COMMUNICATION RICH LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
An Audit/Screening Tool

Aims

- Quality measure/kite mark for settings to work towards as part of a wider locally recognised accreditation process
- Using information already obtained by settings from ECERS –R; ECERS – E
- Focus on specific elements relating to communication & language development
- Quality achievement scores = 5-7 only

	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
ECERS – R **Space for Privacy (p6):**				
are adults aware of children who would benefit from learning with 1 other child?				
do adults know about the value of small spaces for children who are shy or timid?				
do adults know the positive value of small spaces for some children around transition in & out of the setting?				
Meals/Snacks (p24):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
do staff sit with children during meals/snack?				
do staff create a pleasant social atmosphere at these times?				
do staff use strategies such as *expanding/extension* to develop children's conversation skills?				
do adults confidently but subtly *scaffold* children's narratives at the appropriate levels?				
do adults encourage children to talk with one another?				
Encouraging Children to communicate (p36):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
are there opportunities for communication, either listening during adult commentary, or talking, within all activities available to children?				
are there stimulating & varied resources to encourage communication which are regularly updated?				
do adults balance *listening* & *talking* appropriately for age & skill level of individual children?				
do adults use Top Tips consistently & effectively to support children's communication *e.g. waiting for 7 seconds, using signs or gesture to support spoken instructions, chunking lengthy instructions, reducing complexity of adult language?*				
Using Language to develop Reasoning skills (p37):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
do adults model language of reasoning/logical relationships for children during play activities?				
do adults provide opportunities & encouragement via their interaction style for children to use language of reasoning etc related to everyday experiences & events?				
do adults model new language repetitively related to interests of children?				

	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
Informal Use of Language (p38):				
do staff & children interact with each other at all times of the session?				
are adults providing a *HIGH TALKING* environment by using & modelling language in context of social relationships?				
do all staff use the Top Tips effectively & consistently to encourage communication among as well as with the children?				
do staff have meaningful interactions with ALL children regularly?				
do adults use more open-ended questions rather than closed questions to elicit information from children?				
ECERS – E *Book & Literacy areas (p26):*	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
do adults actively encourage children to enjoy books by using the 5 step "*Dialogic Book Sharing"* approach to preparing books & stories?				
Talking & Listening (p30):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
do adults PLAN the language they will use with the children in relation to activities & routines?				
do adults use open-ended questions to extend children's answers?				
do adults have individual conversations with all children regularly?				
do adults scaffold children's conversations at the appropriate level?				
do adults actively encourage children to talk in small peer groups by creating opportunities for group activities?				
do adults consistently model listening skills with children & other adults?				
Mathematics Items (p32):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
are adults aware of language richness of all mathematical activities in terms of number/concepts/shapes/sorting/ matching etc?				
do adults introduce new vocabulary using real objects?				
do adults use new language repetitively across a range of different activities & contexts?				
Science & Environment (p38):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
are adults aware of language richness of all activities & play related to scientific exploration?				
do adults actively PLAN the language they will use in scientific activities to maximise children's exposure to it?				
do adults feel confident with their own level of scientific vocabulary to model it to children?				
Diversity (p44):	Never	Some-times	Often	All the time
through regular observation & appropriate use of audit tools (ECaT) do adults provide opportunities for ALL children in setting to access frequent social interaction with a range of children & adults in a variety of contexts?				
do adults consistently & regularly use Top Tips to promote & support all communication?				