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# Communication and Language Policy

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## Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Equal emphasis should be placed on all 4 strands of communication and language i.e.
  1. listening
  2. talking
  3. reading
  4. writing
- Observations and progress must be clearly recorded for each area in the individual profiles using the agreed proformas.
- All children have a folio - containing examples of work (dated), to be shared with parents and feeder Primary School at time of transfer.
- Information to be regularly shared with parents both formally - at parent key worker consultations and informally throughout the year.

## Lending Library

Our goal is to develop a lending library where parents and children will have the opportunity to borrow good quality books and exchange them on a weekly basis. Library could be run by the parents...

## Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that *New Cowgate Under 5's Centre* has an environment rich in literacy where the children have the opportunity to:

- Listen to stories, rhymes and poems, individually and in groups on a daily basis and that in each classroom has an attractive selection of books on offer to meet children's differing needs
- Engage in activities, which promote and encourage listening and talking.
- Engage in regular singing and music activities.
- Experiment with a wide range of media in a well organised graphic area
- Have access to a wide range of quality resources to facilitate reading, writing, listening and talking, in the form of games, circle time, computer packages, books and audio visual materials.
- Have access to the City Children's Library

## Parents

We aim to support parents in the understanding of literacy in the centre by offering:

- ✓ Workshops/parents curricular evenings
- ✓ A communication and language handbook
- ✓ Parent key worker consultations
- ✓ Through daily informal contact and discussions

## Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5*

### Communication and Language

In communication and language, children should learn to:

- have fun with language and making stories
- listen to other children and adults during social activities and play
- listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs, music, rhymes and other poetry
- listen and respond to the sounds and rhythm of words in stories, songs, music and rhymes
- pay attention to information and instructions from an adult
- talk to other children or with an adult about themselves and their experiences
- express needs, thoughts and feelings with increasing confidence in speech and non-verbal language
- take part in short and more extended conversations
- use talk during role play and re-tell a story or rhyme
- use language for a variety of purposes, for example to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas
- use books to find interesting information
- recognise the link between the written and spoken word understand some of the language and layout of books
- develop an awareness of letter names and sounds in the context of play experiences use their own drawings and written marks to express ideas and feelings

7. **Is able to use simple tools and instruments appropriately.**

- A range of resources will be available to help children develop fine motor skills.
- Staff will provide opportunities for children to experiment using suitable materials such as pens, pencils, crayons, paint and chalk.

8. **Participate in expressive and communicative activities e.g. drawing, making models, using clay, dough, sand play, music, dance and drama.**

9. **Receive pleasure in communicating with others through a variety of media, and realise that their contributions are of value.**

- Children are positively encouraged to participate in a wide stimulating range of expressive activities.
- Staff actively and positively respond to these early forms of communication.

10. **Communicating through a variety of developmental stages. Experiment with symbols, letters and in some cases words and writing. (See attached Literacy Sheet - Writing)**

- The writing profile clearly outlines the steps children may engage on the road to writing.

**5. Is developing phonological awareness (see attached sheet - Concepts of Phonological Awareness)**

- Children will be encouraged to develop a curiosity about words, how they sound, the patterns within words and how they are composed. The staff will do this in a number of ways; through the choice of rhyming books, familiar nursery rhymes, and will take the opportunity to highlight rhyme whenever possible. Other examples are outlined in the Phonological Awareness sheet, and may sometimes require a high level of adult input.

**6. Interpret written information in various forms, e.g. in the environment, in displays, labels, and so forth.**

- Print will be given a high profile within the centre, in displaying children's work, scribing, providing notices for parents and children. Staff will take opportunities to write with the children.
- Captions and labels will be displayed and read together.
- Children's names should be recorded for them, so that they become familiar with their own names.
- Photo books, *All About Me* books, simple recipe books will place print in a meaningful context.

- experiment with symbols, letters and, in some cases, words in writing
- recognise some familiar words and letters, for example the initial letter in their name

## **LONG-TERM PLANNING**

### **PRACTICE**

The examples below reflect the different needs of individual children, the opportunities allow for a differentiated curriculum and are based on the observations and recordings of staff, and information from parents and other professionals. Where possible these will follow the children's interests, and take place in a variety of contexts. Staff will be alert and sensitive to the range of children's abilities and will intervene and support where a need has been identified

### **FOR LISTENING**

**1. Be aware of sound, voice, gesture and respond accordingly**

Staff will constantly take opportunities to engage with children and anticipate their response. Responses will be acknowledged and valued.

- Welcome greeting
- Eye contact
- Use of signing where appropriate

**2. Identify & classify sounds.**

- Imaginative play with farm animals / books / displays / games / songs where children have the opportunity to identify sounds with particular animals
- Outdoor play / outings - drawing attention to sounds in the environment
- A range of activities and experiences with musical instruments, cassettes, C.D's etc.
- A range of Listening Lotto games
- Staff will enhance the children's vocabulary to identify and classify sounds

**3. Listens and responds to the sound and rhythm of words in stories, songs, music and rhymes.**

**4. Listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs, music, rhymes and other poetry**

- Staff provide a wide range of materials - story, rhyme and poetry books, music and resources.
- Staff are a vital resource to support children's interest and learning

**3. Has growing awareness of the concepts of print (see attached - Developing literacy)**

- All children will regularly participate in a structured, adult-led story session. In these situations the adult will be clearly looking at the differing needs of the children.
- While sharing books, the staff will start to develop the child's awareness of the concepts of print, as outlined. For example, staff may read a series of books by the same author; choose books such as "Rosie's Walk" to highlight the importance of illustrations; or by pointing out the various types of print now widely available in story books.
- There may be children who are still at the stage of learning how to handle a book.

**4. Use books to find interesting information.**

- Using children's interests or particular topics, children will become aware of different functions of books, and that "reference" books are useful for finding interesting information.
- These may be grouped together in the story corner, displayed next to an area of particular interest e.g. small world farm, or an adult may accompany a child to the library to seek information out.

## LITERACY

The skills of listening and talking play a significant part in the development of children's early literacy, and promote the development of **reading and writing**.

1. **Enjoys books and stories, in a variety of situations i.e. on their own, with other children, adult led situations, in different contexts throughout the centre.**
2. **Respond to stories and relate to their own experiences**
  - The centre will provide a wide range of attractive books in an inviting, comfortable area. Books will also be displayed throughout the centre to enhance provision in specific areas.
  - The ethos created in the story corner will ensure that the children feel safe and secure; a place where they can relax and enjoy a book on their own, with a friend or an adult. The choice of books should give the children the opportunity to reflect on their own personal experiences and interests.
  - Children will be encouraged to develop an enthusiasm for stories and books by hearing wonderful stories and rhymes.

- Parents are encouraged to share in these experiences e.g. family singing, workshops and general classroom involvement.
- In structured sessions staff will focus on specific elements of rhythm, rhyme and sound.

5. **Pay attention to information and instructions from an adult.**

- Through positive interaction e.g. in baking activities; in activities where health, safety and hygiene are significant; following daily routines; tidying up. Staff will take care to ensure that instructions and requests are appropriate to the developmental level of the child, and in doing so will be aware of the progression for each child.

6. **Listen to other children and adults during social activities and play.**

- Social activities and play are highly valuable in the centre and, the role of staff is significant in supporting turn taking, listening and responding and valuing the contributions of all.
- Circle time
- Lunch time / snack time
- Parties / Celebrations

**7. Listen, concentrate and sustain understanding for extended periods of time to tell a story with / without the help of an adult.**

- Each room will provide a story corner which is welcoming, relaxing and a place where quiet is expected
- Adult presence in the story corner is vital to facilitate high quality learning experience
- Children have opportunities to listen to stories 1:1, in a small group and all together, taking into account that some children may need support to develop these skills e.g. use of signs for Special Needs children; and children who have not had the opportunity to share books.
- The range of books and stories will reflect the differing needs, language, backgrounds and cultures of the children.
- To increase periods of concentration, the skills of the storyteller will be a factor, and the use of props and materials will help sustain the children's interest.

**8. Develop listening skills in different contexts.**

- Staff will take every opportunity to engage with the children, in different contexts within and out with the centre, using informal and more structured approaches. Special Needs children may require direct teaching.

- There will be regular opportunities for children to sing together as part of a group.
- Sharing news in the group is seen as important in building children's confidence. As this progresses children are invited to do this individually to the group.
- Similarly, they will also be given the opportunity to repeat their favourite rhyme thus enabling them to see their peers as an audience. Some children may feel more secure with a friend / partner supporting them. During these sessions the staff are available to encourage the group to listen.

**14. Have the skills and appropriate language to develop in the areas of investigating, recording and interpreting. To use these skills to develop in the fields of knowledge and understanding of the world, and maths and science.**

- Displays, interests, materials and visits will be employed to stimulate curiosity and observation in the children.
- In exploratory play and problem-solving activities, language appropriate to these situations will be introduced by the adult as required. It is important that the context in which this takes place is meaningful to the children. Some examples may be; water tray, construction, clay etc.

## **11. Re-tell a story with / without props**

- The choice of stories throughout, and the situations in which they are told, will match the developmental stages of the children.
- Familiar and favourite stories from home will play a role
- Pictures, props and puppets will be widely available in the story corners and although new books and stories are regularly introduced to the children, there will be familiar ones for the children to enjoy.
- The quiet and inviting atmosphere of the book corner will encourage active participation by the child along with adult support, encouragement and praise.
- The graphics area close by gives another opportunity for the children to further their interest in favourite stories, and talk about their pictures.
- In-group story sessions the adult will regularly encourage the children to actively participate in the story telling. This is particularly valuable for the children with English as a second language, or those who are less confident.

## **12. Repeat a rhyme as part of a group.**

## **13.Repeat a rhyme or share news or information and show awareness of listeners / audience.**

## **TALKING & EXPRESSING IDEAS**

**1.Express ideas and feelings non-verbally as a stage towards communicating through language e.g. facial expression, gesture, signs and body language.**

**2.Recognise value of self in order to feel confident enough to express needs and feelings, in talk, signs and non-verbal language**

- The ethos and Positive Behaviour policy of the centre is central in promoting self-esteem, security, for the children, some of whom may bring with them unhappy experiences, poor self-worth and have had few opportunities to express ideas and feelings which are valued and acknowledged. Others may have English as their second language, and may need time to absorb their new environment before being confident and able to communicate. Children with special needs may depend on signs, gesture and body language, and it is incumbent on staff to develop the expertise to respond to these forms of communication.
- Strategies and gestures such as eye contact, joint action, clapping, facial expressions, eye pointing, finger pointing, may all be signs of a desire to communicate.
- Structured circle time, or group activities, may be used to develop these.

### **3. Use talk during play**

- Staff offer well-resourced, interesting, stimulating and relevant opportunities for a wide-range of role-play. In general, these will reflect the interests of the children, and mirror real-life experiences they may have encountered.
- Sensitive intervention by staff may be used to model appropriate play.
- To extend and encourage talk during role-play, visual stimuli such as displays, books and pictures are a useful addition. In-group discussion, staff may share the role play experience with the children to enhance vocabulary, and knowledge and understanding of the experience.
- The importance of listening, co-operating and negotiating will promote talk in role-play in a positive way.

### **4. Take part in short conversations, with adults/with child.**

### **5. Take part in extended conversations, with adult/with child.**

- Staff acknowledge the importance of getting down to the level of the child to engage and communicate.
- In the early stages staff will respond to information from the home about the child, and as confidence and security grow, a relationship between the child and the adult is established.

### **Use language / sign / gesture to make needs known / and accurately convey meaning.**

- Staff acknowledge each child's initial ways of communicating to make needs known, and following careful observation, intervene to move the method of communication forward as appropriate.
- Children are encouraged to share experiences accurately, informally and formally, in a wide variety of contexts e.g. recalling a baking activity or outing.
- Taking a message to another child or adult.

### **7. Talk to other children or an adult about themselves and recall their experiences.**

### **8. Use language for a variety of purposes e.g. to describe, explain, report, predict, ask and answer questions and develop ideas.**

### **9. Negotiate: using verbal and social skills to cope with or tackle a situation successfully.**

### **10. Express simple conclusions orally / by actions.**

- The staff in the centre will provide, through their talk, varied use of language and introduce children to new vocabulary. They will use open-ended questions to help children talk with increasing confidence, and for different purposes. This will at all times involve careful responsive listening. These skills will be fostered in all areas of the centre.