

Improving Speech, Language and Communication - Early Years Strategy



- White Paper:- We know that high-quality early education, particularly early language skills, can greatly improve a child's attainment throughout primary school.
- We also know that almost half of the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers at key stage 4 has emerged by age five.
- Nationally, Speech, Language and Communication are the biggest barriers to children making progress
- A key area of SEND need reported by BWD settings and schools



EY Local Context

- In BWD schools and settings have focused on making improvements in developing young children's communication and language skills.
- BWD school readiness data shows this is the our priority for children starting school and the key area to develop in all settings in order give them the best start to their education.



So BWD Strategy

- A Borough wide initiative to improve outcomes for all children in all settings - PVI's, Nurseries and EY settings.

Based on 2 Phases:

Phase 1 – Audit Tool

Phase 2 – Targeted Support

- A full system lead approach to addressing early SPLC - the difference between lack of experiences/learning/development and/or SEND needs.
- Increased focus on 'school readiness' and children having the necessary experiences and learning opportunities to achieve a Good Level of Development measure by the end of EYFS (National aim of 90%+)
- Already secured full support of School Improvement Board and EYFS leaders groups.
- Underpinned by our transition work this year and provided learning that we will take into next year.



Phase 1 – The Strategy – Speech and Language Audit Toolkit

Commissioned an Early Years expert ex-HMI
Angela Westington to:

Improving Quality First Teaching

- Quality First Teaching using a co-designed (SEND team, EY Leaders and School Leaders) BWD Audit Tool

Includes:

- 5 Sections linked to QFT to use in settings
- Addresses clear non negotiables and supports a consistency in approach
- Seeks and uses support from within the system



Section 1. Communication and Language friendly environment

- The welcome
- Physical environment
- Noise Levels
- Books
- Staff CPD

- Appendix:
 - photographs and reference materials
 - Book recommendations including nursery rhymes and traditional fairy tales and stories



Section 2. Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)



- Adjustments
 - Appendix
 - Links providing EAL information



Section 3. Identifying English language needs and teaching to them

- Assessment – concerns and referrals
 - Direct teaching and support
 - Routines
 - Adult Led
 - Staff CPD
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- Appendix
 - Progress Check at 2 resources,
 - Training, concerns and referrals information
 - Links to video clips



Section 4. Modelling good English language and interacting with children



- Role Modelling including pacing, intonation, pausing, commenting, extending, open questioning.
- Staff CPD
- Appendix
 - Links to video clips to demonstrate good practice



Section 5. Parent Partnerships

- Support
- Staff CPD



- Appendix

– Information about Child Development

- What to Expect in the EYFS
- Universally Speaking
- Blackburn with Darwen School Readiness Framework
- Home Learning links and websites



Strategy - Phase 2 – Targeted Support

WellComm

The complete speech and language toolkit, from screening to intervention.

- Speech and Language Screening Toolkit WellComm will be given universally to all settings to identify children from six months to six years old who might be experiencing delays with speech and language.
- This toolkit helps settings to easily identify children needing support. They're quick and simple to use (requiring no speech and language expertise), and the traffic light scoring format of the instant reports makes them quick to interpret.
- Data will be collected from the LA via the Wellcomm wizard – initially 3 times over the year (which will be reviewed after the first year) end of September, end of January and beginning of July.
- External training has been commissioned by the LA and is in the process of being finalised from a recommended WellComm provider due September 2022.



Next Steps

- Audit and WellComm on School Improvement Plans and SIG plans – implementation and use across all settings
- Collection and evaluation of data
- Quality assurance and feedback

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

