

New Development in school

Speech and Language Update

We have begun using our new speech and language screening and intervention programme, Speech Link and Language Link this term. Your child's class teacher may have already spoken to you about this programme but we thought everyone might be interested in finding out more about this exciting development.



How does the school use Speech Link and Language Link with my child?

All children in reception and year 3 will be screened using the fun, interactive assessment which highlights specific areas of need in a child's speech and language and make recommendations to help them in these areas. Based on these recommendations, we will be able to give a child the targeted input that they need. The package has progress measures built in, so we can measure the effectiveness of the input. Miss Weeks is taking a lead on delivering the programme in early years and KS1 and works specifically on speech and language input for two days a week. In the juniors Mrs White and Mrs Haydn-Jones are leading the programme. We will continue to monitor progress through termly Individual Learning Plan reviews.



What does a Speech and Language Assessment screen for?

The language assessment is used as a whole year screen. The assessment measures what specific areas of language a child understands; for instance, a child may be really good at understanding verbs, but not as confident in understanding instructions. The assessment allows teaching staff to target areas of need. The speech assessment is only used for children who are already identified as needing input, so it is not a screening tool. What it does do, however, is highlight the exact sounds that a child is struggling to produce and determine whether this is a cause for concern at their particular age. Your child's class teacher will speak to you about any areas of concern raised by the screen and will explain any interventions your child will be part of.



What does it mean if my child is identified as needing extra speech and language support?

If your child is identified as needing extra support, it means that they may be having difficulty with one or more areas of speech and language and their teacher feels they would benefit from an extra boost. Speech Link and Language Link provide schools with the tools to target these specific areas of need, however in some cases we may recommend discussion with specialist support, such as a speech and language therapist. School can make referrals to the community speech and language team if necessary. Remember, when it comes to your child, you are the expert. If you have concerns about your child's speech and language, you should discuss these with your us at school or your local GP.



If your child already has a Speech and Language Therapist when they start school, then they may already have established interventions. The Speech and Language Therapist may advise that your child is also included in Speech Link and Language Link interventions, but they will make a clinical decision based on your child's needs.

What can I do to support my child at home?

The great news is that supporting the school's work at home can be really simple, and really fun! Speech Link and Language Link comes complete with advice and homework sheets for the school to share with a child's home support network. This is a great opportunity to get involved and chat to your child about their work. Also be aware that our holistic view of a child's progress means that we now use parent and pupil views, so we may ask for your input about how your child finds school and other activities. This will be sent home in the form of a questionnaire which your child's class teacher will explain to you.

If you require any more information please contact me, Mrs Cross (SENCO). Thank you for your support.