

Parent Summary: Understanding Your Child's Speech, Language and Communication Development

At school, we look closely at eight key areas of children's speech, language, and communication development. These areas help us understand how your child listens, learns, talks, interacts with others, and manages everyday classroom routines. The eight strands are:

- **Listening and attention**
- **Receptive language** (understanding what others say)
- **Expressive language** (using words and sentences to communicate)
- **Speech sounds**
- **Phonological awareness** (early sound skills that support reading and spelling)
- **Language for behaviour and emotions**
- **Executive functioning** (memory, organisation, planning, self-regulation)
- **Social interaction and communication**

All of these skills are connected. For example, children need good listening skills to understand instructions, and strong understanding helps them express themselves clearly. Early sound skills support reading, and social communication helps children build friendships and feel confident in class. Looking at these areas together gives a full picture of how your child communicates and learns.

To help us assess this in a simple and consistent way, we use an online tool called **Communicate8**. This tool allows teachers to review each of the eight strands and generate a clear, easy-to-read summary of your child's strengths and areas where support may be helpful. Importantly, the tool does **not store or share any personal data**—teachers simply complete the questions and download a PDF to use in school discussions with you.

Using this whole-child approach means we can identify emerging needs early, plan the right support, and help every child thrive with communication skills that boost learning, relationships and emotional wellbeing.