**Tricky Conversation: Checklists**

**Before the meeting**

* Have you talked to the child’s parents before about their child’s development? Remember what those conversations consisted of and build on these when you are discussing your concerns
* Set aside enough time and a space to have your conversation- try to find somewhere with minimal distractions. Is it welcoming?
* Gather your paperwork – these might be your observation notes, videos, photos or child’s work
* Revise what you know about the child’s home life and family situation – consider the child as a whole and be mindful of the context in which you’re having your conversation
* Plan for how you would like the conversation to go – what is your end goal? Do you have advice or information that you can share about next steps?

**At the meeting**

* Begin on a positive note, sharing positive examples of how the child or young person has used their strengths.
* Ask the parents ow they feel about their child’s development – try questions like “do you find him difficult to understand at home? Or ‘have you noticed that she sometimes finds it hard to follow an instruction?
* Be honest about your concerns. Explain clearly why you have wanted to meet and use the evidence you have gathered to share your concerns
* Use questions to bring parents into the conversation, making it clear that their opinion, as the person who knows them best, is all part of building the picture of the child’s strengths and difficulties
* Be solution focused. Try to develop action points with parents and begin your ‘assess-plan-do-review’ response, involving parents every step of the way.
* Be aware of your professional boundaries – there will be some actions that you can take forward yourself and others that may require more specialist expertise.
* Signpost parents to other sources of information both locally and nationally
* Jointly agree the next steps with parents, making sure that they are practical and achievable. Often working towards small steps as part of a longer-term goal is more helpful in ensuring that goals are achievable, and that progress is made.

**After the meeting**

* Type up any notes that were taken at the meeting and share with parents, detailing the main points of the discussion and any agreed actions
* It can also be useful for you to be able to ‘debrief’ either with a colleague or manager and share any new information with them.