Referral criteria for understanding, talking, and communication and interaction for children aged 3;0 to 3;5

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| Age  3;0-3;5 | Communication and Interaction | Understanding | Talking | Pronunciation |
| **No cause for concern** | Can listen to slightly longer stories  Can express emotions  Starting to play make- believe games e.g. shops  Starting to play more with other children  May need adult help to stop and listen to an instruction. Gradually more able to pause their activity to listen to an adult | Understands longer sentences and instructions with 3 key words e.g. put the cup under the table  Understands size, colour and position words  Answers ‘who’, ‘where’ and ‘what’ questions | Uses 3 to 4 word sentences  Beginning to use grammatical word endings e.g. plural cats  Beginning to ask questions  Uses a range of verbs/action words  Describes past and present events | Saying ‘s’ as ‘th’  Saying ‘ch’ and ‘j’ as ‘t’ or ‘d’  Simplifying 2 consonants together them to 1 sound e.g. ‘nake’ for ‘snake’  Saying ‘k’ and ‘g’ as ‘t’ and ‘d’ e.g. ‘tat’ for ‘cat’  May not yet use ‘r’, ‘l’, ‘y’ and ‘th’ |
| **Monitor and follow up in 3 months if the child:** | Shows some pretend play e.g. acting out common routines with teddy e.g. feed teddy, put teddy to bed  Attends and listens to adult directed activities but only for a short time | Follows instructions with 2 key words (e.g. ‘give the apple to teddy’) and is beginning to follow instructions with 3 key words  Not yet consistently understanding ‘who’, ‘where’ and ‘what’ questions | Can join at least 2 words together in a short sentence  Doesn’t use long sentences but is learning new words regularly |  |
| **Refer to SLT if the child:** | Has little/no pretend play  Doesn’t share interest with an adult  Has poor eye-contact  Has little interest in other children  Displays unusual or overly repetitive play/behaviours | Does not follow simple instructions  Does not understand sentences with 2 key words when focused | Few or no 2 word combinations  Demonstrates awareness of or frustration with communication difficulties | Has pronunciation errors other than the above  stammers and I am concerned |