

## Oaklands School

### Language and Communication Policy



At Oaklands school we see the development of language and communication as fundamental to our learners' overall development. It is through our interactions with others that we learn who we are, and it is by being treated as communicators that we learn to communicate.

#### Inclusive Communication

At Oaklands we have an Inclusive Communication environment. This means that we use a number of strategies to support our pupils to communicate. Each pupil will benefit from a different combination of these strategies. The strategies that we use (which are always supported by gestures, facial expressions, body language and speech.) include:

- Object signifiers (sometimes known as Objects of Reference or OOR)
  - Communication devices
    - On-body signing
    - Signalong signing
    - Song signifiers
- Eye pointing – including the use of e-tran frames and eye gaze devices
  - Symbols and photos

We also use various specific approaches to support communication with many of our pupils across the school. These include:

- Core words
- Intensive Interaction
- Visual Timetables
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) – A specific approach for using pictures and symbols.

#### Targets and Curriculum

Targets are informed by the Curriculum for Excellence, making use of the Literacy and English guidance and in particular the Foundation Milestones. Our Early Years provision is informed by Realising the Ambition.

Each pupil has long term targets in Communication set at the start of the school year. These are shared with parents and carers. From these, short term targets which break the long term targets into smaller steps, are set. The short term targets are evaluated on a termly basis. At the end of the school year, the long term targets are reviewed and evaluated and new draft targets set for the following session.



*“Supporting our children to dream big, go far  
and unlock their potential,  
with a range of enriching experiences.”*

In Oaklands school we do not teach in discrete subjects. The teaching and learning that a pupil experiences will take place in a cross curricular manner, throughout a pupil's day and week. All of our pupils are treated as individuals, and their devised programmes and targets will generally be unique to them. We recognise that our pupils' progress is unlikely to be linear. Due to the nature of our pupils and their complex needs, whilst many pupils will make good progress, some progress may remain largely static or, in some cases, even regress. Close scrutiny of progress towards targets will allow us to track progress and make adjustments if required.

As well as individual target setting, our teachers plan on a termly basis. These plans will include group activities, class activities and individual activities linked to Communication. These plans are evaluated on a termly basis.

Our curriculum is heavily focussed on practical activities, making use of concrete objects as well as songs, stories, rhymes and the school and wider environment. We always try, where possible, to link our learning to practical and real life situations and ones which will engage and be useful to our learners. An appendix of possible activities is included at the end of this policy.

#### Team working

Class staff teams (including teachers, Nursery nurses and PSAs) all have a role and responsibility to help develop the literacy and communication of our pupils. In addition, class teams work will work closely with parents and carers, and our Speech and Language Therapy team, to ensure that the best possible outcomes for our pupils can be achieved. Working together, targets for pupils can be set, planned for and assessed.

Reviewed Nov 24

Next review Nov 25



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## Appendix 1

### LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION IDEAS BANK

This is not an exhaustive list of how we tackle Literacy and Communication within Oaklands School but serves as a starting point, and shows the contexts where Literacy and Communication teaching may be seen.

Class library	Circletime	Big Mack use in stories and songs
Sensory stories	Touch pads on doors	TacPac
Online stories	Symbolised environment	Dressing Up
Drama stories	Outdoor learning	VI work
Intensive Interactions	Assembly	Using EyeGaze iPads
Songs	Making choices for snack	Song Signifiers
Switching sessions	Making choices for lunch	Object Signifiers
Turn taking	PECs	Local environment visits



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