



# Speech and Language Therapy & Occupational Therapy

## Top Tips! For 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class

### Play

- Give your child time to play every day.
- Introduce your child to games you liked when you were a child, *e.g. Ring-a-ring a Rosy*.
- Take turns to act out roles – children love pretend play.
- Give your child lots of opportunities to play games with rules, *e.g. Snakes and Ladders, card games, bingo, etc.*
- Play language games which focus on literacy, *e.g. Scrabble, word-searches*.
- Encourage siblings (where applicable) to play together both outside in the garden/park (*e.g. football, tag*) and inside (*e.g. building lego*).

### Attention and Listening

- Call your child's name to make sure he/she is listening.
- Keep instructions short and simple.
- Break up longer instructions into shorter 'chunks'.
- Support spoken information with visuals *e.g. gestures, pointing, pictures etc.*
- Encourage your child to recognise what they didn't understand *e.g. "can you say it again please?"*.

### Language

- Encourage your child to explore the world around them, *e.g.*
  - What shape is the book on the shelf?
  - I wonder which one is heavier?
- Encourage your child to describe events that have happened, *e.g.*
  - What was your favourite part of the party?
  - What happened in the yard today?
- Encourage your child to sort and categorise, *e.g.*
  - Name all the fresh food in the fridge.
  - Name all the items in the cupboard that are not in a jar.
- Encourage your child to think about why we do certain things, *e.g.*
  - Why do you wear gloves in winter?
  - Why do leaves fall off the trees?
- Encourage your child to think about time and use different tenses, *e.g.*
  - What will you do when you go upstairs?
  - What did you do this morning?
- Support your child to label emotions, *e.g.*
  - Cross – angry
  - Sleepy – tired
- Explain the meaning of words, especially new subject words.
- Support your child to read each night.



## Screen Time

- Swap screen time for games you played when you were a child.
- Make bedrooms a 'screen-free zone' so remove TVs, computers and all devices.
- Set routine limits with your child(ren) on the amount and type of daily screen time.
- Children like to copy what others do so if you're spending a lot of time on devices or screens, chances are they will want to do that too.
- Have screen-free times as a family. Turn off the TV and devices while eating meals and maybe set other times as screen-free times that suit your family.

## Gross Motor Skills

- Aim for at least 1 hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.
- Include walking /cycling where possible extra to this hour.
- The playground is an excellent location to practice skills like climbing, jumping, swinging and balancing. These can now be practiced in the garden also.
- Play Simon Says: e.g. Simon Says do a star jump; run to the wall and back; skip around your garden/ yard.

## Handwriting



- Make sure that the table and chairs are at the appropriate height for your child's size. Your child must be seated with their feet on the floor or on an appropriate support (e.g. stool, footrest). The table height should be slightly higher than your child's bent elbow position.
- Place a letter chart/strip in front your child students to increase awareness if having difficulty with left – right awareness.
- Complete pre-writing warm up activities before homework.
- Make sure your child knows about holding the pencil tightly and loosely. What does it feel like when squeezing a pen or pencil as tightly as possible, then with the fingers loosened? If your child holds it too tightly, try writing on toilet paper without holes forming.

## Literacy



- Read with your child every day. You could take turns to read a chapter in a book that they like.
- Point out the different types of print in everyday environments e.g. *newspapers; signs; TV advertisements.*
- Encourage your child to explore how words are made (e.g. rhyme; syllables).
- Encourage your child to practice writing by helping with a shopping list, a to-do list or a recipe.