

# Communication and Interaction Policy

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## **1. Purpose of the policy**

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to assist every pupil attending Huntcliff School, maximise and achieve to his or her full potential. This includes social emotional and behavioural development as well as academic performance. This policy is about developing high quality communication and interaction in the school, the home and the community.

## **2. Information**

### **2.1. What does Communication and Interaction mean?**

- 2.1.1. Communication profoundly affects how we interact with others. Communication and Interaction are about knowing:
- 2.1.2. How to make others understand information conveyed through spoken language.
- 2.1.3. How to use words in context.
- 2.1.4. How to use words correctly with appropriate grammatical patterns.
- 2.1.5. How to speak with expression, with a clear voice, using pitch, volume and intonation to support meaning.
- 2.1.6. How to recall words and express ideas.
- 2.1.7. How to make others understand information conveyed through gesture and language.
- 2.1.8. How to use facial expression in context.
- 2.1.9. How to use non verbal cues appropriately to enhance meaning and increase or diminish emphasis.
- 2.1.10. Awareness of how ones body language and facial expression can affect how others interpret what we mean
- 2.1.11. Awareness of how voluntary and involuntary gesture can affect how others interpret what we mean.
- 2.1.12. How all of the above can affect what others think we feel about what we are communicating.
- 2.1.13. How all of the above can affect the way others predict what we might do.

### **2.2 What is Language?**

- 2.1.14. Language is the means by which we communicate our concepts and thoughts.
- 2.1.15. It involves a combination of verbal and non-verbal components.
- 2.1.16. Language is used in different ways: to question; to clarify; to describe; to persuade etc.
- 2.1.17. Having good language skills involves correctly using non-verbal rules of communication to support meaning, good listening skills and watching the other person thoughtfully and perceptively when engaged in a conversation. It involves knowing how to talk to others and take turns. It involves knowing how to adapt language to suit various situations and individuals.
- 2.1.18. Understanding social behaviour which affects one's ability to interact with other pupils and adults.
- 2.1.19. Knowing how to think and behave flexibly rather than be confined by a restricted range of repetitive activities that might become obsessional.
- 2.1.20. Being able to take into account other people's perspectives, intentions and how these are affected by context.
- 2.1.21. Using non-verbal means of communication such as signing, gestures, electronic communication equipment, communication books.

### **3. Pupil Groups**

- 3.1. Learning to interact and communicate is a complex task for any child. Communication and interaction skills are paramount if pupils are to achieve their learning potential. There are a number of pupils who have difficulties with this area of learning.
- 3.2. A child may have a specific language impairment in the absence of any other difficulty. The nature and complexity of her/his difficulty may not always be obvious because of skills in other areas.
- 3.3. There are a variety of learning difficulties that may include Speech and Language and Communication Needs. Some of these are:
  - 3.4. General learning difficulty
  - 3.5. Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
  - 3.6. Syndromes such as Down's syndrome, Fragile X.
  - 3.7. Cerebral Palsy
  - Dyslexia
  - 3.8. Dyspraxia
  - 3.9. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)/Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).
  - 3.10. Selective Mutism.
  - 3.11. Sensory impairment.
  - 3.12. Physical impairments affecting the production of appropriate speech sounds and those affecting the body's ability use gesture and facial expression.
- 3.13. Pupils whose first language is not English are not recorded as having a "learning difficulty" involving Speech Language and Communication needs unless they also have special educational needs in this specific area. They may however, have learning needs regarding their acquisition of a second language and may still require appropriate specialist input.

### **4. Leadership**

- 4.1. This policy will continue to drive improvements in communication and interaction between pupils and staff at Huntcliff School and with the community it seeks to serve. The policy underpins the strategies, associated procedures and documentation which are used and supported by staff.
- 4.2. Mrs S Palin the Head of Learning Support, has the responsibility for Communication and Interaction and there is a named governor, Mr Ewan Gibbs with the responsibility for Communication and Interaction.
- 4.3. Mrs S Palin is the present named member of staff who has responsibility for supporting Alternative and Augmentative Communication as part of that person's duties.

### **5. Training and Development**

- 5.1. A tiered training approach exists which is reviewed regularly to ensure working practices reflect policies. (Appendix 1)

- 5.2. An audit of staff training needs in the form of a questionnaire will be carried out every 3 years in terms of communication and interaction/autism awareness.
- 5.3. All new staff undergoes awareness training including information on appropriate policies procedures and documentation. Mrs S Palin leads this induction training.
- 5.4. There is an enhanced level of training for key identified staff.
- 5.5. Teaching Assistants in charge of delivering CALL and Communication Skills have an enhanced level of training and their delivery of communication & interaction programmes is regularly monitored by specialists of Speech & Language and the Head of Learning Support.
- 5.6. In addition to the ongoing monitoring of children recorded individually on the special educational needs database, an audit of children with identified Communication and Interaction needs linked to provision mapped resources takes place yearly.
- 5.7. Training opportunities are provided by the school for parents/carers and the community. Specific speech and language advice is given to parents and pupils with specific programmes via the Speech & Language Therapist. There are support groups for parents of pupils with communication and interaction difficulties. Identified parents are notified of meetings by the Head of Learning Support Faculty. The Autism Support Education Team work with school to encourage parents to attend these support group meetings.

## **6. Transport**

- 6.1. The school serves a rural community. Some pupils require a taxi to school to ensure a safe and positive arrival to school. School liaises with taxi companies and the LAs regularly regarding pupils' needs.

## **7. Transitions**

- 7.1. The Head of Learning Support Faculty liaise with Year 6 staff in feeder primaries to ensure a smooth transition to Huntcliff for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Further arrangements are made with key Year 6 staff for pupils who have specific requirements to make additional visits to school.
- 7.2. The Head of Learning Support Faculty attends Year 6 Annual Reviews where possible.
- 7.3. Key staff including the Head of House and Head of Learning Support and Pastoral Support Officers visit feeder schools and complete transition documents with key Year 6 Primary School staff.
- 7.4. Information about Teacher Assessment at KS2 and SEN information are sent to school or communicated via transition staff.
- 7.5. There is a Welcome Day and also an Open Evening for all Year 6 pupils which take place during the second half of Summer Term. Also, a Welcome Morning takes place for smaller feeder schools who may only have one or two pupils coming to Huntcliff as well as for pupils who have either special educational needs or who are regarded as more 'vulnerable'. A Summer School takes place attended by Head of Learning Support to support vulnerable students.

- 7.6. School booklets contain information on the provision of support for students with speech, language, communication and interaction difficulties.
- 7.7. The North Lincolnshire Autism Spectrum Education Team supply Huntcliff with information in the form of a 'passport' for Autistic Spectrum pupils who have completed transition work with them. This information is disseminated to all staff prior to pupils coming to Huntcliff in September.
- 7.8. The Head of Learning Support compiles a list of Year 7 pupils with special educational needs and presents this information to staff in the form of a Pupil Passport. This contains information about the pupils and strategies for teachers to use for each pupil. Also, it contains vital information that the pupils have suggested to assist them in the classroom. Further information about strategies to use for specific difficulties/disabilities are available to staff on the school network in the SENCO area.
- 7.9. Ongoing information and strategies are given to staff for pupils with Statements/EHC Plans in all year groups as well as all those on SEN Support of the SEN Code of Practice.
- 7.10. The school liaises with other learning environments when necessary to support particular pupils with communication and interaction needs. Huntcliff School has strong links with Post 16 Colleges and pupils with communication and interaction difficulties are supported through the transition process.

## **8. Information sharing protocols**

- 8.1. There is a range of different information sharing protocols within the school, including Heads of Faculty meetings, Learning Support Faculty meetings with Teaching Assistants, Annual Review meetings, staff briefings and many other meetings between parent/carer, pupils and members of staff. The use of e-mails between members of the teaching staff makes communication fast and effective.
- 8.2. Pupils with special educational needs are asked regularly about their learning. Questionnaires are used for Annual Reviews and both parent/carers and pupil are asked to complete the questionnaire. Additional questionnaires are given to pupils with special educational needs to gauge their views about their learning and progress.

## **9. Recognition of diversity**

- 9.1.1. All pupils have equal opportunities to join in with any aspect of school life and the wider community. Extra curricular activities such as school trips, school choir, school clubs, a variety of enrichment activities ensure equal opportunity for all pupils.
- 9.1.2. Reasonable adjustments are carried out at all times for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including communication, interaction and language difficulties.

## **10. Resources**

- 10.1. Modes of provision for pupils with communication and interaction difficulties are set out in the school's SEN Policy.
- 10.2. Special provision for pupils with Communication and Interaction difficulties will include additional local authority initiatives such as CALL (Communication Aspects of Learning and

Life) and PEGS (Perceived Efficiency of Goal Setting System), if needed, as well as additional in house tailored programmes in liaison with professionals including Speech and Language Specialists, Educational Psychologists, members of ASET (Autism Spectrum Education Team), Hearing Impaired Service and Partially Sighted Service.

- 10.3. The Head of Learning Support Faculty ensures that a range of appropriate resources are used by staff and their effectiveness reviewed and monitored via classroom observation. Also school rewards, including trips, certificates, stickers and target cards, postcards are useful to promote learning for all pupils as well as those with communication and interaction difficulties.
- 10.4. Commercial resources are available to purchase and the Head of Learning Support Faculty liaises with other school staff when necessary regarding the provision of appropriate resources for particular pupils and the budgeting implications for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- 10.5. A range of good practice strategies for teachers is available for all staff who teach pupils with communication and interaction difficulties.
- 10.6. Additional guidance is available to all staff in the form of information booklets for a range of disabilities including Communication and Interaction.
- 10.7. The Head of Learning Support Faculty further supports the teaching staff by suggesting additional strategies through lesson observations or discussion with teachers.
11. **Opportunities for pupil, parent/carer and teaching and non teaching staff participation in review process.**
  - 11.1. All pupils have their progress monitored. Termly tracking helps to identify areas of strengths and weakness. All pupils with a statement/ EHC Plan have an Annual Review in addition to further reviews with the Head of Learning Support, following the monitoring of tracking. Pupils with communication and interaction difficulties may have additional regular specialists at meetings (see below). There are also reviews that take place with pupils with SEN Support.
  - 11.2. Additional monitoring of progress takes place at parents' evenings or through termly pupil tracking. Contact between parents/carers and a teacher is greatly encouraged throughout the year via e-mail and telephone communication. A school website is also available for parents to view. A text messaging service is in use which also alerts parents to a particular event, if required.
  - 11.3. PEGS and CITS resources for target setting in reviews are used if appropriate and questionnaires for parents, pupils and teaching staff are used to enable pupils, parents and members of staff to have a voice in the target setting process associated with Annual Reviews.

## **12. Outside Agencies**

- 12.1. Services and agencies are identified and involved in providing communication and interaction education as appropriate. These services include in particular NHS Speech and Language Therapy, the North Lincolnshire Council Educational Psychology and Specialist Teaching Team which includes the Autistic Spectrum Support Education Team, St Hughs Communication and Interaction Specialist College and those specialist services available from



Lincolnshire Council to pupils resident in the neighbouring county of Lincolnshire.

12.2. Staff are allocated time to implement programmes from Services and Agencies.

### **13. Improvement of communication and interaction within the school and its community.**

- 13.1. The school offers and promotes a variety of channels of increasing communication with young people/parents/carers and the community. Huntcliff School website is an example of this.
- 13.2. Other services and agencies are involved with named individuals/groups to develop learning environments. Some of these have been mentioned above.
- 13.3. Staff appraisals identify the need for training, development and implementation in communication and interaction and how this impacts on individual roles.
- 13.4. All staff endeavour to monitor young people for signs of communication and interaction difficulties. The Head of Learning Support will follow up any concerns given to her by staff.
- 13.5. Teaching and learning strategies are implemented to personalise targets via information given from Head of Learning Support Faculty to meet the communication and interaction needs of pupils.
- 13.6. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets as part of the review process.
- 13.7. Some pupils with communication and interaction difficulties are involved in CALL, which aims to improve their social and communication group skills.
- 13.8. Parents and carers are involved in sharing information and offered support, advice and training and signposted to other agencies for additional help if appropriate.

### **14. Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of the Policy**

- 14.1. All school staff are able to contribute to and facilitate the communication and interaction needs of specific individual as well as for all pupils at Huntcliff.
- 14.2. All school staff endeavour to contribute to, where appropriate, communication and interaction targets or tracking targets for pupils.
- 14.3. Teaching and Support Staff will have an awareness of young people experiencing difficulties with communication and interaction via appropriate training.
- 14.4. Head of Learning Support, Inclusion Team Staff and Support Staff share information to support interventions for pupils with communication and interaction needs within the environment.
- 14.5. The maintenance of Learning Support Faculty teaching assistants trained to meet particular roles with regard to communication and interaction needs of pupils with special education needs/disabilities is regulated yearly.

- 14.6. This training needs to ensure that there is at least two Teaching Assistants trained to deliver programmes with Speech & Language and /or CALL and at least two Teaching Assistants who can deliver the Communication Skills' programme to pupils. Training will be monitored via staff audits.
- 14.7. Additional help will be given to young people with communication and interaction difficulties in an inclusive way. Sometimes this may require the pupil to be withdrawn for small periods of time from the classroom. Pupils may work on programmes with a member of an outside agency.
- 14.8. A range of approaches are used within the classroom context and these are monitored by the Head of Learning Support or other key staff via observations and learning walks; discussions with class teachers may take place regarding their effectiveness.
- 14.9. When Teaching Assistants are allocated to classes, often they are able to support many pupils within the class, as well as the identified pupils with communication and interaction difficulties, thus ensuring inclusive practice.
- 14.10. The Head of Learning Support monitors the work completed by pupils with special educational needs including those with communication and interaction needs. By monitoring work, she is able to raise teacher awareness of pupils with communication and interaction difficulties and is able to pass on good practice techniques and strategies for this group of pupils.
- 14.11. Targets are set with pupils and parents and other agencies where possible in order to promote a joint approach. Reviews are held to measure outcomes.
- 14.12. Views of young people and parents/carers are taken into consideration regarding provision and services offered. Parents contribute regularly to reviews or annual reviews of statemented pupils as well as completing questionnaires. Pupils take part in reviews and contribute also via questionnaires. There are many occasions for pupils to take part in 'pupil voice' activities within the learning environment.
- 14.13. Pupils with communication and interaction targets are monitored, evaluated and reviewed. All impact of interventions and evidence of progress are noted via reviews. Also teaching assistants note progress and impact of their interventions and/or support in class of individuals.
- 14.14. All parents/carers are encouraged to ring school if there are problems. The Head of Learning Support contacts parents of pupils on the SEN record regularly. Many parents contact school and speak with other members of the teaching staff. School information and ongoing updated information is circulated to parents/carers.
- 14.15.** The school regularly monitors the impact of the work carried out with its communication and interaction. Any complaints from parents with pupils with communication and interaction difficulties are dealt with. Parents can contact the Learning Support Faculty in the first instance or the Head thereafter.
15. **General Statement**
- 15.1. Huntcliff School aims to ensure that in all its measures and procedures the communication and interaction skills of all pupils are continually being promoted within the learning environment.