

Speech Sounds

Ages 3 – 4

Speech refers to the way sounds are produced. Speech production involves coordinating the muscles in the mouth and throat to create sound. These sounds will be used to express needs, thoughts and feelings and communicate with others.

Between the ages of three and four years old, children may:

use many speech sounds, including 'k', 'g', 'ng', 'f', 's', 'h'

sometimes miss sounds off the ends of words, such as 'fis' for 'fish'

make developmentally-appropriate speech sound errors or omissions when talking, such as 'pider' for 'spider' and 'wabbit' for 'rabbit'

use future and past tense



experience difficulties with irregular tenses and plurals, such as 'runned' for 'ran' or 'swimmed' for 'swam'

have difficulties producing some sounds, such as 'r', 'j', 'th', 'ch' and multisyllabic words

show awareness that some words start or finish with the same sounds



Please note: This resource has been made to help educators reflect on children's learning and development in the early years. Learning can take many different forms, so please keep in mind that the poster will only provide a snapshot of what children may be learning and developing at this stage.

Disclaimer: Every setting's needs are different and so the recommendations in this resource may not be suitable for all settings. The examples used are not an exhaustive list and it is for you to consider whether it is appropriate to use this guidance within your setting.