

At our school, the development of children's spoken language underpins all areas of learning and development and is therefore our highest priority. We recognise that communication and language are the foundations for reading, writing, thinking and future academic success. Our curriculum, teaching and assessment are deliberately designed to ensure all pupils make exceptional progress in securing strong foundational knowledge and skills, ensuring the very best start to their school careers.

1. Curriculum Design

- Clear identification of foundational knowledge and skills pupils need, as outlined in the EYFS and National Curriculum.
- Place communication and language at the core of curriculum design, recognising that spoken language underpins all learning.
- Map and explicitly sequence key vocabulary across all curriculum areas to ensure breadth, depth and progression.
- Deliver a language-rich curriculum where vocabulary is explicitly taught through:
 - Direct teaching inputs across all subjects
 - High quality literacy sessions (such as Drawing Club in EYFS and Curious Quests in KS1) and structured talk sessions
 - High-quality adult modelling and interaction throughout the day
- Weave high-quality books throughout all learning themes and curriculum areas.
- Deliver a carefully sequenced and rigorous systematic synthetic phonics programme (Little Wandle) to ensure excellent progress in reading and early language development.

Continuous Provision as a Strategic Tool for Language Development

- Continuous provision is carefully planned and structured; it is not left to chance.
- Every provision zone includes a carefully identified Communication and Language objective.
- All adults are aware of these objectives and use them to inform interactions, questioning and modelling.
- Provision is designed to provide space and sustained time for pupils to:
 - Practise and rehearse new vocabulary
 - Develop and extend spoken language
 - Embed language structures
 - Apply communication skills in different contexts
- This ensures pupils have sufficient, high-quality opportunities to practise foundational knowledge until fluent

2. Early Identification and Targeted Support

We prioritise early intervention to prevent gaps from widening:

- All pupils complete a Speech and Language Link screen on entry to identify need early.
- Racing to English intervention supports pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- Pupils who are eligible for Pupil Premium, speak EAL and/ or have other vulnerabilities are heard reading daily.
- Reading Ambassadors provide additional twice-weekly reading support.
- Assessment systems quickly identify misunderstandings, enabling timely intervention and additional practice.
- Provision is informed by evidence, including EEF guidance: *Supporting Communication and Language in the Early Years*.

3. High-Quality Teaching and Practice Opportunities

- Provide sufficient high-quality opportunities through Continuous Provision and Curriculum opportunities for pupils to practise and apply foundational knowledge until fluent.

- Use a continuous provision model across classes to enable pupils to:
 - Rehearse vocabulary
 - Practise speaking and listening
 - Think aloud
 - Embed knowledge and skills through purposeful play
- Deploy an Oracy Framework with clear discussion guidelines to develop structured talk.
- Implement a Nursery Rhyme progression, alongside songs and poetry, to strengthen phonological awareness and language patterns.
- Foster an emotional connection to language through stories, songs, rhymes and poems.

4. High-Quality Adult Interaction

- Staff CPD prioritises high-quality adult-child interactions. We use three main approaches to support these interactions; *The ShREC approach*, *Sustained- Shared Thinking Model* and *Commenting Over Questioning*.
- Adults model ambitious vocabulary, extend pupil responses and scaffold thinking.
- Teaching approaches are carefully chosen to match what is being taught and what pupils already know.
- A communication-friendly environment (Communication In Print) is embedded across classrooms, shared spaces and staff practice (i.e. symbols worn on lanyards etc.)
- All staff including those who are not always pupil-facing, engage in frequent, responsive back-and-forth conversations with children throughout the day.
- Use warm, expressive tone and eye contact to support attention and understanding.
- Give children time to think and respond (don't fill silences too quickly).

5. Embed Shared Reading, Storytelling & Vocabulary Play – Oracy

- The magic of books!
- Book Talk (Dialogic Reading)
- Read aloud daily with children using a range of high-quality books.
- Ask open-ended questions about characters, events and feelings to prompt children to use language.
- Use storytelling props, puppets or story sacks to make narratives interactive.
- Introduce and revisit key vocabulary in context to support deeper understanding.
- Use of Communication in Print to ensure inclusive approach to the teaching and retrieval of key vocabulary

6. Use Songs, Rhymes and Poems

- Sing familiar songs and rhymes daily — repetition supports memory for sound patterns, vocabulary and sequencing.
- Progression of Nursery Rhymes
- Introduce action and movement with songs to support meaning and recall.
- Incorporate rhyme and rhythm as tools for phonological awareness.

7. Create a Language-Rich Environment

- Set up areas that encourage talk (e.g., small world play, role-play corners, book corners).
- Provide objects and visuals that spark discussion (photos, real objects, textures).

- Label key areas (Communication in Print) and resources to reinforce key vocabulary throughout the environment.
- Chatter Bags, Curiosity Cube, Pictures of Interest, Story Sacks

8. Support Playful, Child-Led Conversations

- Follow their lead: let children choose topics or activities and comment on what they do.
- Use play opportunities to embed language naturally (e.g., during construction, imaginative play).
- Avoid quizzing—respond rather than question when appropriate.

6. Plan for Structured & Unstructured Talk Opportunities

- Organise small groups for focused talk (e.g., story time, circle time) as well as ongoing, spontaneous talk in play settings.
- Build routines where children are encouraged to communicate and express ideas (e.g., sharing news, Chatter Bags).

7. Develop Listening & Understanding Skills

- Create activities that emphasise listening (e.g., sound hunts, listening walks, following multi-step instructions).
- Model how to listen and respond appropriately.
- Encourage children to summarise or retell what they heard.

8. Collaborate with Families

- Share simple strategies and activities parents can do at home to support language (e.g., talk about routines, describe daily events, share books).
- Encourage family ‘show and tell’ to link home and setting language experiences.

9. Adapt for Individual Needs

- Be alert to communication difficulties or children using English as an Additional Language.
- Use visual supports, gestures or sign as needed to aid understanding and expression.
- Provide extra time and adapted language input for children who need it.

10. Assessment that Drives Progress

- Ongoing formative assessment identifies misconceptions quickly.
 - **In the moment assessment**
 - Adults use high-quality questioning to check understanding during interactions.
 - Staff are trained to notice gaps in vocabulary, sentence structure, comprehension and articulation.
 - “Stop and check” moments are built into direct teaching sessions.
 - Use of sentence stems throughout the curriculum to assess expressive language development.
 - Live modelling and rephrasing to assess and extend responses.
 - **Structured assessment systems**
 - Baseline Speech and Language Link screening on entry.
 - Half-termly phonics assessments (Little Wandle) to identify gaps in GPC knowledge, blending and fluency.
 - Vocabulary check-ins linked to curriculum maps.
 - Use of observation checkpoints aligned to EYFS Development Matters and KS1 curriculum expectations.
 - Focus pupils identified for short-term monitoring cycles.
- Pupil Voice is a key indicator as part of monitoring.
- Teachers respond immediately with targeted teaching and practice.
 - **Responsive teaching**
 - Same-day keep-up phonics interventions.
 - Immediate re-modelling and guided practice during lessons.
 - Small group “precision talk” sessions targeting specific vocabulary or language structures.
 - Pre-teaching vocabulary for pupils who need additional exposure.
 - Rapid deployment of Racing to English support for EAL learners.
 - **Planned intervention cycles**
 - Short, sharp, time-limited interventions (reviewed every 4–6 weeks).

- Additional daily reading for PP, EAL and vulnerable pupils.
- Reading Ambassadors delivering structured additional practice.
- Speech and Language Link programmes delivered by trained staff.
- Leaders regularly review curriculum, teaching and assessment to ensure all Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils secure strong foundations.
 - **Monitoring systems**
 - Half-termly pupil progress meetings with a specific focus on communication and language.
 - Learning walks focused on quality of adult interactions and vocabulary modelling.
 - Book looks and provision reviews to check for language-rich opportunities.
 - Analysis of phonics and reading data to ensure rapid progress.
 - **Professional development**
 - CPD linked directly to identified assessment trends.
 - Coaching and modelling to improve responsive teaching.
 - Work closely with independent agencies such as SaLT and EAL advisor to inform practice and monitor children's progress
 - Staff meetings focused on reviewing impact of interventions.
 - Use of EEF guidance and Ofsted Strong Foundations recommendations to inform practice refinement.
- **Creating a Culture Where Assessment is Immediate, Informal and Impactful**
 - Adults understand that assessment in EYFS and KS1 is continuous and dynamic.
 - Staff prioritise noticing, responding and extending rather than recording excessive data.
 - Clear feedback loops between teachers, support staff and leaders.
 - A shared understanding that the purpose of assessment is to secure fluent foundational knowledge for every child.

