

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



Communication & Language Policy



Updated: July 2025
Review Date: July 2028

Policy Statement

At Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery and Sunbeams Club (the school), we recognise that communication and language development are fundamental to a child's learning, social development and emotional wellbeing. In accordance with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework**, we are committed to providing a language-rich environment that supports the earliest stages of all children's communication, listening, attention and understanding in our nurseries, which our pre-school and Reception classes will build on.

This policy is underpinned by the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, particularly the Prime Area of Communication and Language which focuses on developing children's ability to speak, understand, read and write.

Aims

In Hedgehogs and Squirrels, we will aim to -

- Provide a warm, responsive and stimulating environment where communication is encouraged through everyday interactions and play.
- Support children's development in the **three key areas** of Communication and Language:
 1. Listening and Attention
 2. Understanding
 3. Speaking
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to understand and support each child's communication milestones.
- Identify and respond promptly to any concerns regarding a child's communication development.

Implementation

The role of practitioners in the Hedgehogs and Squirrels rooms:

- Practitioners will build strong, secure attachments with each baby to support confidence in communication.
- Staff will use simple, clear and consistent language throughout the day.
- Language is to be modelled in context, e.g., naming objects during play or routines ("Let's put on your socks").
- Practitioners will listen attentively to babies'/toddlers' vocalisations, gestures and early words, responding in a meaningful and respectful way.
- Repetition and reinforcement of sounds, words and phrases are used to support early understanding and speech.

Environment and Resources

- The baby and toddler rooms are calm, nurturing and language-rich environments.
- Visual and sensory resources are provided to encourage attention, interaction and sound exploration.
- Books, rhymes, puppets and musical toys are accessible and used daily to encourage listening skills and enjoyment of language.
- Cosy areas are created to enable one-to-one or small group interactions that support focused communication.

Daily Routines

- Opportunities for conversation are embedded throughout routines such as feeding, nappy changing and dressing. These times of day are extremely important for 1-1 time and to support and encourage language development.
- Staff will provide commentary on what children are doing ("You are splashing in the water!"), helping them to hear new words and make connections between words and experiences.
- Singing and rhymes are part of daily routines to support rhythm, repetition and vocabulary.

Supporting Individual Needs

- The staff in the room will observe and assess each child's communication and language development using formative observations in line with the EYFS. Wellcomm assessments will be completed, Baselines and 2years checks will also be done after the child's second birthday.
- Where a child speaks English as an additional language, their home language is valued and used alongside English to support understanding and a sense of belonging. (See further information on our English as an additional language policy).
- Staff will work closely with parents/carers and also where necessary and may need to work with external professionals to support children with speech, language or communication difficulties. This will only ever be done with parent/carers consent.

Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

- We will share regular updates on children's communication and language development through daily feedback and key person meetings.
- Parents are encouraged to share key words, songs and routines from home to support consistency in language learning.
- Resources and strategies are shared with families to support communication development at home.