

# Total Communication Workshop

Speech and Language Therapy  
Virtual Communication Event  
Firpark Primary School  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2020

# Total Communication

## What is it?

- A range of methods of getting our message across eg: speech, facial expressions, gesture, movement, body posture, eye contact/eye pointing and vocalisations.
- Additional things used to enhance total communication eg: Makaton, Big Mack switches, Low or High Tech Alternative & Augmentative Communication (AAC) Devices, real objects, photographs, pictures, Boardmaker pictures / symbols.



# Communication Difficulties

- The children within our school present with a wide range of communication difficulties and a broad range of medical diagnoses.
- We recognise that each child is an individual and they all have their own unique difficulties as well as unique strengths when it comes to communication.
- Not every method of communication is suitable for all.



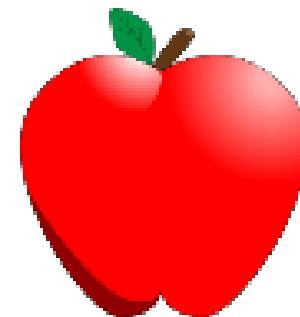
# Total Communication Approach

- Some children will use a variety of communication methods. Here at Firpark we aim to use a total communication approach to support our children in their school environment.
- You can also do this at home or choose the forms of communication which best suit your child.



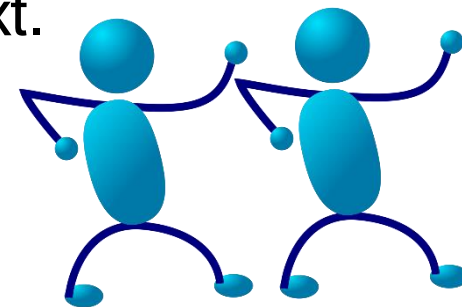
# Symbolic Understanding

- 1: Real Object
- 2: Photograph of real object
- 3: Toy (small model) of real object
- 4. Colour symbol (e.g. Boardmaker)
- 5. Line drawing
- 6. Written word



# Intensive Interaction

- Child leads the activity.
- The adult develops the content and flow by:
  - **RESPONDING** -Some ways to do this are:
    - Imitation/joining-in/mirroring
    - Facial expression/voice/body language
    - Some commentary
- Necessary to “tune in” to the child and constantly read and assess for things that you can respond to.
- Pauses - The activity will always contain pauses as the adult waits for the child to do something next.



# Intensive Interaction



- Repetition is good
  - Frequent repetition of the game/activities that work, gradually enlarges the activities.
  - It enhances forward progress
  - People who are at early stages like repetition
- Repetition provides
  - Familiarity
  - Predictability
  - Security
  - A sense of control and structure

# Benefits of Intensive Interaction



- The effect for the child is then that:
  - The tempo of the activity is okay **as they are dictating it.**
  - The content of the activity is understandable **as the starting point is things the child does and understands.**
  - The behaviour of the adult is understandable **as it is more like the behaviour of the child.**



# AAC- Augmentative Alternative Communication

- There are many different forms of AAC. Some are known as 'Hi Tech' and others as 'Low Tech'. They may be described as 'Communication Aids'.
- We use a mixture within the school, depending on each individuals needs. The SLT will typically be involved in assessment of suitability and may sometimes consult specialist help from SCTCI; particularly when considering 'hi tech' aids.



# AAC- Augmentative Alternative Communication Cont.

- Some common examples are given below:
  - **Low Tech AAC:**
    - Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
    - Communication Books
    - Visuals
    - Symbols
    - Photographs
    - Signing
  - **High Tech AAC**
    - Ipad apps such as Touch Chat HD, Proloquo2go etc.
    - Vantage Communication devices.
    - Big Mack Switches.
- The lists are endless!!

# Makaton Signing

- A visual helper for children.
- Use of Makaton throughout the school is becoming routine and consistent.
- Not a substitute for speech.
- Can help to add additional meaning to spoken language.
- Helps with expressive and receptive language.



# Big Mack Switches

- A switch to operate a specific toy or iPad activities.
- To give *children* a voice within an activity (e.g. during news).
- To convey *a child's* messages between home and school.
- Can have single / multiple messages.



# Objects of Reference

## What are they?

- A real object which can be used as a visual/tactile tool.
- These are essential for children who do not understand pictures, photos, symbols OR who have a visual impairment

## When are they used?

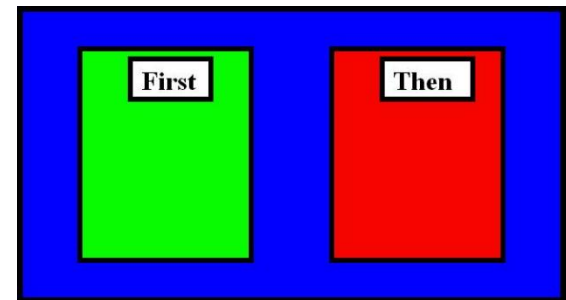
- To signify an activity, event, routine, change



# How Should Objects of Reference Be Introduced?

- The activity should be noticeable and significant to the child.
- Choose something naturally used in the activity and by the child, e.g. armbands for swimming.
- Association between object and what happens next requires *lots of repetition*.

# First – Then Boards



# Visual Timetables





# How Should I Use A Daily Timetable?



- First ALWAYS establish what the child understands.
- Some children are not able to understand photos, pictures or symbols – they should be shown the ***real object or another alternative.***
- Actively involve the child.
- Show the visual when the activity is to happen and remove each visual when the activity is completed.
- At the end of the routine there should only be one symbol left visible.

# Communication Books

- These can be used with Boardmaker symbols or photographs – depends on the child's level of symbolic understanding.
- Can help children to supplement their messages by pointing to a picture (communication book).
- Can allow the child to provide information about themselves to other people – personalised.
- Can help develop vocabulary.
- Can help with transitions.



# Communication Books Cont.



## **Try to remember:**

- Have fun!
- Encourage your child to use the communication book consistently so that they get used to using it.
- Choose vocab and photos / symbols that your child will understand.
- Find a consistent location for the book so your child can access it when they wish.
- Take it out on trips with you so your child can always communicate with it – even to the shops.
- Keep it updated.
- Keep the items sorted into categories (e.g. food, family, transport, places etc).

# PECS

## What is PECS?

- Picture Exchange Communication System.
- A type of ‘low tech’ AAC.
- Teaching an individual to give a picture of a desired item to a “communicative partner”, who immediately honours the exchange as a request.
- Teaching the individual to generalise this with different people in different environments.
- There are many different ‘Phases’ in PECS. Discuss this with the SLT to establish what stage your child is at.



# PECS Cont.

## Reinforcers

- The most critical element to the success of PECS style approach is identification of a powerful set of reinforcers.
- These need to be identified.
- Monitor accessibility.
- Symbols made prior to first PECS session.



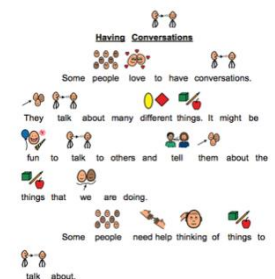
# PECS Phases

- **PHASE 1:** How to Communicate
- **PHASE 2:** Distance and Persistence
- **PHASE 3:** Picture Discrimination
- **PHASE 4:** Sentence Structure
- **PHASE 5:** Responding to 'What do you want?'
- **PHASE 6:** Responsive & spontaneous commenting







# Other visuals







- Social Stories
  - Developed by Carol Gray (1995) to enable children with ASD or communication issues to understand cues and actions in social situations.
  - Provide specific information about a social situation that a child finds difficult
  - Prepare children for new social situations
  - Teach desired responses for specific social situations
  - Build self-esteem
  - Supplement with visuals if appropriate









# Example





  
**Having Conversations**


    
Some people love to have conversations.

       
They talk about many different things. It might be

     
fun to talk to others and tell them about the

   
things that we are doing.

     
Some people need help thinking of things to

  
talk about.



# Other Visuals

- Prompt cards
  - To use positive reinforcement to encourage specific behaviours.
  - Try to use the positive language when using prompt cards (e.g. use ‘Kind hands’ instead of ‘No hitting’).
  - Say what the child should be doing and not what they shouldn’t
  - Used to reinforce social rules (e.g. good sitting, good looking & good listening)



# Questions



If you have any further questions, please contact  
Suzanne Kerr, Speech and Language Therapist via Firpark  
Primary on 01698 274933 or at Motherwell Health Centre on  
01698 242617

# Useful Resources



- <http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/>
- <http://www.hanen.org/Home.aspx>
- <http://www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/>
- <http://www.ican.org.uk/>
- <http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk/>
- [http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our\\_services/ld/intensiveinteraction](http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our_services/ld/intensiveinteraction)
- Autism Toolbox (online)
- Autism.org.uk – National Autistic Society.
- Scottishautism.org
- Visualaidsforlearning.com – really useful website for sequence pictures of everyday activities.
- The HOPE Centre, 145 Chapel Street, Airdrie, ML6 6LH, 01236 779191, [www.hopeforautism.org.uk](http://www.hopeforautism.org.uk)