

EYFS Communication and Language

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately, referring to the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

These are:

- **playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements for their own sake;
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

In addition, the **Prime Areas of Learning (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development)** underpin and are an integral part of children’s learning in all areas.

EYFS Communication and Language (Statutory)

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

- 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.

ELG: Listening Attention and Understanding (Statutory)

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 (Statutory)

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.
- 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.

EYFS Communication and Language Skills

Listening Attention and Understanding	Speaking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and model active listening skills: “Wait a minute, I need to get into a good position for listening, I can’t see you. Let’s be quiet so I can concentrate on what you’re saying.” • Signal when you want children to listen: “Listen carefully now for how many animals are on the broom.” • Link listening with learning: “I could tell you were going to say the right answer, you were listening so carefully.” • Identify new vocabulary before planning activities, for example, changes in materials: ‘dissolving’, ‘drying’, ‘evaporating’; in music: ‘percussion’, ‘tambourine’. • Bring in objects, pictures and photographs to talk about, for example vegetables to taste, smell and feel. • Discuss which category the word is in, for example: “A cabbage is a kind of vegetable. It’s a bit like a sprout but much bigger”. • Have fun saying the word in an exaggerated manner. • Use picture cue cards to talk about an object: “What colour is it? Where would you find it? What shape is it? What does it smell like? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it sound like? What does it taste like?” • Model words and phrases relevant to the area being taught, deliberately and systematically: “I’m thrilled that everyone’s on time today”, “I can see that you’re delighted with your new trainers”, “Stop shrieking, you’re hurting my ears!”, “What a downpour – I’ve never seen so much rain!”, “It looks as if the sun has caused the puddles to evaporate”, “Have you ever heard such a booming voice?” • Use the vocabulary repeatedly through the week. • Keep a list of previously taught vocabulary and review it in different contexts. • Show genuine interest in knowing more: “This looks amazing, I need to know more about this.” • Think out loud, ask questions to check your understanding; make sure children can answer who, where and when questions before you move on to why and ‘how do you know’ questions: “I wonder why this jellyfish is so dangerous? Ahh, it has poison in its tentacles.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use complete sentences in your everyday talk. • Help children build sentences using new vocabulary by rephrasing what they say and structuring their responses using sentence starters. • Narrate your own and children’s actions: “I’ve never seen so many beautiful bubbles, I can see all the colours of the rainbow in them.” • Build upon their incidental talk: “Your tower is definitely the tallest I’ve seen all week. Do you think you’ll make it any higher?” • Suggestion: ask open questions - “How did you make that? Why does the wheel move so easily? What will happen if you do that?” • Instead of correcting, model accurate irregular grammar such as past tense, plurals, complex sentences: “That’s right: you drank your milk quickly; you were quicker than Darren.” • Narrate events and actions: “I knew it must be cold outside because he was putting on his coat and hat.” • Remind children of previous events: “Do you remember when we forgot to wear our raincoats last week? It poured so much that we got drenched!” • Extend their thinking: “You’ve thought really hard about building your tower, but how will you stop it falling down?”

