



# Curriculum policy: communication & language

## Introduction/rationale

At the Village School we value Communication Language and Literacy (CLL) as one of the key areas of Learning for all of our pupils giving opportunities for the development of key skills in communication, access to books and literature and the development of creativity.

For many, but not all, of our pupils the development of communication, language and literacy will feature aspects of language acquisition that have traditionally featured as part of the developmental curriculum commonly utilised in schools for pupils with Severe, multiple and Profound Learning Difficulties and taught via a total communication methodology to ensure that the language of tuition is tightly controlled;

It also includes:

- The use of functional communication skills across the whole curriculum, including the use of intensive interaction techniques, use of language, augmentative communication, reading and writing;
- Material from National Curriculum English, such as the use of poetry, drama, etc., that can be used to enrich a pupil's use of language and provide motivating contexts to practise new language;
- Speech- and language-therapy treatments in response to speech and language disabilities

At The Village the development of essential literacy skills begin at an early age and are built upon during the personalised learning journey through school. The vocabulary development begins with the names of objects, people, places and actions that a pupil needs to acquire in order to make sense of the world and influence events. In addition to the acquisition of nouns and verbs, pupils also need vocabulary to help them develop a basic grammatical competence with which to express themselves. This is The Village School Core vocabulary designed to enable our pupils to develop a sense of self-determination, a vocabulary of propositions, adjectives and conjunctions will also be necessary, in order that he or she may be able to express preferences and dislikes.

## Teaching objectives

All pupils should have the opportunity to:

- develop the ability to respond, to listen and to understand
- interact and communicate effectively with others in a range of social situations
- make choices, obtain information, question and be actively involved in decision making
- develop creativity and imagination
- To develop and promote their functional communication, through verbal and augmentative

communication forms including signing and Augmentative and Alternative Communication systems (AAC)

- To enable each child to access the National Curriculum.
- To give each child a sense of self and of his/her ability to communicate with others.
- To enable each child to achieve his/her potential in communication i.e. utilising strategies and techniques of all kinds to maximise the child’s achievements in communicating.

Our class and subject teachers are:

- knowledgeable about pupils’ abilities and their needs in English and other subjects
- use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching and pupil
- grouping
- make good use of specialist language support teachers and bilingual assistants, and speech and Language therapists when teaching and monitoring progress

Our additional therapist and support staff will:

- work with class and subject teachers effectively to make focused and systematic
- assessments of pupils communication, including their use of first language, as appropriate
- help match the language demands of the curriculum to pupils’ skills and needs, to
- maximise pupils’ development of communication and English
- provide effective specialist teaching for groups or individuals
- contribute to curriculum planning as members of a teaching team, to ensure continuity and progress within the national curriculum subjects

## Delivery

<b>STEPPING STONES</b> <b>Assessment levels P1-P4</b>	<b>TRACKS</b> <b>Assessment levels P4-P8</b>	<b>LANES</b> <b>Assessment levels P8 onwards</b>
<p>We need to structure our communication so that pupils are able to interpret and make sense of the cues we give them. As some students are more sensitive to some input than others (e.g. more responsive to songs than objects), it is important to use all, at least until we find what is most effective for that particular student.</p> <p>Communication techniques follow a multi-sensory approach using object cues, song cues, signing, sensory cues, video recording, and senses cues. Triple C Checklist, Routes of Learning and Switch Progression Route Map are used to assist with assessment and planning goals.</p>	<p>Communication techniques begin to introduce photographs, symbols and Makaton signing.</p> <p>Speaking and listening activities from Pivats levels of attainment.</p> <p>Communication plans put into action by class teams. Assistive technology-Grid 2-VOCCA’s Differentiated curriculum plans includes focused development of communication. Drama activities</p>	<p>Communication techniques begin to introduce a more complex language structured work.</p> <p>English as an additional language focused activities. Differentiated curriculum planning in English-Drama activities. Assistive technology-VOCCA’s</p>

- Links with communication
- Independence skills:
  - Making choices and decisions
  - Meeting own needs
  - Interaction
  - Social communication
- Teaching approaches

## **Planning for progression**

- Key stage development
- Breadth and hierarchy
- Environment and community

## **Different types of pupils**

The Village School has 262 pupils aged 3 to 19 catering for a wide range of complex needs; all levels of learning, communication, ASD, physical, medical and sensory impairment. All pupils at The Village School have significant speech and/or language and communication needs (SLCN), some of which may not be immediately apparent.

All of the pupils have some degree of comprehension difficulties, which may affect their access to the curriculum, particularly as the demands become increasingly complex and abstract. Many of the pupils have additional difficulties and these may be social, emotional and/or behavioural, cognitive, sensory, eating and drinking etc.

Some pupils have alternative or augmentative means of communication. Their strengths and weaknesses are individual and within one class or year group the pupils will show different levels of communication ability.

## **Assessment and monitoring**

The importance of monitoring and evaluating pupil's progress is central to their development. As with all communication methods, regular opportunities to use these are vital for the pupil to achieve access.

- P levels/National Curriculum
- Routes of Learning
- End of key stage outcomes (EHCP)
- Framework for recognising attainment
- Pivats
- Speech and Language Therapy Department standardised assessments

For new students, a comprehensive assessment of all areas of language functioning is necessary to provide a baseline and to plan intervention. This will be completed within 6-8 weeks of commencing the school full time.

For each child there must be an attempt to assess all language areas, although in the early stages it may not be possible to use formal assessments with some children. A range of formal standardised assessments is available to the department. The most appropriate assessments are chosen depending on the age of the child and other factors such as the severity of the language impairment or the level of attention.

One to one and small group intervention focusing on speech and language skills is mainly carried out by the speech and language therapist, but it may also be planned and facilitated by the speech and language therapist and carried out by the teacher, TA or SALT assistant.

Intervention includes the setting of targets and IEPs that are recorded as expected outcomes and evaluated as such. Intervention should be modified accordingly. Intervention must always include consideration of the child’s need to change, readiness to change and ability to change. The Speech and Language Therapist will continually evaluate effectiveness of all levels of SALT interventions, relevant approaches and programmes of therapy through a variety of methods. This may be by standardised testing, measuring outcomes of set targets, and through knowledge of evidence based practice. Evaluation of the impact of therapy is essential in identifying which level and delivery of direct therapy is effective. If a pupil does not make progress following intensive input, this will be an indication that the level/type of intervention needs to change.

## Policy into practice

A range of strategies are in place to ensure that policy is put into practice. These strategies are monitored by the Operational Senior Leadership Team and Strategic Senior Leadership team. They include:

- Assessment ongoing and linked to Pivats, Routes for Learning and National Curriculum levels
- Speech and Language Therapy Polices
- English as an Additional Language Coordinator
- Specialist teacher for visual and hearing impairment pupils
- Audits of total communication, assistive technology and Makaton
- Identification of professional development needs
- Identification of communication as a school priority

Name of policy:	Curriculum policy: communication & language
Effective from:	November 2015
Next review:	November 2016

## Revision history

Date	Details	Author
Nov 2015	created	Sue Jones – Deputy Head

