

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Communication and Language	Amazing Me!	Helpful Hands	Food, Glorious Food	Down on the farm	A Royal Affair	Land or sea? - Take an Adventure with me!

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

At Wheatcroft school, we use **Helicopter Stories** in EYFS to further promote Communication and Language. The children are encouraged to engage in a variety of stories. They learn the importance of listening carefully, learn new vocabulary, learn to articulate their ideas in well-formed sentences, connect ideas and describe events in detail. Each half term we base our learning on one key Helicopter Story, from The Story Basket (whilst comparing and contrasting a variety of other stories). The children also have the opportunity to give their own stories which are recorded verbatim (demonstrating the progress that children have made in their spoken language). Children then enjoy acting out their own stories with their classmates, seeing their creations come to life!



Benefits of using Helicopter Stories- Key findings from the Open University

- *Taking part in Helicopter Stories provided children with the appropriate motivation and environment to significantly develop their communication skills, including nonverbal communication, spoken language and literacy - both when talking to adults and other children.
 - *The technique had a particularly strong impact on children's spoken language, and provided clear evidence for how children were improving.
 - *The approach significantly impacted upon children's confidence, with even some of the quietest children learning to speak up and take part. It developed their sense of agency, as they felt, more and more, they could choose what they wanted to say and be listened to.
 - *Children became more motivated to engage in literacy activities, such as writing down their own stories and following story transcripts.
 - *Children developed performance skills, and became more creative in their performance techniques.
 - *Children grew in their willingness to take on roles with which they didn't identify, for example playing a role of the opposite gender.
- On top of benefits to children, the evaluation also found that adults who used the Helicopter Technique developed skills in listening to children, letting them lead, and understanding their language development.

At Wheatcroft School we learn and recite one **Helicopter poem/rhyme** each week. This means that children have been exposed to a bank of 30+ poems during their time in EYFS. This rich offering supports children with their language and communication. It promotes use of different vocabulary and helps speech development. Children learn to memorise spoken word and the poetry reinforces rhyming and intonation, which helps when the children start to read.

Development Matters Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use new vocabulary through the day → *Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important → *Learn new vocabulary → *Develop social phrases → *Engage in story times → *Learn rhymes, poems and songs → *Engage in non-fiction books → <p>(throughout!)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding → *Retell the story, once they have developed a deep familiarity with the text, some as exact repetition and some in their own words → *Use new vocabulary in different contexts → *Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound → *Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary → 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them. *Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. Describe events in some detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them. *Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences *Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen 	(all previous statements)
Opportunities for Communication and Language	<p>Tell me about yourself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Welcome to EYFS *Settling in activities *Making friends *Children talking about experiences that are familiar to them *Model talk routines through the day. For example, arriving in school: "Good morning, how are 	<p>Tell me a story...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Settling in activities- Develop vocabulary through the new day and for new routines *Tell me a story - retelling stories/ Story language- promote use of role play areas *Children to tell their own stories (Helicopter approach) *Listening and responding to stories 	<p>Tell me... who/when/where then why/how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Using language *Continue to retell familiar stories, using their own language- promote use of puppets *Telling their own stories (Helicopter style) *Encourage and model the use of how and why questions during news time. *Take part in 	<p>Talk it through!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Encourage and model the use of time connectives when children are telling their news from home or retelling stories. Take part in discussion- What do we wonder?, linked to story front covers WHY, HOW *Children to tell their own Helicopter stories *Helicopter poems 	<p>What happened?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Continue to Model complete sentences on everyday talk and encourage full responses *Continue focus opportunities to solve problems together. *Introduce problem solving words and phrases to use in their 	<p>Time to share!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Continue to Model complete sentences in everyday talk and encourage full responses *Continue focus opportunities to solve problems together. *Consolidate all communication and language development

	<p>you?"</p> <p>*lots of opportunities for listening- listening skills modelled/ whole body listening introduced</p> <p>*Following simple, clear instructions</p> <p>*Helicopter poems introduced (see list/order above)</p>	<p>*Following instructions</p> <p>*Take part in discussion- What do we notice, linked to story front covers</p> <p>*Understands how to listen carefully and why listening is important - introducing talking partners.</p> <p>*Carefully chosen stories to develop the children's vocabulary.</p> <p>*Helicopter poems</p>	<p>discussion- What do we wonder?, linked to story front covers</p> <p>WHO, WHERE, WHEN</p> <p>*Encourage and model describing events in some detail</p> <p>*Helicopter poems</p>	<p>*Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important - children to listen carefully and ask good questions during discussions.</p> <p>*Sustained focus encourage when listening to stories etc.</p>	<p>explanations: 'so that', 'because', 'I think it's...', 'you could...', 'it might be...'</p>	<p>(including any aspects that the children are struggling with)- make learning 'sticky'.</p>
<p>Helicopter Stories vocabulary introduced through core story</p> <p>We believe that vocabulary has to be 'taught' as well as 'caught' and as such, we spend time explicitly teaching vocabulary in a variety of ways.</p> <p>We frequently revisit words in order for them to be remembered and for connections to be made.</p> <p>We record 'Wow' words in a big book and use pictures and other words to help them 'stick.'</p>	<p>Goldilocks and the Three Bears</p> <p>woods</p> <p>cottage</p> <p>chimney</p> <p>porridge</p> <p>bears</p> <p>journey</p> <p>returned</p> <p>smash</p> <p>small</p> <p>medium</p> <p>large</p>	<p>The Elves and the shoemaker</p> <p>shoemaker</p> <p>leather</p> <p>candle</p> <p>needle</p> <p>stitches</p> <p>final</p> <p>discovered</p> <p>customer</p> <p>struck</p> <p>giggling</p>	<p>Stone Soup</p> <p>cauldron</p> <p>silken bag</p> <p>cabbage</p> <p>salt beef</p> <p>refused</p> <p>began</p> <p>villagers</p> <p>mentioned</p> <p>whispered</p>	<p>The Ugly Duckling</p> <p>ducklings</p> <p>pond</p> <p>wild ducks</p> <p>farmyard</p> <p>wood pigeons</p> <p>lake</p> <p>hatch</p> <p>beautiful</p>	<p>The King's New Clothes</p> <p>material</p> <p>palace</p> <p>trickster</p> <p>foolish</p> <p>pretended</p> <p>sparkle</p> <p>stripes</p> <p>parade</p> <p>band</p> <p>servants</p> <p>finally</p> <p>gaspd</p>	<p>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</p> <p>field</p> <p>river</p> <p>bridge</p> <p>troll</p> <p>meadow</p> <p>decided</p> <p>hooves</p> <p>suddenly</p> <p>charged</p> <p>joined</p> <p>brothers</p>