



Early Years Curriculum Communication and Language

An Overview of Communication and Language:

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. (Development Matters, 2023)

Communication and Language in context at The Downley School (TDS):

Research shows a strong association between language skills in early childhood and school attainment, therefore it is imperative that we are able to provide children with a language rich environment in which practitioners are able to provide quality interactions with children during their play. Children have access to quality texts and regularly share stories with staff. We endeavour to provide children with a wide range of experiences that encourage speaking and listening and ensure that practitioners are skilled in asking pertinent questions to develop vocabulary. At TDS, we have a child centred approach to learning and topics are all planned following children's interests. However, we are also aware that, as some of our children have limited experiences outside the classroom, it is also essential to plan for learning and enrichment activities that introduce new experiences to all our children.

Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important. • Learn new vocabulary. • Use new vocabulary through the day. • Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them. • Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. • Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives. • Describe events in some detail. • Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen. • Develop social phrases e.g. – “How are you?” • Engage in story times. • Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding. • Retell the story, once they have developed a deep familiarity with the text; some as exact repetition and some in their own words. • Use new vocabulary in different contexts. • Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound. • Engage in non-fiction books. • Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn rhymes, poems and songs (Recall and sing over ten Nursery Rhymes / songs) ❖ Build up a range of words (adjectives) to describe features of objects e.g. ‘huge’, ‘dark’, ‘shiny’. ❖ Build up a range of words (verbs) to explain what is being done in the present time e.g. rolling, patting, shaking

- Development Matters Statement
- ❖ TDS Statement

Communication and Language - Early Learning Goals

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

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Opportunities to support Communication and Language in EYFS

- Key vocabulary displayed and modelled by practitioners in all areas of the environment.
- Daily story time with quality texts.
- Reading books that match phonics levels and appeal to pupils.
- High quality wordless picture books.
- Relevant books placed in all areas of learning.
- Reading Records and daily book swaps that encourage children to share stories with their parents.
- Food and drink tasting opportunities.
- Exploration of fruit and vegetables, plants and flowers.
- On site nature walks.
- Age-appropriate maps displayed to stimulate curiosity and questioning about the wider world.
- Singing time - All children in EYFS spend 10 minutes a day singing songs and nursery rhymes.
- Literacy inputs based round a quality text.
- Drama workshops.
- Organisation of visits from 'People Who Help Us' in the local community.
- 'Real life' experiences including – Forest school, shop visit, den building, etc.
- Parent workshops to aid parents in supporting with Phonics, Reading and Maths.
- Cooking sessions.
- Role play areas updated regularly and linked to topics in order to give children opportunities to learn new vocabulary and apply vocabulary they have learned.
- 'Lifecycle' experiences (Caterpillar > Butterfly, Egg > Chicks > Chickens).
- ClassDojo to encourage further communication between home and school.
- Weekly visit to the library.
- Parents invited to read a story and share with class.

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