



The Westminster
School

Safe, Happy and Learning Together

www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk

2022/2023

Curriculum Overview

The Westminster School

my Communication

Curriculum Intent

To enable each pupil to develop the means to communicate in ways that are meaningful and reflective of their individual needs within school, community and society.

Our priorities are:

- To provide learning experiences which facilitate the development of each pupil's communication in ways which reflect their individual needs and preferences.
- To support pupils with personalised and effective approaches and strategies which help to model and scaffold their communication.
- To build pupils' confidence, desires and engagement to participate meaningfully in social interactions.
- To provide pupils with opportunities to apply and develop their preferred means of communication in ways that contribute towards them developing positive and rewarding relationships, within school and their wider community.

Curriculum Implementation

Key Components and Strands

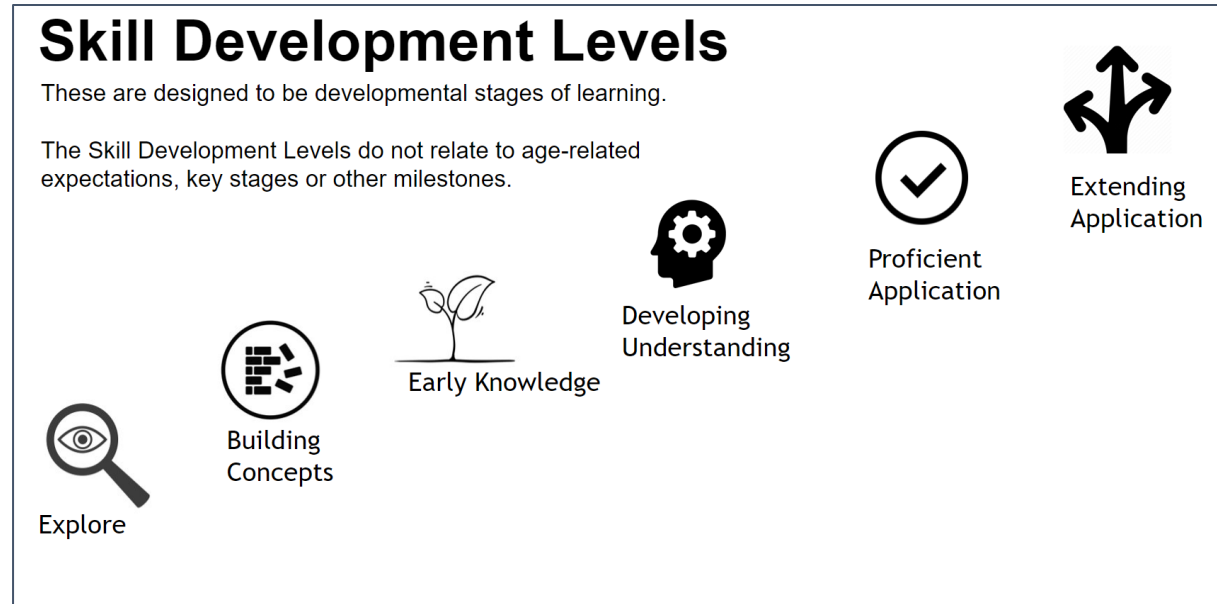
The curriculum at the Westminster School is made up of six Areas of Learning. Each Area of Learning has 2 or 3 key Components, which encompass a number of Strands. Each strand is then broken down into key priorities of learning which are then used to support the planning and delivery of high-quality teaching and learning.

The below table details the key components and strands for My Communication:

Area of Learning	My Communication		
Component	Reading	Writing	Receiving and Responding
Strand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Phonological awareness▪ Language Structure▪ Comprehension▪ Sight Recognition▪ Fluency▪ Vocabulary▪ Genre purpose▪ Background knowledge and reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Language structure▪ Spelling▪ Grammar and punctuation▪ Composition, Modes and Genres▪ Recording and recounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Recognition and response▪ Understanding▪ Memory, retention and recall▪ Questioning▪ Articulation and Fluency

Skill Development Levels explained

Each Area of Learning and its key components have a Skill Development Grid. These grids are broken down into six distinct Skill Levels as detailed below.



Example Skill Development Grid – Writing (Building Concepts)

Skill development		
Language structure	Spelling	Grammar and punctuation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group symbols/words related to an event or picture Begin to develop an awareness of a subject and verb e.g. using colourful semantics 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise parts of familiar words in context e.g. first letter of own name next to a coat hook Join in with familiar sounds when sharing a story Begins to find and write Level 2 phonics letter shapes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, sort and match to show awareness of letter sounds and letter names using capital and lowercase letter cards or magnets for example. Recognise capital letters in familiar words e.g. own name
Composition, Modes and Genres	Recording and recounting	Note – Use this guidance knowing that most criteria can apply inclusively to writing using pencil/pen or through typing and technology. Only exceptions to this are the criteria about pencil grip and physical handwriting.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compose a phrase or sentence fragment either orally or using symbols Use vocabulary focused on familiar people, objects and experiences Sequence a narrative set of images with emerging intent Choose and engage with preferred familiar stories 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make a range of marks, including lines and circles, with different materials and tools Attempt to copy different shapes and forms, including letter shapes Choose vocabulary, e.g. a symbol or picture, to show understanding of a familiar person, object or activity Have some control when using a pencil/pen 	

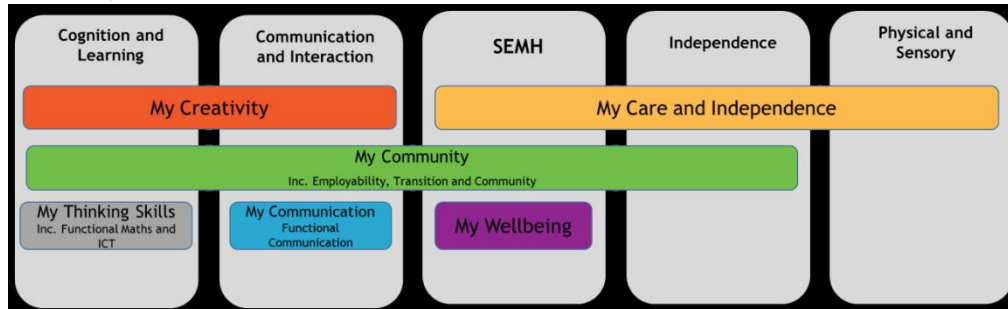
My Communication links to other Areas of Learning

My Care and Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Talking about myself▪ Accessing information▪ Recognising vocab in context▪ Communicating choices and preferences▪ Developing hobbies and interests▪ Developing independence through following instructions to cook, clean, buy food, travel, keep safe and live independent lives.▪ Following directions
My Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Environmental print▪ Communicating with people in the local community to seek information▪ Using communication to keep safe in the community▪ Accessing travel▪ Understanding what their community is and how to access this▪ Experiencing others communities through friendships and relationships or from stories and role play/drama activities▪ Building and maintaining relationships with others▪ Experiencing and exploring the world by communicating with others to do e.g., catching a bus or train or going to the cinema, a sporting event or restaurant.
My Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Communicating ideas through art forms▪ Awareness of variety of approaches and skills in adapting narratives into different forms▪ Creating a personal response – through writing, performance, animation etc▪ Exploring how language may differ between different literary genres▪ Self-expression, turn taking, reading gestures and expressions▪ Exploring and responding to stories, creating their own texts, interpretation.
My Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Understanding meaning▪ Understanding ideas and making links▪ Reading meaning in texts, images and other forms▪ Following instructions
My Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Participation and enjoyment of an activity▪ Reading for pleasure▪ confidence, self-expression, problem solving and reasoning▪ Vocabulary to express oneself and recognise and communicate emotions and feelings.

My Communication links to EHCP Areas

It's important to ensure our curriculum makes direct links to current Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) areas. The broad areas of need, as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice, and operationalised through the EHCP are as follows:

- Communication and interaction.
- Cognition and learning.
- Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).
- Independence.



- Sensory and/or physical needs.

See below for links to key EHCP Areas for all Areas of Learning:

Towards Independence Hierarchy

At the Westminster School we attribute progress through judgments against a Towards Independence Hierarchy. The Hierarchy allows for staff in school to make judgments based on how independently pupil's work towards or achieve an activity or target. For more information on how we assess and feedback to pupils at The Westminster School please refer to our most recent Assessment and Feedback Policy.



Accreditations

All Areas of Learning in the Westminster School Curriculum provide opportunities for pupils to work towards accreditations. All accreditations are carefully considered for their appropriateness and suitability for each individual pupil.

The accreditation available to pupils as part of their My Communication sessions include:

- NCFE Functional Skills – English (Entry Level 1 through to Level 1)

My Communication contributions to SHaLT

Our values at The Westminster School are encompassed in our statement of Safe, Happy and Learning Together. Through this we seek to develop our values statement: Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident, aspirational and independent members of our community.

The table below shows how My Communication contributes to achieving our overall statement:

Safe	Communicating a problem, concern, worry, feelings and emotions, abuse, understanding of the world & community.
Happy	Means to communicate emotions, recognise feelings (emotional literacy), communicate a like or dislike, communicate wants and needs, share experiences with others
Learning	Embedded in every aspect of learning
Together	Social, relationships, for verbal and non-verbal, observing others, developing empathy

Enrichment Opportunities

We pride ourselves on the enrichment opportunities we provide for pupils across all Areas of Learning. Enrichment opportunities within My Communication include:



Library lessons, group stories and lunchtime clubs



Creative storytelling, eg through animation and puppetry



Linking learning and texts to curriculum visits- e.g. KS4 trip to Safari Park linked to study of Rabbit-Proof Fence



Author visits/ workshops- Paul Geraghty and Dreadlock Alien



Post-16 involvement in DPD storytelling project, including workshops and opportunities to interview an employee



Visits to a variety of productions at Birmingham Hippodrome.



Staff use Twinkl phonics to support the delivery of phonics to identified pupils and to support CPD