



**No Pens Day
Wednesday**

**4 October
2017**



**Put down your pens
and pick up your language!**

Activity Pack

Your guide to running the day



Welcome to your No Pens Day Wednesday activity pack

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No Pens Day Wednesday encourages schools to put down their pens and pick up their language by spending one day focusing on learning through speaking and listening.

Thank you for signing up and getting involved.



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All about No Pens Day Wednesday

No Pens Day Wednesday is a national speaking and listening event organised by The Communication Trust. The Communication Trust is a coalition of over 50 not-for-profit organisations with expertise in speech, language and communication, who support the children's workforce to develop the skills of the children they work with.

Now in its sixth year, **No Pens Day Wednesday** is more popular than ever. In 2016 we had over 5,700 schools signed up, resulting in combined pupil numbers of an estimated 1.75 million pupils! Last year we added No Pens Day homework components to our plans for the first time in order to encourage more communication within the home. No Pens Day Wednesday 2017 will take place on **Wednesday 4th October**.

This year, we'll have lots of new resources, ideas and guidance to help you run your day, including an increased focus on Further Education resources for 2017. If you haven't already, simply register on our website to access all the available resources – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday

Just a note... If Wednesday 4th October doesn't work for your school, you can run your No Pens Day at any time and as often as you like. In previous years, schools have even decided to extend the activities over a week with 'surprise' no pens lessons incorporated throughout the school day! The resources stay available on our website throughout the year.



Why run a No Pens Day Wednesday?

Of all the skills we develop at school, the ability to communicate effectively is the one that has the most profound and potentially positive impact on our lives. Communication is at the core of what we do: at home, in work, at school and socially. Strong language skills and good communication are key to whole school improvement, progression and attainment and supporting children and young people to develop these skills is vital.

For children and young people with SEND, a focus on communication can help support inclusion and independence. Good spoken language skills are strong predictors of later academic success. Children with poor language and literacy development at 5 are at substantial risk of low achievement at 7 and beyond.

- The attainment gap between children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and their peers is marked, with pupils with SLCN consistently achieving less well than pupils with no identified SEN from EYFS through to GCSE. At the end of Key Stage 4, the attainment gap is 49%; 15% of young people with SLCN achieve 5 GCSE A*- C grades or equivalent compared to 64% of young people with no identified SEN. The attainment gap for children and young people with SLCN is growing and has widened by 10% since 2008.
- Language ability is also important for behavioural and emotional development; language levels directly impact on pupils' self regulation skills and therefore on their behaviour.
- High quality language teaching and learning in the classroom helps to reduce the numbers of children and young people who require specialist language support.
- Conversations between adults and children characterised by high quality language learning interactions really make a difference. High quality classroom talk is a key factor in improving pupil engagement and outcomes.



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In the Evaluation of **No Pens Day Wednesday** 2016:

- 83% of respondents said that taking part in **No Pens Day Wednesday** raised their awareness of pupil's speech, language and communication needs.
- 95% said they'd do things differently around school as a result of their involvement, with almost 50% saying they'd run more regular No Pens Days
- One in four respondents reported they identified pupils who were struggling with spoken language that they had not identified before.

■ Many of the respondents noted that as a result of taking part in NPDW they not only noticed pupils' improved communication skills, but also improvements in their writing and engagement in lessons.

"It was a very enjoyable and engaging day. It made us think more creatively about our teaching and particularly recording methods. The children were really engaged and the parents also asked lots of questions about what was going on."

"The level of engagement of the staff and children was a joy to watch. No Pens Day really inspired their creativity and some of the outcomes were amazing."

"Teachers have become more aware of strengths and difficulties of pupils in their classes. There is more understanding of the importance of listening and attention skills and giving clear instructions."



Expanding the day to Further Education

For 2017, we plan to have an increased focus on involving Further Education settings with **No Pens Day Wednesday**. This carries on from our theme in 2014, where we successfully expanded the day by creating lesson plans and activities for early years settings and special schools. At present, although we know from our sign up data that FE settings take part in the day, our lesson plans only specifically cater for ages 0 - 16.

This year, that's set to change! In addition to creating new FE focussed lesson plans and activity packs, we will also have a specific focus on Further Education in our post event work, aiming to create a range of new FE case studies to sit alongside our existing case studies when evaluating the day.

One of our goals in extending the day to an FE audience is to ensure that young people have the communication skills that will allow them to thrive when they leave education. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills have previously said that employers now rate communication skills as their highest priority, above even qualifications - it is therefore essential that children and young people are given as much support as possible in honing these essential life skills.



No Pens Day Wednesday – Top Tips

Over the next few pages you will find some really useful ideas and tips to help you make the most of **No Pens Day Wednesday** in your school or setting. Our professional team share their ideas and also build on what we know schools and settings who've taken part have found most exciting and effective throughout the day.

We'll explore the following themes for early years, primary, secondary, FE and specialist settings:

- **Keep it fun**
- **Keep it relevant**
- **Keep linking it to writing**
- **Keep collecting impact**
- **Keep on sharing**



Keep it fun

No Pens Day Wednesday is a great opportunity to be really innovative and creative across the curriculum.

"We really enjoyed the productive noise that could be heard all over the school throughout the day. The children loved it and so did the teachers; coming up with very inventive ways of learning."

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Early Years

- Think about the resources you already have within the classroom and how these can be used to bring the day to life. Puppets, props, role play and dress up provide the perfect opportunity for children to be active in conversation.
- How could you use musical instruments to accompany activities?
- Are there ways that more reluctant speakers could be encouraged to join in? e.g. children take turns to be the 'voice' for a toy/character
- How could parents be involved?

Primary

- Think about how a morning assembly could be used to trigger lots of enthusiasm and ideas for the day.
- How could music and movement be incorporated?
- How can the oral traditions of retelling stories and poems be used in the day?
- Would the children enjoy being part of a 'human graph' as part of a maths lesson?
- How could jokes and non-literal language be included?

Secondary and FE

- Think about the interests of the young people and how they could be included in the day. Consider getting the students actively involved in sharing their ideas for activities and planning.
- Would they enjoy a poetry slam contest or verbal debates?
- Could you use interesting video clips to spark discussion?
- How could you use improvisation to re-enact a historical event?



Specialist Settings

- How could you use art, imagery, poems and stories to bring activities to life?
- How could you use listening activities in small groups to support discussion and collaboration?
- Will the students enjoy having more of a focus on listening and being listened to?

There is a wealth of information and practical tips/activities on the **No Pens Day Wednesday** website to inspire you in how to use speaking and listening activities in a fun and engaging way across the day. Have a look at the lesson plans and don't forget to look at the case studies and evaluations too, as these include little nuggets of inspiration for a really enjoyable day for adults and children.

No Pens Day Wednesday is a real opportunity to try something a bit different and have lots of fun!



Keep it relevant

No Pens Day Wednesday is not just a ‘one off’ occasion to think about speaking and listening. It’s a great opportunity to really focus on communication skills and see how they are relevant for all lessons across the curriculum and throughout the year. It’s a chance to demonstrate and celebrate how the spoken word can really enhance learning and engagement. Helping pupils, parents and staff be aware of the wider relevance of the day should be an important part of your planning.

“It really highlighted the areas where children need further support and has informed teachers of the next steps that need to be built into their future planning.”



For Children

- Help the children to see how the day fits into what they have already been learning by clearly linking it to previous and future lessons. For example using a book or text that the children are familiar with or are studying.
- Keep any of your notes or recordings of discussions that you may have made on the day - use them for future reference and discussion in other lessons throughout school.



For Young People

- Older students are often very focussed on the ‘note taking’ aspect of school work especially if they are preparing for exams and assessments. Get them to discuss the importance of spoken language skills and the impact of having more time to prepare for written work in this way, both before and after the day. Did it help them to have more time to explore ideas?
- How are communication skills important in interviews or the workplace, in relationships and life? You could even consider role playing some of these scenarios so they can see exactly how useful being able to ‘think on your’ feet can be!

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For Parents

- Make sure they are aware of the day and do ask for their feedback and input. Share with them materials that the children produced on the day (physically or by photo or video) and make clear how this links to work the children subsequently produce.
- Use letters, websites or other means of communication to let them know all about the day - we have lots of resources to support you to share information about **No Pens Day Wednesday** with your parents on our resources pages.

For Staff

- When planning for the day, think about how **No Pens Day Wednesday** links to your school development plan or individual priorities.
- Consider planning collaboratively and in groups to really make the activities as relevant as possible.
- Consider a 'subject themed' approach if this would be useful for your setting. One school planned all its **No Pens Day Wednesday** activities around scientific vocabulary and it was a great success!



"Feedback from staff indicated that it made them think differently about their teaching, some found it challenging to do it for the full day, others welcomed the opportunity to experiment with new ideas."



Keep linking it to writing

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"We found that the day had a positive impact on the written work of the students following the event... In a subsequent assessment, a few of our children who were predicted level 5s at the start of the year attained level 7s, with some of them managing to write over four sides of writing!"

Although we want everyone to put down their pens for the day and really focus on how we can use spoken language to support learning, it's important to keep in mind how this all links to written work and how incorporating these skills to your everyday planning beyond **No Pens Day Wednesday** can have a real impact.

Schools and settings who have taken part before have regularly highlighted the impact the day has on children and young people's written work.



Early Years

- You could introduce important ideas or content and 'set the scene' for something before the day, so that children have had the opportunity to become familiar with key vocabulary or concepts.
- You could extend activities from the day in to future lessons. Are the children inspired to make up a song or a rhyme based on the art work they made? They could draw a picture about their best bit of No Pens Day, or think more about some of the sounds that they heard and talked about during a 'sound trail'

Primary

- You could ask students to bring in materials from home in preparation for the day, and encourage them to write about potential No Pens Day activities that could make use of these materials. In previous years, schools have encouraged students to plan and prepare visual PowerPoint presentations to share on the day on their interests/hobbies.
- You could also encourage pupils to produce extended pieces of writing after **No Pens Day Wednesday** based on activities they took part in on the day.



Secondary

- Again, think about how students could prepare for the day, for example by looking at examples of poems or writing a piece of poetry to use during a 'slam poetry' contest or by reading relevant articles for topics and activities.
- Following the day they could write up the results of a verbal debate or how they completed a maths problem.
- They could also be encouraged to write a reflection on their whole experience of **No Pens Day Wednesday** - what did they learn about communication? What did they learn about themselves?

Specialist

- Use lessons before the day to introduce any supporting resources for concepts, ideas or vocabulary that will be important for the activities. Introduce any relevant signs or symbols that are likely to be new or unfamiliar before the day and make these easily accessible and update on any AAC devices or equipment children may be using. This way, pupils can really concentrate on communicating during the day rather than grappling with new ideas.
- Use opportunities following the day to revisit ideas and activities to reinforce new vocabulary and concepts, discuss how the day went and how effectively pupils were able to communicate and share their ideas.

For Staff

- Use **No Pens Day Wednesday** as a chance to really reflect on how you use spoken language to support written work. Some staff have reported that they found it really reassuring to realise how much they already do this and they used the day to enhance their awareness and practice. Others said it gave them a chance to really explore new approaches and ideas which they will use again in the future.



Keep collecting impact

"Personally, the day has made me realise how speaking can be used a lot more during lessons to help those who struggle to communicate in writing."



It's really important that you capture the impact of the day but when there is no 'marking' to be done it can be a challenge to know how to do it! Below are some ideas from schools that have previously taken part that you might want to consider:

Student's voice

- Use a camera to capture photographs of the children during activities. Consider video or voice recorders to record what the children were able to say when they were just focussing on their talking.
- Towards the end of the pack, there are some questions which you could use to guide a discussion on pupils' experiences of the day. One secondary school has used a big brother style 'diary room' to record their students' thoughts and opinions on the day. What a great way to gather impact!

Discuss it

Discuss both with the children and with staff members before and after the day.

- What did the children notice? Were they more relaxed or was it initially more nerve-wracking?
- Did staff notice any changes in pupil confidence or self esteem? Has it supported development of social skills? Some schools reported that it 'narrowed the gap' in performance for children with SEN - did you see any examples of this?
- Ask parents for reports of any feedback they received.



Monitor it

- Although you need to put down your pen during the day please do write and record any results as soon as the day is over.
- What was pupil engagement like during the day?
- Was there any difference in the quality and depth of written work produced after the day due to the extra time given to discussion and preparation? Compare specific pieces of work so you can make an informed judgement.

- Think about changes you would like to see in advance of the day and then see if your expectations were met. Were you able to more effectively evaluate your student's speaking and listening skills afterwards?
- Did you identify any difficulties and challenges that you were previously unaware of? Did some children surprise you with their abilities and strengths? Again, make sure to record any actions you undertake as a direct result of the day.

We are always collecting information on the impact of the day so please do share your evidence with us. You can do this by completing our case study template, sharing your thoughts through our evaluation survey or by getting in touch directly with us at enquiries@thecommunicationtrust.org.uk – we can always arrange a follow up phone call.



Keep on Sharing

Consistent feedback we get from schools who have taken part is how useful it is to share resources and ideas about **No Pens Day Wednesday**.



Within school

- Consider group and collaborative planning for the day - it's a great way to share innovation and particularly useful if you are considering a focus on one idea or subject area across certain year groups or the whole school. Some schools have used team development days or INSET to really develop and plan for **No Pens Day Wednesday** and their approach to speaking and listening as a whole.
- If you've taken part before, look at what worked well last time and consider any changes or developments you would like to make this time.

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Between schools

- Whether it's your first time or you've run the day before, do look at the information provided on the website from other schools who have taken part - their experiences might be useful to help you shape ideas for your school's participation.
- Some schools have also used group spreadsheets or displays to share lesson plans and ideas. If there is a staff shared area then this is a great place to collate practical suggestions and resources. In previous years, schools used it as an opportunity to share resources around signing and symbols with all staff across the school.
- Use your professional networks to share your good practice around spoken language so that more pupils than ever can get the opportunity to experience **No Pens Day Wednesday**.
- Share your ideas and resources with other schools and settings via the sharing function on our website.

Getting ready for the day

Over the next few pages there will be some really practical information to help you prepare for **No Pens Day Wednesday** - or Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday if another day suits you better! These are just guidelines, so just adapt and add things to and make it relevant for you.



Visit the website and register

On our website at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday you can register to access all the resources we've developed and that schools have shared to help you run your **No Pens Day Wednesday**. You'll find lesson plans, activity ideas, assembly ideas, information for staff, information for parents, promotional materials and resources from our members.

Check out the resources

Once you've registered, there are lots of free resources for you to use. All the resources we've produced for the event since 2011 are available online, giving you a wide range to choose from across all settings, age ranges and subjects. You'll also be able to access resources shared by other schools and settings across the country on our 'resources from schools' page.

From the central **No Pens Day Wednesday** page on our website, you'll be signposted to access all the available information and resources including the lesson plans, activity ideas and ideas for engaging parents. Each resource will include information about those that are produced by us, as well as a link (where available) to the resources shared by other

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schools and settings. It's a really easy to use online resource bank and once you've registered, you can share the link with your colleagues so they can explore it for themselves too.

Make the resources your own and share your ideas

All of the resources that have been shared can be used as a starting point to springboard from, so you can build and adapt things to meet the needs of your pupils and your individual setting. And remember, if you've got examples of lesson plans, activity ideas or other resources that have worked well with your pupils, share them with others the sharing function on our website!

Support with running your No Pens Day Wednesday

Three weeks before your No Pens Day Wednesday:

- Confirm who'll lead on plans for the day.
- Book in a staff meeting to inform other teachers about **No Pens Day Wednesday**.
- Download the activity pack and other resources at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday
- Familiarise yourself with the available resources and consider how you might adapt them or if you'll use them as they are. If you've created your own lesson plans or activity ideas – why not share them on our site for others to use?
- Decide on who'll run the **No Pens Day Wednesday** assembly for pupils.
- Consider whether you'll have competitions/presentations on the day to encourage the pupils to get involved – you can use our downloadable certificate to reward excellent work on the day.
- If you would like to let your local newspaper or local T.V. news channel know you're running a **No Pens Day Wednesday** then you can download press templates and a media advice toolkit from our website.
- If you plan to use or share photos of **No Pens Day Wednesday**, make sure you have the relevant permissions in place!
- Plan in reflection time after the day to look at lessons learned. What might your next steps be? How can you embed spoken language across your setting going forward?



Two weeks before your **No Pens Day Wednesday**

- Ensure all teachers have discussed with their pupils the plans to participate in **No Pens Day Wednesday**, including seeking their views on taking part and asking their ideas on how the day should be run.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the day and the reasons behind your decision to take part.
- Identify 'a budding photographer' in your school or community who can take pictures of your **No Pens Day Wednesday** activity.
- Send a letter to parents – we've provided a template for you to use on the website; you may decide to invite parents into the school assembly or to see what's happening in the classrooms – we know parents often really enjoy being involved in **No Pens Day Wednesday**.



One week before your No Pens Day Wednesday

- Plan the lessons you'll run using the examples provided at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday
Ensure any additional resources you need are prepared. If you create new plans and activities, remember to share them with others through our website.
- Make sure you've thought about differentiation ideas for pupils who struggle with their speaking and listening and have included this information in your planning.
- Put information in your newsletter for parents and in the news section of your website.
- Take time to familiarise yourself with our case study template which you can find on our website so you can send in feedback and stories to us. We're always keen to hear from schools and settings so please do get in touch.
- Plan where and when you'll gather pupil views on the day.
- As a staff team, think about the impact you're hoping to evidence from **No Pens Day Wednesday** and ways you might be able to measure this. Consider using some of the methods mentioned on page 14 of this pack.
- Set up a blog or podcast that the teachers and pupils can access. Use this to share ideas about what you and other teachers are planning to do on the day, get the pupils' views, share with other schools and look at ways to keep this going after the event.



On the day

- Begin with an assembly explaining to pupils what will happen on the day; you can download examples from www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday - you might even want to ask the pupils to lead the assembly! Make sure you plan in time to support them with this beforehand.
- Send us a message on social media to let us know you're taking part and keep us updated throughout the day on how things are going, include some of the best bits so our followers can share your fantastic practice- you can find us on [Twitter @ Comm_nTrust](#) and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/communicationtrust
- Use the materials provided on our website to plan for your exciting **No Pens Day Wednesday**.
- Note the impact on pupils' engagement and learning. Ask pupils' views during the day; discuss the benefits of not using pens, alternative activities used and places where it would be useful to write things down – ensure you capture these views by writing them down or recording them.
- Plan a follow up assembly/ sharing pupils' work. You might choose to do this on another day/invite parents etc.
- If you have invited your local newspaper or T.V. news channel along for part of the day, nominate someone to be the 'media person' who will lead on liaising with local media and talk to them about what they need. For example, they may want to set up a specific photo with staff and children or talk to a child/teacher/parent about their views on the day.
- We would love to see any photos or videos that you take on the day so we can show others how successful your **No Pens Day Wednesday** was. Please send to enquiries@thecommunicationtrust.org.uk – please remember that in order to share them, all photos and videos need to have full permissions.



After the day

- Present results / certificates at the end of week assembly.
- Use a staff meeting to reflect on the best and most challenging elements of the day. Look back over the impacts you had hoped to see and how the day went – were there surprises? Did you achieve the impact you hoped for? Is there more you could do?
- Share pupils' views with each other; see suggested approaches on page 16.
- Decide on what you'll continue with to continue embedding spoken language across your school or setting going forward. You might want to take a look at our Communication Commitment resource to support you in this; see more information about this on page 26 – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment
- Complete our short evaluation survey which we'll send round after the event to let us know what went well and what could be improved.
- Share your experiences with us using our case study template. Email your templates along with any photos you're happy to share to enquiries@thecommunicationtrust.org.uk. We're keen to add to our fantastic range of case studies from previous years and to the great work that's happening!
- Send a press release with a couple of the best pictures to your local media and any other important contacts. Please do also send them to us – enquiries@thecommunicationtrust.org.uk to help us keep track of the media activity.



Evaluating the day

An important feature of **No Pens Day Wednesday** is the reflection it will prompt, from pupils, school staff and parents, particularly around what went well as well as what was less successful and what could happen differently next time. Including the views of children and young people is recognised as good practice and is a specific focus of the reformed SEND system.

For pupils, opportunities could be provided throughout the day to ask their views about different lessons and activities. We also have resources available in the ‘information for staff’ section online that will be useful in thinking about this, including a pupil evaluation tool.

Pupil Voice

Here are some examples of questions that might be a useful starting point for evaluating what students think:

- 1. What did you most enjoy about No Pens Day and why? You could use examples and traffic lights/smiley faces to encourage pupils to judge which were best.**
- 2. What was the most challenging part of the day? Why? Was there anything you would have liked to have been done differently? Why?**
- 3. Were there times when you wanted to write things down? If so, when would that have been useful?**
- 4. What do you think of this way of learning? Would you like your teachers to do more activities like this or less? Thumbs up or thumbs down?**
- 5. Did you surprise yourself today in any way? What was your best success?**

For teaching staff, we suggest some time is set aside to evaluate and share positive practice. This could be the starting point to plan next steps and to think about the bigger picture of how children’s speaking and listening skills can continue to be supported throughout the school.

Staff evaluation

Here are some examples of questions that might be useful to think about after the day.

- 1. What were the most challenging elements of the day?**
- 2. What worked well – what activities, principles, lessons or approaches?**
- 3. What were pupils’ views on the day?**
- 4. What was the impact on learning, engagement and behaviour?**
- 5. After the day, did you notice any impact the day had on pupils’ written work?**
- 6. Did the day give you any new insights into particular pupils?**



Choose elements of the day you'll use again, for example:

1. Try one new activity that you want to embed in your teaching
2. Target specific spoken language objectives in your planning going forward and make it a focus of every lesson
3. As a staff team, perhaps it would be useful to use some time in staff meetings as an opportunity to discuss spoken language across the curriculum and to share practice.

This may be the first time you have taken part in **No Pens Day**

Wednesday, or you may be a seasoned participant and have taken part in many **No Pens Day Wednesdays** before! Either way, we would love to know what you think. If you have any suggestions for ways we can improve the day, please let us know at enquiries@thecommunicationtrust.org.uk



Spread the word

We've got lots of guidance and templates to help you spread the word, far and wide, about your **No Pens Day Wednesday**:

- [Template letter for parents](#)
- [Flyers to send home to parents](#)
- [Posters to display around school](#)
- [Template press release](#)
- [No Pens Day Wednesday one pager](#)
- [eComms Toolkit](#)
- [Media Toolkit](#)

All of these materials are available for you to access on our website – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday



The Communication Trust
Every child understood

We're putting down our pens and picking up our language!

We're involved in No Pens Day Wednesday, a national speaking and listening event!

- All classes and lessons will be focused on learning through speaking and listening activities.
- We are doing this because we know speaking and listening skills are extremely important for children's development - both in education and more widely. This is a really exciting day that will encourage good classroom talk and will build on these essential skills in a fun and engaging way.
- To find out more about the day and more about what activities might be going on please ask a member of staff.

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The Communication Trust
Every child understood

No Pens Day Wednesday is being run by The Communication Trust, to find out more please go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/nopensdaywednesday

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Taking it further with The Communication Commitment

We hope that taking part in **No Pens Day Wednesday** has helped to raise awareness of the importance of speech, language and communication and SLCN in your setting. To take your setting further, register for our free Communication Commitment resource and follow the three steps to support you towards developing a whole school approach to communication.

We know that the most effective way to embed good practice to support communication development in schools is to take a whole school approach. The Communication Commitment provides school leaders with the resources needed to do just that.

It provides everything you need to assess where you're at currently, what key actions will take you forward and provides free resources to support you to achieve them. It then signposts you to our expert member organisations who offer accreditation and training programmes for settings that feel ready to invest further in their whole school approach. The Commitment was updated in 2014 to include specific reference to ways it can support schools to meet the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice and it's a really practical way you can get to grips with the changes happening and prioritise communication for all pupils including those with SEN in your school.

You can find out more about the Commitment and register to take a look or get involved here – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment

"[The Commitment] has enabled Teachers to review the impact their own language has on struggling pupils and how they can support progress through a language enriched classroom and language enriched activities. They are using resources to support and progress pupils to independent learning."



Voice Box 2017/18

Voice Box – the joke competition for schools – returns this autumn to fill classrooms across England, Scotland and Wales with the sound of laughter. Holding a Voice Box joke competition can be a fantastic activity to organise as part of your No Pens Day Wednesday.

Run by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) in partnership with NAHT and supported by The Communication Trust, the competition reminds people that all children need support to build their communication skills and confidence and some need additional specialist help to speak and/or understand what is being said to them.

Hundreds of pupils took part in the 2016/17 competition. Finalists comprised children from both mainstream and special schools, who used a variety of means, including sign language, to tell their jokes to a packed audience of politicians and parents.

Many children said afterwards that their experience of taking part in the competition had been a positive one and had impacted significantly on their confidence levels. One child also said it had helped him to make friends.

The competition will run from **2 October to 1 December 2017** and the grand final will take place in London in Spring 2018.

If you would like to get your local school involved, visit www.givingvoiceuk.org/voice-box/ for more information including a toolkit, details of prizes to be won and a submission form.



YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE COMMUNICATION COMMITMENT >>>

WHY?

It's free to register, you'll receive free resources and you'll be supporting all your pupils, including those with SLCN, to communicate better – part of the Ofsted Framework and preparing you for the SEND Reforms



COMMUNICATION
COMMITMENT



Our other work to support you in your school

We have a wide range of resources and support which will help you to be aware of typical language development and to identify and support those who are struggling.

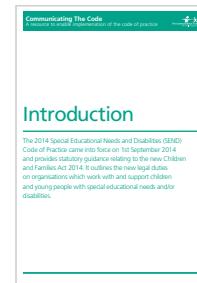


The Progression Tools aim to support teaching staff to identify children who may be struggling to develop their speech, language and communication skills. The Progression Tools can also be used to track and monitor children's speech, language and communication skills over time.. They are now available across the age ranges from 3–18 and are one of our most popular resources. To find out more and to order progression tools please go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/progressiontools



Communicating the Curriculum is a practical resource from The

Communication Trust, which helps primary schools to define and monitor children's progress in spoken language and engage with the national curriculum for spoken language. The resource not only helps to show how the programme of study statements can be broken down in relation to the typical stages of language development, but also how schools can use this to identify a pupil's progress. This will help schools to spot pupils who might be struggling with their spoken language and signposts to next steps and support for these pupils – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/communicatingthecurriculum



Introduction

The 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice came into force on 1st September 2014 and provides a framework according to the new Children and Families Act 2014. It includes the responsibilities of organisations which work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Communicating the Code has been developed specifically for people working directly with children and young people with speech, language and communication needs and it should be of use to those working in early years, schools and post 16 settings. It contains practical information, case studies and links to great resources to help all those involved with children and young people with SLCN fulfil their responsibilities effectively under the new Code of Practice – www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/communicatingthecode



Universally Speaking is a series of booklets for anyone who works with children and young people. The booklets show where children should be with their communication skills at any given age. You can use the booklets to find out whether the children you work with are on the right track, what helps them learn to talk and listen and what to do if you have concerns about any of their communication abilities. To find out more and to download a free copy, go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/universallyspeaking

No Pens Day
Wednesday

4 October
2017



What Works is a moderated virtual library of evidenced interventions and training packages that

aims to support children's speech, language and communication. *What Works* helps early years practitioners, teachers, school leaders, and speech and language therapists find training packages for the workforce and the most appropriate interventions for children and young people by providing a free and easily accessible overview of the evidence base.

To find out more and register to use the site please go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/whatworks



The Communication Commitment is an interactive website that supports schools to improve their whole school approach to communication. There's more information on page 26 and on our website www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment



We are a Consortium of over 50 voluntary organisations who provide specialist expert support around speech, language and communication. Download our **Catalogue** which lists the products and services available from our Consortium. To download please go to www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/consortiumcatalogue

Find out about more about our work at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk

The Communication Trust is a coalition of over 50 voluntary and community organisations with expertise in speech, language and communication. We harness our collective expertise to support the children's workforce and commissioners to support all children and young people's communication skills, particularly those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

We do this by raising awareness, providing information and workforce development opportunities, influencing policy, promoting best practice among the children's workforce and commissioning work from our members.

The Trust was founded in 2007 by children's charities Afasic and I CAN together with BT and the Council for Disabled Children.

www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk

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