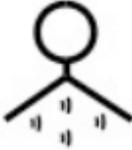
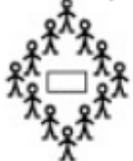




# Curnow School Communication Policy



<p><b>To be given real choices</b></p> 	<p><b>To say no, refuse and reject choices</b></p> 	<p><b>To ask for what I want</b></p> 	<p><b>To share my feelings</b></p> 	<p><b>To be heard and responded to (even if the answer is no)</b></p> 
<p><b>To ask for and get attention and interaction</b></p> 	<p><b>I have the right to communicate</b></p>			<p><b>To have and use my speech system at all times</b></p> 
<p><b>To ask and know about my schedule and my world</b></p> 				<p><b>To be taught how to communicate</b></p> 
<p><b>To have my speech system in working order and to have a back up</b></p> 				<p><b>To be a full and equal member of my community</b></p> 

## Curnow School Communication Policy

# *'Every child deserves a voice'*

### Aims -

At Curnow School the majority of our students will have significant struggles with Children with speech and language difficulties or more complex special needs may need support to initiate and take part in communication and interaction. This means making use of all the ways of communication which are available to the child and that as a school we make it our responsibility to work with other professionals, the family and the child to ascertain and develop the communication methods that best suit the child's abilities and needs.

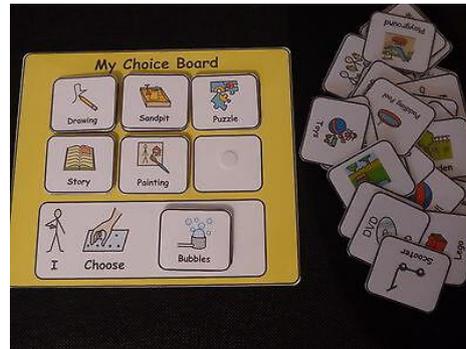
### Approaches -

At Curnow School we employ the principles of a total communication approach, allowing us to immerse the child in the world of communication and determine the best pathway for an individual. Total communication involves using any means of communicating that is available to the child or young person. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a range of strategies and tools to help people who struggle with speech. These cover a wide range of materials and would include picture boards or sophisticated computer-based systems. AAC helps someone to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible. Low tech and high tech AAC are at the heart of our total communication offer.

These systems may include:

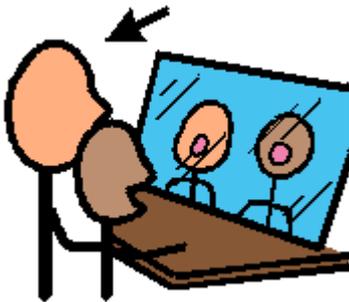
- Speech and spoken language
- Makaton signing
- Photos
- Picture symbols
- Choice boards
- Communication books/PODD books
- Objects
- Voice output communication aids and computer based systems
- On body signing (TaSSeLs)

- Intensive Interaction



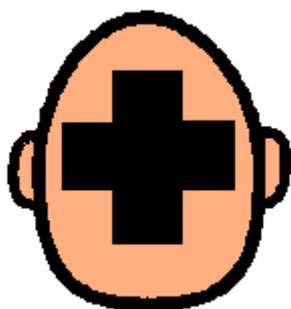
For further information or guidelines regarding any of the communication support systems mentioned above, please refer to Curnow School 'Total Communication Information Pack' which adds greater detail about the specialised methods used.

Role of the Speech and Language Therapist and our Specialist Intervention Team.



To ensure the successful communication development of all students at the school it is essential that the Specialist Intervention Team (SIT), Speech and Language Therapist, (SaLT) department and school staff work collaboratively. At Curnow School there is a well-established relationship between SaLTs and school staff. SaLTs support the teaching teams to set communication targets, through the SaLT plan, the EHCP reviews and through target setting, suggest materials that can be used to support the learners communication and provide the link between settings. They contribute to staff CPD and support referrals to other services, such as the Children's Augmentative and Alternative Communication Assessment Team (CAACAT) and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). They also provide a vital link between the different settings that a learner attends, including the home setting, assuring consistency and monitoring progress.

Multi-disciplinary working.



Within the area of communication there are often multiple barriers to learning that require more specialist involvement. Where possible a multi-disciplinary approach will be adopted where the therapists involved will work to provide the best practice model, taking into account all barriers to learning and setting joint goals. Where this is not possible teachers will work in collaboration, for example, with the Teacher for the Visually Impaired

and the Teacher of the Hearing Impaired and the SaLT to consider all recommendations and create methods and materials that are relevant. Once again, it is essential that the various therapy departments and school staff work collaboratively and foster good working relationships. Other therapists that might support the communication offer may include Occupational Therapy, (OT), Physio Therapy (PT), School Nurse, Paediatrician, Paediatric Dietician, Music Therapists, Educational Psychologists, (EPs), and Child and Adolescent Mental Health – Learning Disabilities (CAMHS-LD) team including Psychiatrist and Clinical Psychology.

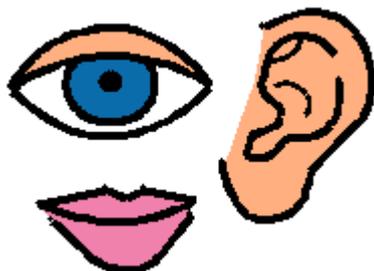
Roles within the school.

Equality of opportunity is evidenced when staff recognise that they are AAC users when in school. This means that:

- Staff should be encouraged to sign.
- Staff should be encouraged to use symbols.
- Symbols are visible in all areas of school.
- Symbols are incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum and not just AAC sessions.
- AAC has a high status in terms of staff training and sharing of expertise.

*ACE Advisory Trust*

The role of the communication lead.



It is the responsibility of the communication lead to work with the SALT and the SIT to provide professional leadership and management in the area of communication across the school, in partnership with other professionals where appropriate. As lead, it is vital to maintain an interest and commitment to evaluating practice with a constant view to providing our learners with the best chances to develop their communication skills to the best of their ability. This

will require research, continued CPD and monitoring of practice in line with the school's assessment and monitoring schedules, allowing the profile of this area to remain high. Additionally they have responsibility for -

- Auditing the training needs of staff identifying where training is required.
- Supporting colleagues where required within this area.
- To plan any parent training that will help them to support their child.
- To ensure pupil progress is accurately reported to parents/carers and Governors of the school in accordance to the school's PARRC (Planning, Assessing, Recording, Reporting and Celebrating) policy

#### The role of the teacher.



Teachers have a responsibility to support and promote communication skills and development throughout the school day using the means, reasons and opportunities model to raise the profile of communication. They will be the conduit for information from other professionals and will be able to facilitate this being put into practice throughout the school day. Their role includes -

- Planning opportunities for communication through structured, non-structured and social opportunities
- Providing a communication rich environment which is accessible and relevant to learners within the class group
- Modelling the use of materials and methods to learners through structured and non-structured experiences
- Ensuring that children have access to 'a voice' at all times
- Meeting with professionals and acting upon their advice in line with individual therapy plans and the EHC Plan
- Making and maintaining resources where necessary
- Attending multi-disciplinary planning meetings and providing relevant information to planning meetings
- Ensuring that transitions between class groups are well informed and that a child's communication is not disadvantaged by this, for example by ensuring that all of the materials that a child needs will be available within the next classroom
- Supporting parents and other settings by liaison and sharing practice ideas

#### The role of the teaching team.

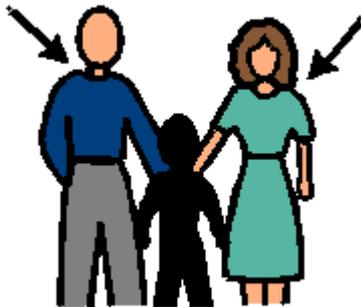


Alongside teachers, the wider staffing within the class team have a responsibility to act upon the advice of the teacher in structured and non-structured periods throughout the school day. The teacher will set goals and plan for opportunities, it is the role of the class team to ensure that they carry out recommendations that are made by the teacher and use their knowledge and expertise to

support this with further ideas and assessment observations. They are a valuable resource and vital to the learners communication journey. Their role includes –

- Exploiting opportunities for communication through structured, non-structured and social opportunities
- Maintaining a communication rich environment which is accessible and relevant to learners within the class group
- Modelling the use of materials and methods to learners through structured and non-structured experiences
- Supporting the teacher to make new materials and monitor and maintain materials in use
- Deliver planned sessions to individual and small groups of learners, following the guidance of teachers and other involved professionals, reporting and/or recording the learners progress within these
- Work alongside other professionals in a key worker role with specified individuals where directed by the teacher.

Working with parents.



We fully recognise the need for consistency across every setting that a learner experiences and the huge impact that this can have on the progress made and the ability to generalise skills. Working with families allows us to share knowledge and hugely increase the exposure that the learner has to the chosen system. We work with parents to develop a shared understanding of communication developments taking place both at home and school, by:

- Sharing information and joint goal setting at annual reviews
- Setting targets that can be practiced at home and in other settings
- Offering training to parents (e.g. Makaton)
- Supporting families with materials for home use
- Liaising with parents at termly Parents' Evenings
- SaLTs providing advice on communication development and ideas for activities at home
- Keeping communication open through the Day2Day book

The average 18 month old has been exposed to 4,380 hours of oral language at a rate of 8hours a day from birth. A child who has a communication system (AAC) and receives speech/language therapy 2 times a week for 20-30 minutes will reach the same amount of language exposure (in their AAC language) in 84 years.

*Jane Korsten*

## Assessment



Progress can be linear and progressive, working on the acquisition of new skills and generalisation of their use. It can also be the assessment of established skills displayed via different means, for example the learner may be proficient in making food choices using a low tech system such as symbol exchange and may be learning how to perform the same requests using a high tech method such as a software system on an I Pad. For these reasons assessment using traditional linear progress methods will not always reflect the progress that a learner

makes. It is therefore important that we have a range of methods to be able to track, record and celebrate achievements. These take the form of –

- Individual goals set against the individual's EHCP targets
- Personalised learning goals
- Individual Intervention Plan targets, set by the SIT team
- Education and Health Care Plan review
- Speech and Language Therapy target review
- Multi-disciplinary team target review.

Target review will involve information from all settings where possible and relevant, to ensure that the generalisation of skills remains at the heart of the process. An 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle ensures that assessment fully informs next step target setting.

Policy review date:	March 2024
Policy to be reviewed:	March 2026
Responsibility:	Communication Lead Headteacher/LGB