



# Total Communication Policy

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## Introduction

The right to express your views is not only a key part of the Human Rights Act 1998, it is also vitally important for personal development and wellbeing. The 2014 SEND reform outlines an explicit requirement for pupils with SEN, like the majority of children at Kingsbury, to be provided with a clear focus on their Speech, Language and Communication Needs; so that is what we do, supported by our SALT team. Children develop the skill to communicate at different speeds dependent upon their developmental needs, expressive preferences and abilities. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) benefit from a Total Communication Approach, to ensure that their communication development is encouraged over time.

All of our children at Kingsbury School experience challenges with communication and there are lots of ways in which we support the development of this within school. We are supported by the Speech and Language Therapy Service who work with the children and Kingsbury staff to help us provide the optimum environment in which children can develop their skills. The Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) team play a vital role at Kingsbury, working in collaboration with classroom staff to choose and use the most appropriate



communication tools for each child. Communication is a top priority for us and features as a key component throughout our teaching and learning approaches, ensuring communication development is embedded within our curriculum delivery.

## Kingsbury's Triangulation Approach

The speech and language therapy team offer training, advice, support and demonstration to all staff in the school in collaboration with the school communication lead/coordinator.

Communication at Kingsbury is supported through three types of provision:

- **Universal** – throughout the school/college
- **Targeted** – to meet identified communication needs
- **Specialist** – to address specific only to your child. School staff and the speech and language therapy team work together to meet the communication needs of the pupils.





Any approach taken by the therapy team in a special school can be separated into the three areas above (and explained further on the next 3 pages). Speech and language therapists have a role to play at the universal, targeted and specialist levels of need, but always in collaboration with parents, carers and colleagues in the wider workforce.

A consultative approach is where the therapy team has a place in all three levels of provision to make certain all pupils' needs are being met. This may not be via direct work with the pupils, but with the school as a whole.

\*\*It is important to note that during a pupil's time in the school they are likely to move between the 3 levels as their needs change.





## Universal Provision

Displays with Boardmaker symbols and signs

Signing posters displayed

Staff using key chain symbols

Relevant symbolised support for pupils - First and Then/  
individualised timetables/ communication books/PECS

Working timetables used as part of routine

Differentiated work photos/symbols/objects of reference

Key words/signs/symbols displayed around the room for  
areas where appropriate  
(print rich not full of print)

Communication Aids accessible and relevant to  
topic/lesson

Individualised communication approach for all pupils–  
Receptive and expressive needs met

The universal approach is the provision  
that a special school as a whole can  
provide each and every pupil.  
The aim is for all pupils to have their  
receptive and expressive needs met.



Katie GM



## Targeted Provision

Pupils referred internally for intervention in a specific area

Pupil has NHS Speech and Language plan that needs inputting by school staff through the curriculum and directed activities

Intervention will largely focus on developing functional communication skills and the SLT will work with classroom staff to identify desired outcomes and appropriate targets

Joint target setting with school staff is essential to ensure that communication targets can be integrated into the school day and progress can also be monitored by staff.

Pupil has a TALK TOOLS (oral sensory) assessment need

Pupils may move between Targeted and Universal depending on level of input required from internal or external referral.

Those pupils receiving targeted provision are children who have been identified as having a SLCN which require additional support above what is offered at universal level.



Katie GM



## Specialised Provision

Immediate intervention is required, this may be following a new diagnosis or changes to an existing condition.

A pupil may need external companies to assess or view, for example a pupil with VI needs that need assessing. e.g. referral to the ACE centre for EyeGaze assessment and will need overseeing until this is in place in class and staff are trained.

These pupils will also be supported in the classroom through jointly agreed strategies and techniques at universal and targeted levels and through direct involvement of the SLT in class, which is essential.

Pupils should move in to the Specialist section whilst therapies are being put in to place to support them. Once therapies are established and there are no further issues.

Pupils will move back down in to Targeted and Universal.

Specialist Provision - Pupils require a team around them to have their needs assessed and a plan for intervention to be put in place led by SALT and may involve direct intervention and/or guided interventions for school staff to carry over. However it continues to be important that staff complete the sessions with the SLT so that the work can be carried over into the classroom.



Katie CM

## Behaviour is Communication

The link between behaviour and communication Behaviour is communication. Many children and young people, who have behavioural difficulties, including many of those with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH), also have speech, language and communication needs. These needs often go unrecognised because behaviour can mask a child or young person's difficulties with communication. SALT and Kingsbury School work collaboratively on supporting children and young people with behavioural problems and SEMH by identifying their communication needs, advising their families and professionals working with them on how to respond appropriately, and providing advice and guidance for ongoing support. When we see a child who is not behaving appropriately or who appears unhappy, our first question will always be: 'what are they trying to tell us'? Giving a child a communications channel will very often be the answer to their issues or provide a vital role in supporting their behavioural needs.

## Staff Training at Kingsbury

This is an essential component of supporting students with SALT. This is achieved through a clear training development plan focussed on communication skills for staff at Kingsbury and parents. SALT provide essential training that is accessible for school staff and parents in key areas of communication needs, related to students with communication difficulties.

Therefore, at Kingsbury, we aim to:

1. Adopt a Total Communication Approach throughout school, where pupils have access to their personalised communication tools throughout the day.
2. Identify and develop a Means of Communication tailored to each child's individual needs: communications style; cognitive ability; physical ability.
3. Create Opportunities for Communication throughout the curriculum to enable each child to communicate functionally and spontaneously, to the best of their ability.
4. Understand the importance of helping to understand our children's Reasons to communicate We are very aware that a student's inability to communicate effectively can be a significant (possibly the most significant) barrier to learning.

Therefore, we work collaboratively with SALT to ensure that we focus on communication friendly strategies and environment that remove these barriers. We will achieve this through working in close partnership (SaLT team, Senior Leadership Team and Classroom staff):

- Take a strategic whole-school approach (this is our total communication approach) to supporting communication for its pupils.
- By ensuring that communication is part of the school improvement plan.
- Identify and support students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and incorporate this in their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).
- Support the professional development of all staff at Kingsbury in order to best support students with SLCN through tailored training interventions.
- SLT and Communication Lead practitioner will support staff to provide high quality teaching and supportive learning environments that foster and encourage the development of communication skills.
- Support parents to develop and incorporate communication skills into home and community environments through parent training and liaison
- Support students' communication skills at every point of transition but with particular focus on transition to Secondary school settings.

## SALT at Kingsbury

Kingsbury School SALT is supported by National Health Service (NHS) provision from Lancashire Their role within school is to:

- Work in the classroom settings - liaising with staff and working with children as part of their classroom experiences to share good practice, regularly review progress and plan next steps for communication skills. This achieved through education and health care plan reviews (EHCPs) known to SALT annually and through one-page profiles to identify a child's communication skills
- Jointly plan classroom activities/ ideas in order to incorporate communication across the day
- Support each other and class teams on how to generalise new communication skills across the various environments accessed
- Provide a baseline level of training for all staff on communication across the setting

- Keep other professionals updated on our children and their means of communication i.e. OT/ PT/ Paediatrician
- Refer onto additional services in a timely and appropriate way (as required)
- Identify and prioritise children based on their needs in relation to the school environment and their clinical need.
- Engage with parents in a supportive way, ensuring that communication skills can be integrated into the family home and supporting parents with training and liaison when needed

## References and Resources

[The Picture Exchange Communication System \(PECS\)](#)

[\(nationalautismresources.com\)](#)

[AAC Language Lab](#)

[PRC-Salttillo](#)

[AAC & Speech Devices from PRC \(prentrom.com\)](#)

[Top 1500 Nouns used in English Vocabulary Words for Speaking \(talkenglish.com\)](#)

[Practical Help with Autism | Gina Davies Autism Centre](#)

[The SCERTS® Model](#)

[Total communication - Sense](#)

Special educational needs and disability: managing the September 2014 changes to the system ([publishing.service.gov.uk](#))