Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Setting up a Communication Supportive Playground Environment to Support Social Skills within Context

Universal Strategies and Ideas to support SLCN

Bi-Borough SLT Levels of Support

The Bi-Borough School Aged Speech, Language and Communication Local Offer is provided through Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH) NHS Trust and the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service. The Whole System Approach works at a universal, targeted and specialist level, providing training and guidance to professionals and parents at all levels to identify and meet the needs of school aged children.

A child/young person may receive several packages from different levels at the same time, with specialist level interventions based on their need at a given moment in time.

Supporting Social Skills within Context Overview

Children and Young People can require functional and naturalistic opportunities to practise their communication skills and / or make friendships.

Examples of this support includes:

- SLCN friendly lunch club
- Games club
- Structured Free Play
- Playground Buddy Schemes

Children and Young People can develop their confidence through being supported by other children and young people, via enrichment opportunities in school.

Children and Young People may also benefit from a communication supportive environment and adult strategies across classroom, playground, and other social settings.

Creating a Communication Supportive Playground Environment

These resources can be used daily within playgrounds and outdoor settings. The audit can additionally be completed on an annual basis to ensure consistency over time.

What age range benefit from a Communication Supportive Playground Environment?

The strategies, ideas and activities within this pack have been developed for a range of children and young people ranging from Reception to Secondary School.

Resources should be selected based on the child and young person's profile.

Which students would benefit from Social Skills supports?

Students who have differences with social interaction, who have expressed that they would like to develop their social skills.

How will supporting social skills in context support the students in the classroom and/or playground?

Developed social skills will help in many everyday situations, such as.

- Participating in discussions in the classroom.
- Participating in conversations with peers.

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Pack Overview

Area of Support	Aims	Resources
Setting up a supportive playground environment	• To consider whether current playgrounds are communication supportive environments. • To learn strategies to implement within playgrounds to create a communication supportive environment.	From this Pack • Playground Communication Supportive Environment Checklist • Pupil Voice Playground Communication Supportive Environment Checklist – KS1 • Pupil Voice Playground Communication Supportive Environment Checklist – KS2 • Playground Choosing Chat Board • Playground Chat Board From School • Outdoor clock • Visual Timer (e.g. sand timer)

Setting up a supportive playground environment

Overview

Communication Supportive Environments (CSE) are often discussed in relation to the classroom, however, should also be considered in relation to the playground as well.

This pack will provide further information and considerations for setting up a CSE in the playground.

Having a CSE in the playground will support a child/young person's ability to:

- Make choices around what they would like to do at breaktime.
- Make choices around who they would like to interact with or whether they would like some time alone.
- Play and interact with peers within a structured game.

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Resources

In this pack you will find:

- Playground Communication Supportive Environment Checklist
- Pupil Voice Playground Communication Supportive Environment Checklist
- Playground Choosing Chat Board Example
- Playground Chat Board

You may also need the following items from School:

- Outdoor clock
- Visual Timer (e.g. sand timer)

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Key Considerations of a Communication Supportive Playground Environment

Area for Consideration	Rationale	Examples	Supportive Resources
Playgrounds have designated quiet spaces	• Playgrounds could have places for social interaction as well as spaces where children may be alone in a quiet space.	This could include: • A bench. • A fort. • Grass area. • Option to be in the library.	
Playgrounds have structure	• Playgrounds could have structure.	This could include: • Areas with different equipment (e.g. ball games, quiet reading area) • Labels (as used in the classroom)	
Structured games are available	• Playgrounds could have opportunities for structured games.	This could include: • Having 1 or 2 main activities per week, which are rotated to avoid too many choices, which can be over-whelming, e.g.: ▪ Board Games ▪ Table Tennis ▪ Hopscotch ▪ Basketball	
Clubs are available as an alternative to being in the playground	• Clubs could be available. These could be run by a teacher or older students.	This could include: • Gardening • Music • Lego • Chess	

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		• Frisbee	
Playgrounds have visual timers and clocks	• Playgrounds should have visual timers and/or clocks so that children and young people can monitor how much time they have in the playground.		From School: • Outdoor clock • Visual Timer (e.g. sand timer)
Playgrounds have designated 'meet-up' spaces	• Playgrounds should have designated places for children and young people to 'meet-up' with each other.		
'Playground buddies' should be assigned	• Children should be assigned as a 'playground buddy' to look out for another child / young person in the playground.		
Playgrounds have activity checklists	• Playgrounds should have a visual checklist or choice board of activities children may do whilst in the playground.		From the pack • Playground Choosing Chat Board
Playgrounds have shared and collaborative play equipment.	• Playgrounds could offer a range of equipment which requires more than one child/young person to operate. • Playgrounds could also offer activities, which allow children to spend some time on their own.		From the pack • Playground Chat Board

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Primary Age Communication Supportive Environment Playground Checklist	
A Communication Supportive Environment Playground Audit was completed in XXX Primary School on XX/XX/XXXX, by XXX XXX, Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) and/or XXX XXX, SLCN Advisory Teacher and XXX XXX Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). *Please see below for a summary of what is working well and steps for development.* *For further support and information, please liaise with the SLT and Advisory Teacher*	
RAG Rating Key	**Green:** strategy consistently & confidently used **Amber:** evidence of strategy use **Red:** no evidence of strategy at this time

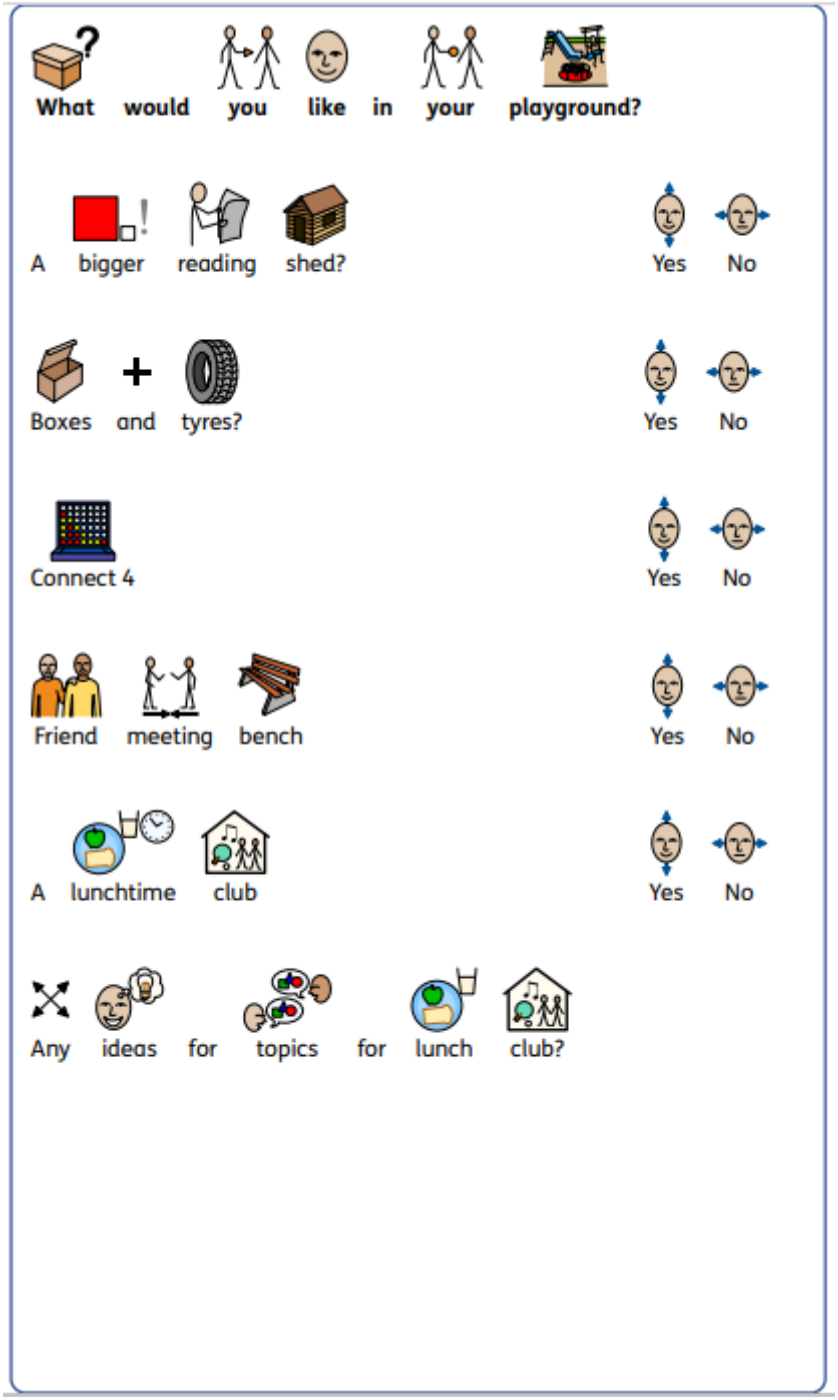
Playground Organisation and equipment			
Area	***RAG***	***What's working well...***	***Even Better If...***
Playgrounds have designated quiet spaces. E.g. A bench/ fort/ grass area/ option to be in the library.		•	•
Organised play zones (equipment or areas).		•	•
Labelling of equipment, areas including words and visuals. (N.B. Is this consistent around the playground, are the labels appropriate).		•	•
Playgrounds have designated 'meet-up' spaces.		•	•
Playgrounds have equipment which requires more than one child/ young person to operate.		•	•
Structured games are available e.g., board games, table tennis.		•	•
Clubs are offered as an alternative to being in the playground		•	•
		•	•
Use of Visuals			
Area	***RAG***	***What's working well...***	***Even Better If...***
		•	•
Is there a visual timer/ clock so children know how long they have in the playground?		•	•
Is there a visual checklist of activities which children may do whilst in the playground		•	•
Vocabulary: *Is vocabulary displayed, including nouns, verbs and adjectives related to the activities?*		•	•

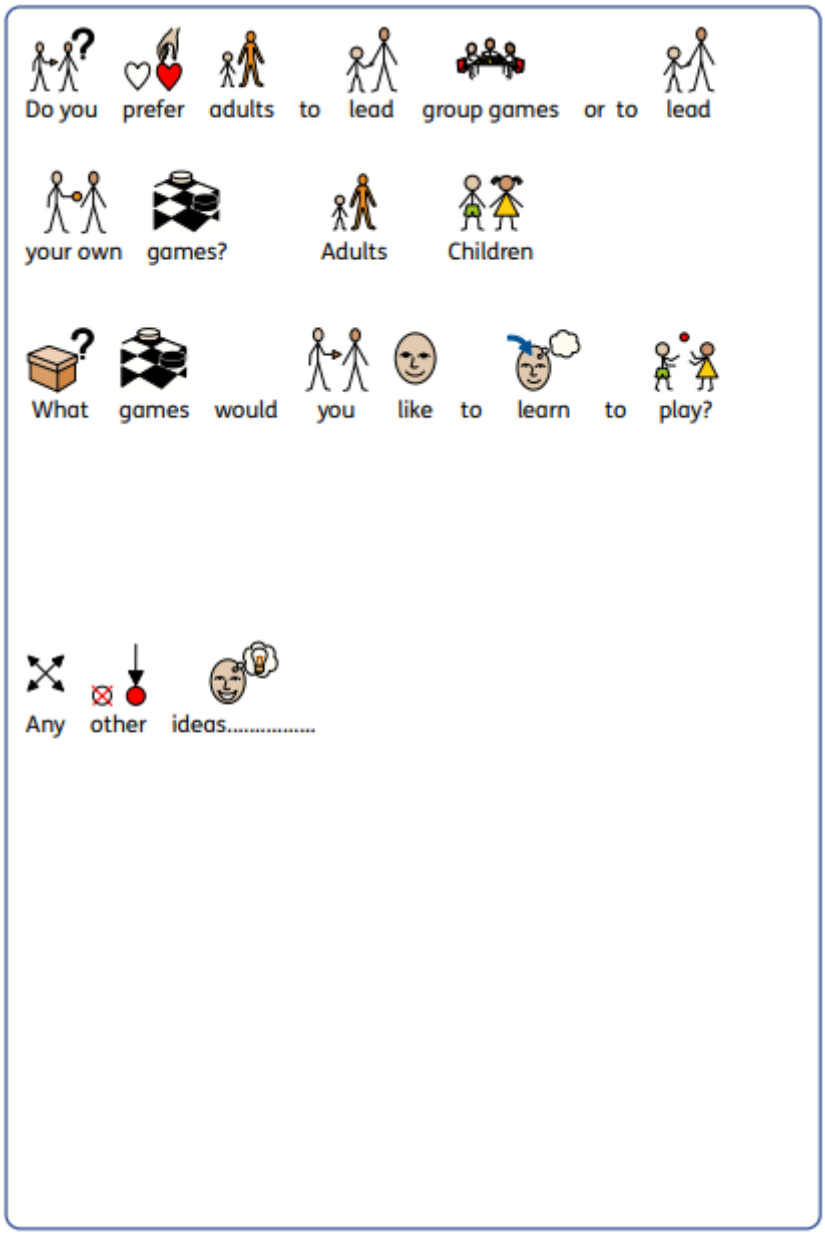
Are visuals supports as above being referred to in order to support the development of social skills?		•	•
Playground expectations are displayed & referred to so that all adults and children are able to access them.		•	•
		•	•
Adult's Use of Language			
Adult Language	***RAG***	***What's working well...***	***Even Better If...***
Model what the child could say - *Initiating a conversation* - *Continuing a conversation*		•	•
Support collaboration and conflict resolution - *Questioning* - *Modelling ideas for resolution*		•	•
Supporting empathy - *Labelling emotions* - *Supporting executive functioning and reasoning*		•	•
		•	•
		•	•
		•	•
		•	•
Peer Interactions			
Peer interactions	***RAG***	***What's working well...***	***Even Better If...***
Assigned playground buddies		•	•
		•	•
		•	•

		•	•
Further examples of good practise	•		
Further comments and/or suggestions	•		

Agreed Actions and Timeframe for Completion		
Agreed Action	**Person(s) Responsible**	**Completion Date**

The Communication Supportive Environment Playground Audit will be reviewed by XXX XXX, Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) and/or XXX XXX, SLCN Advisory Teacher and XXX XXX, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) on XX/XX/XXXX.


What would you like in your playground?
A bigger reading shed?
Yes No
Boxes and tyres?
Yes No
Connect 4
Yes No
Friend meeting bench
Yes No
A lunchtime club
Yes No
Any ideas for topics for lunch club?


Do you prefer adults to lead group games or to lead
your own games?
Adults
Children
What games would you like to learn to play?
Any other ideas.....

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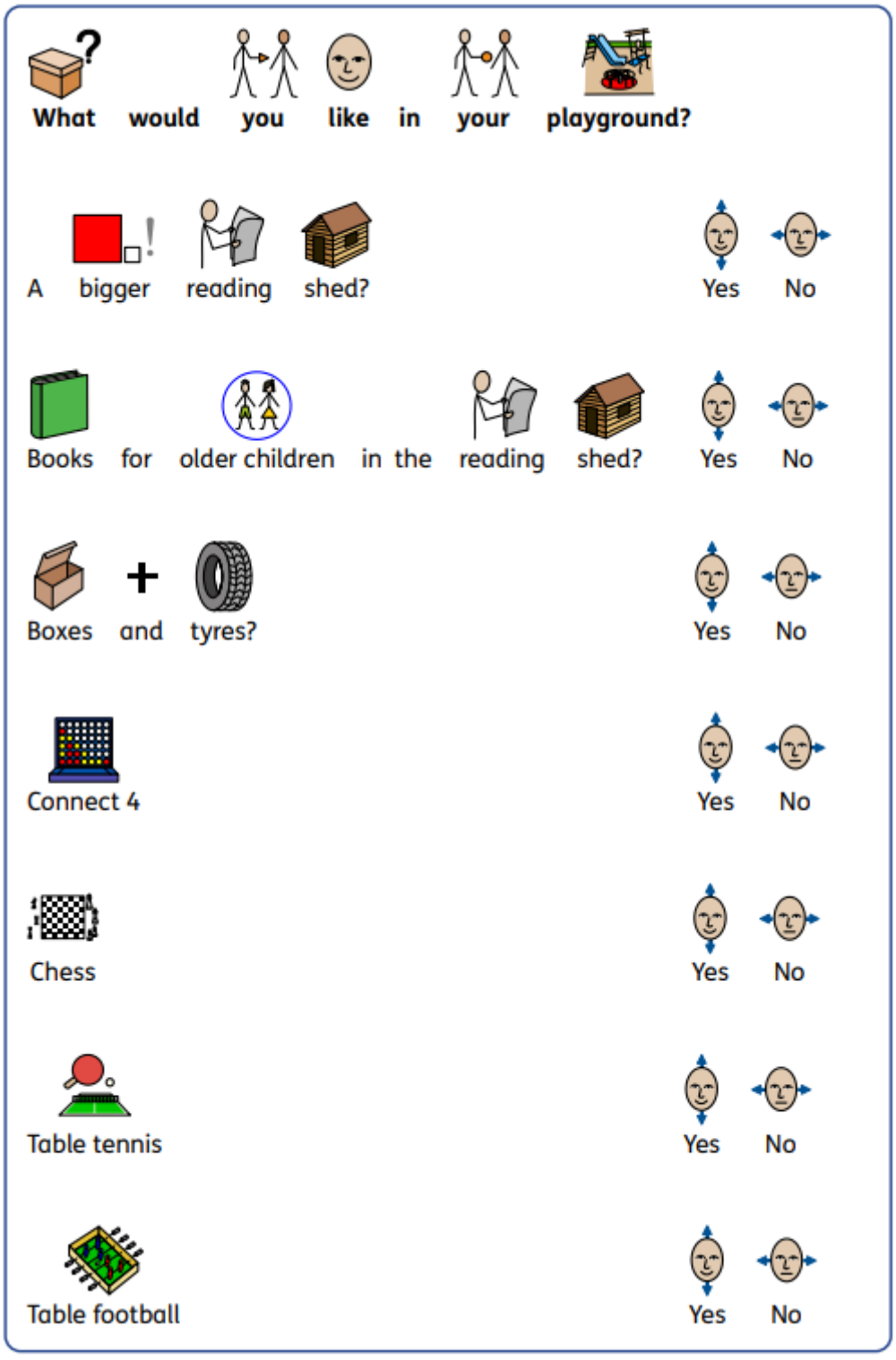

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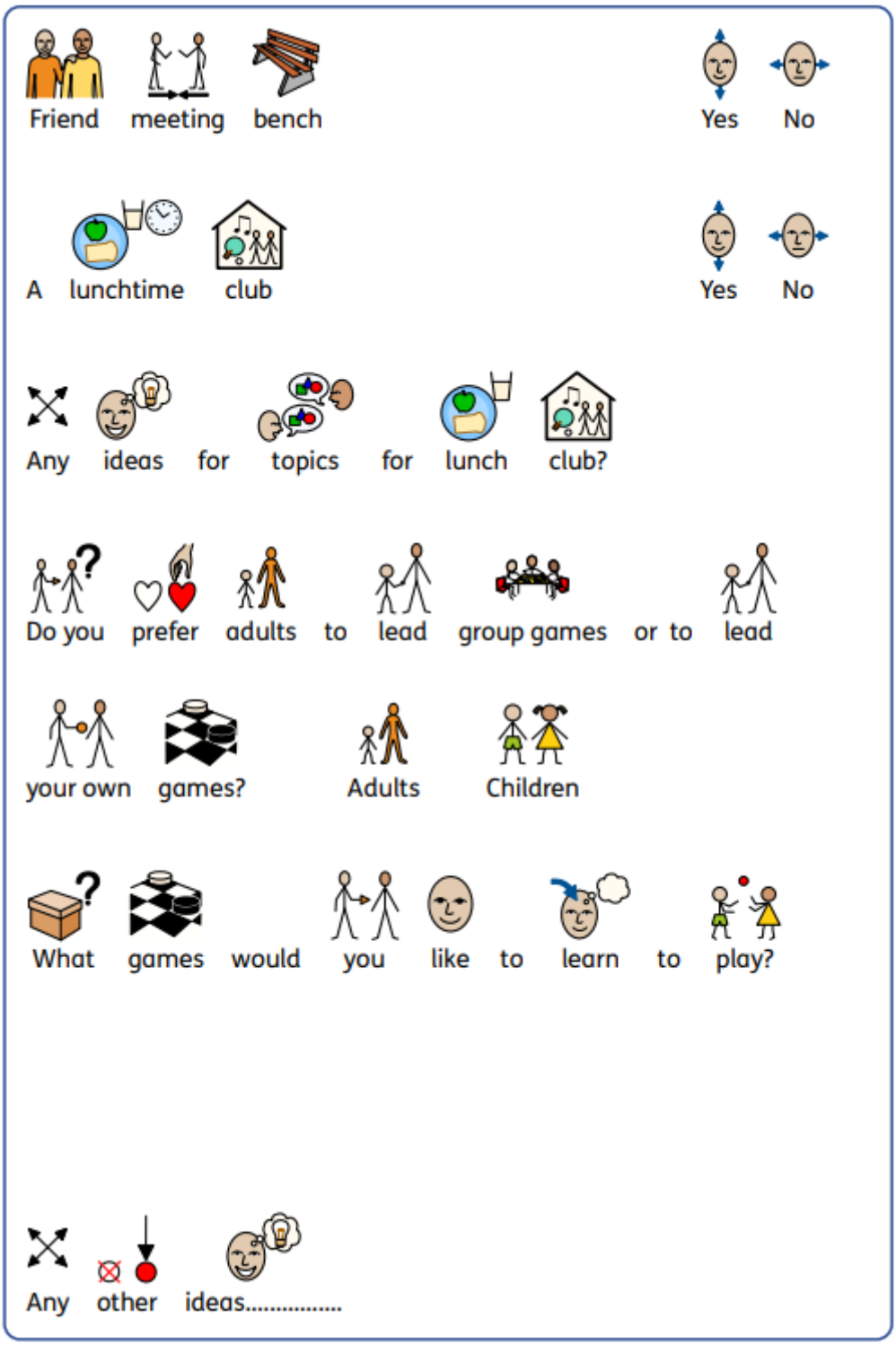
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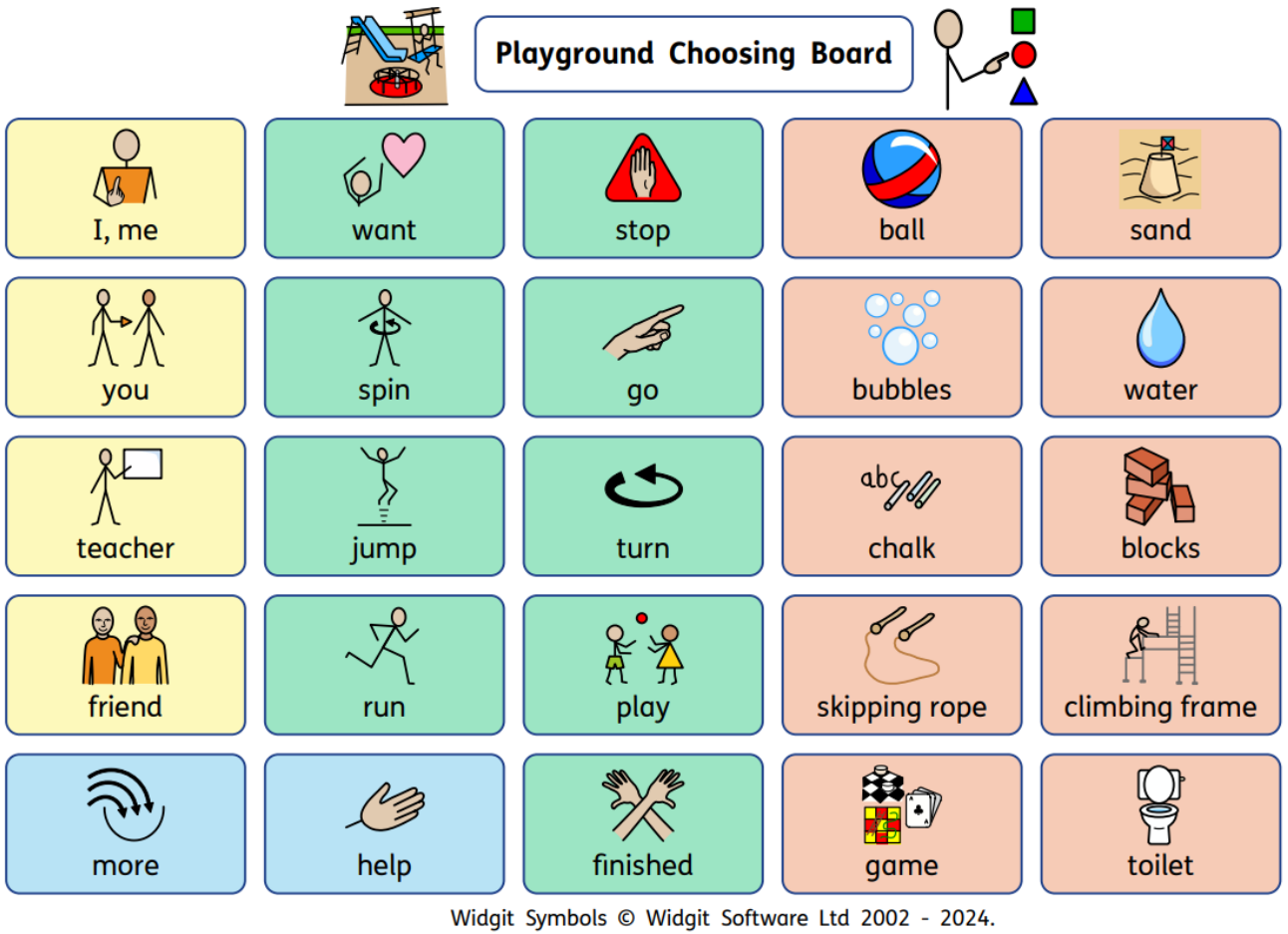

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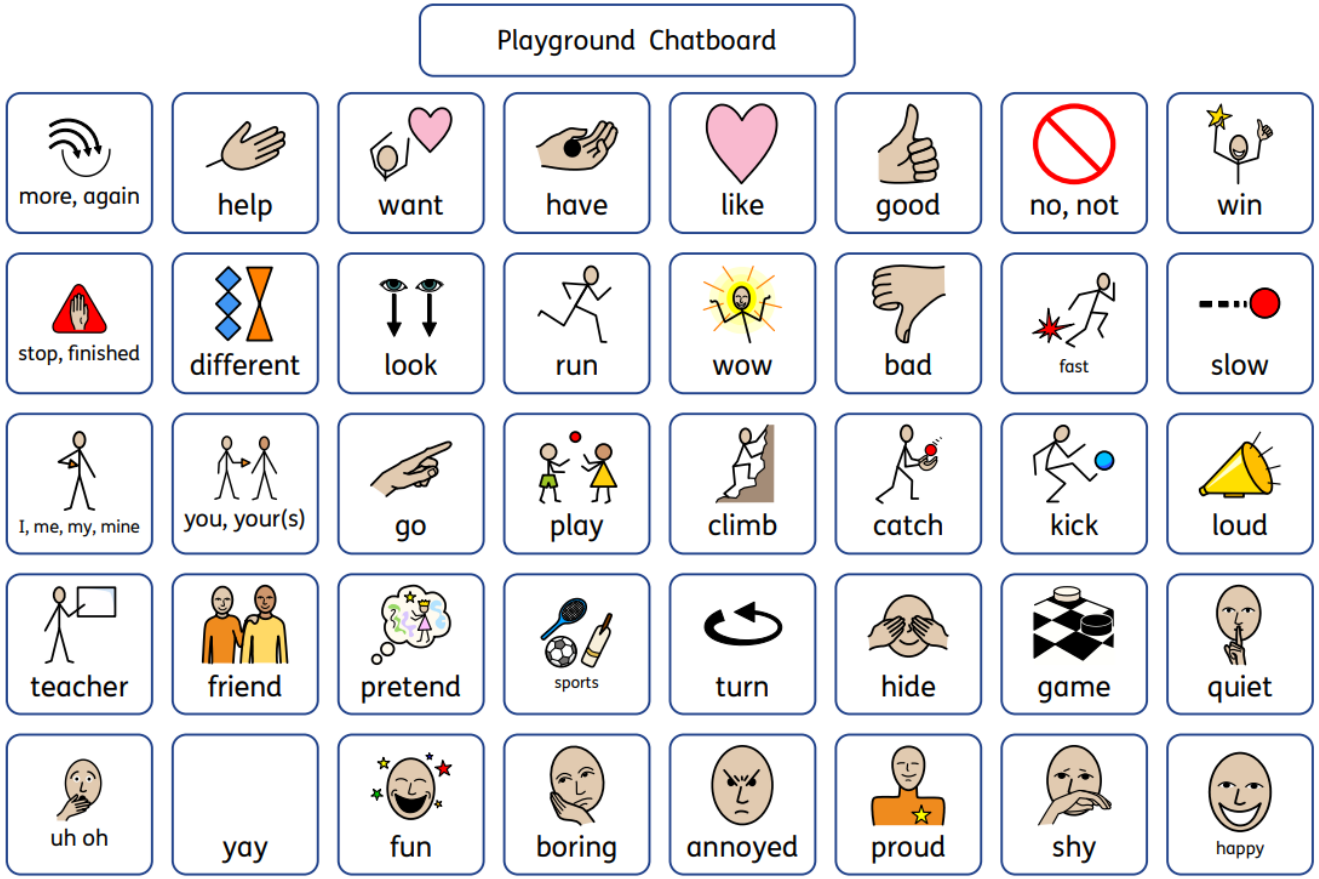

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