How to develop:

How to develop grammar – the auxiliary verb

What is "grammar"?

Grammar consists of the rules that explain how words are used in a language e.g. verb tenses, plurals, pronouns etc.

What is "an auxiliary verb"?

An auxiliary verb is a helping verb. It is used alongside a main verb to give more meaning e.g. in the sentence "we were running", "were" is an auxiliary verb indicating that the action of the main verb, "running," was taking place in the past; in the sentence "she is eating", "is" is an auxiliary verb indicating that the action of the main verb, "eating," is taking place in the present.

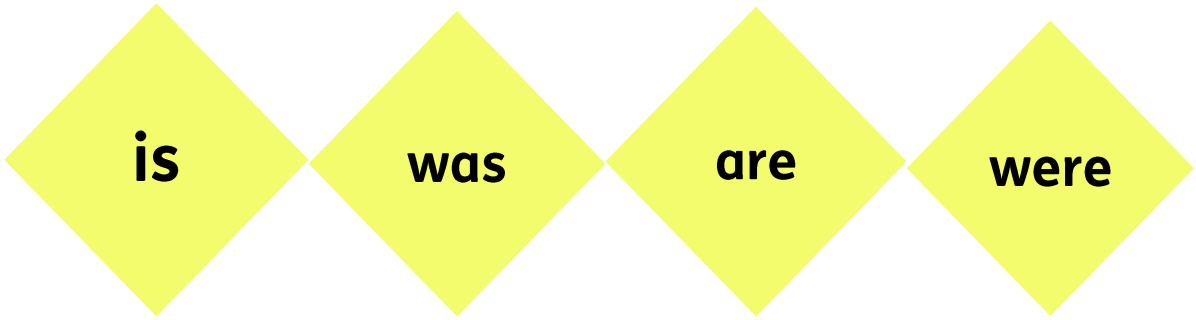
Strategies

- **Build opportunities into everyday moments** – using what the child sees, does, hears everyday.
- **Use visual support** - gesture, objects, photographs, symbols.
- **Model accurate grammar is day-to-day life** – : Children need to hear language modelled in the right way for them to understand and use it.
- **Choices or forced alternatives**: if the child has difficulty, offer two choices e.g. "the running or the boy is running?".
- **Repeat back in the right way**: If a child makes an error, repeat the word/phrase/sentence back to them in the right way for them to hear. You do not need to tell them they were wrong or ask them to repeat you.

Activities

Action pictures:

Children take it in turns to describe action pictures. Adult takes first turn and emphasises use of auxiliary e.g. *"The girl **is** walking"*. Encourage the children to self correct by saying *"Which one sounds right? The boy running home or the boy is running home?"* Auxiliaries can be written in yellow diamond – tell the child this is small and precious so don't forget.



Sentence strips

Use a sentence strip with 4 spaces/boxes for children to check if they have included an auxiliary verb when describing pictures, events, etc. For example:

The	boy	is	running