

What do we do at St. Albert's to support speaking and listening?

At St Albert's we encourage children to communicate confidently by providing them with purposeful language interactions and experiences. Within school there is a wealth of opportunities to develop language and listening skills. Here are some examples of what we do:

- Big Talk (foundation stage and year 1) - Puppets, story sacks, nursery rhymes -- Children are tracked and monitored from nursery onwards and any speech and language problems
- Talking tables in each class where children can display items
- Talk homework (see next page)
- Wow words of the week
- Show and tell
- Debates of topical issues
- Role play / drama
- Hot seating (children take on the persona of a character or person and respond to questions from another point of view)
- Use of voice recorder / video camera
- Guest speakers in school

Please Remember

Please do not worry if your child is referred to a speech and language therapist (SLT). As a school we aim to give children the best start possible and an SLT maybe required for a short time to ensure that your child gets opportunity to thrive.

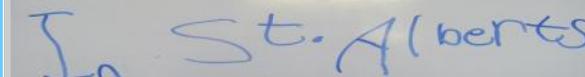
Talk Homework

In school we will be launching Talk Homework. Each week we will send home a simple discussion task; it will be same for all children in school so families can do it together. The aim is to get children sharing ideas with their families and developing their vocabulary and imagination. Please help your child to discuss the question they have been given and particularly focus on why they think that. It is vital for children to try to talk in full sentences and to use words such as 'because'. Please discuss the question at home and let the children know your opinions.

Some helpful hints for parents taking part in a talking homework conversation

- Set aside an hour for 'Talk Homework';
- Encourage as many family members as possible to be home on Talk Homework evening and consider discussing the question while having a meal together.
- Don't just give your opinion, use the 'because' word to explain why you think that.
- Give the possible opinions of two contrasting family members who are not present for the talk, and use the 'because' word to explain why they may be different.
- Ask others around the table to give their opinions and to use the 'because' word.
- Ask your child his/her opinion and ask them to use the 'because' word.
You could link the topic back to something you remember from when you were a child

A Good Listener...



In St. Albert's

Speaking and listening are key elements within the school curriculum. In all areas of learning your child will be encouraged to listen to spoken descriptions, questions, instructions and explanations, not only from the teacher but fellow pupils too.

Why are Speaking and Listening so Important?

Speaking and listening are at the heart of children's learning. Children need to be confident communicators and active listeners in order to learn about the world they live in. Language skills are crucial, and children begin to develop these skills from birth. At school children are taught to:

Think about what they say

Choose the right words

Listen to others before they speak

Talk to others

Share ideas

'Listening and Speaking are the roots of reading and writing'

(Ofsted 2005)

Parents' Role

Parents and carers play a crucial role in developing children's communication skills.

From the moment of birth parents are a child's first teachers and provide a powerful example of good communication.

Research shows that even very tiny babies understand the rules of conversation and can 'take turns' in communicating with an adult, by copying facial expressions for example.

Conversation with parents has been found to be one of the most important factors influencing children's achievement.

Developing Talk

From the very earliest stages parents are teaching their children to communicate - through playing, chatting, singing, commenting and questioning parents are modelling speaking all the time. Here are some ways to develop your child's speaking skills:

Make time to talk to your child

Encourage your child to talk

Listen patiently

Actively encourage longer conversations.

Asking questions

A Good Speaker...

...uses good vocabulary

...is clear about what

...makes eye contact with the lis-

...uses facial expression and gestures

...speaks in a clear voice

...makes a longer contribution than just

Developing Listening

Speaking and listening go hand in hand. Listening skills are important for all sorts of reasons. Here are some ways to develop your child's listening skills:

Story tapes, songs and rhymes in the car and elsewhere

Ask them to follow clear simple instructions

Give them the opportunity to make choices - 'Would you like to wear a blue jumper or a red one today?'

Take turns in conversations with them and encourage them to listen to your contribution.

Enjoy telling jokes and encourage the re-telling of them.

A Good Listener...

...makes eye contact with the speaker

...listens carefully

...responds appropriately to the speaker.

...asks relevant questions

...turns the body to face the person who is speaking

