



# Devonshire Primary Academy Speech and Language Policy



Implementation Date: February 2017  
Adopted by Governors/HT: HT  
Review period: 3 year  
Last review date: February 2017  
Person responsible for policy: Mrs V Millerick

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

### **WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?**

- LANGUAGE – the ability to understand words and sentences and organise thought to be able to respond using appropriate vocabulary and grammar
- SPEECH – the ability to combine sounds together to say words. This involves the physical elements of pronunciation
- NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION – (NVC) – the ability to understand and use gesture, body language, facial expression and voice to communicate your message

These strands occur in all areas of school life; attention, listening, play, negotiating, and are fundamental to the progress a child makes.

### **Our aims:**

- To provide a whole school environment where all forms of communication such as verbal and non-verbal, are valued, used and understood by all members of the school community
- To integrate ELKLAN and HANEN principles and methodologies throughout all aspects of school life
- To identify children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) as early as possible and to provide appropriate support and intervention as necessary
- To ensure that Speech, Language and Communication is given a high profile through regular training and inclusion on staff meeting agendas
- To ensure that children leaving Devonshire are effective communicators
- All staff recognise that they have a responsibility to develop the communication skills of children in their care

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Whole School Ideals**

At Devonshire we create a learning environment which supports the communication needs of our pupils. To achieve this we use:

- Visual timetables
- Symbol support
- Sensory areas
- Clearly labelled areas in classrooms
- Symbols in EYFS to support labelling
- Communication friendly areas such as reading corners
- Communication group room for small group or individual interventions
- Learning takes place through paired, small group and whole class settings
- Use of technology to support communication

At Devonshire we use programs and allocated staff to support the communication needs of individuals. To achieve this we utilise:

- HANEN training
- ELKLAN training
- Phonics grouping
- Time to Talk
- Talkabout
- EALIP –English as an Additional Language Intervention Program
- Dedicated small group speech and language work with identified SLCN pupils
- Close liaison with Shine Therapy Speech and Language Therapists
- Liaison with NHS SLTs

### Planning

At Devonshire we recognise the importance of subject- specific vocabulary as well as a solid base of general vocabulary for children to progress in their learning. We promote this by using:

- Vocabulary intervention groups in year groups, comprising of children who have been identified by speech and language therapists as having long-term vocabulary related issues. Each half term class teachers supply TAs running these groups with vocabulary that can be pre-taught before the next topic begins, as well as following the individual needs of the children.
- Word wise whizz
- Mind mapping
- Vocabulary maps
- Multiple meaning trees
- Word bluff
- I spy
- Word searches
- Word Choice

### **Assessment and Recording**

Upon entry to Pre-School and Reception speech and language is assessed using a baseline assessment against the Development Matters Communication and Language Framework. Parents are asked at these times to complete a short questionnaire about their child's speech, and are encouraged to discuss any issues from this that indicate the child may require additional speech and language support.

Children identified through this process, or by any member of staff throughout the school, can be assessed by the SHINE speech and language therapists following the discussion of the case with the S&L coordinator and the completion of the parental consent form.

Following assessment (which may focus on speech sounds, grammatical use of words and vocabulary or all of these) a report with recommendations will be produced by the therapists and sent to the SENCO and S&L coordinator. The coordinator will then

distribute the report to relevant people; the class teacher, any TAs who will be included in the intervention support for the child and also the parents in summary form. The full report will always be made available for parents if they should like to see it. Any parents who would like to discuss the report are encouraged to attend a meeting with the coordinator, the SENCO and the therapist who wrote the report where possible.

Any report that recommends further speech and language intervention will be accompanied by individualised targets for the child, which are reviewed and updated as close as possible to six monthly intervals unless the need arises to review sooner (e.g. if a TA or teacher raises further concerns or if the child has exceeded their targets earlier than the review date). The targets are also distributed in the same way as the reports; parents are also given an extra letter each September to confirm that their child is still on the speech and language register and what this means in terms of support.

Children who score within the limits of their age group in these assessments will be discharged from the SHINE therapy service with a letter recording this being again distributed and summarised for parents.

Some children who have been able to improve in all areas except for their depth and use of vocabulary will still be discharged from the SHINE therapy service but will then join the 'vocab +' intervention groups that are run by TAs throughout school. It is expected that these children will stay in these groups for the rest of their time at Devonshire, being supported in hope that this will enable them to 'close the gap' on the vocabulary known by their contemporaries and allowing them to access the curriculum more confidently. This approach will include some pre-teaching. The TA running each group is required to complete a half-termly record sheet which includes a register for each session and a record of the vocabulary covered. This will go on to be included in a short summary for parents of children in these groups each parents evening.

Every child who is registered as having speech and language needs – either with the SHINE therapists or with the NHS or both – will be included on two spreadsheets; one which records the therapy and interventions that each child has had and when throughout the year, as well as showing when new targets are needed; another which aims to track the progress of these children throughout their time at Devonshire regardless of whether they have been discharged during this time. The information on this latter spreadsheet comes currently from termly KLIPs data that each class teacher submits, and looks at achievement levels in Reading, Writing and Maths. The tracker is able to show progress levels in each child in each of the areas, and summarise this alongside information such as the number of pupil premium children that the register currently holds, the number of discharges for each school year and looks at the progress made by pupil premium and non-pupil premium children.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of their children's communication. We nurture this in the Early Years setting through home visits for all, welcome meetings, courses for parents, encouraging parents to fill in Speech and Language questionnaires. We are also a part of the School Readiness Project.

All parents are informed of Topics at the beginning of each half term, to encourage discussion and broadening of vocabulary around the subject.

Each week a section of the school newsletter 'The Buzz' there is a 'Talking Tip', an activity or suggestion aimed at improving the communication of adults and children in their homes.

Parents who have children receiving specific TA intervention on a 1:1 basis are invited into school to observe a session. We hope that this will encourage families to adopt strategies that will support their child at home.

We feel that keeping parents up to date with information about the support their child receives is very important – see Assessment and Recording.

Currently our EAL population is 4.7%. We encourage children to talk to their parents in their mother tongue as well as in English as far as possible. This ensures that children are learning at an appropriate pace for their age and are not limited by language barriers. Communication with these parents can take place through an interpreter or, if necessary, using technology which is able to translate.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In-service training is undertaken to incorporate communication principles ie. ELKLAN, HANEN etc. This includes staff refreshing their skills as well as induction of new staff. As opportunities arise staff will attend external training within the authority.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We aim to differentiate activities to suit the needs of all children including SEND, EAL and the More Able.

## MONITORING

This policy will be monitored by SLT and Barbara Houghton; Governor for SEND.

Policy date: February 2017

Approved by governing body:

Date for review: September 2019