

MAVISBANK SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

ALTERNATIVE AND AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

RATIONALE

'Communication is a basic human need. It lets people form and maintain relationships through the sharing of thoughts, feelings, wants and intentions. People who have difficulty in communicating may therefore be excluded accidentally or deliberately from the social exchanges of everyday life. This is why communication has an important place in the curriculum of all school pupils irrespective of their age and ability. Nowhere is its place more important than in the curriculum of pupils who have difficulty in learning.'

'Early Communication Skills'
G. MacKay and W. Dunn

INTRODUCTION

All of the children and young people at Mavisbank School have significant augmentative communication needs. The ability to communicate is central to the holistic development of the child

AIMS

- To ensure the individual needs of all children are met.
- To provide a forum for updating and sharing knowledge.
- To ensure standards of good practice are upheld.

PRINCIPLES

- Children's and young people's individual needs will be identified through setting up procedures for initial and ongoing assessment.
- Programmes will be devised to meet the individual needs of the children.
- All staff will have an understanding of the nature of the individual needs of all the children.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The speech and language therapist and class teacher will be responsible for coordinating assessment procedures and devising and implementing programmes. They will ensure that parents and staff involved have a working knowledge of the programme and methods of implementation for each child.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the policy will be ongoing and able to take into account the changing needs of the child.

A variety of methods will be used to meet the communication needs of the individual child.

In-service, formal and informal, will be ongoing to ensure that all members of staff have a working knowledge of all methods of alternative and augmentative communication used within the school.

Children will be provided with opportunities to use their systems functionally.

RESOURCES

Picture Communication Symbols using a variety of low-tech devices

High-tech as required

Picture Exchange Communication System

MGS (on body) signs

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Daily evaluation will be carried out by class-based staff. From these evaluations the next priority is decided by the class team with support from the speech and language therapist.

Ongoing assessment will be carried out:

- using a multidisciplinary approach
- in all communication situations
- using both formal and informal procedures

The policy will be monitored through Additional Support Plan and discussions with multidisciplinary team and parents. Formal reporting to parents will be carried out through annual review system. Informal reporting to parents will be carried out through daily diaries and discussion as and when appropriate.

Last updated: Sept 2014

Reviewed and amended: John Lochrie, Eileen McDonnell

To be reviewed: Sept 2017