

Stages of Communication

Engagement/attention

Very little engagement – main interest in toys/activity

Some engagement – mainly physical. Joint attention to motivating activities

Good engagement – seeks attention. May engage in activities chosen by adult

Beginning to engage with other children

Understanding

Understands no words

Understands and participates in familiar routines; understanding of some single words/learnt phrases

Understands more words within context of situations

Understanding wide range of words and concepts

Messages

Does not send direct messages

Physical request e.g. pulling, taking hand. May use single word in a familiar context or when motivated.

Sending deliberate messages – words, signs or pictures. May point ; echolalia

Uses words (or other means) for more reasons – request, comment, draw attention

Play

Sensory play – depends on child's likes e.g. spinning, watching movement

Physical play with familiar adult; sensory play; functional play e.g. posting, stacking, threading
Wider range of play; copying short play sequence or play routine

Development of more creative play. Pretend play

Interaction

Briefly with adults, never with peers
Wants to do things by himself

Physical interaction. Starting to take turns as part of a fun play routine

Interacts with familiar people in familiar situations; longer interaction

Interacts with less familiar people; start to interact (mainly physically) with peers

Key

Blue = own agenda

Pink = requester stage

Green = early communicator

Red = partner stage