****



Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale

Education Committee

**6.7 Understanding and using verbs in the past tense**

**Why is this important?  
Developing the grammatical structures relating to past tense allows children  
to talk about an event that has happened in the past and contrast this with  
the here and now. This increases the range of language use and also allows  
children to talk about things outside the here and now.**

**-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  
What to do  
• To elicit past tense, try:  
★ After playtime/lunchtime, ask the child who he/she played with and  
what he/she ate, etc.  
★ When playing with toys (e.g. in home corner or with the farm), ask  
what food the child made for dinner or what the farmer fed the cows, etc.  
★ Tell a simple story and ask the child to use the pictures to  
retell the story using the past tense.  
★ Play ‘Simon Says’. When the child  
has performed the action, ask:  
■ Adult: ‘What did you do?’  
■ Child: ‘Jumped/danced/ hopped’, etc.  
★ Use everyday situations to elicit past tense forms (e.g. a train goes  
past, a child falls over). Ask ‘What happened?’**