



Westfield Nursery School Policy for Communication and Language

Vision

At Westfield Nursery we aim to deliver against our vision 'Inspired beginnings, outstanding futures'.

Background

We acknowledge that upon entering Westfield, some children will be confident and fluent speakers, whereas others will rely heavily upon gesture and need support in making their needs known. Some children may need support to listen, sustain attention and use speech appropriately and purposefully. We believe children will become confident communicators, speakers and listeners if the desire to communicate is encouraged and valued. We can model the conventions of communication and interaction, turn-taking, listening, initiating, and sustaining appropriate conversation.

Intent

For children to be able to

- attend, listen and respond appropriately to peers and adults in a variety of situations and be confident that their voice will be heard (listening)
- follow simple instructions, to understand spoken language in context and have the confidence to question (understanding)
- use spoken language and developing vocabulary with communicative intent (speaking)
- use a range of methods of communication if non-verbal

Roles and Responsibilities

Overall curriculum lead is Mrs Andrews, lead teacher. Class leaders take responsibility for planning communication and language.

Implementation

See 'Communicates with adults and children' (C&L) section of the Westfield Nursery School Curriculum.

Inside and outside early years practitioners should:

- Act as a role model
- Recognise language and communication is an intrinsic element of life and learning and as such it should be considered throughout every aspect of the Nursery experience
- Have a positive attitude to communication and language development in children
- Have a good understanding of the sequence of learning intentions and the learning outcomes for communication and language development
- Be aware of the development of language acquisition, for example knowing which sounds are easier/ harder for children to pronounce, consideration given to the level of complexity of language practitioners use
- Ensure they have knowledge of current trends relating to communication and language in the early years

- Have a secure knowledge of the resources available and how all resources are used
- Be aware of the need to expose children to a range of different types of language, such as narrative, descriptive, sequential, comparative, positional and instructive and we are alert to the possibility of too much language being instructive in nature
- Encourage children to comment, suggest, question, instruct and negotiate in a thoughtful and sensitive manner
- Identify children who need help in developing language skills and make provision for their needs to be met, for example through a special educational needs plan
- Foster good relationships with outside agencies such as the speech and language therapy service or Early Years Support Team and refer children to the services. Recommendations from the services are built into support
- Ensure they understand how appropriate ICT can promote children's communication and language development
- Have the opportunity to challenge and extend their own learning

Inside and outside early years practitioners should give opportunities for children to:

- Listen and respond to identified key and extended vocabulary, for example at message board, snack time or during child-initiated play
- Listen and respond to a range of quality books
- Listen to and join in with a range of songs and rhymes
- Take part in meaningful imaginative play in role play settings or use of small world resources
- Allow children opportunities to speak to one another and adults in 1:1, small groups and whole class situations. They are taught listening is an integral part of communication and everyone needs a turn to speak and a turn to be listened to

Strategies

Skilled practitioners will use a range of methods to support communication and language

- Move to be face to face
- Stop, look and listen
- Follow the child's lead
- Join in with the child's play
- Listen to and interpret what the child says
- Comment
- Take turns in conversation
- Change tone
- Change volume
- Simplify language
- Match plus one (extend language)
- Praise communication attempts
- Question (one question to five comments)
- Use specific vocabulary
- Visual timetable
- Picture cards

If staff have concerns about a lack of communication within an area of provision, they can complete a 'hotspots' activity to monitor and then implement required changes.

Resources

We use a range of resources to develop children's communication and language such as telephones, talking boards and puppets. Children are encouraged to share in the responsibility for the equipment and have clear expectations regarding storage, use and care. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that all resources are in good working order and appropriate for the children's stage of development.

Interventions

We deliver the Lift Off to Language programme for children who need additional communication and language support.

For our pupils with additional communication and language difficulties we use a range of interventions and support such as bucket time, tap tap box, objects of reference, object exchange, gestures/ signs and the use of now & next boards. See SEND policy

English as an Additional Language

We welcome children and families for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) and see multilingualism as an asset and support the parallel use of home languages and English. We monitor and support language acquisition using our Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) in the Early Years sheets.

Equal Opportunities

Practitioners have high expectations of what the children can achieve regardless of gender, ability, race or culture/social backgrounds.

Working with Parents/ Carers

We actively encourage our children and their families in this area. The expectations of communication and language are shared on entry at the new starter meeting and subsequently via newsletters and the website. Parents/ carers can learn more about communication and language at the curriculum stay and play day.

Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation

Two-year checks are completed for those children starting in our two-year-old class.

Two weeks after settling in week a baseline is completed. Assessments are then completed at the end of each term so the school can monitor progress and target next steps.

The school has a program to monitor and evaluate the work of the school through regular scrutiny of policy, planning, assessment, observations and feedback from staff, parents and carers.

The judgements staff make are moderated with outside agencies to support validation of these assessments.

Impact (Based on exit data and questionnaires from June 2021)

Children make better than expected progress in communication and language from initial baselines.

Children with speech and language needs receive timely interventions and support.
Children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium make expected progress.
EAL children make better than expected progress and develop their use of English which supports development in all areas of the curriculum.
Staff are responsive to attempts to communicate by children that are not necessarily language led.
Children report they like story time, reading time, singing and time with their friends.
Parents/ carers report that children enjoy a range of songs, rhymes and stories.

Conclusion

Implementation of this policy will ensure children reach their potential in the area of communication and language.

Policy updated March 2022