

# Building communication skills

- Sing alphabet songs and have letters at home (such as magnets on the fridge), so they can understand that words are made up of letters and start to understand the different shapes.
- Help your child to expand their vocabulary. You can do this by dropping unfamiliar words into your conversations. This gives you the opportunity to explain its definition as well as providing an example for its use.
- Model good listening skills by listening to your child when they speak to you and always answer - even if it's a yes or no.
- Explore language through reading poems (children tend to love poems that rhyme - especially if they're silly ones!) and singing.
- Remind your child to listen to others when they speak and to respond appropriately.
- Use the kind of language you want your child to use. Having one rule for you and one for them is confusing.
- Speak regularly to your child, wherever you happen to be.
- Write notes to your child. Once they start school you can pop one into their lunch box.
- Encourage your child to communicate with extended family through letters that you can dictate, or use something like Skype to talk to them.

