



Beacon Hill School

Speaking and Listening Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Alternative Communication Policy and the other elements of the English Policy. Speaking and Listening should be taken to include all non-verbal systems of communication including signing, using communication aids, PECs and Objects of Reference.

PRINCIPLES

"The development of communication and listening skills is an essential step towards reading and writing for pupils with severe, complex and profound difficulties." (Berger, Henderson and Morris 1999)

"The ability to communicate gives children the capacity to participate more fully in their society" (Primary Framework for Literacy 2007)

- ✧ Speaking and listening is at the heart of the curriculum for all pupils. The English programme of study 2000 states that "teachers should ensure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing is integrated."
- ✧ Speaking and listening are at the heart of child development. Aherne et al (1990a) state that 'all children learn to communicate by actively participating in and interacting with their environment and other human beings.' For pupils with severe learning difficulties these earliest experiences need to be taught in a structured way through all of a pupil's senses.
- ✧ For every child, the development of symbolisation is fundamental to the development of speaking and listening.
- ✧ As pupil's vocabulary and language structure develop, they need to listen, understand and respond to others to formulate, clarify and express their ideas and to adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances and demands. For many children, this learning may not occur without careful planning and monitoring by the teacher.
- ✧ Individual access to expressive communication can be gained through the use of VOCAs (Voice Output Communication Aids) and other ICT equipment. Where required, teaching programmes should be established to teach the pupil operating skills, e.g. recording and playing back a child's own speaking). Close liaison with SALT (Speech and Language Team) will ensure that this takes place.
- ✧ Much speaking and listening development takes place at home, and the aim of work in school is to facilitate the pupil's use of these skills at home and in other non-school environments.

- ✧ A multi professional approach is essential in speaking and listening work. Speech therapists in particular, have a major contribution to make, and systems are in place to ensure that their expertise is harnessed appropriately.
- ✧ Signing, and the use of early systems such as objects of reference are used both with pupils who have not developed speaking and listening skills, and for those who require additional support. Signing is expressive communication, just as speaking is, and so is vital to this work. All adults in school will use Makaton when communicating with children.
- ✧ The Primary Framework 2007, emphasises the importance of role play, to encourage the development of speaking and listening skills. There are opportunities for drama and role play throughout the curriculum, in order to provide opportunities for developing these skills.

LINKS TO SCHOOL AIMS

Beacon Hill School and Specialist College for Business and Enterprise is a community:

- *That has high expectations for continuous improvement in order to raise standards for pupils.*
The raising of standards in speaking and listening will be important to raising standards, and the quality of education provided as a whole, and so is essential to school improvement.
- *In which all partners include, involve and inform each other.*
School staff work together closely to ensure continuity in a pupil's speaking and listening programmes. School staff also work closely with parents, and the speech and language team, to put together appropriate programmes, and monitor progress. Reports are shared with all disciplines involved, including parents.
- *That actively develops parental partnerships for the benefit of the pupils.*
Parental support for work on speaking and listening is crucial to a pupil's progress. Speaking and listening skills need to be developed in a wide range of settings, and parents are ideally placed to provide these for their child.
- *That positively promotes and encourages independence, confidence and self advocacy.*
Being able to communicate effectively gives an increased self esteem, and greater confidence in expressing views, holding conversations or making choices. Pupils are more independent when they are able to communicate effectively.
- *That values communication and provides the time and opportunity to make it effective.*
This school aim reflects the importance of communication within Beacon Hill School. Being able to communicate enables pupils to access all others areas of the curriculum,

and other life experiences. There are times in the school day, and during subject lessons, dedicated to developing communication skills.

- *That extends inclusion within and beyond the school.*
The ability to speak and listen effectively, is an important skill, if a pupil is to function effectively outside of school. Skills such as conversation skills, and turn taking are particularly important.
- *That gives pupils the skills and opportunities to make informed choices.*
The skills developed in speaking and listening programmes are essential to the development of self advocacy and choice making. Effective skills in communication and choice making will allow a pupil to live more independently, and control more of his/her environment.
- *That establishes an atmosphere of security, trust and respect for all.*
Pupils at Beacon Hill School are given opportunities to speak and communicate, as well as having an understanding that they will be listened to by others, including school staff. This enables an environment of security, trust and respect to be evident, throughout the school.
- *That celebrates achievement for all.*
Although it can be difficult to record and measure progress in speaking and listening, pupils' achievements are still celebrated in the usual ways, through the use of badges, certificates and awards. Skills in this area must be celebrated, as a key component in the development of the whole child.
- *That works in a creative and enterprising way to fulfil these aims.*
Beacon Hill School recognises that children learn in different ways, and will respond to some methods of teaching better than others. School staff use a range of strategies, to ensure that all pupils are able to develop their speaking and listening skills.

AIMS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

- ✧ To encourage in pupils, responsiveness to the presence of others and to establish reciprocal interaction patterns.
- ✧ To promote in pupils, consistent behaviours in relation to people and objects.
- ✧ To establish in pupils, understanding and the systematic use of, speaking and listening behaviours.
- ✧ To build in pupils, a repertoire of signals related to needs, preferences, interests, ideas and feelings. (Ouvry 1987)
- ✧ To formulate, clarify and express ideas, develop concepts and increase knowledge in pupils.
- ✧ To enable pupils to listen, understand and respond appropriately to others.

- ✧ To enable pupils to use signs as reinforcers of language and concepts.
- ✧ To reduce the stress and frustration for pupils who have difficulties with speech.
- ✧ To offer pupils opportunities to exercise control over their environment through choice making and self advocacy.

GUIDELINES

- ✧ Experiences in the Foundation Stage will link to Key Stage 1 teaching.
- ✧ Speaking and listening is vital to ensure pupils learning across the whole curriculum. Therefore all pupils will have specific programmes in this area, and targets on termly IEP's.
- ✧ Through planning and teaching strategies, including the use of PECs, symbols, ICT and visual structure, provision will be made to ensure children with ASD are given equal learning opportunities in this area.
- ✧ Speaking and Listening are fundamental to all areas of the triad for pupils with ASD. Careful planning will ensure that children are able to develop their speaking and listening skills in situations involving communication, social interaction (for example in turn taking), and flexibility of thought.
- ✧ Teachers will ensure that, where possible, pupils will receive their entitlement to age appropriate content. This will include ensuring that work is presented in age appropriate contexts, for example, for pupils in secondary and post 16, speaking and listening skills can be developed through discussion of national events or football. This will always be delivered at a level appropriate to the ability of the individual pupil.
- ✧ The percentage of time spent on this area of the National Curriculum will differ for all key stages, but will reflect the vital importance of this area for all pupils at Beacon Hill School.
- ✧ Work in speaking and listening aims to enable pupils to control their environment by expressing choices and self advocacy.
- ✧ Pupils will be given opportunities to speak to large groups (for example in assemblies), as well as more formal 1:1 situations (for example in careers interviews).
- ✧ Pupils will be given specific vocabulary and skills to enable them to keep themselves safe from abuse, or if necessary, to accurately describe their experiences.

- ✧ Pupils will have specific work on the dynamics of speaking and listening such as conversation skills, turn taking etc. This could take place in social settings such as drinks time, or when in the local community.
- ✧ The advice and support of the teacher for the hearing impaired will also be sought for all pupils with a hearing impairment. They may also be able to offer ideas and support for other children, to help develop their speaking and listening skills.
- ✧ The advice and skills of the speech and language therapists will be used to develop pupil skills in this area. Specific suggestions for work in school will be discussed with the therapist concerned, and put into place as part of a pupil's programme in school.
- ✧ Such recommendations must also be communicated to parents, along with other specific parts of a speaking and listening programme. A pre-review meeting, parents evening or a specific session could be when this information is shared.
- ✧ Teachers will always be aware of, and support any work agreed with, the speech therapists, who must not work in isolation. This is also reflected in the school aims.
- ✧ Teachers will encourage pupils to play with sounds and vocalisations in order to extend and develop their ability to communicate. This may include babble conversations, mimic games etc.
- ✧ The use of rhymes and poems will be used to develop both pupil's skills and their interest in the sounds they can make.
- ✧ Daily phonics lessons will give opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, in particular in letter and sound pronunciation, and segmenting and blending skills.
- ✧ Termly topics will be used as a vehicle to develop pupil's speaking and listening skills.
- ✧ Music, drama and role play are valuable tools for developing speaking and listening skills.
- ✧ Pupil's access to the curriculum will not be restricted on the basis of gender, race or ability.
- ✧ Topics for discussion, and opportunities to discuss activities, will cover a full range, including those relevant to boys and girls, and also from other countries or cultures.
- ✧ Teachers will provide pupils with opportunities to:
 - Listen to and carry out instructions.
 - Listen to and consider the ideas of others.
 - Listen for, select and recall.

- Explain informally, and more formally.
 - Describe events, activities or problems.
 - Explore and develop ideas with others.
 - Consolidate ideas and understandings.
 - Ask questions, as well as answer them.
 - Speculate, wonder about, and imagine.
 - Narrate, recount or relate.
 - Reflect on experience or learning.
 - Express views, ideas and feelings.
 - Plan, organise and arrange activities.
 - Solve problems collaboratively.
 - Investigate and evaluate experiences.
 - Persuade, discuss or argue a case.
 - Comment on the talk of others.
 - Talk at length, adopt the expert role.
 - Speak with varying degrees of formality.
 - Make choices and decisions.
- ✧ The opportunities listed above, will vary according to the Key Stage a pupil is in, and the ability of the individual pupil.

RECORDING, ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION

- ✧ Achievement in this area will be variable but will always be valued and, where appropriate, celebrated and rewarded.
- ✧ Recording of pupil's progress will be ongoing and will inform the pupil's learning through IEP's and on pupil profiles, using PIVATs, early learning goals (for foundation stage), and teacher assessment.
- ✧ Recording will be carried out for all pupils, whatever their rate of learning, or level of achievement.
- ✧ Recording of learning will be ongoing (in addition to half termly 'I can' assessment sheets), and will include parental and pupil comments.
- ✧ National curriculum assessment will be carried out through teacher assessment, and pupils will have access to end of key stage tests, where appropriate.
- ✧ Students in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 will work on specific communication modules in the ASDAN curriculum, as well as core skills work.

- ✧ Specific early language and communication assessments will be used, both by teachers, and the speech and language therapists, and programmes based on their results.
- ✧ Levels of attainment will be recorded for individual pupils using PIVATs, through to NC Level 4.
- ✧ 'I can' style assessments will be used at the end of each half term, for all pupils in Key Stages 1-4, to monitor progress in all areas of Literacy.

RESOURCES

- ✧ Students will have access to a wide range of materials, resources and techniques across all Key Stages. For example, Microphones, recording software on computers, telephones, puppets, audio books, ICT and role play areas.
- ✧ Where appropriate, pupils will have access to Voice Output Communication Aids, and switches, to enable communication. This will be in consultation with the speech and language team.
- ✧ Each class uses a visual timetable every day in circle time, to enable pupils to structure their day, anticipate and sequence events.