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Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale

Education Committee

**4.3 Understanding that ‘no’ plus an object is an early negative**

**Why is this important?  
Children use negatives to describe the ‘absence’ or non-existence of  
an object (e.g. a child finishes his/her drink and says ‘no juice’). Before  
children learn to use ‘no’ in two-word phrases, they must first be able to  
understand these structures and to use them appropriately.**

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What to do  
• Gather together two favourite toys (e.g. cat, puppy, doll, Spiderman).  
• Use just two toys to begin with.  
• From a store of everyday objects, choose a few (e.g. ball, cup, hat, socks).  
• Give an object to one of the toys (e.g. put the hat on the cat’s head).  
• Ask ‘Who’s got no hat on?’  
• Encourage the child to point to the toy without the object.  
• If the child points to the toy wearing the hat, say ‘Teddy’s got a hat, who’s got no  
hat?’  
• If this continues to prove difficult, prompt by guiding the child’s hand towards the  
right response and reinforce it with ‘Look, teddy’s got no hat on’.**