Make activities "FUN!"
- Let others take turns first

• Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- Make activities "FUN!"
  Make increased use of brain gym activities
- Give the child a stress ball to use during listening tasks

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Play
'It's not just play – It's learning'

Why work on developing play?

- Play is the most natural way for children to learn about their world and interact with those around them. There are different levels and types of play and each one will help the child's language development.

- By playing and pretending children understand that toys can symbolise real events/objects i.e. a small plastic car represents the real car that drives on the road.

- Children then develop their understanding further so that they can pretend one object is something else e.g. they will use a brush as a microphone or a shoe box as a bed.

- Play can improve social interaction skills such as eye contact, turn taking and copying sounds and actions. It can also help develop understanding, use of language and gesture, concentration and listening and imagination.

- Play can also help develop other new skills such as physical and movement skills, general learning and problem solving.

- The areas of typical child development fit together like building blocks. If one piece is not present or shaped differently it has implications for the other pieces. E.g. if a child does not engage in typical social play or typical symbolic play, there will be an impact on communication development.

- A very important part of play is 'Joint attention.' Allow the child to lead, adapt to share the moment, add language and experience.

Top tips for playing

- **Get face to face :** Get right down on the floor at the Childs level. This may involve sitting or lying on the floor, but it's worth it!

- **Be expressive :** Use your face, body and voice to be as animated as you can

- **Let your child take the lead :** They may want to do something different to you, but go with it.

- **Watch :** Watch what your child is looking at and playing with, if your child isn't making sounds to communicate yet this will help you know what they are interested in

- **Wait :** Remember children need more time that adults to respond

- **Imitate :** Copy their sounds, actions, words, facial expressions.

- **Comment :** Avoid asking questions, instead use simple language to comment on what the child is doing e.g. "you're pushing the car, ooo the car is fast'

- **Unplug :** turn off your phone, tv and radio

- **Keep it short :** lots of short play sessions are better than one long one.

Get involved and have fun!

Different types of play

The image on the first page shows the different types of play a child will take part in dependent on their developmental age, their mood and the setting they are in. However there are more types of play listed below;

- **People Play :** is vital for the development of interaction, communication and learning. This play requires no toys.. just you! e.g. *'Peek-a-boo', tickling games, nursery rhymes with actions,*

- **Sensory & Exploratory Play :** When a child explores objects and toys with all their

senses e.g. *messy play (sand, foam, water, paint), explore sounds with shakers, bells etc, feely books and feely bags with objects with different textures in (e.g. smooth, bumpy)*

- **Cause and Effect Play :** When a child learns they can influence their surroundings, it's the foundation for communicating intentionally e.g. *toys with stitches that the child can control , toys that make noises, pop up toys, lift the flap books, reacting to the Childs actions with a fun response e.g. if they drop something, say 'uh oh', building towers and knocking them down.*

- **Social Play :** Early social play lays down the template for communication – Helps develop eye contact, taking turns, attention and listening, facial expressions and body language e.g. *Copy their actions in play e.g. when they splash the water, copy them, Play the way your child wants to play - the child may be happier putting all the bricks in a bucket and tipping them out rather than building a tower. Bubbles and balloons, starting blowing and then wait for eye contact before you blow more bubbles/let go of the balloon.*

- **Physical Play :** Helps promote fine and gross motor movements and develop independence and cooperative play skills.e.g *hide and seek, ball games, playgrounds, soft play, nursery rhymes with actions, tig and chase etc.*

- **Constructive Play :** involves manipulating elements of the play environment to make something new, helps develop physical skills, problem solving and flexible thinking skills. e.g *playdough, building blocks, train track sets, stacking cups, sand play, building pillow forts etc.*

- **Creative Play :** this type of play helps develop imagination, creativity, fine motor development e.g. *Arts and crafts, cooking, potato painting, blowing bubbles with paint, play dough, making pictures using paints, crayons and different materials such as feathers and pasta.*

- **Pretend Play :** also known as symbolic play. Where children start to use objects to identify what they are playing - it allows children to identify with the adult world, develop language, flexible thinking skills and promotes problem solving and emotional development.Top tips for developing pretend play skills…

- Act out real life situations (bath, bed, dinner time) with dolls/teddy/toys and real objects.
- Let the child explore and play with objects around the house - putting on adult shoes etc.
- Involve toys/dolls in real life situations e.g. give dolly some dinner.
- Can the child match everyday object toys or real everyday objects to pictures?
- Play dough e.g. making food for dolly, making toys for teddy.
- Play with cars- talk about where are they are going e.g. filling up at the garage, going to the shops.
- Provide objects that have no specific function, so the child can make up their own ideas e.g. a box

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Language Difficulties

- Language can be split up into two areas : RECEPTIVE and EXPRESSIVE areas.

- **RECEPTIVE** – is understanding what we hear and making sense of it.

- **EXPRESSIVE** - is what we say – how words are put into sentences and beyond.

What do receptive language difficulties "look like"?

- May have a limited vocabulary of words that are understood

- May find it difficult to understand abstract concepts (e.g. time, emotions)

- May find it difficult to follow directions

- May find it difficult to process what is heard, and then to work out what that means

- May find it difficult to understand that words may have more than one meaning (e.g. cricket bat and animal bat);

- May interpret language very literally, and find it hard to infer what people really mean. Can make it hard to recognise humour and sarcasm and to understand figurative language (e.g. I put you on the spot)

- May find it difficult to know when they have not understood, and then have the skills to seek help or to ask questions to seek extra information

- May find it difficult to consider the knowledge of a listener

What do expressive language difficulties "look like"?

- May have difficulties with learning and retrieving words eg. "Mmm.. Like.... A Lion" when meaning tiger (known as word finding difficulties.)

- May have difficulties formulating correct sentence structures.

- May have limited grammar, use incorrect word endings, difficulties with plurals.

- May have difficulties with organising ideas to provide a description or an explanation – could give too little or too much information.

- May have limited narrative abilities therefore will find it challenging to retell a story or an event.

- May have poor awareness of a listener – what information they need to be able to understand a message.

- May find open ended questions difficult.

Scan the following QR code for a video example of expressive language difficulties… or type the following URL into your internet browser… https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnRNeDtme0g

How can we help?

Strategies to support receptive and expressive language difficulties

Receptive language strategies

- Check that the pupil is listening and encourage active listening;

- State the pupil's name before giving an instruction or gain eye contact (if appropriate);

- Use visual strategies and non-verbal cues to support what is being said;

- Help the pupil to make links to previous knowledge and experiences.

- Emphasise key words with slight stress;

- Think about the length and complexity of the instruction being given, it is useful to think in terms of whether it is a single or multi-command instruction, give one piece of instruction at a time to allow pupils to process this before adding more e.g. "before you go outside, you must finish your worksheet".

- Check that the pupil has understood, observe their response and clarify any misunderstandings;

- Encourage the pupil to use self-help strategies for example rehearsal or visualisation;

- Encourage the pupil to let you know when they have not understood, this can be via verbal or non-verbal means, such as using a 'traffic light' system; and allow the pupil time to process the information, apply the '10 second rule' – the teacher counts silently to 10 to allow the pupil to formulate a response.

Expressive language and supporting unclear speech strategies.

- Respond to what the pupil is saying as opposed to how clearly they speak.

- Encourage the pupil to use gesture, drawing or writing to aid understanding.

- Avoid asking for constant repetition of mispronounced words.

- Make the pupil feel relaxed and build self-esteem and confidence.

- Comment on and praise good interactions/ speech.

- Consider where in the 'queue' the pupil is asked to respond, somewhere near the beginning is preferable so they have been given a good model/example of an answer, avoid leaving the pupil to the end as memory skills may be affected;

- Repeat what the child says correctly so that they hear the correct production / grammatical structure.

- Give time for the pupil to think about what they need to say, find the right words and formulate the sentence.

- Give prompts if the pupil cannot think of the word, for example, what do you do with it? Where would you find it? What does it look like?

- Expand on what the pupil has said by adding new words or a new idea.

- Avoid asking the pupil to repeat the sentence again after you, and avoid finishing a pupils sentences or saying the words they can't find as this can be frustrating for the pupil.

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Pragmatic Language/ Social Communication Difficulties

The way that we **use** and **understand** the **subtleties of language** in a range of contexts and the **unwritten social rules** that we all adhere to.
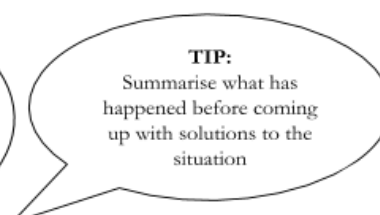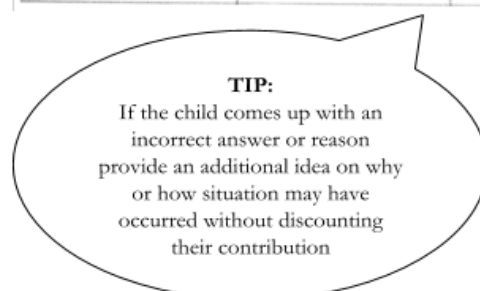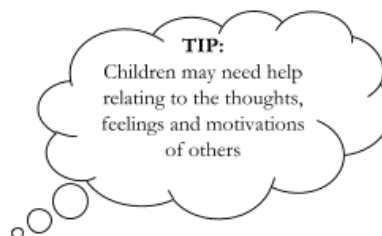
What do pragmatic language/ social communication difficulties "look like"?

- Difficulty using and understanding non Verbal language e.g. body language, facial expression and tone of voice *: the student may stand to close/too near to their peers, their facial expression may not match the tone of the conversation etc. may not interpret agitation, upset in another and therefore be seen as 'not caring'.*

- Topic Maintenance : *the student may switch topics of a conversation with no warning, the student may find it challenging to ask appropriate questions/make comments to keep a conversation going*

- Turn-taking : *Student may interrupt others, or not be aware that others may want to speak.*

- Eye contact : *Student may find eye contact uncomfortable or use eye contact too intensely.*

- Beginning and ending a conversation appropriately.

- Understanding and use of humour may be difficult for the student

- Volume : *May talk too loudly or quietly*

- Rate : *May talk too quickly or too slowly*

- Difficulty applying knowledge and language in a social situation : *can be perceived as rude, inappropriate and misinterpret the cues given by others*

- Adjusting their language based on the person or situation: *The student may talk to a policeman the same as they would with their peers on the playground.*

- Social conventions : *Student may not see the need for social greetings, saying please and thank you, opening the door for others etc.*

- Inferential comprehension : T*he students ability to understand meaning that is not explicitly stated or explained in text they have read, or information they have heard.*

- Assertiveness : *Student may not be able to assert their needs appropriately, they may appear passive or aggressive.*

- Difficulty considering the needs of a listener : *Can speak for too long or on topics that are of no interest*

- Making and keeping friends : *does not have the language skills to initiate a conversation, to repair a friendship that has gone wrong.*

- Difficulty playing with others: *can't understand the rules for sharing, taking turns, winning and losing.*

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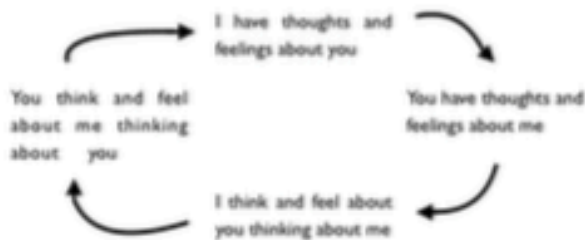Independent Therapy Services

How can we help?

Strategies to support pragmatic language difficulties

- Be aware of the student's **sensory needs** (speak to OT if necessary)
- Use **social thinking vocabulary** concepts within interactions. Core concepts explained below.
- **Actively pre-plan** with the student- if you need to, you could role play situations that are about to occur- write down any changes that are expected to happen.
- **Use the student's interests** and experiences to help them understand different contexts - try to relate the curriculum to real life situations as often as possible.
- **Reduce the communication load**, particularly when the student is experiencing big feelings.
- Provide **visual supports** such as **visual timetables, task management plans**.
- **Model appropriate conversation and social** skills e.g. social greetings, body language, personal space, asking for help, starting and maintaining conversation.
- Praise and provide specific **feedback** when the student has shown good skills. Create a safe space where your students can practice these skills with their peers.
- **Use Social Behaviour Mapping** to teach about the specific relationship between behaviors, others' perspectives, others' actions (consequences) and the student's own emotions about those around him or her.
- **Use Comic Strip Conversations:** They are simple visual representations of conversation. They can show:
    - the things that are actually said in a conversation
    - how people might be feeling
    - what people's intentions might be.
- Comic strip conversations use stick figures and symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation, and colour to represent the emotional content of a statement or message.

TIP:
Children may need help relating to the thoughts, feelings and motivations of others

TIP:
If the child comes up with an incorrect answer or reason provide an additional idea on why or how situation may have occurred without discounting their contribution

TIP:
Summarise what has happened before coming up with solutions to the situation

10 Core Concepts

1. Thoughts and Feelings®

This is the perspective taking loop, it's a lot to consider!

All of us have thoughts about others' behaviours when sharing space together. Most thoughts are "neutral/good/normal". However all of us do things that can cause others to have 'weird/uncomfortable" thoughts about our behaviour on occasion.

Many of our students can acknowledge that they have thoughts and feelings about other peoples behaviours, but may not realise that others, in turn, think about them.

Top tip : Our human brains are designed to focus more actively on what people are doing wrong rather than doing right. As you introduce this concept, push towards recognising the good thoughts and feelings, such as "Jamie, I really like how you listened to the story, it made me feel proud"

2. Thinking with Your Eyes®

Using your eyes to figure out and make 'smart guesses' about what non-verbal messages others are sending, what they might be thinking, as well as figuring out what is expected/unexpected for the situation.

When we are aware that

Thinking with Your Eyes

others have thoughts and we "think with our eyes", to watch peoples faces and eyes, we can begin to 'see' some of the thoughts other people are having.

Top tip : Teach students that 'eyes are like arrows' they point towards what people are looking at and what a person is looking at it often what they are thinking about.

3. The Group Plan®

The group plan is a simple way to talk about "reading intentions" or "motives". When in a group (two or people people) there is a plan. Each of us has a job to figure the plan. When there are people working together toward the same goal, they have a group plan.

In classrooms, we routinely bring students into a

The Group Plan

collective environment and expect them to behave. For students you cannot spontaneous figure out the group plan we should explicitly teach:

- Everyone in this room has thoughts and feelings about what is happening around them and to them. We hold a lot of our thoughts in our head.

- When in the class, we work together to accomplish shared goals.

- Throughout the day we are expected to think with our eyes to figure out the group plan.

We also have to figure out people's individual plans. When people share space (e.g. walking down a crowded hall), if each person doesn't read others' plans and navigate around them, the space may become very chaotic.

Top tip : Always 'expose' the group plan, what is the goal, how are you going to achieve the goal. When reading stories or watching tv programmes, ask what is the group plan?

4. Is Your Body and Brain in the Group?®

This concept addresses how our physical presence (or lack of) communicates our intentions to others.

We notice when someone's body is turned into the group and their brain is actively paying attention - they look like they are working as part of the group. We also notice when someones body and brain is not in the group or when their body is in the group but their brain is not in the group - they are usually not paying attention to the group plan.

Body in the Group

Top tip : Try not to use this as a command "get your body in the group", instead ask students 'Do you think your body and brain is in the group?'

5. Whole Body Listening®

"How do I show I am listening to you with my body parts?". We teach that the whole body (eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, body, brain, heart) need to be engaged to show others that we are paying attention. 'Whole body listening' morphs into 'active listening' for older students The aims of teaching 'whole body listening' help students to:

Whole Body Listening

- Develop awareness of ways to help their bodies and brains attend to information so they can interpret what is being said.
- Show others (the speaker and other listeners) that they are listening so they are included in the group.
- Take the perspective of others.

Top tip : Whole body listening is a tool not a rule, remind students to listen as best as they can but take into consideration their sensory needs too.

6. Hidden Rules and Expected and Unexpected Behaviour®

Hidden rules = Most of us can interpret and produce social behaviours at a sub-conscious level, we can enter a situation, recognise the people in it and determine the social expectations - we figure out the hidden rules. We need to help our students develop better abilities to observe the situation and figure out the hidden social rules, as these help to us to know whats expected.

Hidden Rules and Expected-Unexpected

Expected and unexpected behaviours = Every environment has a set of 'hidden rules' that people expect to be followed such as respecting personal space, talking when its your turn etc. When people follow these rules, they are doing what's expected, when they don't follow the rules, it's unexpected. But if you are someone who doesn't know the hidden rules, this can be very hard! We use Expected and Unexpected instead of appropriate and inappropriate because behaviours are not always black and white. For instance, shouting is unexpected in the classroom but quite expected on the playground.

Top tip : Support your students to become social observers (Social Detectives). They will need to use all their tools (all the concepts discussed on this advice sheet) to figure out the hidden rules or expectations that lead us to figure out the related expected and unexpected behaviour.

This concept is not to be used as a behavioural management tool (e.g. don't reward expected behaviours and punish unexpected behaviours). Its a teaching tool to help our students figure out the social world.

7. Smart Guess®

Smart guess is used to describe when we make inferences/ educated guesses.

Smart Guess

• Smart guess : Take what you already know and make a guess

• Wacky Guess: Making a guess when have not been given any (or enough) information.

We need to use our eyes (and all our other tools) help us to make smart guesses so we can figure out the hidden rules.

Students who find it difficult to make smart guesses in the social world will also find this difficult to their academic work. Teachers will often ask students to: Make predictions , make inferences, understand figurative language, guessing what a character may do in a book, movie, etc. (reading comprehension) and problem solving how to work as a group = all of these skills require smart guesses.

Top tip : Help students practice finding the clues and then making smart guesses. Use movies, tv shows, adverts - pause them in places and encourage them to make a guess based on what they have already seen. Then you can encourage them to search out this same information in their day-to-day interactions.

8. Flexible and Stuck Thinking ®

Why do we teach flexible thinking? The social world is complex; it shifts and changes constantly. Therefore the expectation is that we shift and change with it.

Flexible thinking is being able to adapt our own behaviours in the moment depending on the situation and the people in it. This means we can change our plan, try a different solution to a problem, change what

Flexible and Stuck Thinking

we are thinking or give up what we want based on the group plan. A flexible thinker can also understand what other people say and do based on different points of view or contexts. Flexible thinking is important for learning how to problem solve!

Stuck thinking is being unable to change what we are doing or thinking based on what is happening around us. If we are stuck in our thinking we might have only one way of seeing a problem or situation, or we might follow one rule all the time, no matter where we are or what is happening around us.

Top tip : Being flexible starts with understanding there are choices, options, and different ways to look at a situation. You can only be flexible when you see you have choices- Play games where the goal is to come up with as many options as possible e.g. what to have for dinner, different ways of travelling somewhere, clothes to wear.

- Use the vocabulary "flexible thinking" and "stuck thinking" throughout your daily activities and routines. "My plan today was to go to the shop early, but it doesn't open until 10:00, I'll have to use my flexible thinking and go later" or "My brain is stuck thinking about what to make for dinner tonight, can you help me?"

9. Size of the Problem®

When we learn about this concept we need to learn:
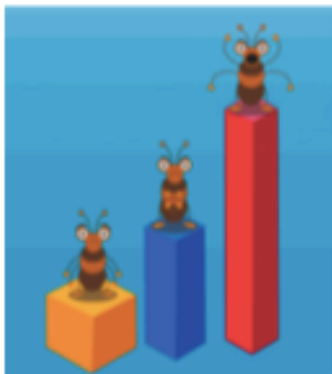
Size of the Problem

- Problems come in different sizes
- Emotions and reactions come in different sizes
- Reactions come from emotions
- It's expected that the size of the emotion and related reaction matches the size of the problem.

It's hard for our kids to figure out the size of the problem, but you can help ask them- How long it will take to make the problem smaller, fix it, or make it better? How much help we need and from whom (kids or adults?)

1. Small problem: a problem you can solve by yourself (e.g., a broken pencil lead)

2. Medium problem: a problem you need help to solve, often from an adult (e.g., my science project was destroyed)

3. Big problem: a problem even adults need help solving (e.g., fire, car accident, etc.)

Once we have figured out the size of the problem we need teach that our emotional reaction should relate to the size of the problem. Small problem = small reaction.

Top tip : When helping your child solve problems you can follow these steps..

- What happened
- The size of the problem
- How you felt about it
- Ideas for solving the problem or making it smaller
- What you did
- How you felt about it afterward

10. Sharing an Imagination ®

Shared imagination is when people imagine together something that may or may not be real (e.g. imagining different role-based play, reading fiction or imagining what it would be like to go on a trip to Paris while listening to another person is describing their trip to Paris).

Sharing an Imagination

Singular imagination is when someone imagine something in their head but can't synchronise that information with other people. For example, a child with singular imagination may make up a creative story in their mind and then assume you know exactly what they are thinking - this results in frustration if you don't understand.

Shared imagination is crucial for conversation and connecting with others!

Top tip : When your child is explaining something, model and explicitly talk about the basic language structures we use to relate to others:

Add-A-Thought - I add my own thoughts and experiences to show how they connect to your thoughts and experiences.

Supporting Comments - Nods of the head, "Wow", "That's interesting" - acknowledges that you are tuned in.

Ask-A-Question - 'Social wonder questions' make people feel like the listener is truly interested in them as a person "how did that make you feel?"

For further advice and support please contact your Speech and Language Therapist.

A model to understand behaviour: "The iceberg"

Think behaviour - Think Language

How can we help these students?
- Developing Receptive and Expressive Language skills
- Managing change and developing flexibility
- Developing creative and imaginative thought
- Understanding and managing behaviour
- Understanding and developing strategies to cope with sensory differences
- Supporting the development of self esteem and ability to accept diagnosis
- Developing social skills and friendship skills
- Developing conversation and group skills
- Creating appropriate learning environments

Classroom strategies
- Try and provide a workstation or a quiet room which has reduced distractions.
- Provide instructions visually which can be referred back to.
- Where possible, link work and tasks to the child's areas of interest.
- Clear, defined reward systems which provide the motivation.
- Provide a visual timetable for the day / week.
- Implement a sensory diet into the child's timetable.

Changing and rewarding behaviours
- Be selective about which behaviours need to be supported (what i s most important/meaningful) don't try to change everything at once!
- Identify (with the students) what rewards are most meaningful to them.
- Use a system for recording rewards that is meaningful to the student – consider how simple or complex it needs to be; consider how visual the reward chart needs to be.
- If a token system is used, then rewards should only be gained, not taken away
- You can use a three warnings system as an ongoing management tool to help a student to recognise when a behaviour is inappropriate, and to enable them to work at changing this
- Offer choices e.g. if you do this then X will happen, if you do that then Y will happen. Giving choices allows a child to feel in control.
- Make sure that the whole team around the student is working towards the same goals, and using the same strategies (may need a behaviour management plan)

Speakeasy Therapy
Independent Therapy Services

What does the SaLT provision look like at Maplewell?

Tier:	Specialist	Targeted	Universal
Who will receive this provision?	**Additional to the universal and targeted** interventions. Offered for those young people who require a **highly individualised** programme of work. This group includes children with **complex learning and communication needs** and those children who are **cognitively able and have specific speech, language or communication needs**.	**Additional to the universal interventions.** This type of intervention offers **specific support for those children and young people who are felt to be vulnerable in relation to their speech, language and communication needs**. This group includes children with delayed language and communication skills who **following targeted intervention will return to the universal tier,** through to identification of children who may go on to have more persistent needs.	**All students.** This type of intervention involves the **SaLT supporting for the whole population**, i.e. whole class or whole setting/ school and ensure all children have appropriate language and communication opportunities.
Who facilitates the Intervention?	Speech and Language Therapist	Speech and language therapy assistant, Teaching assistants COMPASS staff	All staff working in the school
What does it look like?	**Assessment** **Direct intervention (group or individual session)** with a speech and language therapist.	This level includes **small group and individual targeted** intervention. Approaches such as language groups, narrative groups, social communication groups and phonology programmes**.**	Workforce development- **training/ workshops.** This level includes **access to appropriate information**, creating communication friendly **environments** and **whole class/setting/school** intervention approaches. Supporting the roll out of strategies through modelling and scaffolding.