

## Oak View School Communication Policy

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| <b>Written</b> | 15/11/10 | <b>Last Reviewed</b> | April 2014 | <b>Next Review</b> | April 2016 |
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### Rationale

At Oak View School we aim to promote “total” communication systems. We aim to integrate alternative and augmentative communication into the whole school experience of every student. (“Total” communication refers to any means by which a student can supplement or replace a spoken communication (Developing Augmentative Communication policies in Schools 2001).

We aim to develop unaided communication, speech, gesture, pointing and eye pointing; reading and understanding of facial expression and body language and intensive interaction.

We aim to develop aided communication: British Sign language and Makaton; object cues; objects of reference; Picture Exchange Communication Systems ( PECS); symbol aided communication; photo aided communication; photo books; use of communication aids including big macs ,Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs – including those using tablet and other mobile technology); moon text.

### Implementation

*At Oak View School we aim to “ seek advice from external specialists, including speech and language therapists, and to then implement , monitor and evaluate individual education plans to support full access to and involvement in school and social life” ( Developing augmentative and alternative communication policies in schools, Ace Centre – 2001) Communication*

- All learners at Oak View School will be supported in the development of their communication skills through a multi-disciplinary approach, involving all relevant agencies including parents, families and carers.
- Communication programs are devised in collaboration with Speech and language Therapists (SLTs) and home (where possible).
- All students with autism should have a communication target in their IEPs.
- Communication development is planned for in literacy sessions and throughout the school day : for example a communicative element is identified in topic planning.

### Resources

#### SLT

- Teachers collaborate with SLT to identify where there is a need for intervention; advice on strategies; work alongside teachers in class and withdrawal.
- Speech and language therapy is provided by Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust.
- The SLT has carried out a Communication Assessment of every pupil in the school. Every pupil has a Communication Profile that describes the level of communication used by the pupil and strategies to support further development. This is kept in the pupil’s black folder and in the Resources Drive of the curriculum network.
- Oak View School employs a Speech and Language assistant to work alongside class teachers. The SLT assistant should do PECS 2 day training, Intensive interaction training and the Oak View School autism training.
- Communication Targets are set by both the SLT and the Class Teacher with consideration of PECS, National curriculum (BSquared), IEPs (Chelmsford Key Skills Framework) SENSE curriculum, observation of the student and in collaboration with home.

## **Autism**

- Training in Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) and PECS, and intensive interaction is a priority for staff working with students with ASD.
- At Oak View School we aim to train the class teacher and lead teaching assistant in PECS where there are students using it in the class.
- We aim to ensure that where students are using a TEACCH style approach there is a teacher or lead teacher assistant who has taken part in the 1day, 3 day or 5 day TEACCH course.
- All staff are inducted and trained in communication strategies for autism, (in house) (see training program).
- Where students with autism use a TEACCH or PECS style approach, classes are supported to provide opportunities to develop this across the school day.
- Use of AAC-should be investigated, e.g proloquo2go software on the ipod

We aim to use technology as a medium to access the whole curriculum, and improve opportunities for learning.

### **Severe and complex needs / Physical disability/ Sensory Impairment**

- All students will be supported in the development of their functional communication skills ( aided and unaided)
- Expressive and receptive language will be supported throughout the school day.
- Students with severe and complex needs will be supported using a combination of appropriate communication systems, to enable curriculum access and to develop to their full potential. This will be within the resources available to the school.
- We value a sensory approach to learning.
- We advocate continuity and consistent approaches across settings, achieved through working with a multi- disciplinary team, including parents and carers.
- We aim to identify every possible opportunity to develop communication throughout the student's school experience.

### **Moderate learning difficulties**

- Receptive and expressive language will be developed through an interactive approach focussing on the contribution of all aspects of communication : speaking, listening, reading and writing within a whole language model
- Communication will be developed for a range and variety of purposes and within a variety of contexts related to the student's individual needs
- Learner's use and understanding of language will be supported through the use of signing and symbols where appropriate. A core vocabulary of agreed symbols is used throughout the school.
- The development of skills associated with the use of language (pragmatics) will be addressed through access to specialist advice and use of published materials such as the "Social Use of Language Profile".

## **Assessment**

Pupils and Students' communication is assessed using:

- BSquared
- PECS
- Communication Framework
- PEP-R (to be developed)
- SATS
- And by external specialists including Speech and Language Specialist.