



Extend Learning
Academies Network

Communication and Language Policy

Version:	1.1	
Written by:	ELAN executive team	
Reviewed by:	ELAN Board	Date: 05/05/2020
Approved by:	Name: Iain Kilpatrick Signed by: Iain Kilpatrick Chair of the Board	Date: 05/05/2020
Adopted by Academies:	Banwell Primary School Bournville Primary School Locking Primary School Mead Vale Primary School Mendip Green Primary School Milton Park Primary School Oldmixon Primary School Walliscote Primary School Windwhistle Primary School	
Review:	3 Years	
Next Review Due By:	September 2022	

Document Control

Document Information

	Information
Document Name	<i>Communication and Language Policy</i>
Document Author	<i>ELAN executive team</i>
Document Approval	<i>ELAN executive team</i>
Document Status	<i>Version 1.1</i>
Publication Date	06.05.2020
Review Date	September 2022
Distribution	<i>Website/General</i>

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Amended by	Comments
1.0	06.05.2020	ELAN executive team	New MAT policy
1.1	May 2021	School Improvement Lead	Frequency of policy review amended to align with accreditation renewal.

Contents

1. Aims	4
2. What is communication?	4
3. A Communication Friendly School	4
4. Strategies used to promote communication include:	5
5. Sustainability	6
6. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities – communication with other schools and outside agencies	6
7. Monitoring and Review	6
8. Appendix 1 - The Communication Chain	7

Communication and Language Policy

1. Aims

The aims of the communication and language policy are:

- 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 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 development of speech, language and communication is given a high profile through regular training and inclusion on staff meeting agendas and school improvement plans
- to ensure that children leaving Extend Learning Academies Network (ELAN) schools are effective communicators.
- to annually review the School Communication Policy and monitor its implementation across the whole school.

2. What is communication?

In ELAN, we use the following definitions:

- **Language:** the ability to understand words and sentences and organise thought and 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 and facial expression to communicate your message.

The communication chain also explains receptive and expressive language (see Appendix 1)

All these elements of communication are fundamental to children's learning and development. These elements are applicable to all aspects of school life and beyond.

The ELKLAN training has formed the basis of our speech, language and communication policy, incorporating a range of strategies to develop children's language skills, irrespective of any difficulties they face.

3. A Communication Friendly School

In ELAN, we feel that pupil voice is an important strand of education, which involves:

- listening to young people
- giving young people the language to understand and express their views and feelings
- encouraging children to recognise and vocalise the support they need and find useful

We provide a communication friendly environment where children are encouraged to speak out and voice their opinions in order to:

- take ownership and responsibility for their achievements and challenges and demonstrate independence
- make informed choices
- reason
- better engage in the learning process and become active rather than passive learners
- access support that they may need
- make communication as easy, effective and enjoyable as possible for all

- provide opportunities for everyone to talk, listen, understand and take part
- support learning and personal, social and emotional development

4. Strategies used to promote communication include:

- providing regular and frequent opportunities for children to speak and listen to each other, interact in a group and participate in role play, throughout their time in school
- high quality adult interactions e.g. 'Stop, Listen, Respond...', the hand rule, giving praise, following the child's interest
- thinking about the vocabulary used in questioning using the Blank Language Scheme. This will be differentiated across the school to meet the needs of children functioning at the four different levels
- extending vocabulary through modelling language, making information and directions visual through a variety of vocabulary strategies such as word maps, mind mapping, word wise whizz
- encouraging children to 'Speak Out' when they are unsure using 'Speak Out' strategies.
- displaying school expectations and values visually.
- using visual timetables/time lines to support children's understanding of what they are doing over a period of the school day.
- developing children's narrative skills through colourful stories, Talk for Writing, story mind mapping etc.
- using high quality communication and language interventions such as Talk Boost, Socially Speaking, The Narrative programme, Black Sheep, Gap House.
- providing whole school ELKLAN training in Communication Counts, including 'top-up' training annually and training for new staff as part of induction.
- using alternative forms of communication where appropriate, for example, Makaton, PECS, large print.

Communication will link closely with all areas of the curriculum and form a vital part of learning across the school. As such, this policy will be supported by work in phonics, other intervention programmes and input from outside agencies such as speech therapy. Children receiving additional support for a SLCN from the speech and language service will have individual targets set for them within an individual 'Speech and Language Therapy Plan'. This will be shared with parents to ensure a joined up approach at home and at school.

As a result of implementing ELKLAN strategies and embedding this communication policy into practice, members of staff will feel they:

- can work more effectively with children with speech, language and communication difficulties
- can identify and support children and young people with English as an Additional Language (EAL) who also have speech, language and communication needs
- can enable EAL children to communicate effectively and interact with their peer group and adults.
- support the communication development of all children in the school environment across the curriculum and in the playground.
- know how to modify their interactions which is a benefit to all children.
- can change the way they speak to children so they understand more of what is said
- can encourage talking by using specific strategies such as modelling language which can be used anytime and anywhere
- know how to support a child with interaction difficulties
- can support a child with speech difficulties who has a speech therapy programme to follow
- are more confident dealing with children with mild speaking and listening difficulties and know which need to be seen by the speech and language therapist
- are more confident in talking to parents about the child's speaking and listening skills.

- share a common language with the Speech and Language Therapy service so reducing time needed to understand what is being asked of them and thus improving efficiency

ELKLAN level 3 and 4 Language Communication Practitioners can be a specialist resource to other members of staff in each ELAN school.

5. Sustainability

To ensure that ELKLAN principles and practice are fully embedded within the culture of the school, our lead communication practitioners work across the trust, in partnership with The Beach Teaching School, to provide top-up ELKLAN training for new staff and for any staff who missed sessions from the first round of training.

The trust has a network for lead communication practitioners that meets three times a year to facilitate sharing of effective practice.

As part of induction procedures in all ELAN schools, new staff and supply staff will receive a brief introduction about ELKLAN and the expectations of being a communication friendly setting. Within this introduction the staff member will be introduced to key ELKLAN strategies used in school to support pupils with SLCN. They will be made aware of who the lead communication practitioners are in school so that they can use this person as a source for support around SLCN. They will also be directed to read this communication policy.

6. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities – communication with other schools and outside agencies

Please refer to Extend Learning Academies Network Special Educational Needs policy.

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

8. Appendix 1 - The Communication Chain

