



**SCOTTISH  
COCHLEAR IMPLANT  
PROGRAMME**

# **Symbolic sounds**

How to support early listening  
development



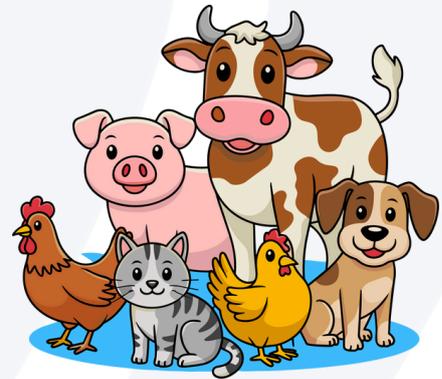
## What Is Listening Discrimination?

Listening discrimination is your child's ability to hear the difference between sounds or words. This skill is an important step in developing clear listening, speech perception, and later speech production.

At the early stages after switch on, we focus on helping your child notice differences in syllable length, such as:

- One-syllable sounds: boo, moo, baa, shh
- Two-syllable sounds: uh-oh, beep beep, choo-choo

These are fun, play-based sounds often found in the Hear Say programme. Your rehab advisor can provide resources to use at home.



## Why is this stage important?

Learning to tell the difference between short (one-beat) and longer (two-beat) sounds helps your child:

- Pay attention to sound patterns
- Develop early listening skills needed for speech
- Notice rhythm and length within words
- Prepare for more complex listening tasks later on



## How the Hear Say Resource Helps

The Hear Say resource uses symbolic sounds that are:

- meaningful (e.g., animal sounds, transport noises)
- easy for children to enjoy and repeat
- naturally rhythmic (perfect for demonstrating one vs. two beats)

Children learn best through play and repetition, so Hear Say provides lots of ideas for games and activities to practise these skills in everyday routines.

## What your child will be learning?

Your child is now ready to practise:

### 1. Listening for Syllable Length

Hearing whether a sound is:

Short (one syllable): baa

Longer (two syllables): beep beep

### 2. Matching Sounds to Pictures or Objects

Using Hear Say cards or toys, your child will learn to match:

- What they hear to the picture or object that goes with the sound

### 3. Choosing between two options

For example:

Which one did you hear? Moo or beep beep?

This is a listening task – not a speaking task. We are checking what they hear, not what they can say.



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How you can support this at home

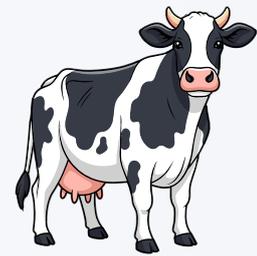
## 1. Keep Activities Fun and Playful

Short, frequent bursts (1–2 minutes) work best. Your child should feel relaxed and successful.

## 2. Use Toys or Pictures

Examples:

- Animals
- Transport toys
- Everyday household items



Say the sound naturally as you play:-

- Here comes the choo-choo!
- The cow says moo.



## 3. Emphasise the Beat

Use simple rhythm cues:

- Tap the table
- Bounce a soft toy
- Clap gently

Example:

One clap: moo

Two claps: beep beep





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How you can support this at home

### 4. Offer Clear Choices

Show two pictures or toys and say one of the symbolic sounds.

Ask your child:

- What did you hear?

Give lots of wait time to allow your child to process what they heard.



### 5. Celebrate All Attempts

Praise your child for listening, trying, and engaging, not just for picking the correct option.



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### Tips for Success

- Keep background noise low
- Make sure your child's cochlear implant is working well each day
- Use natural, playful daily moments—no need for long 'teaching' sessions
- It's okay to repeat the same activities over several days
- Follow your child's lead—stop when they lose interest

### When Will My Child Move On?

Children progress at their own pace. Your clinical team will help monitor your child's listening skills and guide when they are ready for the next listening stage.

If you have questions or want help using the Hear Say materials, please just ask—we're here to support you.