

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

What is PECS?

- PECS is a communication system, which uses pictures or symbols to help a child communicate their wants and needs.
- PECS uses pictures/symbols in a very specific way, and although you may be using symbols with your child in others ways, PECS should only be introduced with the support of a Speech and Language Therapist.
- PECS is designed to help children who struggle to initiate communication or who have limited spoken language.

What can I do if I think my child needs PECS?

- Firstly speak to your child's Speech and Language Therapist, they will help assess your child to decide whether PECS is the right way forward for you.
- There are 6 phases to PECS, all of which can require a high level of input and commitment from parents and other adults who work with your child, therefore below are some things you can do which will make the process easier:
 1. Make a list of all the things your child enjoys. If you are struggling to think of many things, then we would suggest you start experimenting with lots of different play activities. These don't have to involve toys, they may be activities like tickling, singing, movement play (swinging/jumping).
 2. Practise activities where your child needs to pick up small objects e.g. building blocks or cards. For your child to be able to access PECS they will need to be able to pick up and hand over symbols, these activities will prepare them for this.