



Brookfields Communication Standard Policy

Intent

At Brookfields we believe that communication is at the centre of our school curriculum learning pathways and is paramount to all pupils' development. Our three pathways; EYFS, Explorers and Adventurers (see curriculum handbook for further information about our pathways), highlight the importance of good communication to support pupil progress and independence. Our children have diverse and complex learning needs, expanding into areas of sensory processing, emotional and behaviour regulation, attention, and motivation, physical and movement and social interaction skills. We endeavour to support all pupils to establish a system of expressive and receptive communication that is relevant to, and supportive of, their learning needs.

All staff at Brookfields follow a Total Communication approach that is embedded into everyday teaching and learning, including structured and unstructured routines (snack, lunch, and playtimes) throughout the school day. This means that all methods of communication are recognised and equally valued, encouraging pupils to interact in both planned and spontaneous learning situations. We recognise that, as a staff team, it is our responsibility to showcase effective communication through listening, observing, and modelling skills.

It is our aim at Brookfields to embed the *Five Good Communication Standards (endorsed by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists)* across our learning pathways, which will support our children to create positive, inclusive relationships, boost self-esteem and confidence, develop independent life skills, navigate the wider world, and improve their quality of life.

Implementation through the Five Good Communication Standards

The use of the *Five Good Communication Standards* enable staff to promote a high quality, consistent method to communication and interaction, based on an individualised child centred learning approach.

1. Provide good information that tells people how best to communicate with me.

At Brookfields all pupils have an Education Health Care Plan which outlines their key learning outcomes. These SMART targets are used to inform the production of termly IEP's that focus on core communication and interaction skills. Targets are evaluated towards the end of each term, allowing staff to identify next steps of learning, continually supporting communication skills for all pupils. To support progress and ensure all staff are communicating effectively with each pupil, Communication Overview Profiles are created, showcasing communication levels and stages for each individual child. Listen, Respond, Teach behavioural plans (LRT) are used to promote positive behaviour strategies using effective communication models. These are updated and reviewed by staff and class teams to be kept up to date and specific for each pupil. Relevant documentation, which supports communication and interaction, is shared with all staff and outside agencies who work with and interact with our pupils. This ensures that all adults working with Brookfields pupils, understand the individual needs of each pupil and can follow a standardised approach to communication.

2. School staff support me to make decisions linked to my care, support, and education.

At Brookfields, communication is inclusive for all, as we recognise that children understand and express themselves in different ways. Staff seek to establish a supportive and effective communication environment which supports the views of individuals, allowing them to be understood. The use of a range of activity such as PSHE learning sessions, UNICEF Rights Respecting School articles, ELSA intervention groups, and emotional regulation opportunities, are all a fundamental part of our curriculum. Through such methods we upskill children in developing an awareness of their feelings and beginning to express their individuality through personal preferences, likes and dislikes.

Pupil voice is advocated throughout our school giving all our children an opportunity to share their views through as many opportunities as possible. The use of Talking Mats, Visual Communication Aids, AAC devices and scaffolds are pivotal in supporting our children with this standard, along with ensuring that staff know how to support each pupil appropriately to develop problem solving skills and decision making. A collaborative approach between school, family, carers, and outside agencies is used to establish a complete picture of the individual's views and preferences, this is reviewed by each staff team and shared during Annual Review, Pupil Progress and Transition meetings as well as in the child's annual school report.

3. Staff are good at supporting me with my communication.

As a school Brookfields ensures that all staff receive high quality continuous professional development linked to communication and interaction. It is paramount that all staff know how to communicate with pupils in a meaningful, enriching and positive way. We use SALT professionals to deliver bespoke training to all staff, as well as inducting new staff to core communication and language skills. A Speech and Language Assistant comes into school once per week, to model learning sessions, review pupil activities and resources and provide staff with next steps to enhance communication progress and provision. The use of ongoing and daily formative assessment allows staff to adapt communication approaches for each child, using appropriate resources and learning aids that allow pupils to understand and interactive meaningfully, as well as expressing themselves positively.

Core communication approaches that are regularly utilised at Brookfields include objects, photos, pictures, symbols, signing, writing, visual aids/boards/books or devices. The Speech and Language Service provides staff with care plans for individual pupils focusing on core aspects of their communication skills and targets. Staff at Brookfields then use these care plans to inform their planning, ensuring that these aspects of communication are embedded into daily teaching and learning sessions and in the less structured times of the day.

4. I have lots of chances to communicate.

By embedding a Total Communication Approach, pupils are exposed to many forms of communication which can include one or a combination of the following skills and strategies.

- Objects of reference
- Communication boards
- Signing- Makaton (or specialised BSL if appropriate)
- Body language, facial expressions and gestures
- Eye contact and eye gaze
- Vocalisations
- AAC (visual communication aids including high tech equipment)

- Intensive Interaction
- Attention Autism
- Colourful Semantics
- Functional Language and Key Word Levels
- Talking mats
- Zones of Regulation
- Switches
- Social Stories
- Planners and visual timetables (class/individual)
- Play based learning

These are entrenched into day-to-day learning at Brookfields across our learning pathways, allowing children the opportunity to communicate in all areas of learning, through adult led modelling and child led interaction. These core skills and strategies are implemented into pupils' learning journey at Brookfields through the curriculum and as they explore the following teaching and learning enhancements and opportunities.

- Messy play exploration
- Forest Area and Tyre Park exploration
- Sensory Integration
- Reading for Pleasure
- Specialist music lessons
- Sporting activity
- Enrichment in the community (LoTC)
- Imaginative Play
- Enrichment and Cultural Capital Opportunities
- Self-Regulation choosing time
- Sensory Rooms- Soft Play and Light Room
- Swimming
- Occupational Therapy Groups

5. Staff help me to understand and communicate about my body.

At Brookfields, supporting the physical, mental & emotional health and well-being of our pupils is fundamental. As a school we support our pupils and their families to receive up to date health care advice and signpost them to various professionals if they require specific and individualised support. Targeted interventions such as NSPCC Keep Safe and puberty themed sessions are delivered collaboratively by our school Family Support Worker and Speech and Language Assistant to specific groups of children. School staff work very closely with the continence service team, school nurse, optometrist, occupational therapist, and other healthcare professionals to ensure pupils are accessing and receiving, when relevant, appropriate health care.

Specialist training is provided for staff if pupils have a significant health care need, along with continuous professional development for all staff and specific training updates for staff who are first aid trained. The use of care plans and when required health action plans and individual pupil risk assessments are used to support staff with understanding the health care needs of pupils. If relevant, staff provide communication aids to support pupils and their families before and when attending health care or hospital appointments and will complete any relevant documentation linked to their health care needs in school. Staff are highly skilled in

identifying the needs of their pupils and by utilising the appropriate communication and interaction strategies they can support pupils to develop their own understanding of looking after their bodies. At Brookfields, we pride ourselves on knowing our children and their individual learning, emotional and health needs. All staff are exceptionally efficient when knowing if a pupil is ill or in pain and staff follow appropriate procedures to ensure pupils receive the appropriate level of care.

Impact

At Brookfields, we believe in a cohesive approach to our pupils' education, with school staff, families/ carers and professionals working collaboratively to provide the best learning experience for all. By following our Communication Standard Policy, we can continually monitor the levels of progress in these areas through our IEP's, Pupil Progress Meetings, and data collection. Senior Leaders maintain oversight of individual and cohort progress using the B-Squared assessment tool. A collaborative and standardised approach to communication and interaction through universal communication strategies and resources enhances pupils' opportunities to continually progress and develop their own independent life skills in an accessible and inclusive learning environment.