



# COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION POLICY

## **RATIONALE**

Promoting functional communication is fundamental to the whole school approach. This is communication that occurs in everyday 'real life' situations, results in real consequences and includes, but is not limited to, spontaneous communication.

We believe that all behavior is communication and that all communication should be equally valued.

The ability to communicate is a key skill that is fundamental to participation and achievement in all curriculum areas. Pupils communicate to access to the curriculum, make choices, transfer skills, build self-esteem, enhance social and independence skills, give autonomy and allow them to function in the community.

## **AIMS**

Pupils are given every opportunity to respond to, communicate and interact with others within a total communicating environment, develop effective and appropriate communication skills in a variety of settings, develop and gain ownership of functional communication within the school, community and home and use a variety of methods to record and recall information in a variety of ways according to their levels of development.

Many of our pupils need to experience symbolic forms of communication, according to their level of development, such as objects of reference, photos, symbols and words

As a staff, we support our pupils by the use of a full and diverse range of communication approaches throughout the school, which includes key word signing (Makaton), Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Objects of Reference, photos, touch cues, sensory cues, auditory scanning, switches and communication aids/ books.

## **ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The role of Communication & Interaction Manager includes:

- coordinating communication throughout the school;
- ensuring that pupils are making progress in their communication skills;
- ensuring that each pupil has access to support for their communication, including access to a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT), individual/ group sessions, appropriate use of communication skills from staff;
- liaising between SLT and school;
- line managing staff designated as part of the Communication & Interaction team;

- providing appropriate agreed resources;
- providing access to appropriate training, including an agreed rolling program of refresher training;
- ensuring that the communication needs of all pupils, with especial reference to those with complex communication difficulties, are known by staff within the school community, for instance through up to date communication passports.

Currently, two TAs hold a specialist role within the Communication & Interaction team. Their role encompasses:

- working in conjunction with SLT to delivering speech and language programs that help pupils meet their SLT targets, including social use of language;
- tracking the impact of training of staff in different aspects of communication on progress in pupils communication skills, through bi-annual tracking;
- supporting the class teams to enable pupils to use effective communication systems across the curriculum;
- contributing, where appropriate, to the training of staff in different communication systems and delivery of speech and language programs;
- preparing appropriate resources.

We are currently supported by three Speech & Language Therapists and one SLT assistant, who are employed by the NHS. Each therapist has approximately 6.5 hours allocated to Spring Common Academy Trust per week. Within this time they will:

- provide assessment and facilitate intervention for children with speech, language, communication and/ or eating and drinking difficulties;
- work with school staff, parents/carers and other professionals to facilitate pupil's communication skill development, for instance through the provision of specific targets, general strategies, or direct face to face therapy on an individual or group basis.
- to contribute to training for staff/ parents on topics relating to communication and or eating and drinking;
- provide an annual report as part of the annual review process.

Where appropriate programs of support will be followed within the classroom. Copies of SLT targets will be kept by SLT, Communication & Interaction team, the school office and class teams.

## **ENTITLEMENT, ACCESS AND INCLUSION**

All pupils on the SLT caseload will receive input for speech, language and communication skills from their class team as part of their broad and balanced curriculum. In addition, targeted support may be offered from the allocated SLT, SLT assistant or a specialist communication TA.

This may take the form of a speech and language program, specific targets or strategies that can be employed by staff to enhance the pupil's communication.

All classrooms will create a total and positive communication environment for all pupils which will include a consistent and accurate delivery of all augmentative forms of communication. Non-verbal pupils and those with complex speech disorders will have a Communication Passport which will inform staff about the communication needs of these pupils. All pupils will have an appropriate communication target included in their current IEP.

## **ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING**

Pupils are assessed by their allocated SLT on at least an annual basis or when targets have been reached.

An assessment report is provide by SLT at Annual Review.

A SALT surgery for parents takes place biannually.

The Communication & Interaction team track identified pupils biannually, looking at how a range of communication methods and styles are supported across the key stages. This information is fed back to class teams to support their practice. In addition, learning walks, not limited to those lead by the Communication & Interaction manager, identify good practice across the school.

## **PLANNING FOR PROGRESSION**

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

Appropriate training for staff in different communication approaches together with support provided from the Communication & Interaction team will enable pupils to progress within their own level of language.

Evidence of progression is recorded using the B Squared small steps as an ongoing process.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Monitoring of communication and interaction will be carried out by the Communication & Interaction team.

This may take the form of 'drop ins', individual pupil tracking, learning walks, monitoring of speech and language programs, monitoring of class lessons and planning, and discussion with class teams.

Evaluations will be reported to the SMT, Trustees, SLT, members of the Communication & Interaction team and class teams.

## **RESOURCES**

Resources are held in the Elaine Bartlett building of the school. These are accessible to all school staff and SLT.

New resources will be purchased by the Communication & Interaction manager on request.

In addition, a central bank of key augmentative communication aids and access technologies will be kept to trial with assessed pupils as required.

The Communication & Interaction Policy will be monitored by the Communication & Interaction manager and SMT

Policy agreed on: 2016

Signed on behalf of the Trustees \_\_\_\_\_

Committee: CURRICULUM

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Review date (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Website **Y**/N