



MULTI-SENSORY CUES POLICY

RATIONALE

The Communication Policy states that we aim to promote functional communication in everyday 'real life' situations, resulting in real consequences and including spontaneous communication.

We acknowledge that all communication will be equally valued and promoted, and that ability to engage in communicative exchanges is fundamental to participation and achievement in all curriculum areas, including access to the curriculum, making choices, transferring skills, self-esteem, enhancing social and independent skills, giving autonomy and functioning in the community.

Further to this, we acknowledge that some pupils, principally but not exclusively those identified as having profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), require very specific, structured approaches to communication.

PMLD PUPILS

PMLD pupils have difficulties with spoken language:

- Receptive language (understanding what is being said to them)
- Expressive language (saying something themselves)

They benefit from cues to help them understand and express themselves.

Cues might be:

- Signs
- Symbols
- Pictures
- Objects
- Body language
- Facial cues
- Gestures
- Vocalisations
- Sensory (touch, smell, visual, sound, movement)

AIMS

We acknowledge that pupils should be given every opportunity to respond to, communicate and interact with others within a total communicating environment, which includes experience of symbolic forms of communication according to their level of development.

These cues help pupils to:

- understand familiar events and activities;
- develop a sense of security;
- Anticipate and join in familiar events and activities;

- make transitions between activities;
- indicate their likes and dislikes;
- choose between activities.

Cues can provide:

- A command (eg: tapping on a child's shoulder to say 'sit down');
- Feedback (eg: rubbing a child's back to say 'well done');
- Information (eg: pressing on the child's hips to say 'time for the toilet').

Correspondingly we recognize that there is a broad progression in pupils developmental understanding of symbolic communication:

Objects > Photographs > Symbols

We aspire to provide communication systems that most closely support the needs and abilities of our learners.

Cues should:

- Be easy and convenient;
- Have an obvious relationship to the activity;
- Be accessible to the child;
- Be pleasant or neutral for the child;
- Immediately precede an action or activity;
- Alert the child that something will follow the cue;
- Focus the child's attention on the activity that follows.

On body cues are very important for pupils with sensory impairments; to help them anticipate activities, people and places they can't see or hear. On body cues are made on the child's body using distinctive motions or touches.

It is an expectation that all staff will use the full range of communication approaches throughout the school to support our learners.

OBJECTS OF REFERENCE (OOR)

Objects of reference are objects that have particular meanings assigned to them, due to their consistent use. Each object acts as a consistent symbol. It is noted that:

- All objects are potentially multisensory in nature;
- Objects of reference can play a key role in the development of receptive as well as expressive communication.

Objects of Reference can be used for pupils to:

- Sequence events;
- Anticipate what is going to happen next;

- Make choices;
- Understand that an activity has 'finished';
- Give pupils the opportunity to initiate activities;
- Use as an expressive mode (as an alternative to speech);
- Use as the first steps towards reading and writing for a child with a visual impairment.

IMPLEMENTATION

Adults need to:

- Take into account any particular likes and dislikes;
- Make the cues very different from each other;
- Use the cue as close to the activity as possible.

Object cues are everyday objects from daily activities used as a cue for those activities. The objects will be those that are used during the activity. For example, the child is shown or feels the cup they are going to use, which is then filled with drink and used for drinking:

- Don't use that cup at any other time;
- Don't use a different cup as the cue;
- Don't leave more than a couple of seconds between the cue and the activity or the connection will have been lost.

Object cues should be child-specific so that objects that are meaningful and motivating to them.

The object stands for an activity, rather than being an object that is part of the activity.

ORGANISATION

The PMLD team, in conjunction with the Communication & Interaction team and Speech & Language therapists, will annually draw up list of pupils identified as using objects and photographs as communicative cues.

In conjunction with the pupil's class team, a list of appropriate cues will be drawn up or revised. This list will indicate when and where cues are intended to be used.

Only a small number of objects or photos should be introduced at any one time.

Objects and photographs should be used for activities that occur regularly within a pupil's regular routine.

The class team, in conjunction with the Communication & Interaction team, will ensure that the appropriate cues are available for use. Photographs will be

produced centrally by the Resources Assistant and stored centrally on the school's network.

The PMLD team, in conjunction with the Communication & Interaction team and Speech & Language therapists, will annually review the list of pupils identified as using objects and photographs as communicative cues, and make amendments as appropriate.

PLANNING FOR PROGRESSION

Frequent and thorough assessment will have an impact on planning for progression as well as a consistent approach to planning and delivery of speech, language and communication programs.

It is intended that there is a general progression for pupils, dependent on their abilities and needs:

Bespoke list of OOR > generic list of OOR > photographs of OOR > generic list of symbols

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of use of multisensory cues will be carried out by the PMLD team, in conjunction with the Communication & Interaction team. This may take the form of 'drop ins', individual pupil tracking, Learning Walks, monitoring of programs and lessons, and discussion with class teams. Any evaluations will be reported to the SMT, Trustees, SALT and class teams.

The Multi-Sensory Cues Policy will be monitored by the Communication & Interaction manager and SMT.

The policy will be reviewed by Trustees.

Policy agreed on: JUNE 2016

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: CURRICULUM

Author: LINDA CROOK

Review date (optional): _____

Website **Y**/N