ENCOURAGING LANGUAGE AROUND SOCIAL INTERACTION
Key Stage 1

What a child can do today with assistance, they will be able to do by themselves tomorrow.

Lev S Vygotsky

Circle Time

Circle Time is a good way to **discuss** the **social emotional issues** that are arising in your classroom, for example, not sharing resources or bullying.

Circle time is a **group-oriented way of learning** that is based on **core values**. These values include **mutual respect** and **inclusiveness**. These are the **skills needed for children** to **learn the language** around **social interaction**.

How do you run Circle Time?
Children sit in a circle and the teacher is the facilitator. Discuss a social situation that is relevant to your class. Ask the children how they feel about the situation, how it makes them feel? Allow them to offer strategies. The session should last 15 minutes.

Rules of Circle Time
1. Each child has the right to pass.
2. One person speaks at a time.
3. No one puts down another child's comment.

4. Circle time works best if you have a purpose. Make the purpose of circle time relevant to the needs of your class. In example, not sharing equipment or someone being left out of a group at breaktimes.

The Role of the Facilitator

Participate in each circle time and model the language the children will need to share their feelings and ideas.

Manage the group, quote rules of the group instead of saying the individual name. For example, 'We don't interrupt other children when they are talking'

Keep children active and moving. Also, manage the pace of the session.

Consider having an object the children pass around. Whoever is holding the object is the only one allowed to speak.

Role Play

Role play is a good way to allow children to problem solve social emotional issues that arise in your classroom. Children get to act out different scenarios and learn the language they need to deal with these situations when they arise.

When using **role play** to **teach the language** around **social interaction** it is usually the process that is more important than the actual performance.

Role play is a very **valuable tool** for **exploring issues**, making **learning memorable, encouraging cooperation** and **empathy. Role play demonstrates** how to use **language in real life with a focus on communication.**

Role play activities in groups are **inclusive** and involve all learners in **active participation** and **social interaction.**

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is a method of learning where pupils come together to work on a task. For collaborative learning to work successfully, teachers need to teach children the skills to work and talk together.

There are things you can do to make sure **collaborative learning** is **effective**. As you plan tasks for **collaborative learning,** think about:

The planned learning and outcome: Successful collaborative learning needs to be planned and targeted around specific learning and a clear outcome. Be clear with the class about what the outcome should be. If you want pupils to solve a problem, make sure they are clear about what the problem is. Working on something that has a purpose, whether to be published, displayed or interacted with by other children, will motivate your class.

Modelling key group skills: As a teacher, you have a key role in teaching these skills explicitly, but also modelling them every day. Before starting a group activity, take time to model good group communication, maybe with a child volunteer or a TA.

Group size: The groups of three to five are the most effective. Larger groups lose effectiveness, which means that not all students are equally involved.

Group composition: Plan groups so that each group has a range of skill sets, and low prior attainers are in groups with higher attainers. There is evidence that collaborative learning helps those with low prior attainment.

Group roles: Collaborative problem-solving only boosts a child's learning if they are taking part in it. Ensure that all children are participating. One way to do this is through group roles.

In addition, you may find giving specific roles for group work can support their learning, i.e., leader, recorder, timekeeper, presenter and resource master.

Find 'group roles for collaborative learning' under the social interaction resource section on the INSPIRE website.

Managing conflict: Prepare for it by teaching conflict management beforehand and be on hand to talk through disagreements during the task.

Ongoing support: Spend time going around the groups, asking questions to prompt their thinking.

Prepare children for change of activity or routine

For **many children routines** make them **feel safe**. Try to keep to a familiar everyday schedule and use the vis**ual timetable** to **prepare children** for any **changes.** Also, changes to adults in the setting are particularly important to discuss and prepare for.

Find 'top tips for using visual timetables' in the understanding spoken language resource section on the INSPIRE website.