



Strong Close Nursery School



Communication and Language Policy

Rationale

Communication and Language is an essential feature of every individual's schooling and their subsequent adult life. It is through communication and language that children will begin to communicate, socialise and achieve confidence and cognition. The implementation of language across the curriculum should reflect the importance it has for the development of all individuals. Language is the tool that enables communication and can be the spoken word or non-verbal communication in various forms including facial expression, multi-sensory approaches, body language, gesture, sounds, sign language and mark making. Evidence demonstrates that early spoken language skills are the most significant predictor of literacy skills at age 11.

“The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.”

Statutory Framework for the EYFS Educational Programme.

To provide effectively for the learning, interests and needs of all our children we will use the ‘Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage’ to inform our practice. The seven key features of effective practice from the non-statutory Development Matters will be at the heart of our day to day practice. We recognise the individuality of all children and the need to nurture their confidence, capabilities, and independence. Our curriculum will reflect the needs and interests of our children and we will develop more in depth learning through schemas, projects, real world experiences and repeated and motivating activities. To this end we will ensure that our practice reflects the characteristics of effective teaching and learning; playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically. Our children that are on or being assessed for our resourced places are assessed using the Developmental Journal resources.

Aims

Our aim is to ensure our practice gives children the best communication and language opportunities and for children to work towards achieving the early learning goals for Communication and Language.

Our aims set out how we intend to deliver a high quality curriculum

- To provide a cross-curricular and whole school approach to the teaching of communication and language, which is grounded in knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and the most effective ways of teaching and learning.
- To have a particular focus on the aspects of communication in our planning and assessment
 - Listening, Attention and Understanding
 - Speaking
- To ensure that all adults value and respect the range of languages and experiences which children bring with them from home and their wider communities.

- Recognise that children whose first language is not English should have confidence and pride in using their first language whilst having opportunities to use English when appropriate.
- Closely liaise with parents and to share information with them. We recognise that a great deal of children's talk refers to home experiences.
- Develop children's confidence in themselves as speakers.
- Have adults at hand to extend the child's language and to be a good listener.
- Provide space and time for listening and talking in all areas of the curriculum.
- Monitor and record children's spoken language and to use this information for curriculum planning.
- To ensure that all children are supported through the best possible opportunities to embed strong language and communication skills, helping children in making progress, consolidating their learning over time and narrowing the achievement gap.

Objectives

Our objectives set out how we implement our aims

- We will ensure that we develop and extend children's existing skills and concepts by providing a rich and varied range of high quality play and language experiences in all areas of the school
- We will create a well organised language rich environment that will engage, encourage and inspire children to communicate.
- We will use the indoor and outdoor environment, stories, songs, poems, rhymes, visitors, trips and outings as sources of language, extending experiences, communication and learning
- We will help children develop and extend the skills of listening, attention and understanding, and speaking by ensuring that all adults are aware of the main focus of particular experiences and are skilful in supporting and extending interactions with children. Adults will be highly tuned in to the children's capabilities and motivations
- We will develop children's vocabulary skills by providing meaning in context to new words and deepen their understanding of meaning through real life experiences
- We will nurture children's confidence and engagement through settled and trusting relationships with adults and by developing children's independence towards self-scaffolding
- We will develop children's conversational turn taking skills
- We will offer many opportunities for children to extend their oral language skills through listening to stories and talking about them
- We will ensure children have opportunities to role play and make believe as they explore their interests
- We will ensure all children have equal access to all the curriculum
- We will involve and support parents/carers in our work by sharing individualised, specific and relevant activities from our Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) toolkit, Schema toolkit, Family Matters workshop, dummies and bottles leaflets and workshops, 50 Things to do Before You're 5 app and the Tiny Happy People website.

- We will provide targeted interventions to children who are experiencing barriers to learning and, in particular, delays in the development of their communication and language skills, through our SALT toolkit sequential and specialised activities and our Let's Talk enhancement programme by supporting a programme of real world experiences and responsibilities including cleaning, gardening, composting, shopping and food preparation.
- We will support non-verbal children through a range of strategies dependent on their need and including Verve and Intensive Interaction strategies to develop trust, selective mutism support, and Let's Talk and Let's Move interventions.
- We will endeavour to ensure that children learning English as an additional language have the opportunity to work with an adult who speaks their first language, researching a range of key words with parents/carers and celebrating multilingualism in our setting. Children will then learn English from a strong foundation in their home language.
- We will ensure we provide targeted support to children with special educational needs, through next steps or Individual Support plans with parents and carers.
- We will provide a total communication approach for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This will be done using intensive interaction techniques, Makaton, visual aids, objects of reference, picture exchange and by referring to Speech and Language Therapy as appropriate to the needs of the child. Children with more complex needs will be assessed using the Developmental Journal materials.
- We will ensure that the literature and displays present in the school reflect the diverse cultures and abilities represented in school.
- We will discuss children and their interests weekly to inform planning, and share at home with parents and carers through our What's Happening to help support and deepen children's learning through play. Half termly planning newsletters are also developed by staff and shared with parents/carers.
- To ensure that children are making the best progress, over time, we will assess their progress and interests termly using Development Matters and the key observational checkpoints including the Developmental Journal materials for those children on specialist places, supported to make smaller steps of progress. The results of these, will inform future planning both at an individual level and also at a curriculum level.

The following support the **implementation** of this policy and ensure we monitor **impact**

- a. Learning and Teaching Policy
- b. Communication Strategies with Children
- c. Development Matters
- d. Developmental Journal documents
- e. Assessment Policy, Guidelines and information
- f. Half termly policy, provision and practice monitoring