

## Positive Interactions and Encouraging Communication

At Incey Winceys Day Nursery and Preschool we understand how important positive interactions are on the wellbeing of the child, their ability to feel comfortable, concentrate, and ultimately learn.

Words in the child's home language where a child has English as an Additional Language are obtained and used to best understand the child's needs.

Staff understand that wherever possible the child will consent to the activity, such as changing a nappy, and if they are reluctant staff will wait until they have finished their game. However, common sense is used to ensure the child is not left in a soiled or wet nappy or clothes for extended periods of time.

Staff lead children by holding their hand and are aware of potential dangers of dislocation of the wrist or elbow. Staff's behaviour towards the child always shows respect and mutual understanding and if the child is not comfortable, the adult will seek another member of the team to support.

Staff are aware of good practice with regards to speaking and encouraging conversation, this includes:

- waiting for **10 seconds** after asking a question to allow adequate time for the child to think and respond.
- Speaking in short, clear sentences and if a child pronounces a word incorrectly the staff will model it for them by repeating it in the correct pronunciation (without making the child feel that they are wrong).
- Using a variety of approaches to encourage clear speech sounds by exercising the mouth muscles, such as blowing bubbles, using wind instruments such as recorders or harmonicas, pulling faces such as poking tongue out or making O with mouth in the mirror, using sounds in play such as "weee" when sliding or "cha cha cha" while dancing.
- Facing the child and giving them good eye contact when speaking or listening to provide a positive role model.
- Liaising with parents if there is a particular word being said but not understood.
- No shouting.

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- Where a child may not be speaking, staff will leave pauses in known phrases, songs or books to encourage the child to speak. In identifying that a child may be able to speak but is reluctant to, they work on this issue in a 1:1 session.
- Using objects of references (toys or items the child can hold) while teaching words as they are often more memorable than looking at a picture.
- Repetition is the best way for children to learn, so repeating the same songs, games or books gives the child time to join in and become familiarised.
- Understanding that speech development begins with single words and gradually becomes more words in a sentence and speaking appropriately to children. For instance, if a child is speaking 2-word sentences then staff speak similarly, adding in a third word such as “red bus” becomes “big red bus”.
- Specific 1:1 session, such as “what’s in the box” may be scheduled if appropriate and if there are concerns over speech development, a speech tracker is used to monitor and record development. If needed, a referral to Speech and Language may be sent.
- When there are issues with sharing, role modelling the language needed, such as “can I have a turn?” while using visuals such as a sand timer to reinforce the waiting period.
- Using the routine to reinforce key words and encouraging please and thank you as part of the mealtimes. If a child does not say a word, they are not prevented from accessing the same things and it is not highlighted, staff model and praise those that join in.
- Understanding that speaking is not the only way of communicating and provide strategies in line with advice from outside agencies, use Makaton, watch for gestures, and eye contact to meet the needs of the child.
- Understanding that the attention of young children is usually very short, and this should be considered when planning for the day, such as not planning carpet time to last longer than 10 minutes.

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- Understanding that everything they say and do is being taught to the children and are aware of the impact their tone of voice, expressions and overall attitude has on the children.
- Role modelling good speaking and listening to each member of the team.
- Understanding that children have come to nursery with a variety of different experiences and backgrounds and being sensitive to children's fears, giving them time to feel comfortable. Staff also understand that some children do not wish to take part in an activity such as getting hands wet during messy play and staff think creatively to ensure they are still part of it, such as providing a wooden spoon or a pair of gloves.
- Liaising with parents and other members of the team to ensure their next step is appropriate and to find engaging activities to allow the child to achieve it.
- Using the space in ways that allow children to learn best, for instance breaking into smaller groups and having quieter sessions during the day.
- Understanding that the way they read a story is very important in engaging the child's attention, and by using different voices or puppets/props the interaction will be more positive.
- Being aware that many children find the nursery environment over-stimulating and provide a "chill out" area or den that can be accessed during the day.
- Understanding that behaviour is a form of communication and use behaviour trackers if there are concerns to try to ascertain what the reason may be.
- Being patient and not pressuring, and subtly praising the child when they speak enables the child to feel comfortable and valued.