

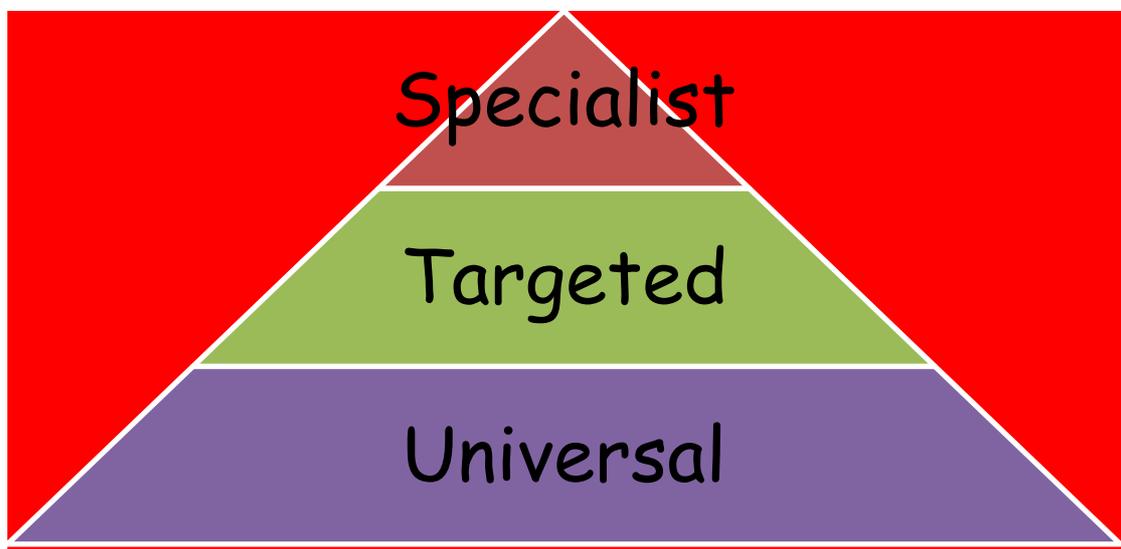
## Communication Support at Woodlands Meed

*The speech and language therapy team in collaboration with school and college staff*

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**March 2016**



## SECTION 1 Introduction

### Introduction to Communication at Woodlands Meed

At Woodlands Meed we follow a “Communication Friendly” approach; this means we provide an environment that will help your child to be supported in their communication wherever they are in the school/college.

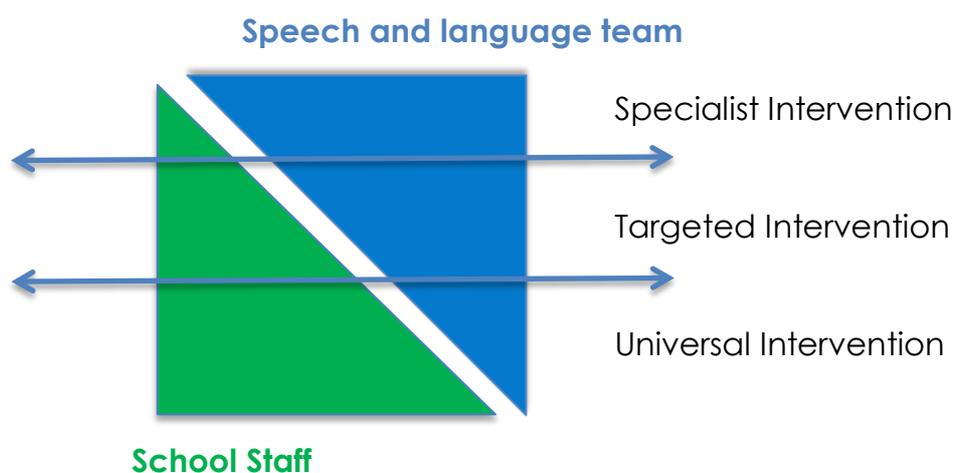
The **speech and language therapy team** offer training, advice, support and demonstration to all the staff in the school in collaboration with the school/college special educational needs coordinator.

Communication at Woodlands Meed is supported through three types of provision:

- **Universal** – throughout the school/college
- **Targeted** – to meet identified communication needs
- **Specialist** – to address needs specific only to your child

School staff and the speech and language therapy team work together to meet the communication needs of the pupils. The following illustration shows how the School Staff have the key role in meeting all pupils' universal needs at Woodlands Meed. At the specialist level the speech and language team play a greater role in the pupil's intervention for communication. At all levels staff and therapists work together to meet the communication needs of all pupils.

Roles Planning Provision for Communication:



## 1.1 Universal

- The “Communication Friendly” environment
  - Positive Relationships
  - Enabling Environments and Adapted Language
  - Learning and Development Opportunities
- Signing and Symbols:
  - Makaton Signing to support spoken language and teaching
  - Use of symbols to support spoken language and teaching
  - Cued articulation and finger spelling to support clear speech and literacy
- Support strategies for:
  - Attention and listening
  - Comprehension and concepts
  - Memory
  - Social communication and interaction
- Visual support systems, such as visual labelling, timetables, now/next boards

## 1.2 Targeted

Communication boosting activities carried out within the classroom, either individually or in small groups. Classroom staff deliver these with advice from speech and language therapy. Published programmes have in built schedules of learning goals for the pupils. These goals may be to learn new language forms or, alternatively, to learn new strategies to overcome existing difficulties.

- Attention Autism – Bucket Time for joint attention and turn taking
- Language
- Memory
- Social Interaction
- Sound Awareness

## 1.3 Specialist

If your child receives specialist adaptations to meet their communication needs please be aware that they will continue to benefit from all the forms of support that are appropriate for them from the **Universal** and **Targeted** interventions in their class. Some examples of specialist support are as follows:

- Aided language boards
- Attention Autism
- Colourful Semantics

- Communication Aids; low tech and high tech
- Intensive Interaction
- Objects of reference
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Talking mats

If your child has additional specific intervention this will be summarised in their Speech and Language Goal sheet, as part of their EHCP. These goals will be agreed and reviewed by the therapist and your child's teacher. The therapist will explain and demonstrate how these goals may be achieved with the relevant staff. There may also be suggestions about what you can do at home; please contact your therapist if you would like to discuss goals and how they may be achieved at home and school.

At certain times in a child's life it is sometimes necessary for them to receive extra support either as a specialist assessment (e.g. for a new high tech communication aid) or to make a transition (e.g. leaving education). When this occurs Speech and Language Therapy will collaborate with school/college and parents to facilitate the process.

#### **1.4 Eating and Drinking**

Some children will have an ongoing eating and drinking plan for home and school. The speech and language therapist Ruth Willis is available to support school staff to follow this plan. At times a child's eating and drinking needs change so they will be re-assessed; if this happens we will involve you in the process. If you have any queries about the existing eating and drinking plan please contact Ruth Willis.

## **SECTION 2 Universal Support**

- 2.1 The “Communication Friendly” environment:
- Positive Relationships
  - Enabling Environments and Adapted Language
  - Learning and Development Opportunities
- 2.2 Signing and Symbols:
- Makaton Signing to support spoken language and teaching
  - Use of symbols to support spoken language and teaching
  - Cued articulation and finger spelling to support clear speech and literacy
- 2.3 Support strategies for:
- Attention and listening
  - Comprehension and concepts
  - Memory
  - Social communication and interaction
- 2.4 Visual support systems

### **2.1 Communication-friendly Environment: Positive Relationships**

A communication-friendly setting means that everyone:

- Encourages pupils to talk about their own interests at appropriate times. By acknowledging all efforts at communication it shows that the pupil is valued. This will help build a positive relationship and support the pupil's independence and self-confidence; staff will use their knowledge of the pupil and sensitive observation to interpret the pupil's wants, needs and feelings and reflect these back in developmentally appropriate language ('you're happy/sad/angry/tired'; 'you think that's funny'; 'you don't like it; you want the...');
- Uses time spent on physical care with the pupil (such as toileting and washing hands) as an opportunity to interact with them and form a positive relationship;
- Talks to the pupil before carrying out physical care tasks, e.g. 'I'm going to help you put on some clean clothes';

- Supports the pupil in both free play and group times encouraging them to speak. This may mean playing silently alongside the pupil initially without asking questions or giving instructions and being very sensitive to when the pupil is unsettled;
- Makes some one-to-one time for the pupil to talk to an adult so that their turn does not necessarily take place in front of others;
- Uses positive language and behaviour with, and in front of, the pupil;
- Lets the pupil know of changes to the day's routine. This will help the pupil to understand what will be happening and what the expectations of them will be; a visual timetable will be used to support this;
- Encourages the pupil to share books/objects of interest with other pupils;
- Supports the pupil's language development by ensuring the pupil's attention is gained before giving instructions. By using the pupil's name first, the pupil is more likely to realise that he or she is being spoken to. Pupils may not be able to attend to what they are doing and listen to language at the same time, so it is important they can give their full attention when someone is talking to them.
- Is responsive when the pupil finds it difficult to use the correct speech sounds in words. To support unclear speech, the adult will model the correct pronunciation of the word. This means that if the pupil says, 'It's a dod', the adult – rather than drawing attention to the error – will say, 'That's right, it's a dog'. This is also true for when the pupil is using sentences and there are errors in grammar. For example, pupils can make errors where they apply rules of grammar across all verbs and add an -ed ending such as 'I ranned'. The adult will positively model the correct way, 'You ran very fast', but will not ask the pupil to repeat the correct sentence.
- Thinks carefully before asking questions. Questions can be used to extend the pupil's thinking and learning, or simply to test. Testing pupils by asking questions to which the adult already knows the answer does not help support language. Questions

that are merely testing, e.g. 'What colour is it?' or that invite simple 'yes' or 'no' answers can interrupt the flow of communication and stilt natural conversation. Pupils respond better to comments on their activity, e.g. 'You have made a very tall tower'. The commenting approach encourages the pupil to talk and keeps the pupil's attention on the task; gives plenty of time for pupils to respond. The pupil needs to process the adult's language, think about what they would like to say and then formulate the words. The adult will give the pupil extra time to respond, and not dominate the conversation and will encourage the pupil to talk or use an alternative way of communicating.

- Supports and help the pupil to resolve disputes and problems.

## **2.1 Communication-Friendly Environment: Enabling Environments**

As a communication-friendly school/college our environment:

- Has visual displays that pupils want to talk about. If the pupil has the opportunity to help with a display they are more likely to talk about it;
- Keeps play materials and resources in boxes that are labelled with pictures or symbols;
- Has a well-planned environment where it is clear to the pupil what happens there, e.g. there is a painting area with a sink close by. Separate areas are defined e.g. using play-mats and moveable furniture. Pupils will feel more confident and secure, and are therefore more likely to talk, if the environment makes sense to them. It may be necessary to put the same activity out several times before the pupil will have the confidence to take part and talk about it;
- Has some quiet areas where pupils can talk to each other and form relationships. Often pupils feel more secure in small, well-defined areas. This might be the book corner or even a temporary den built with the help of the pupils;
- Has quiet, comfortable areas where adults can devote time to bonding with and being close to the pupils;
- Has some areas that do not have much on display on the wall so that the pupils can concentrate on the adult talking to them,

rather than having their attention taken with what they are looking at on the wall;

- Has a quiet area for storytelling and reading/looking at visual materials. Soft cushions and furnishings will help give the message that this is a comfortable area for sitting and sharing stories;
- Ensures that there is no continuous background noise such as a radio/music. Pupils who find communication difficult can find it hard to tell the difference between the sounds that make up language and other sounds around them. Even as adults we can find the noise from a TV distracting when we are trying to talk. For pupils who are still developing their attention skills it is even more difficult to cut out these extra noises;
- Has play equipment in the outside environment as well as the inside environment that encourages shared play. Often pupils will engage with an activity purely because it is outside. We plan opportunities for children to communicate. This will encourage verbal interactions;
- Ensures the physical environment reflects the culture and ethnicity of the pupils. Parents may be happy to offer materials and objects from home;
- Has adults that are flexible with their plans and responsive to spontaneous events, e.g. supporting pupils to talk about the snow that they see falling.

## **2.1 Communication- Friendly Environment: Learning and Development Opportunities**

As a communication-friendly school/college we are:

- Making sure resources are stimulating and at the appropriate developmental level for the pupil. Pupils are more likely to comment and ask questions when resources are exciting to them;
- Making opportunities to relook at favourite books. Pupils enjoy becoming familiar with the language and repeating familiar stories;

- Planning to both sing and say songs/rhymes with the pupils either as a planned group activity or spontaneously when pupils choose to;
- Enhancing stories and songs with props such as objects or puppets and supporting them with actions. It will help to focus the pupil's attention which is essential for the development of language and aid comprehension;
- Checking that pupils have understood instructions. The developmental level of the individual pupil's understanding will vary day to day – practitioners will have to simplify their language and use gestures, signs or symbols to help the pupil struggling to understand;
- Thinking about the vocabulary that might be appropriate. Plan to introduce new vocabulary by giving the pupil opportunities to use every one of their senses to investigate, e.g. if you want to talk about exotic or unusual fruits then pupils need the opportunity to see, touch, smell and taste them. We will ensure there are opportunities for adults to use new words regularly so that they will become part of the pupil's vocabulary. It is not enough to just name them once, pupils need to hear the new words lots of times and in different situations;
- Thinking carefully when making plans about how the adult will support the activity or play. It helps when the adult models the activity and talks about it. This will demonstrate the appropriate language for the activity as well as giving the pupils ideas without directing them;
- Showing pupils how spoken language and written language are linked. Adults will offer to write a caption/sentence by the pupil's drawings or work. Adults will also offer to scribe what the pupil says and read it back to them. This models both the process of reading, and that of writing. There are different methods of recording around the school; adults will model writing/typing in different situations to spark pupil's curiosity and generate spoken discussion.

## **2.2 Signing and Symbols**

- **Signing**

Makaton signing is used throughout the school and college to support spoken communication. Staff and parent/carer training in the use of Makaton is offered on a regular basis. For more information about Makaton visit [www.makaton.org](http://www.makaton.org) and [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk) for downloadable pdf "Other ways of speaking"

- **Symbols**

Makaton and Widgit Symbols used throughout the school to assist pupils in locating rooms; understanding timetables; understanding school rules; in literacy lessons, in Personal Statements in Records of Achievement; symbolised pupil feedback forms for Annual Reviews and in topic vocabulary charts. Symbols may be used in a personal communication aid such as a communication or PECS book. Staff can create symbols to support spoken and recorded language using the Communicate in Print software. For more information visit [www.widgit.com](http://www.widgit.com)

- **Cued Articulation and Finger Spelling**

To communicate a spoken sound clearly staff will use conventional written letters and/or finger spelling and cued articulation. These supports are helpful when speech is unclear and to develop literacy skills. For more information visit [www.cuedarticulation.com](http://www.cuedarticulation.com)  
[www.stass.co.uk/publications/cued-articulation](http://www.stass.co.uk/publications/cued-articulation)  
[www.british-sign.co.uk/fingerspelling-alphabet-charts/](http://www.british-sign.co.uk/fingerspelling-alphabet-charts/)

## 2.3 Support Strategies

- **Attention and Listening Strategies**

- Short instructions
- Repetition
- Reduced sensory distractions
- Adult language matched to the developmental level of attention (e.g. single channelled, fixed or flexible)
- Play – matched to the child's developmental level so as to sustain focus (e.g. parallel, non-directive, symbolic)
- Sensory Stories – told with actions, prompts, objects that use all the senses. For more information visit [www.bagbooks.org](http://www.bagbooks.org)
- Supports: cue cards, symbolized or written prompts or other strategies selected by the pupil
- Interactive music: This approach to music lessons develops aspects of communication such as turn taking, eye contact and expression of mood, as well as fostering co-operation. Pupils are given the freedom to experiment

with the structure of pieces; these may be abstract or created to accompany cartoons/films etc.

- Tac pac: This is an activity pack that combines touch and music to promote social interaction and communication, sensory, neurological and emotional development. Tacpac allows the 'receiving partner' to make contact with their own body, their environment and other people in a safe framework. The 'giving' partner makes sure that each tactile experience is well organised and adjusted to the receiving partner's responses. For more information visit [www.tacpac.co.uk](http://www.tacpac.co.uk)

- **Comprehension and Concepts Strategies**

- Differentiated Adult Language – modelling, expanding, repetition, commenting, reduced use of questions
- Time to process language
- Multi-sensory teaching
- Self Help strategies – adults model how to ask for help
- Topic boards: typically A4 boards containing key vocabulary for the topic represented in words or symbols
- Pre-teaching new topic vocabulary for a new lesson. The school/college uses the Lexia system (core strand 5 vocabulary) to teach word meanings and to then link these to written words for pupils developing literacy skills). For more information visit [www.lexialearning.com](http://www.lexialearning.com)
- PORIC – a teaching sequence to learn new concepts (Personal experience, Objects to explore the concept, Representation of the concept in picture/symbol form, Independent application of the concept, Consolidation showing application of the concept to different situations). For more information visit [www.cheerfulpublications.co.uk/cheerbookspor.htm](http://www.cheerfulpublications.co.uk/cheerbookspor.htm)
- Abstract Concepts and Idioms: words such as "truth" and idioms such as "butterflies in his tummy" or metaphor "his room is a disaster area" are used sparingly by adults and carefully explained following PORIC principles. Pupils are encouraged to notice and check out their comprehension of this type of language
- Instructions given according to Key Word ability; this is the number of key words in a sentence that the pupil is able to process e.g. "time to go home" can be understood by a pupil who is at a two-key-word-level. For more information visit [www.derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk](http://www.derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk)
- Opportunities to use new skills learned through small group or individual programmes for comprehension and

concepts in new activities around the school, e.g. to learn what the concept “many” means in maths, food preparation, handing out pencils, gathering toys

- Life Skills – as pupils go about their activities as a part of everyday life adults will use these opportunities to model and reinforce everyday vocabulary, language and social phrases that are particularly useful

- **Memory**

- Short instructions supported by multi-sensory prompts
- Pupils are encouraged to use their personal support strategies, e.g. repeating back, prompt cards, lists, visualization
- Instructions and repetition given according to the pupil's level of need
- Motivating activities and lessons that are personalized to engage active learning and participation

- **Social Communication and Interaction**

- Adult modelling of appropriate behaviour and interaction
- Clear boundaries and rules for expected behaviour and interaction
- Social reinforcement of pro-social interaction, e.g. praise and feedback from the recipient
- Opportunities to communicate with a variety of social partners in different settings and group size
- Opportunities to communicate using a variety of different means, e.g. speech, writing, computers
- Opportunities to communicate for a variety of functions, e.g. to request, refuse, express needs or opinions, comment, celebrate, share humour, make friends, complain

## 2.4 Visual Support Systems

- **Classroom Rules**

Displayed visually and used to reinforce desired behaviour

- **Interactive Whiteboards**

- **Jolly Phonics**

These are visual representations of the sounds (consonants and vowels) used in phonics teaching and relate to literacy. Each letter has an associated sound, song, picture and sign/gesture. For more information visit [www.Jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.Jollylearning.co.uk)

- **Listening Rules**

Displayed visually and used to reinforce desired behaviour

- **Sensory Timetable**

Smells, sounds, textures, colours and objects can be set up in the form of a sensory timetable or schedule. Timetables at a sensory level are used to orientate pupils to the day of the week, to the next activity and can reduce their anxiety about what is going to happen next. For more information visit

[www.accessibleinfo.co.uk](http://www.accessibleinfo.co.uk)

- **Sequencing: Now/Next boards**

Many pupils find it hard to sequence their language for describing their news and stories. Blank grids can help them do this, and also help establish the concepts of 'first', 'next', last'.

For more information visit (or look at images on a search engine):

[www.suffolklearning.co.uk/suffolklearning\\_images/users/Neil\\_Annett/UsingNowandNextBoards.pdf](http://www.suffolklearning.co.uk/suffolklearning_images/users/Neil_Annett/UsingNowandNextBoards.pdf)

- **Visual Feedback systems**

Used to give feedback on loud or quiet voices, fast or slow rates of speaking

- **Visual Timetables**

All classes have a large version of the daily or weekly timetable on display. According to the needs of the pupils, this may be picture-based or written. Older pupils are also helped to develop personal organisation skills, as appropriate. Some pupils in ASD classes have personal timetables to help them to understand and follow the structure of the school day. As these pupils move through the day, they look at their timetable and remove completed segments.

## SECTION 3 Targeted Support

- 3.1 Attention Autism – Bucket Time for joint attention and turn taking
- 3.2 Language
- 3.3 Memory
- 3.4 Social Interaction
- 3.5 Sound Awareness
- 3.6 Vocabulary

### 3.1 Attention Autism – Bucket Time for joint attention and turn taking

- Attention Autism is an approach designed for use with children who have autism (see Section 3 specialist support)
- The Bucket Time activities, taken from Attention Autism, are delivered in a small group and have been found to benefit children with all forms of communication difficulty that impact upon their ability to attend to an activity (joint attention) and to take turns with others
- Groups typically last ten minutes and are highly enjoyable so as to motivate attention
- Pupils are guided through four stages of attention
- For more information visit [www.ginadavies.co.uk](http://www.ginadavies.co.uk)
- There are many videos on YouTube (Attention Autism – therapy ideas live [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFYnc4xcZ6k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFYnc4xcZ6k)) showing some of the activities and a Facebook page hosted by Gina Davies (creator)

### 3.2 Language Groups

At Woodlands Meed our general aim for language is that it meets the pupil's functional need and helps them to reach their potential. For pupils with learning difficulties this may mean that some aspects of language, such as complex grammar, is not an appropriate goal as it not in line with the overall level of the pupil's development and will have little impact on their quality of life.

- **Black Sheep Narrative**  
This is a published language programme for children of developmental age equivalent of three to sixteen. At Woodlands Meed children are matched to the appropriate developmental level of the programme (and not the chronological year group). The programme is delivered in a small group and follows a developmental sequence of language skills. At the earlier stages learning is based upon spoken language but as the pupil progresses then written material is

gradually introduced; throughout picture materials are used to support understanding and expression.

This programme benefits:

- Comprehension
- Vocabulary development
- Sequencing
- Expressive language
- Using Questions
- Story telling
- Creative language
- Emotional language

The Early Years programmes specifically target:

- Who?
- Where?
- When?
- What happened next?

The Key Stage One programme specifically targets:

- Who?
- Where?
- When?
- What happened next?
- The end

The Key Stage Two/Three/Four programmes specifically target:

- Descriptive language
- Setting expansion
- Time
- Location and character
- Generating stories with a problem and solution
- Feelings
- Recording dialogue
- Questions, statements and explanations

As this programme was designed for mainstream school our learners may need a slower rate of delivery with additional opportunities to learn the material. For this reasons aspects of the programme may be reinforced by the use of Black Sheep Press language packs. These aspects focus on one particular element of language with pictures, tasks and worksheets for the adult to follow when teaching the pupils.

For more information about Black Sheep narrative and language packs view [www.blacksheepress.co.uk](http://www.blacksheepress.co.uk)

- **Languageland**

This is a complete language resource that provides modified lesson plans that can be incorporated into existing class planning. Activities can be integrated into Circle Time or timetabled as a 'stand - alone' lesson, and target the following skills at a general level: interaction/ social skills; listening, language comprehension; sound awareness skills; vocabulary development. It provides guidance to teaching staff on ways to adjust teaching practice through demonstrated language lessons. For more information about Black Sheep languageland view [www.blacksheepress.co.uk](http://www.blacksheepress.co.uk)

- **School Start (and Pre School Start)**

School start is a language and sound awareness programme for children at a language level equivalent to approximately 4 – 5 years. The language strand of the programme follows a developmental sequence of language goals and aims to promote:

- Attention and listening
- Social interaction
- Receptive language
- Expressive language

The programme consists of 30 group sessions, one to be delivered each week, and is supported by Makaton.

Pre School Start is a language programme for a language level equivalent of 3 to 4 years. It can be delivered over three or five terms; the pace is adjusted to the pupils' rate of learning. This programme is based upon play, experiential learning and real objects, supported by Makaton. The programme follows a developmental sequence of language goals and aims to promote:

- Attention and listening
- Social interaction
- Receptive language
- Expressive language

For more information visit [www.speechmark.net/shop/school-start-2nd-edition](http://www.speechmark.net/shop/school-start-2nd-edition)

- **Derbyshire Language Scheme**

This is a structured programme that develops early spoken language skills, starting at single words and moving to long complex sentences. It can be delivered to pupils individually or

in a small group play based activity. For more information visit [www.derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk](http://www.derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk)

### 3.3 Memory

- **Memory Magic**

Memory Magic is a group programme that can be adapted to suit different age groups. However, pupils require a level of self-awareness, motivation and self-monitoring to benefit from this approach. The general aim is to let the pupils try out different self-help strategies to support memory for spoken information. Each strategy or 'memory trick' is taught and practiced in one guided lesson (in reality each lesson is broken into several group sessions to suit the pupils' pace of learning). Once all six 'memory tricks' have been tried out the pupil is encouraged to select those that work best for him or her. Throughout success is dependent upon each 'memory trick' being supported by adults for use in class and at home. For more information visit [www.stass.co.uk](http://www.stass.co.uk)

### 3.4 Social Interaction

- **Social skills groups**

All social skills groups aim to develop

- Non verbal communication
- Verbal communication
- Conversation
- Turn taking
- Interaction

The purpose is to help pupils to make friends, cooperate with others and learn some social skills so as to interact with others in school/college and beyond. For this it is essential that skills learned within the group be transferred to other situations. This is achieved with collaboration with all the adults and friends around the pupil. At Woodlands Mead we may use materials from the Talkabout series or The Social Use of Language Programme. For more information visit

[www.speechmark.net/shop/talkabout-activities](http://www.speechmark.net/shop/talkabout-activities)  
<http://alexkelly.biz/>

[www.wendyrinaldi.com/wr-sulp-u.shtml](http://www.wendyrinaldi.com/wr-sulp-u.shtml)

### 3.5 Sound Awareness

Sound awareness is how the child develops the underlying skills for saying words clearly and then using this knowledge when reading and writing. Children learn that:

- Sentences consist of words
- Words can be divided into syllables (um-bre-lla)
- Words consist of single spoken sounds (d-o-g)
- How spoken sounds can be added, taken away to change the word
- How spoken words may rhyme (as the ends of both words match e.g. cat and hat)

We aim to support sound awareness skills to help pupils develop clear speech and emerging literacy skills.

- **School Start**

School start is a language and sound awareness programme for children at a language level equivalent to approximately 4 – 5 years. The sound awareness strand of the programme aims to develop:

- Sound awareness strategies for literacy (rhyme, syllables and spoken sounds)
- Auditory discrimination of spoken sounds to support clear speech

The programme consists of 30 group sessions, one to be delivered each week, and is supported by Cued Articulation or Jolly Phonics.

- **Cued Articulation**

To communicate a spoken sound clearly when teaching phonics and phonological awareness skills staff will use conventional written letters and may use cued articulation. For more information visit

[www.cuedarticulation.com](http://www.cuedarticulation.com)

[www.stass.co.uk/publications/cued-articulation](http://www.stass.co.uk/publications/cued-articulation)

- **Jolly Phonics**

These are visual representations of the sounds (consonants and vowels) used in phonics teaching and relate to literacy. Each letter has an associated sound, song, picture and sign/gesture. For more information visit [www.Jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.Jollylearning.co.uk)

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| <b>3.6 Vocabulary</b> |
|-----------------------|

In addition to universal support for vocabulary in class some child may benefit from small group opportunities to reinforce new word knowledge and retention. For these groups we suggest:

- Approaches such as memory maps, semantic links, Living Language, Word Wizard, Word Aware and Robust vocabulary. These approaches have been selected as additional support to the school/college's use of Lexia
- Vocabulary that is targeted will be at the right level for the pupils (not too easy or so hard they will not need to use it again) and be based upon on-going activities in their current life (e.g. a holiday that they are about to go on or a lesson in the curriculum)
- Liaison between the group and the class teacher will ensure that the correct words are selected and the strategies to store words that is used in the group is also used in class
- For pupils who have a difficulty recalling and saying words that they already know (a **word finding problem**) small group input aims to teach them self-help strategies to store new names and words using meaning (found in the bathroom, used to clean teeth.) and sound cues (e.g. starts with a "T...", rhymes with ...). This approach is only beneficial for pupils with a level of self-awareness, motivation and self-monitoring
- For more information on the published programmes visit  
[www.livinglanguage.com](http://www.livinglanguage.com)  
[www.speechmark.net/shop/word-aware-teaching-vocabulary-across-day-across-curriculum](http://www.speechmark.net/shop/word-aware-teaching-vocabulary-across-day-across-curriculum)  
[www.amazon.co.uk/Bringing-Words-Life-Vocabulary-Instruction/dp/1462508162/ref=dp\\_ob\\_title\\_bk](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Bringing-Words-Life-Vocabulary-Instruction/dp/1462508162/ref=dp_ob_title_bk)

## SECTION 4 Specialist Support

The following forms of support are described briefly below. The list is not exhaustive as we may introduce new or alternative interventions when it may be beneficial to a pupil. If you are interested in an approach for your child that is not listed here please contact us to discuss it further.

- 4.1 Aided language boards
- 4.2 Attention Autism
- 4.3 Colourful Semantics
- 4.4 Comic Strip Stories
- 4.5 Communication Aids; low tech and high tech
- 4.6 Communication Passports
- 4.7 Intensive Interaction
- 4.8 Objects of reference
- 4.9 Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- 4.10 Play
- 4.11 Selective Mutism
- 4.12 Sensory Integration
- 4.13 Social Stories
- 4.14 Speech Clarity
- 4.15 Stammering
- 4.16 Talking mats
- 4.17 TEACCH
- 4.18 Word Finding

### **4.1 Aided Language Boards**

Aided language boards are a tool to model and prompt use of a communication board to stimulate use of a visual system. The conversation partner interacts with the symbols/words/pictures on the board encouraging the pupil to do likewise so as to express themselves. For more information visit:

[www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Using-Aided-Language-to-Develop-Skills-with-Augmentative-Communication-Displays](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Using-Aided-Language-to-Develop-Skills-with-Augmentative-Communication-Displays)

### **4.2 Attention Autism**

Attention Autism is developed from the idea that children learn to communicate naturally when interaction is dynamic, engaging and joyful. The approach, therefore aims to be motivating and creative, delivered with enthusiasm. It provides children with an experience worth communicating about. Children attend a short group activity where the adult introduces new, sensory stimulating activities; they progress through four steps, beginning with joint attention on the toy materials and into turn taking/sharing. For more information visit

[www.ginadavies.co.uk](http://www.ginadavies.co.uk)

### 4.3 Colourful Semantics

Colourful Semantics helps children to learn how to build sentences using colour coding. There are four basic colour coded stages (who, what doing, what is it, where). These themes guide the child on how to create the elements in a sentence. This approach helps to develop sentence length, vocabulary, increases the types of words used (e.g. to add on descriptive words), helps with story telling and links in with literacy. Pupils that learn Colourful Semantics can then be supported in class to use it to improve their spoken sentences (length, complexity, accuracy) and to develop their reading/writing skills. For more information visit

[www.integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk/our-approaches/speech-therapy-approaches/colourful-semantics-2/](http://www.integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk/our-approaches/speech-therapy-approaches/colourful-semantics-2/)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=17smjL8Y21s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17smjL8Y21s)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2MI8hC-G8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2MI8hC-G8)

### 4.4 Comic Strip Stories

This technique helps pupils to develop greater social understanding. Comic strip conversations provide visual representations of the different levels of communication that take place in a conversation, using symbols, stick figure drawings and colour. Some of the more abstract aspects of social communication (such as recognising the feelings and intentions of others) are made more 'concrete' and are therefore easier to understand. For more information visit

[www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips/comic-strip-conversations.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips/comic-strip-conversations.aspx)

### 4.5 Communication Aids; low tech and high tech

There is an expectation in the school that all teaching staff use and understand total communication – which translates as 'more than just words'. This includes one or more of the following:

- **Gestures and pointing**  
All staff use common gestures and pointing (e.g. stand up, wait a minute etc.) to support pupils' understanding of classroom routines and procedures. Gestures and pointing provide a strong visual clue to pupils with difficulties understanding spoken language and may be used in conjunction with more formal signing such as Makaton.
- **Picture Exchange Communication System -PECS**  
See below.

- **Photos**  
Some children find it difficult to recognise symbols, and so photographs are used. Many children will use a combination of photographic and symbol support. Examples of photos use are:
  - A visual timetable
  - Picture Exchange Communication books
  - High tech communication aid, such as an i Pad
  - A communication book
  
- **Communication books**  
These use pages of symbols and/or photos to visually represent the spoken vocabulary and are divided into categories meaningful to the individual, such as family, classmates, lessons, foods, preferred activities. They are a vital support for pupils who find it hard to express themselves sufficiently via spoken/written/signed language
  
- **Signing dictionary**  
Some pupils may use idiosyncratic signs due to motor difficulties as a result of their learning difficulty; dyspraxia; cerebral palsy etc. These pupils will have a personalised signing dictionary with photos and/or written descriptions of the signs they use to enable others to recognise their signs and understand them.
  
- **Big Mac switches**  
Big Mac switches can be recorded with a message for pupils to use in a lesson – e.g. part of a 'hello' song so they can join in with the rest of the class; useful phrases such as 'more' to enable them to request 'more' of a favoured activity. Switches can also be used to record information for pupils with poor auditory memory – the pupil can then press the switch to hear the information again to support their independent learning.
  
- **High tech – Go Talk; High tech – i Pad/Proloquo2Go; Gridplayer, Dynavox**  
Medium and high tech 'Communication aids' enable pupils with limited speech and signing skills to communicate using recorded speech or electronic voice by using a device with a symbol or written display. The Speech and Language Therapy team assess and recommend appropriate communication aids. These may be used flexibly, as part of an individual lesson or as part of a pupil's communication system. Pupils may be recommended to access, via a tertiary referral, highly specialist assessment and advice from Chailey Heritage. Specialist training on how to use the recommended equipment is subsequently arranged via the manufacturer, when needed.

i Pads used as a pupil's main communication system should be considered separately from i Pads used as teaching tools or reward systems.

For more information visit  
[www.communicationmatters.co.uk](http://www.communicationmatters.co.uk)

#### **4.6 Communication Passports or Profiles**

Passports include important information about the pupil's identity, such as choices, methods of communication, likes and dislikes and medical needs. They are particularly useful when children are cared for in settings away from home or when they transfer to a new educational provision.

#### **4.7 Intensive Interaction**

This is a chance for the pupil to lead interaction with an adult. It mimics early communicative development where the adult carer is highly tuned into the baby's first attempts to look, turn and make sounds towards another person. Out of these interactions emerge the foundations for taking turns, emotional regulation, joint attention and enjoying other people. The adult follows the child's lead and aims for the time together to be fun and meaningful for the child. Initially adults will prioritise time in the day to spend with the pupil practicing Intensive Interaction. As the adult and pupil become familiar with this time together it will then take place throughout the day, as the adult tunes into when the pupil is likely to be receptive. For more information visit [www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk](http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk)

#### **4.8 Objects of Reference**

These are objects that represent something else, for example a piece of towel to represent swimming, a paintbrush for art etc. This approach is useful for pupils who are not yet ready or are unable to use speech/ photographs/ line drawings to communicate.

Objects of reference are used:

- In class: to help pupils have an awareness of what is about to happen or where they are about to go.
- Around school: to help pupils find their way around. Shared spaces, such as the swimming pool, hall, toilets, calming room, sensory room, soft play, all have an object of reference on display. For example, a pupil may be given a plastic ball

to represent the soft playroom; the playroom has an identical ball hanging on the door.

#### **4.9 Picture Exchange Communication System - PECS**

This is a highly structured system used by some of our pupils with social communication difficulties. PECS works to develop pupils' interaction skills, and in some cases, develops spoken language. Through using the system to initiate interaction with other people, pupils learn that their needs and wants will be met. This motivates them to interact more readily. Staff working with PECS require formal and informal training and support. For more information visit:

[www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/](http://www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/)

#### **4.10 Play**

Children learn through play; for some children play is the best approach to develop attention, interaction, symbolic representation, imagination, as well as all aspects of speech and language. Pupils at the school/college will be at many different stages of play development. Play, as an approach is adapted to that pupil's level.

For pupils with an early stage of play development a non-directive approach is used. Adults follow the child's lead commenting on actions and objects with simple language but without directing the child to do something specific e.g. 'banging the drum'; 'splashing in the water' etc. Adults may play alongside a child and model different play options for the child to select from – e.g. pouring water from one beaker to another, splashing, dropping objects etc. in water play. Pupils are encouraged to develop their symbolic play skills. There are opportunities for doll play, car play, make-believe play with toy kitchens, play food and tea sets; and doll's houses, miniature people and furniture etc.

For pupils at a later stage of play development a play based approach is used to develop such skills as creativity, group and team interaction and using language to solve problems.

#### **4.11 Selective Mutism – Social Anxiety Disorder**

Children who are selectively mute are reluctant to use their spoken communication in certain situations; typically they will speak at home but not at school. Selective Mutism is one of many symptoms of Social Anxiety Disorder. As an anxiety disorder its treatment is guided by mental health services; speech and language therapists have a key role in diagnosing and supporting any co-existing communication disorder as this may impact upon the success of anxiety treatment. This

is a disorder that will involve the collaborative working of all the relevant professionals, together with the family/carers. For more information visit:

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs53/documents/anxiety-disorders-consultation-summary-report2](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs53/documents/anxiety-disorders-consultation-summary-report2)

#### **4.12 Sensory Integration**

Some pupils have sensory processing and motor planning disorders that interfere with activities of daily living, learning, and communication. The Occupational Therapist assesses and advises on intervention for these pupils; collaborative planning with the speech and language therapy team will take place when a joint communication approach is indicated.

#### **4.13 Social Stories**

Social Stories are used to improve the social skills of people with social communication difficulties (usually those with ASD). Staff and families create stories that model appropriate social interaction by describing a situation with relevant social cues, other's perspectives, and a suggested appropriate response. The aim is not to teach social behaviour but, rather, social understanding, such as the perspective of others. This may then lead to pro-social behaviour and emotional regulation. For more information visit:

[www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips/uses-benefits.aspx](http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips/uses-benefits.aspx)

#### **4.14 Speech Clarity**

Many pupils at the school/college have some degree of difficulty at saying sounds and words clearly.

Pupils are assessed to determine:

- Potential to change with therapy; this may be due to the cause of the difficulty or other factors such as awareness and motivation to change
- Need for therapy based upon 'intelligibility'
- Readiness to change

Pupils who will benefit from intervention will follow an individual programme designed by the speech and language therapist and delivered by therapist/therapy assistant/teaching assistant as appropriate.

Programmes of intervention for speech will either:

- Aim to resolve the speech difficulty, where possible,  
Or
- Aim to establish support strategies to maximise best use of existing speech skills

Programmes of intervention for speech are most successful when:

- Intervention is carried out in natural settings, e.g. the classroom
- Intervention is carried out daily for short periods of time
- Intervention is monitored and reviewed so that input is adjusted with progress
- Strategies that support the application of new skills are used at home and at school
- There is liaison between the speech and language therapist, teaching staff and parents/carers
- Links between speaking and **reading/writing** are made in class; Therapy intervention will address the 'input' aspect of speech development (auditory discrimination, auditory processing, sound/phonological awareness). Any underlying sound processing difficulty will receive intervention at the spoken and recorded mode of communication in collaboration between the therapist and class teacher
- Gestural systems such as Cued Articulation are employed

Intervention for speech is not indicated when:

- The child has not responded to a period of therapy
- The timing is not appropriate, i.e. the child is currently focusing on other areas of development such as language
- The child is awaiting a medical or dental intervention that impacts on speech
- The child has functional intelligibility so motivation to change goes
- The child has reached their full potential for speech clarity

In these instances it may be necessary to review and reconsider the decision to cease intervention for speech.

#### **4.15 Stammering**

Stammering occurs when a child tries to say a word but feels the sounds are blocked in the mouth. Muscle tension builds and when the word is said it may be repeated, stretched out or said like an explosion of sound. Some children show little awareness that this is happening and continue to be confident to communicate. Others develop awareness and feel stressed about talking; this builds a circular pattern

of anxiety and avoidance of talking. The therapy approach taken to help the child will depend upon the impact it has in their life and their degree of awareness. This means that their ability to reflect upon their attitudes and feelings around speaking and access a 'talking therapy' approach will be taken into account when planning suitability for intervention. The speech and language therapist delivers stammering therapy: the therapy plan will be tailored to the child. For more information visit:

[www.stammering.org](http://www.stammering.org)

[www.stammeringcentre.org/mpc-home](http://www.stammeringcentre.org/mpc-home)

[www.downsyndromedevelopment.org.uk/wp-](http://www.downsyndromedevelopment.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Dysfluency_Stammering_Getting_Stuck.pdf)

[content/uploads/2013/03/Dysfluency\\_Stammering\\_Getting\\_Stuck.pdf](http://www.downsyndromedevelopment.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Dysfluency_Stammering_Getting_Stuck.pdf)

[www.stutteringhelp.org/autism-spectrum-disorders](http://www.stutteringhelp.org/autism-spectrum-disorders)

#### **4.16 Talking Mats**

Talking Mats are a way of enabling pupils to be involved in expressing their views and making choices, with the aid of symbols. It is highly adaptable and allows even quite complicated issues to be simplified in a way that is meaningful for the pupil. For more information visit:

[www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/talking-mats](http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/talking-mats)

#### **4.17 TEACCH**

##### **TEACCH**

This is an approach designed to meet the needs of pupils with ASD. Programmes are designed around pupils' individual strengths, skills, interests and needs; enabling the individual to be as independent as possible. Working from the premise that people with autism are predominantly visual learners, intervention strategies are based around physical and visual structure, schedules, work systems and task organisation. It is a philosophy that aims to understand the culture and perspective of autism so as to work with, not against, the nature of autism. For more information visit:

<http://www.autism.org.uk/teacch>

[www.teacch.com/about-us/what-is-teacch](http://www.teacch.com/about-us/what-is-teacch)

#### **4.18 Word Finding**

Pupils with a specific language impairment that is either developmental, or acquired (such as after a medical incident that resulted in a lack of oxygen in the brain) may result in a difficulty with retrieving and saying known vocabulary, at speed, in conversation. Assessment is used to determine the underlying breakdown in the speech processing system in the individual child (e.g. the meaning of the word or the sound structure of the word). Intervention will be based upon these findings and so is tailored to the child's specific

pattern. Intervention typically focuses on developing strategies for the child to use to lay down strong mental representations and motor patterns for word production so to minimise the impact of the disability. Pupils require a level of self-awareness to learn these strategies and to apply them in their life. For pupils without this level of awareness intervention is directed at the adults around them, so that they help the child store new words as effectively as possible.