

Targeted Interventions for SEND Support

The following pages describe interventions considered to be good practice in supporting young children with SEND and vulnerabilities in their learning in the early years. They should be used to specifically support, identified areas of difficulty.

The 0-25 SEND Code of Practice describes SEND in four broad areas of need and support, which can be broadly linked to areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework:

The Four Areas of SEND Need	The EYFS Curriculum
Communication & Interaction	Communication and Language
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Cognition & Learning	The Characteristics of Effective learning running through all 7 Areas of Learning
Physical & Sensory	Physical Development

What the SEND Code of Practice says

A fuller explanation of the four areas of SEND need is given in Chapter 6, 'Schools', in the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice from paragraph 6.28. It is recognised that individual young children are likely to have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. Importantly, underpinning the areas of learning and development in the EYFS are the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Through these we are able to see how children approach their learning and exploration through play.

The Early Years Guide to the SEND Code of Practice [SEND: guide for early years settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612212/SEND_guide_for_early_years_settings_-_GOV.UK.pdf) asks setting SENCOs to plan for young children's needs using 'well-evidenced interventions targeted at areas of difficulty and where necessary, using specialist equipment or software.' (p 15).

About this document

The following information lists interventions/strategies. They are listed in alphabetical order and web links have been given where available. Of course, this is not a finite list but represents the range of targeted support that is currently in practice in Torbay's early years settings to date. The boxes are ticked to indicate which main areas of SEND each intervention is supporting.

The web links will provide you with some practical support or further resources. For further discussion and support please email us on earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk

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<p>Attention Autism Attention Autism is appropriate for children with social interaction and communication difficulties.</p> <p>Attention Autism is a four-step programme focusing on gaining young children’s engagement in adult-led group activities. Minimal language is used to meet the children’s level of attention control in order to introduce them to new experiences and progress their learning through sustaining their attention skills.</p> <p>Monitor responses at each stage and slowly move forward or back the steps, depending on the child’s level of engagement.</p> <p>Use the Leuvens Scales of involvement and well-being and/or the Listening and Attention Levels and Strategies to monitor progress found on Attention Autism - Family Hub</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Autism Education Trust Competency Framework Is a self-evaluation tool available for all practitioners and parents to support the assessment, planning and intervention for children from birth to 5 years with ASD.</p> <p>There are 37 competencies in the framework that are divided into 4 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A unique child ▪ Positive Relationships ▪ Enabling Environments ▪ Learning and Development <p>Each competency statement is linked to resources</p> <p>It is hoped that by working through this resource is will help practitioners to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding of children with ASD, to enable them to work effectively and improve outcomes for children.</p> <p>A certificate of competency is given out from the AET for successful completion of the framework.</p> <p>This framework found on www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>BLAST BLAST works on the underpinning skills for language, communication and literacy – turn taking, discrimination, listening, visual attention and social communication as well as developing basic language skills. BLAST 1 is designed for all children in nursery aged from 3-4. It is a group-based intervention delivered on a regular basis, using familiar stories, songs and short activities.</p> <p>The BLAST assessment is carried out pre and post intervention www.blastprogramme.co.uk</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Calming Basket/Box/Area A basket/box/area with various calming items for a child to explore when they are feeling dysregulated. A dark den could be used or covered/screened area. The basket or box can be with a co-regulating adult, attuning, validating, and calming & soothing together with the child.</p> <p>The contents of the basket/box/area will depend on the age of the child their individual preferences and what you know and have observed works to calm them.</p> <p>Through working with a trusted adult, being shown again and again strategies to use to help to calm down the child will begin to develop the skill of self-calming.</p> <p>For further ideas also look in Supporting self-regulation through a setting approach – Early Years – Social, Emotional and Mental Health - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>			✓	✓

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<p>Choices</p> <p>To teach choice making, start offering two named items simultaneously to the child with a clear preference for one over the other. Pause for a response from the child, which might be an eye gaze, reach of point or naming the item of their choice. Start by using real objects/toys. Once the concept of choosing is understood, you can begin to offer more choices of things that the child likes to do or have and move on to pictures or photos.</p> <p>Encouraging the child to make visual choices about calming strategies can be very helpful e.g. lie down, swing or book</p> <p>For more information about choice making and resources sign up to Widgit Online or go to www.do2learn.com</p> <p>Choice-Making.pdf (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Comic Book Conversations</p> <p>Comic strip conversations, created by Carol Gray, are simple visual representations of conversation. They can show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the things that are actually said in a conversation • how people might be feeling • what people's intentions might be. <p>Comic strip conversations use stick figures and symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation, and colour to represent the emotional content of a statement or message.</p> <p>From Carol Gray's <i>Comic strip conversations</i>, 1994</p> <p>By seeing the different elements of a conversation presented visually, some of the more abstract aspects of social communication (such as recognising the feelings of others) are made more 'concrete' and are therefore easier to understand.</p> <p>Comic strip conversations can also offer an insight into how an autistic person perceives a situation</p> <p>More information here Social stories and comic strip conversations (autism.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	

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<p>Communication Passport A communication passport is a way of supporting a young person with communication difficulties as they transition to a new school, classroom or environment. It gives the young person a voice to share information about themselves. They are used as an introduction to the person and as way of starting a conversation</p> <p>Create a 'This is Me' booklet, co-created with parents/carers</p> <p>One-Page Profiles are also a way of creating a communication passport for a young child Sheff kids One Page Profiles - Search</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Curiosity Programme Is an intervention that builds motivation, curiosity and recognises engagement. It focuses on communication, joint attention and interaction</p> <p>Developed by Gina Davies.</p> <p>The Curiosity Programme is designed to support;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young children with speech, language and communication needs. • Those children with additional needs. • Children who do not yet have tolerance for group working <p>There are 4 stages</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curiosity – get connected. 2. Signature sequence 3. Creating curiosity 4. Playing together <p>For more information: Gina Davies Curiosity Programme Gina Davies Curiosity Programme - Search Videos</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>Derbyshire Language Scheme This intervention aims to support children’s verbal understanding using key word levels.</p> <p>The idea is to integrate your play and verbal language with the child, being mindful of the key word level of your language.</p> <p>You can use the toys and objects around you to support the child’s understanding either reducing or increasing the key word level of the language that is processed by the child.</p> <p>More information and resources about the Derbyshire Language Scheme can be found here Derbyshire Language Scheme - (derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk) Key word levels of understanding - Search Videos (bing.com) https://www.saltbythesea.com/blog/</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Early Communications This link will take you to the Speech and language Therapy resources on the Child and Family Health Devon webpage</p> <p>There are a number of really useful strategies to use when supporting young children’s communication and play skills</p> <p>How To Videos - Children and Family Health (tsdft.uk)</p>				

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<p>Early Talk Boost</p> <p>The Early Talk Boost intervention is designed for children aged 3-4 with delayed language development.</p> <p>The intervention is delivered 2/3 times per week during circle/story time by a trained early years practitioner to a group of up to 8 children over a 9 week period. The intervention incorporates a familiar sequence of stories, songs and short activities.</p> <p>The Early Talk Boost Tracker is carried out individually with each child pre and post the intervention. Each child will achieve a score that will indicate a level of need that is RAG rated.</p> <p>For further information</p> <p>Early Talk Boost - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Early Talkers</p> <p>A set of activity cards addressing four areas of speech, language and communication skills. The packs are 'Babbling with Babies', 'Toddler Talk' and 'Chatting with Children'.</p> <p>By using this resource, it is possible to devise weekly small group or individual sessions (between 10-15 minutes) focusing on attention and listening, understanding, speaking and social communication for children whose SLC skills are identified as requiring support</p> <p>Early Talkers Boxset – Speech and Language UK Shop</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>The Engagement Model</p> <p>Engagement is crucial before targeted learning can happen. The engagement model aims to provide a 'better fit' way of noticing and acknowledging children's responses to their world when other ways of doing this are not working well. More information and practical resources can be found here</p> <p>The Engagement Model - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>Emotion Coaching</p> <p>Through empathetic engagement, the child's emotional state is verbally acknowledged and validated, promoting a sense of security and feeling 'felt'. This activates changes in the child's neurological system and allows the child to calm down, physiologically and psychologically.</p> <p>Five key steps are involved in Emotion Coaching:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Becoming aware of the child's emotions 2. Recognising the emotion as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching 3. Listening empathetically, validating the child's feelings 4. Helping the child find words to label the emotion 5. Setting limits and explore strategies to solve the problem at hand. <p>Monitor the child's well-being and involvement using the Leuven's Scales and referring to the EYFS Early Years Outcomes for PSED in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Regulation • Managing Self • Building Relationships <p><u>Emotional Coaching - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>First and Then Visual Sequence (Now and Next)</p> <p>‘First and Then’ can be a useful strategy to structure your child’s activities. This can be used to encourage your child to participate in activities that would not be their natural choice but will help them to develop useful learning skills.</p> <p>A ‘First and Then’ sequence can also be useful to warn a child of a change of activity and help them prepare for that event e.g. ‘First ear defenders then singing’. This will help reduce anxiety when moving through a sequence of events.</p> <p>A First and Then visual sequence can be presented using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects • Photos • Pictures • Drawn pictures <p>All with words to support</p> <p>Find more information here Torbay Early Years Graduated Approach Toolkit (TEYGAT) - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Gesture And Body Language</p> <p>The use of natural non-verbal gestures has been shown to enhance communication and should be used to supplement verbal speech by both the practitioner and the child. In fact, body language and natural gesture makes up most of the communication understood by others.</p> <p>Emphasising your gestures, facial expressions and body language will be really helpful for children with verbal communication needs.</p> <p>For further information and support find it here Home (makaton.org)</p> <p>Will signing stop my child from talking? - SaLT by the Sea</p> <p>5 First Words (plus Makaton) to teach your toddler - SaLT by the Sea</p>	✓	✓	✓	

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<p>Identiplay Identiplay is an approach that helps establish a shared focus. By doing this, it helps develop imitation skills, which in turn builds children’s confidence as they practice a new skill.</p> <p>The idea is to set up a parallel play scenario with toys that meet the child’s play development and motivation. Have two of each item with a clearly defined play area for the child and yourself. Playing alongside each other with no interference from the adult will help encourage the child who finds interaction so difficult, to learn new play skills.</p> <p>The adult needs to provide a very simple narrative to match the play actions to provide the child with structure, consistency and an understanding of what is happening. In time the routine allows for the adult to build in change and develop flexibility to the familiar, for the child.</p> <p>Using the Autism Observation Profile will help monitor progress</p> <p><u>Identiplay – a parallel play model - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>Lego Based Therapy LEGO based therapy is appropriate for children with social interaction & communication difficulties. It is an intervention based on collaborative play using construction materials (magnetic blocks, Mr Potato Head etc).</p> <p>LEGO based therapy aims to develop social competence through the development of social skills. Collaborative play provides opportunities for children to practice skills such as turn- taking, listening, sharing ideas, communication, compromise, problem solving and shared attention.</p> <p>Groups of 3 children and a trainer facilitator aim to build together within set roles. Each child plays the role of ‘architect’ ‘supplier’ and ‘builder’.</p> <p>Pictorial instructions in the form of a photo are used to support directions.</p> <p>The children show improvement in their ability to wait their turn, listening skills and negotiation skills, with a small number of peers assisted by an adult. A small step assessment such as the Early Years Developmental Journal looking at C&L and PSED skills will support monitoring and development of skills in these areas.</p> <p><u>The Brick-by-Brick programme Play Included</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Makaton The Makaton Language Programme supports children with speech, language and communication difficulties.</p> <p>The Makaton Language Programme is a multi-modal communication system involving speech, sign, natural body language and facial expression and symbols.</p> <p>There is a Core Vocabulary aimed at meeting functional communication needs.</p> <p>Early Years practitioners and parents/carers must work together to choose the vocabulary to teach the child and the resources to use together. <u>www.makaton.org</u></p>	✓	✓		

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<p>Objects of Reference Useful handout on the Family Hub website that explains how to put this in action Objects of Reference - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>One Page Profile A one-page profile captures the essence of the child’s character and needs, and acts as a starting point in getting to know them. It isn’t designed to replace the reports written by health and educational professionals, but should be a representation of the child’s own thoughts and views. More information here One Page Profiles - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>				
<p>Picture Exchange Communication System PECS is specifically designed for children with ASD and/or significant communication difficulties. The aim is for the child to communicate requests and intent through picture cards. The child may have little or no spoken language. The intervention is a specific, manualised intervention covering 6 phases. Children are taught the approach with the aim of them giving a picture of a desired item to a communicative partner in exchange for that item as a mode of expressive communication or ‘speaking’. The child then goes on to use PECS as a way of commenting www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/documents/infobrochure-UK-web.pdf</p>	✓	✓		

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<p>Portage: a small steps approach</p> <p>A set of strategies can be used achieve a small step approach to learning by changing what we expect the child to do when attempting something new, changing the prompts and instructions we use, the materials and context and finally how we measure the child’s success levels when aiming for achievement.</p> <p>Progress is measured through achieving set small step SMART targets and in engaging in planned play.</p> <p><u>Torbay Portage Service - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Welcome National Portage Association</u></p> <p><u>Portage in Action (youtube.com)</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Sensory Bag</p> <p>This activity is for young children with difficulties with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attention and listening skills ▪ Language skills ▪ Social interaction needs ▪ Turn taking skill <p>It is a collection of stimulating toys or objects to explore, kept in a special looking box or bag. Use objects that are otherwise not freely available to the child to increase intrigue and motivation.</p> <p>Follow a set pattern each time – using a place to be, a song sung each time you open the lid or open the bag, use simple language and keep it short and successful.</p> <p>Monitor a child’s progress by noting the number of toys explored in the box or bag each time or the length of time of the individual play session.</p> <p>Monitor involvement using the Leuven’s Scales.</p> <p>Monitor attention skills using the Listening and Attention Scales.</p> <p><u>Sensory Play - Family Hub</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	

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<p>Sensory Songs – using familiar rhymes and songs with touch and movement to help engage the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furry-Squirrel.pdf (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk) • Incey-Wincey-Spider.pdf (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk) 				
<p>Sensory circuits Giving children time to reorganise their focus of attention and at the same time satisfy their need to move – please see document from Dingley;s Promise link below</p> <p>Sensory Circuit Guide (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>				
<p>Seven C’s to Support Emotional Behaviour This simple booklet reminds us of 7 key responses for adults to put into action, when supporting young children’s social and emotional needs: Clear rules, Choices, Countdown, Confidence, Consistency, Control and Comfort</p> <p>Found here 7 Cs supporting social and emotional skills - Family Hub (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>				
<p>Special Play Time A specific regular time to spend with a child that may follow a set routine using object cues such as a blanket to play on and a bag of resources to unpack together. The idea is to follow the child’s lead and give space for their communication with you. More information in this handout</p> <p>Speech and Language Therapy Factsheet - Special Time (torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk)</p>				

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<p>STAR - Setting, Triggers, Actions and Responses</p> <p>This behavioural based tool is useful for practitioners and parents to unpick a child's actions to situations and guide where and when to make changes to the environment or the adult's responses.</p> <p>The aim is for practitioners and parents to identify areas of change in both</p> <p>the trigger to a child's behaviour/'action' and the setting in which the undesirable behaviours occur. By making changes in these two areas, the aim is to see reduced undesirable behaviours.</p> <p>Equally, it can be helpful to complete a STAR chart for occasions when the child demonstrates desirable behaviours, in order to enable parents/practitioners to see under what conditions, the child can respond more favourably. This can then provide clear ways for moving forward with support.</p> <p>Monitor young children's well-being and involvement through using the Leuven's Scales Re-asses the child's actions in a situation that has been problematic using the STAR</p> <p><u>Using a STAR Chart for Behaviour</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>Social Stories</p> <p>Social Stories can be used with children with social interaction and communication difficulties to help them understand a social situation and to keep them safe.</p> <p>A social story needs to have a title, introduction, body and conclusion and should use patient and supportive language.</p> <p>It should be made up of descriptive sentences, and may also have coaching sentences. A descriptive sentence accurately describes the context, such as where the situation occurs, who is there, what happens and why</p> <p>The users' carers will measure an increase in the users' positive responses to social situations through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observation notes ▪ STAR charts ▪ Leuven Scales of Well Being (1-5) <p>Continue to add or amend the social story depending on the users' responses to it. www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx</p> <p><u>Social Stories - Family Hub</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Visual Communication Symbols</p> <p>(Objects, Objects of Reference, photographs, coloured pictures, black and white line drawings, written and spoken word)</p> <p>Using symbols to as cues to enhance verbal language.</p> <p>Appropriate for children with difficulties understanding verbal language and with listening and attention difficulties.</p> <p>Using a symbol to accompany verbal language will provide a visual cue for the child to support their understanding and their responses.</p> <p>The 'Symbol Ladder' will support the user in deciding the developmental level of abstract/concrete symbols that are most appropriate for the child.</p> <p>Early Years practitioners and parents/carers must observe and record the child's responses to the symbols of choice, looking for their understanding of the request/comment. <u>Visual Supports - Family Hub</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	

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<p>Talking Tables Activities to support all areas of communication developed by Educational Psychologist Fleur Griffiths.</p> <p>The approach involves an adult sitting at a table with enticing objects peeping out of his/her apron. Children can choose to come and join the table, taking one of the 4 seats available. Techniques to prompt sharing of ideas include drawing, using puppets, 'treasures' and toys from home.</p> <p>For further information go to Speech & Language Therapy London (verivoicetherapy.co.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Talking Mats A low tech picture sorting activity Most of the 'people' images are specifically without gender or ethnicity There is a top scale to indicate feelings about each topic / option Topic focussed indicated by a topic card A 'thinker' role and a 'listener' role The thinker places the 'option' cards in categories corresponding to the top scale Enables the 'voice' of the child/adult to be heard – choices, preferences and views Supports engagement and co-production Supports understanding of information and then to make reliable decisions and/or view points Can record the mat(s) Can use the completed mats for target setting and measuring change Provides evidence to refer onto other services First Steps 10 minute toolkit (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>				

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<p>Thrive Principles</p> <p>The Thrive Approach supports children’s emotional and social development. Helping them to develop healthy secure attachments and build emotional resilience.</p> <p>Within Early Years we focus on the building blocks of being, doing and thinking. Each of these are split into three sections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being - safety, being special, having needs met ▪ Doing - experimenting and exploring, learning about options, exploring and learning about body limits. ▪ Thinking – expressing a view, understanding cause and effect, problem solving <p>Parents and practitioners work together to ascertain at which building block the child’s emotional needs lie and select the most appropriate strategies and activities to support the child. Individual action plans should be amended and updated as necessary.</p> <p>www.thriveapproach.com</p>	✓		✓	

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<p>VERVE Video, Endorse, Respect, Vitalise, Eye Contact</p> <p>VERVE is appropriate for young children needing support to develop social communication skills and should be used in conjunction with their key adults.</p> <p>VERVE assesses the child's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-regulation ▪ Attention skills ▪ Play skills ▪ Communicative intent ▪ Understanding ▪ Talking <p>and assesses the adult's use of a range of skills to support this. Video is used to support observation of these skills and look for progress and changes of behaviours.</p> <p>Monitoring progress: Look for the child's ability to make eye gaze with the interacting adult and for the adult to offer periods of silence when the child is not looking at their face. The aim is to develop SILENCE, FACE WATCHING and PROXIMITY</p> <p>Evidencing progress through video. www.vervechildinteractions.org www.keenacummins.co.uk</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Visual Timetables</p> <p>A visual timetable or timeline using objects, pictures, photos or symbol pictures can be used to break down steps of an activity or routine throughout the day. It is like using a diary or making a list using pictures with words to aid understanding for the child and reduce anxiety about what is happening next.</p> <p>Parents/carers can also use a mobile phone to create a timeline by taking photos of each step.</p> <p>Widgit symbols and charts are available through signing up to WidgitOnline www.widgitonline.com</p> <p>Other tips about making a visual timetable can be found on www.do2learn.com</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓

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<p>Clear Warnings of change Sand timers Countdown strip Countdown timer App Visual Countdown Timer - Apps on Google Play 7 Cs supporting social and emotional skills - Family Hub</p>	✓		✓	
<p>Wow Box This activity is for young children with difficulties with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attention and listening skills ▪ Language skills ▪ Social interaction needs ▪ Turn taking skill <p>It is a collection of stimulating toys or objects to explore, kept in a special looking box or bag. Use objects that are otherwise not freely available to the child to increase intrigue and motivation.</p> <p>Follow a set pattern each time – using a place to be, a song sung each time you open the lid or open the bag, use simple language and keep it short and successful.</p> <p>Monitor a child’s progress by noting the number of toys explored in the box or bag each time or the length of time of the individual play session.</p> <p>Monitor involvement using the Leuven’s Scales.</p> <p>Monitor attention skills using the Listening and Attention Scales.</p> <p>Wow-Box-1.pdf (torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓