

English Policy September 2024

Rationale

There are now improved opportunities for age-appropriate language and literacy development for deaf children due to advances in amplification technologies.

All deaf children must be fluent readers and writers in English because this is the first language of their local community and the wider society in the United Kingdom.

They need equal access to information presented in English. Deaf children must be independent readers and writers because literacy is the key to Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).

Principles

Reading and writing are fundamentally auditory not visual processes. Literacy development for deaf children is qualitatively similar to hearing learners but they must have knowledge of language beyond conversational proficiency or Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). Language is the precursor to the success of reading and writing. Language is acquired, literacy is taught. Therefore, there must be a rigorous approach to the development of language through relevant, meaningful interaction and activities before teaching code related print and phonology. Application of the stepped approach using the Halliday's Functions of Language model will form the basis of the approaches.

Approaches

Teachers of the Deaf will use appropriate curriculum based Long Term Plans and differentiate Medium Term Plans for their group/s accordingly, referring to EHCPs and professional reports and assessments to ensure appropriate language and English proficiency progression and development.

Maximise the use of residual hearing.

The teaching of English will always include the use voice.

Multi-sensory approaches will be used, but English must be taught in an English order using as much audition as possible.

For children whose first language is BSL, a Deaf Instructor will develop the specific language around the topic chosen to develop CALP through relevant, meaningful interaction.

Children will be exposed to language at a higher level in interactions and books to develop cognitive academic language proficiency because we do not write as we speak.

Retelling stories in a 'reading voice and style ' and using language and sounds 'through the air ' will be fundamental to the understanding of texts because we do not read and write as we speak.

Retelling will be in an accurate English order and teachers will question and expect responses to be in English order.

There will be an emphasis on reading aloud to children on a daily basis. There will be an emphasis on topic texts to develop CALP and vocabulary. Retelling activities must focus on developing CALP.

Voice will be used for phonics with speech reading and Visual Phonics by Hand (VpbH) and will follow the developmental programme of the Letters and Sounds document.

Invented spelling will be encouraged in order to demonstrate phonic progression and spelling.

The decoding of unfamiliar words will include the use of context, prediction and phonological awareness.

The skill of reading ahead and self-correcting will be taught.

Revised August 2024

References

June 2013 References Deafness for Reading for Meaning Project - An Intervention Design, January 2013, Swanwick, University of Leeds - School of Education

A Masterclass - Planning Language and Literacy programs for DHHI Learners
Mayers, C,. May 2013 Ear Foundation Nottingham

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/faq/what-are-bics-and-calp>

<http://www.visualphonicsbyhand.co.uk/>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf

<https://www.mytutor.co.uk/answers/4533/A-Level/English-Language/Language-Development-Acquisition-What-are-Halliday-s-seven-functions-of-a-child-s-language/>