

Downs Way School Communication Policy

Aims

Downs Way School's principal aim is set out in the Vision Statement:

'At Downs Way School all staff and Governors are committed to providing a high quality, stimulating, safe and caring learning environment where every child is encouraged to achieve their true potential.

Everyone at our school whether child or adult is a star; we enable them to shine.'

In order to achieve this we must communicate effectively with our pupils, their families, with each other and with members of the wider school community.

Our intention is that this policy will help to ensure that children in our school receive support with communication skills that are an essential part of learning for life and also to encourage resilience. It is our aim that all pupils leave Downs Way School as effective communicators.

All children - those with a special need and those without - benefit from verbal and non-verbal methods of communication. We aim to provide a whole school environment where all forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, are used alongside each other to support the whole community. Communication skills underpin the basis for all future learning and are fundamental for accessing all areas of the curriculum.

Objectives

All communication at Downs Way School should:

- Keep pupils, parents, staff, governors and other stakeholders informed
- Be open, honest, ethical and non-judgemental
- Use jargon free, plain English and be easily understood by all
- Use the method of communication most effective and appropriate to the context, message and audience
- Be compatible with our core values as reflected in our Vision Statement

This policy forms part of the induction information for new members of staff and supply staff. Their attention is particularly drawn to the section on responsibilities of class teachers in relation to children with SCLN - Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Co-ordinating provision

The SENCo has overall responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the communication provision within the school. Governors will receive regular reports on the effectiveness of provision.

SENCo responsibilities

- Be responsible for day to day application of communication policy
- Ensure all areas of the communication friendly framework are in place
- Work with teaching and support staff in co-ordinating provision for SLCN pupils
- Monitor and evaluate SCLN provision and report to the governing body
- Liaise with parents
- Liaise with external support agencies

Class Teacher responsibilities

- Make their classroom communication friendly
- Deliver communication friendly lessons
- Familiarise themselves with pupil records and information regarding their SCLN pupils
- Differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of SCLN pupils
- Support individual pupils in reaching their IEP (Individual Education Plan) targets
- With support from the SENCo write IEPs for SLCN pupils
- Be alert to the need for monitoring pupils who are causing concern
- Use assessment information to plan and devise specific strategies for managing pupils with SCLN
- Consult with and keep the SENCo informed of any changes to need or circumstance
- Implement the teaching needs of pupils, which may include the management of a special needs assistant or teacher
- Liaise formally with parents/carers to discuss progress, IEP targets, reports from outside agencies and any concerns
- Complete IEPs each term

Learning Support Assistant responsibilities

- Be aware of which strategies are appropriate to ensure that pupils are able to access the curriculum or ask for help
- Feedback to the class teacher
- Through participation in training have a thorough understanding of the communication skills needed to become a communication friendly school. Thereby be able to assist in the delivery of interventions designed to

address the needs of the child/ren they are supporting, including reading, phonic and targeted speech therapy support

- Where possible attend reviews

School responsibilities

All staff should:

- Be aware of the nature and range of communication difficulties that children can experience
- Have knowledge of practical strategies to use within the classroom
- Have knowledge of differentiating activities to enable SCLN to access the curriculum effectively
- Be prepared and able to communicate effectively with all children who attend Downs Way School

All school staff are expected to use these strategies within the school environment to promote speech, language and communication. It is expected that in each classroom there will be evidence of:

- Stop, listen and respond and that the poster reminding all pupils is on display in a prominent place
- Blank level questions are used throughout lessons
- Mind maps
- Vocabulary maps
- Visual timetables
- Visual school expectations and rules
- Task plans for appropriate children
- Story plans

At Downs Way School pupils need to be given the opportunity to speak and have their own voice. All pupils should have the opportunity to voice their opinions and air their views. Children are asked to complete questionnaires about school life. The results of these are acted upon. School staff are aware of the needs of the SCLN children take account of these needs when interacting with the children anywhere in school.

Staff Development

There is an ongoing programme of INSET for all members of staff. Staff also attend courses run by the Local Authority, Speech and Language Therapy Services or other schools.

Referral Process

If a parent or member of staff has concerns about a child's speech and language needs they will speak either to the class teacher or the SENCo. The SENCo will make an assessment and refer a child to the SALT team at East Surrey Hospital. The SENCo will ensure parents and staff are kept updated on progress of a referral. If possible a member of staff will attend school based therapy appointments to ensure staff can deliver any interventions effectively.

Assessment

Downs Way School uses the Early Years Framework and Speaking and Listening APP scales to assess children based on in class observations across a wide range of activities. Where appropriate, P Scales are also used for assessment.

Monitoring

The SENCo will monitor the application of this policy and will take appropriate steps to ensure that it is operating effectively.

This will be achieved by:

- Ongoing teacher and TA/SNA observations of the pupils
- Differentiating short term plans
- Scrutiny of evidence of pupils' work showing progress towards curriculum objectives
- Scrutiny of evidence of progress towards targets at IEP reviews
- Evidence of strategies involved in becoming a communication friendly school
- Discussion with pupils about their progress
- Discussion with parents/carers about their child's progress
- Discussion with outside agencies about a child's progress
- Scrutiny of plans and books to ensure expectations are met e.g. mind maps used, range of blank level questions

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually to ensure its effective application.

Next review - Summer Term 2014