

Talk, talk and more talk – Language rich environments.

"Reading and writing float on a sea of talk."

James Britton.

At Wheatcroft, we understand that children's vocabulary, understanding of the world, ability to use accurate grammar, and their ability to communicate effectively, all depend on the quality of language they hear. We prioritise language-rich environments, where adults engage children in high-quality conversations throughout the day. The more conversations children engage in, the more they will understand once they can read, and the more vocabulary and ideas they will have once they can write. We carefully and deliberately plan ways to develop children's spoken language within our English units. We extend their vocabulary and understanding by:

- Paying close attention to and responding to what children say, giving them time to share their thoughts and opinions.
- Rephrasing and extending what children say when appropriate.
- Asking lots of open questions.
- Modelling accurate spoken grammar.
- Modelling making connections between events.
- Modelling new language for children and modelling thinking out loud.
- Modelling language from books and stories.
- Extending children's vocabulary by introducing, teaching and explaining new words in different contexts.
- Deliberately repeating and consolidating new vocabulary to build words into children's working memory.
- Using our 'Challenging Talk' posters when engaging in conversations and expecting children to justify their opinions or answers.
- Sharing high-quality and engaging books and talking about them every day.
- Asking our home/school community to engage in talk homework.
- Providing additional smaller-group story times for children with delayed language.
- Helping pupils retell and develop their own stories orally and take on different roles in imaginative play and drama.
- Taking rapid action when speech, language and communication delays are identified.
- Working with external agencies to support these children make progress.
- Investing in a speech and language advanced teaching assistant, to assess children, deliver interventions, liaise with teaching staff, and communicate with external agencies and to overview any children requiring support in this area.
- In addition, we also invest in a qualified speech and language therapist through the SEASIDE SALT company, who carry out their own assessments and support individual children with therapy plans.



We have high expectations for the way in which all pupils and staff communicate with each other. This includes the ways in which we listen to each other. We teach children to listen and model the ways in which listening is important. We maximise participation in class and group discussions wherever possible.