Renfrewshire Council & Health and Social Care Partnership

Renfrewshire's Inclusive Communication Environments

Framework for Practice

Contents

Introduction

Renfrewshire Council Educational Psychology Service and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership Speech and Language Therapy Service have developed a joint initiative to develop the capacity of all educational establishments to support and develop the language and communication skills of all children.

The 'Inclusive Communication Environment' Key Indicators Framework

We want establishments to be able to demonstrate an ongoing development to meet the speech, language, and communication needs of all children and young people. This may include training, learning conversations, work with families and children/young people, and links with other agencies.

There are three key indicators which form the basis of supportive practice:

- **Indicator One**: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language, and communication for all pupils.

- **Indicator Two**: Adult communication (verbal and non-verbal) that promotes interaction and responds to individual needs.

- **Indicator Three**: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills and promote participation from all learners.
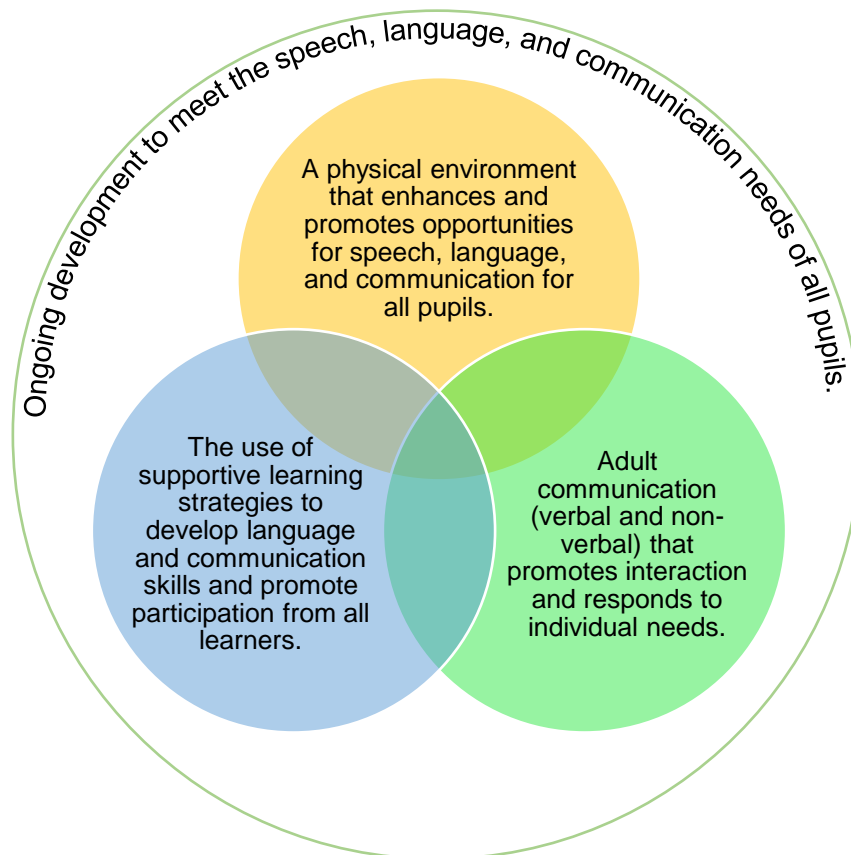
Figure 1: Graphic showing RICE Key Indicators

Links to Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA)

To streamline the delivery of whole establishment initiatives from Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service, RICE will be supported through the RNRA training and Core Group structure. This will allow your link Educational Psychologist to support your progress towards developing an Inclusive Communication Environment by delivering training and coaching support in Core Group meetings. RICE is now embedded within certain nurture principles which relate to the RICE Key Indicators:

1. The environment offers a safe base (links to Key Indicator 1).
2. Language is a vital means of communication (links to Key Indicator 2).
3. Learning is understood developmentally (links to Key Indicator 3).

Your action planning and development of change ideas will continue to take place through the RNRA planning templates. Changes across other nurture principles may also reflect how an establishment is working to support children and young people with speech, language, and communication needs. Your RNRA accreditation submissions should reflect the changes you have made using this framework.

Coaching and Support

The role of the coach is to support and encourage practitioners to manage their own learning and skill development. This will allow the establishment to maximise the learning environment to support speech, language, and communication.

Coaching will be delivered by the establishment's link Educational Psychologist. For Early Learning and Childcare Centres who are focusing their development on one of the nurture principles listed above, the link Educational Psychologist and a Speech and Language Therapist from the locality will provide coaching and support through Core Group meetings.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Early Years Establishments	

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language, and communication for all pupils.

Examples of changes may include:	Displays including items that invite comments from children, such as learning topics or photos.
	Resources that are available for free play are easily reached by the children or easily within their line of vision.
	Labelled equipment areas at child's eye level for use with all to support tidying and organisation.
	Use of Visual Supports appropriate to the child's stage, remembering that understanding of symbols moves from physical objects to photos to coloured pictures. If appropriate to child's stage: use of visual timelines / now and next boards / choice boards.
	Group expectations (behaviour, listening, routines) are available with visual supports at eye level for children.
	Well defined activity areas.
	Quiet areas or areas used for story time that are less visually distracting.
	Outdoor play opportunities.
	Opportunities for imaginative role play.
	Consider the sensory properties of the environment (e.g., light, sounds, smells) and how these can be reduced at times.
	Use of resources to indicate personal spaces during group activities, e.g., cushions, chairs, coloured tape, or squares.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Early Years Establishments	

Indicator Two: Adult communication (verbal and non-verbal) that promotes interaction and responds to individual needs.

Examples of changes may include:	Use simple repetitive language during everyday activities.
	Adults gain pupil's attention before giving information (note that attention does not require eye contact/child looking towards, notice non-verbal signs that child or young person has noticed communication from adult).
	Talk at an appropriate rate using short sentences.
	The adult adapts their language or words used to the level of the child's.
	Model the correct sentence when they hear a child's incorrect attempt but don't make the child repeat this.
	Extend the child's responses by adding describing or action words, e.g., 'car' to 'red car'.
	Encourage children to ask questions.
	Use vocabulary the children can understand in everyday instructions.
	Give children time to respond. If repeating a question, repeat using the same words the first time.
	Give a running commentary on the child's activity rather than asking questions most of the time.
	Use natural gesture and facial expression to support language.
	Use of Visuals to supplement spoken language.
	Modelling activities and talking through steps or actions.
	Helping children to develop and extend imaginary play.

	Supporting play by modelling language based on the child's activities and encouraging peer interaction by facilitating shared play and turn taking.
	Using questions that invite conversation or encouraging reasoning skills rather than yes/no answers.
	Responding positively to children's efforts to communicate by responding to verbal and non-verbal initiatives.
	Awareness of attunement principles (see Appendix 1).
	Ensuring that all children have the opportunity to interact individually with an adult if they wish.
	Speaking sensitively to shy or unsettled children.
	Helping children to settle when they arrive if needed.
	Playing alongside children without always directing their play.
	Encouraging children's independence and self-confidence by acknowledging all efforts.
	Letting children know of expected changes to the day e.g., visit to school.
	Actively supporting children in solving their problems and disputes.
	Respect first/home language(s) or alternative communication methods e.g., signing.
	Consider the impact of transitions at key points across the year and during each day and provide support to plan for these with the child and prepare them for the change.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Early Years Establishments

Indicator Three: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills and promote participation from all learners.

Examples of changes may include:	Re-reading favourite stories to children.
	Making time to say rhymes as well as singing with groups of children.
	Frequently supporting songs and stories with actions, objects, or puppets.
	Using concrete and visual methods to introduce new concepts and vocabulary with appropriate repetition.
	Seeking opportunities to repeat and reinforce new vocabulary.
	Linking children's spoken language with written language.
	Giving prompts/supports to support understanding, such as visual reminders or checking children have understood instructions.
	Cue in children to support focus and understanding, e.g., name before instruction.
	Accepting non-verbal communication as well as verbal.
	Ensuring that all children (including the least verbal or non-verbal) have a turn at expressing themselves in a group.
	Talk about their own interests other than just the task in hand.
	Speak in groups to children and adults as well as during free play.
	Have opportunities for supported conversation with their peers as well as opportunities to interact with their peers without adult intrusion.
	Have opportunities to share books with their peers.

	Have opportunities to use first/home language(s) or alternative communication methods e.g., signing.
	Provide opportunities for structured play that includes clear start and end points, steps, and roles or turns.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Primary Schools	

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language, and communication for all pupils.

Examples of changes may include:	The use of visual cues/symbols/displays/timetables used consistently across the school about location, people, equipment, behaviour expectations (e.g., same subject symbols in each classroom).
	Displays that invite comments from children and positioned for easy access.
	Optimal positioning of children depending on their individual needs/ learning styles e.g., cushions or chairs may help some stay in place; hoops, carpet squares or coloured tape can be used to indicate personal space.
	Organisation of school and classroom to provide well defined areas e.g., quiet areas, talking areas etc with symbols/pictures and labels.
	Use symbols/pictures to aid children's understanding.
	Label equipment (storage) with pictures and words.
	Use of visual planners/timetables which can be arranged to show the structure of a lesson or activity or the structure of the day and the week.
	Consider positioning for children for communication activities e.g., alongside not opposite.
	Resources available for free play that are accessible to children or easily within their vision.
	Quiet areas or areas used for story time that are less visually distracting.
	Outdoor play where imaginative role play is available some of the time.

Indicator Two: Adult communication (verbal and non-verbal) that promotes interaction and responds to individual needs.	
Examples of changes may include:	Use language at a level understood by pupils e.g., simplify own oral language where necessary.
	Augment talk with non-verbal clues/gestures.
	Get pupil attention/ cue in listening for key information.
	Support pupils to listen and attend in whole class, group, and individual contexts.
	Respect first/home language(s) or alternative communication methods e.g., signing.
	Model and recast appropriate speech and language forms.
	Consider the range and level of questions used.
	Use repetition effectively.
	Identify core vocabulary and concepts for lessons.
	Plan for pre-teaching of vocabulary/concepts where necessary.
	Seek opportunities to repeat and reinforce new concepts new vocabulary.
	Consider reducing the vocabulary/concepts where necessary.
	Celebrate success at speaking and listening.
	Facilitate shared play and turn taking.
	Model activities and talk about what children are doing.
	Support children to develop and extend imaginary play.
	Support outdoor play by modelling language based on the child's activities and encouraging peer interaction.

	Using questions that invite conversation or encourage reasoning skills rather than yes/no answers.
	Awareness of attunement principles (see Appendix 1).
	Providing opportunities for children to share their views and be 'heard'.
	Clear expectations for cooperative turn-taking for speaking and listening.
	Clear expectations of learning outcomes and success criteria.
	Support a range of strategies to think about feelings and express them appropriately by actively supporting problem solving and disputes using visual supports to de-escalate e.g. The Incredible 5-Point Scale, PAThS, Emotion Works.
	Recognition and accommodation of feelings – identifying ways of calming down, if necessary, e.g., calm spaces/ time out.
	Opportunities for play without adult direction.
	Supporting pupils to make choices using verbal and non-verbal means.
	Interacting alongside pupil without always directing their learning.
	Ensuring that all children have the opportunity to interact 1:1 where necessary.
	Encouraging children's independence and self-confidence by acknowledging all efforts.
	Letting children know of expected changes to the day e.g., visit to school.
	Actively supporting children in solving their problems and disputes.
	Responding positively to children's efforts to communicate.
	Consider the impact of transitions at key points across the year and during each day and provide support to plan for these with the child/young person and prepare them for the change.

Indicator Three: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills and promote participation from all learners.

Examples of changes may include:	Use of a positive feedback strategy for class and individual children.
	Validation of appropriate behaviour by describing it, modelling it, and visually representing it.
	Supportive visual methods to explain information for learning, classroom procedures, teacher expectations, expected behaviour, etc.
	Awareness of effective use of non-verbal communication e.g., gesture, symbols.
	Effective use of questioning and pupil feedback to ensure that all children have understood instructions.
	Making sure pupils have direct experience of new concepts.
	Make explicit links to previous learning.
	Use of a range of teaching/learning styles according to need.
	Encouraging hands-on, experiential learning.
	Identify multisensory approaches to learning.
	Identify activities for small-group learning.
	Build in opportunities within a lesson for over-learning and repetition.
	Plan for differentiation of task and outcome where necessary, including opportunities for alternative ways of recording skills and knowledge.
	Identify key approaches for support staff to use with individuals/ small group whilst encouraging independence.

	Appropriate homework given for child's level of language and learning e.g., value real world learning and everyday experiences such as a trip to the shops.
	Linking children's spoken language with written language.
	Accepting non-verbal communication as well as verbal.
	Ensuring that all children (including the least verbal or non-verbal) have a turn at expressing themselves in a group.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Secondary Schools	

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language, and communication for all pupils.

Examples of changes may include:	The use of visual cues/symbols/displays of key vocabulary/ timetables used consistently about location, people, equipment, behaviour expectations e.g., symbols clarifying subjects on class door matching symbols in pupil timetable.
	Optimal positioning in class of young people depending on their individual needs/ learning styles.
	School 'expectations' and 'charters', etc are written in simple language and enhanced with symbols/photos.
	Use of visual planners/timetables which can be arranged to show the structure of a lesson or activity or the structure of the day and the week.
	Distinct areas in the classroom for resources with supportive labelling of equipment and containers etc.
	Use of visual tools to help pupils to structure answers and responses, e.g., group discussion prompts, research prompts.
	Reference charts with pictures and key vocabulary to help young people to make contributions in different subjects.

Indicator Two: Adult communication (verbal and non-verbal) that promotes interaction and responds to individual needs.

Examples of changes may include:	Use language at a level understood by pupils e.g., simplify own oral language where necessary.
	Augment talk with non-verbal cues/gestures.
	Get pupil attention/cue in listening for key information e.g., cue in with name or highlight need to stop and listen.
	Support pupils to listen and attend in whole class, group, and individual contexts.
	Respect first/home language(s) or alternative communication methods e.g., signing/Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) where appropriate.
	Model appropriate speech and language forms.
	Consider the range and level of questions used and appropriately differentiate.
	Use recap and repetition effectively.
	Identify core vocabulary and concepts for lessons and revisit frequently.
	Plans for pre-teaching of vocabulary/concepts where necessary.
	Seek opportunities to repeat and reinforce new concepts new vocabulary.
	Consider reducing the vocabulary/concepts where necessary.
	Celebrate success at speaking and listening.
	Speak facing the class and stop speaking when writing on the whiteboard.

	Give advance warning that change is coming using either a verbal countdown to the change of activity or visual planner/ timetable.
	Repeat instructions.
	Restate and emphasise key points.
	Slow down the rate of presentation.
	Use shorter units of explanation.
	Awareness of attunement principles (see Appendix 1).
	Provide opportunities for pupils to share their views and be 'heard'.
	Clear expectations on learning outcomes and success criteria.
	Encourage young people to monitor their own learning outcomes.
	Careful consideration given to the choice of peers for group work e.g., patience with speech difficulties.
	Give the young person alternative ways to make their contributions e.g., AAC, voice recording, speech to text.
	Direct and explicit support re classroom and school expectations.
	Consider the impact of transitions at key points across the year and during each day and provide support to plan for these with the child/young person and prepare them for the change.

Indicator Three: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills and promote participation from all learners.

Examples of changes may include:	Supportive visual methods to explain information for learning, classroom procedures, teacher expectations, expected behaviour, etc.
	Awareness of effective use of non-verbal communication e.g., gesture, symbols.
	Effective use of questioning and pupil feedback to ensure that all young people have understood instructions.
	Make explicit links to previous learning.
	Use of a range of teaching/learning styles according to need.
	Encouraging hands-on, experiential learning.
	Build in opportunities within a lesson for over-learning and repetition.
	Plan for differentiation of task and outcome where necessary, including opportunities for alternative ways of recording skills and knowledge.
	Information is left on the whiteboard long enough for pupils to read and understand.
	Reducing the amount of material student must process if required e.g., providing copies of PowerPoints.
	Presenting material in smaller units at a slower pace if required.
	Allowing extra time for completion when necessary and give planning time for oral responses.
	Explicitly teaches note taking and time management, and use of organisational systems e.g., diaries, keeping lists of subject requirements, including guidance on revising techniques etc.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Additional Support Needs Establishments	
	written in collaboration with Riverbrae	

Indicator One: A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language, and communication for all pupils.	

Examples of changes may include:	Displays that invite pupil's engagement [1] are positioned for easy access.
	Opportunities are provided for all pupils to request access to activities, e.g. activities presented visibly through clear containers will facilitate pupil's requesting. Adults should be aware and responsive to the different methods of requesting for the specific pupil they are working with. This might include both verbal requesting or non-verbal as seen in body language such as turning to/away from objects, eye pointing and AAC methods.
	Optimal positioning of the pupils and/or adults are considered depending on the communication stage of the pupil and what best facilitates their engagement and/or interaction, e.g. cushions, chairs, hoops, carpet squares or coloured tape may help indicate personal space and support some pupils to engage whereas some might be more engaged when they can move freely. Adults are aware of the most appropriate positioning when participating in communication activities with pupils.
	Organisation of school and classroom provides well defined activity areas. This should include the use of visual supports.
	The physical environment promotes access to story time, for example visual distractions are reduced and signifiers are used to indicate a move to a quieter time.
	Quiet areas for regulation are available indoors and outdoors.

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[1] Engagement will look different for different pupils. A continuum of engagement found within https://education.gov.scot/media/entpriih/milestones-supporting-learners-with-complex-asn.pdf p. 8 outlines broad forms of engagement a child might go through in their learning.

	Play areas facilitate the language and communication development of all children e.g., - role play areas are available, concrete, and meaningful. - outdoor play includes imaginative role play for some of the time. - play is accessible at the level of the pupils. - adults model role playing. - the indoor and outdoor environment encourages pupils to share a play space and develop play skills at their level.
	School 'expectations' and 'charters' etc are written in simple language and enhanced with symbols/photos/objects of reference.
	School develops a toolkit which includes a number of ways to seek and use the pupil voice [2]. This includes a range of visual supports which are used to facilitate pupil choice and decision making and reflects the importance of ensuring the child understands the level of symbol used [3].
	Use of Visual Supports (available at eye level) which help to: - reduce anxiety. - increase predictability. - support communication and language development, aid understanding. - increase independence and participation. Visual supports are appropriate to the communication stage of the pupil and may be at an object, photo, symbol, picture, or word level. Where appropriate consistency of symbols is seen across the school (i.e. symbols are created using a consistent symbol maker platform). (A table of visual supports for different communication stages can be seen in Appendix 2).

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[2] https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/renfrewshireedpsych/2023/01/18/toolkits/pupil-voice-rnra-v7-final/
[3] Appendix 3: The Symbolic Hierarchy illustrates a hierarchy of symbols from concrete to abstract.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Additional Support Needs Establishments	
	written in collaboration with Riverbrae	

	Indicator Two: Adult communication (verbal and non-verbal) that promotes interaction and responds to individual needs.
Examples of changes may include:	Adults use simple repetitive language during everyday activities.
	Adults gain pupil's attention before giving information (note that attention does not require eye contact/child looking towards, notice non-verbal signs that child or young person has noticed communication from adult).
	Adults talk at an appropriate rate using short sentences.
	Adults adapt language in accordance to the communication stage of the pupil e.g., questions are appropriate to the pupil's communication stage in order to extend their interaction or adults use vocabulary their pupils can understand in everyday instructions.
	Adults model the correct speech or phrase when they hear a pupil's incorrect attempt.
	Adults extend the pupil's responses.
	When appropriate, pupils are encouraged to ask questions.
	Adult communication and activities promote awareness of people/ peers, e.g., adult talk may include peers' names, what they are doing or their interests "*Emily is playing with the ball*" *or "Eva loves cars".*
	Activities promote opportunities for talk (both verbal and symbolic) that encourages extension from requesting using just a noun (e.g., swing, cake, song) to include person's name and verb, e.g.: - "Swing (n)" might be extended to "Emily (adult name) Push (v) Swing (n)" - "Cakes (n)" might be extended to "Kerry (adult name) Bake (v) Cakes (n)" - "Song (n)" might be extended to "Jacqui (adult name) Sing (v) Song (n)".

	Adults actively support pupils in solving their problems and disputes.
	Adults give pupils time to respond.
	Adults comment on the pupil's activity more than they ask questions.
	Adults use natural gesture, facial expression and signing to support language.
	Adults use visuals to supplement spoken language.
	Adults facilitate shared play and turn taking at a level appropriate for the pupils they are working with.
	Adults model activities and talk about what pupils are doing.
	Adults help pupils to develop and extend imaginary play.
	Adults respond positively to pupil's efforts to communicate, and the pupil's preferred method of communication is respected.
	Adults have an awareness of attunement principles (see Appendix 1).
	Adults ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to initiate interaction with an adult e.g.: - Visible, accessible objects will promote a pupil to request their preference e.g. by turning towards, pointing, vocalising. - some pupils have access to visuals to request initiation, are taught how to use them and adults are responsive.
	Adults are role models of 'how we learn' in play and learning activities. This can involve joining in alongside pupils without always directing their play and learning.
	Adults encourage pupil's independence and self-confidence by acknowledging all efforts.
	Clear communication of 'expectations' are presented in a way that all pupils are able to understand.
	Adults communicate expected changes to the day in a way that pupils can understand (e.g. visual timetables).

	Adults adopt both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that support participation and engagement from all learners (e.g. considering the importance of tone, pitch, volume of voice, body language, facial expressions, and word choice).
	Adult communication supports de-escalation when pupils are unsettled.
	Adults speak sensitively to pupils who appear shy or who are presenting as dysregulated.
	The first/home language and culture of all pupils in the school community is respected and celebrated.
	Adult communication facilitates access to pupil voice.
	Adults model conversational skills by talking about their own interests at less formal times (e.g. at snack times).
	Core vocabulary and concepts for lessons are identified and revisited/repeated frequently.
	Adults encourage pupils to monitor their own learning outcomes appropriate to their stage.
	Consider the impact of transitions at key points across the year and during each day and provide support to plan for these with the child/young person and prepare them for the change.

	Key Indicators for Renfrewshire's Additional Support Needs Establishments written in collaboration with Riverbrae	

Indicator Three: The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills and promote participation from all learners.

Examples of changes may include:	Routines, structures, and the physical environment promote access to reading or being read to.
	Opportunities are provided for re-reading of favourite literature (e.g. story books/ comics/ novels/ non-fiction articles etc.).
	Visual methods are used to explain information for learning, classroom procedures, teacher expectations, expected behaviour, etc.
	Home/school communication approaches facilitate sharing of learning strategies across contexts. Communication with partners (such as respite partners) facilitates sharing learning strategies across contexts.
	Adults make time to say rhymes and sing with groups of pupils if appropriate.
	Songs and stories are frequently supported with actions, objects, puppets, or other visuals.
	Concrete and visual methods (including real experiences) are used to introduce new concepts and vocabulary with appropriate repetition.
	Adults seek opportunities to repeat and reinforce new vocabulary and overlearning of learning activities takes place.
	Links between pupil's spoken language and written language is promoted where appropriate.
	Prompts/supports are provided for those who struggle to understand instructions and adults check for pupil's understanding of instructions.

	Adults cue in pupils who are not attending or struggling to understand e.g., name before instruction or visual cue.
	Adults accept and are responsive to non-verbal communication as well as verbal. Non-verbal may include: - eye gaze - turning to/away - gesture - use of physical object or place to indicate a request e.g. putting on their jacket communicating they want to go outside etc.
	All pupils (including the least verbal or non-verbal) have a turn at expressing themselves in a group.
	Positive feedback approaches are developed that suit the individual needs of the learner e.g. for pupils who do not respond positively to praise, ways to offer positive feedback that does not overwhelm are developed.
	Opportunities for pupils to have supported conversations with their peers are created as well as providing opportunities for pupils to interact with their peers without adult intrusion.
	Opportunities and support for pupils to share literature (e.g. books, sensory stories, comics, magazines, articles) with their peers are created.
	Adults are role models of 'how we learn' in play and learning activities. This can involve joining in alongside pupils without always directing their play and learning.
	Multisensory approaches to learning are created.
	Adults plan for differentiation of task and outcomes including opportunities for alternative ways of recording skills and knowledge.
	Opportunities to use first/home language(s) or alternative communication methods e.g., signing.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Attunement Principles

Appendix 2: Table of visual supports and communication stages

Appendix 3: The Symbolic Hierarchy

Appendix 4: Neuro-Affirming Poster

Appendix 5: Links to self-evaluation resources

Appendix 6: Resources and further information

Appendix 1: Attunement Principles

AVIGuk
Association for
Video Interaction Guidance uk

Principles of attuned interactions and guidance

Being attentive	· Looking interested with friendly posture · Giving time and space for other · Turning towards · Wondering about what they are doing, thinking or feeling · Enjoying watching the other
Encouraging initiatives	· Waiting · Listening actively · Showing emotional warmth through intonation · Naming positively what you see, think or feel · Using friendly and/or playful intonation as appropriate · Saying what you are doing · Looking for initiatives
Receiving initiatives	· Showing you have heard, noticed the other's initiative · Receiving with body language · Being friendly and/or playful as appropriate · Returning eye-contact, smiling, nodding in response · Receiving what the other is saying or doing with words · Repeating/using the other's words or phrases
Developing attuned interactions	· Receiving and then responding · Checking the other is understanding you · Waiting attentively for your turn. · Having fun · Giving a second (and further) turn on same topic · Giving and taking short turns · Contributing to interaction / activity equally · Co-operating - helping each other
Guiding	· Scaffolding · Extending, building on the other's response · Judging the amount of support required and adjusting · Giving information when needed · Providing help when needed · Offering choices that the other can understand · Making suggestions that the other can follow
Deepening discussion	· Supporting goal-setting · Sharing viewpoints · Collaborative discussion and problem-solving · Naming difference of opinion · Investigating the intentions behind words · Naming contradictions/conflicts (real or potential) · Reaching new shared understandings · Managing conflict (back to being attentive and receiving initiatives with the aim of restoring attuned interactions)

Copyright Kennedy, H (2011) Table 1 Chapter 1 in Kennedy, H., Landor, M. & Todd, L. *Video Interaction Guidance: a relationship-based intervention to promote attunement, empathy and well-being* London: JKP

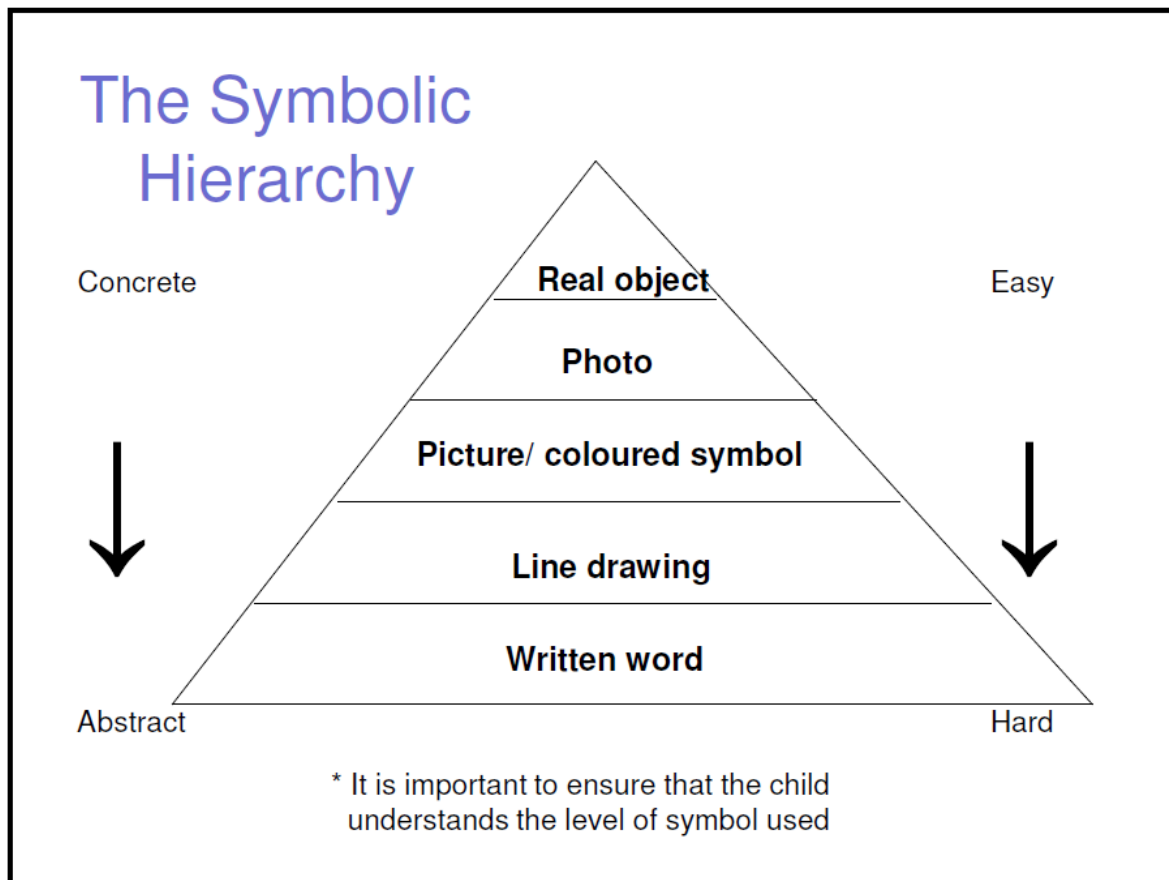## Appendix 2: Table of visual supports and communication stages

(Adapted from An Autism Evidence Based Practice Toolkit for use with the SCERTS™ Assessment and Planning Framework (thirdspace.scot))

Visual support	Description	Comm stage: Social Partners *(i.e. pre-words)*	Comm stage: Language partners	Comm stage: Conversation partners
Objects of reference (OOR)	Any object which is used systematically to represent an item, activity, place, or person. Understanding real objects is the first stage of symbolic development. Therefore using objects is considered the most concrete way of representing a word.	✓	✓	
Personalised photo book	For individuals just learning to communicate, photos of people, things and places they know can be highly motivating. It allows repetition in hearing and using key vocabulary and sentences.	✓	✓	
Now Next timetable	A form of visual timetable, with two symbols, OOR or photos –one indicates what is happening now and one indicates what will happen next. The symbol can be used to support transition.		✓	
Object Now Next timetable	Social Partners might understand an object timetable indicating what is happening now, with an object to take to the next activity to support transition.	✓		
Visual schedules	For daily or social routines; task or activity schedules explaining the resources required and steps in an activity.		✓	✓
Visual timetables	An individual visual timetable is recommended for all autistic children (NAIT 2019). It can support predictability and desirability each day. It supports transitions and managing			

	familiar and unfamiliar as well as unexpected and expected events. The length and type of timetable depends on the child's stage. In addition you may use a whole class visual timetable. It is a sequence of symbols usually organised from left to right. On the left is the current activity square and the rest of the symbols indicate the sequence of events for all or part of a day. When an activity is finished the child put the symbol in a finished pocket and puts the next activity on the current activity square. OOR may be used instead of symbols. The child is taught to use it and the adults support it by ensuring that it is true, and that it is accessible and visible.			
Timers	To indicate the passage of time.		✓	✓
Environment visual labelling	To make it clear what happens where, where things go or how many people should be at an activity. Use pictures and words to support vocabulary development.		✓	✓
Communication Supports such as choice boards, social interaction supports, turn taking boards and talking mats	Communication/social interaction supports.		✓	✓
Technology based visual supports and apps	Communication/social interaction supports.		✓	✓

Visual learning tools for conversational language partners	Visual tools to help pupils structure answers and responses and support understanding and participation e.g. group discussion prompts, spider-maps, series of event chains, visual cycles, checklists, reference charts with pictures and key vocabulary. (For more information see [What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy (ed.gov)](#) and Barnett, J. H., Trillo, R., & More, C. M. (2018) Visual Supports to Promote Science Discourse for Middle and High School Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 53*(5), 292-299.).			✓

Appendix 3: The Symbolic Hierarchy

The Symbolic Hierarchy

Concrete   Easy

Real object

Photo

Picture/ coloured symbol

Line drawing

Written word

Abstract   Hard

* It is important to ensure that the child
understands the level of symbol used

Appendix 4: Links to self-evaluation resources

Primary CIRCLE Resource
https://www.thirdspace.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Primary-CIRCLE-Resource-2021.pdf

Inclusive Classroom Scale: page 19
Participation Scale: page 33

Secondary CIRCLE Resource
https://www.thirdspace.scot//wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CIRCLE-Secondary-Resource-International-Version-1.pdf

Inclusive Classroom Scale: page 43
Participation Scale: page 57

Up, Up and Away Resource for Early Years
https://www.thirdspace.scot//wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Up-up-and-away-September-2019.pdf

Literacy Rich Environment Tool: page 11
Risk and Resilience Tool: page 30
Identifying Stages Tool: page 37
Wellbeing Tool: page 41

Adapted CIRCLE Inclusive Environment Scale for Early Years
https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/renfrewshireedpsych/rice/

The Inclusive Classroom (Sobel & Alston, 2021)
https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/inclusive-classroom/

Download available for Inclusive Classroom Checklist.

Appendix 5: Resources and further information

Autism

Autism Network Scotland http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/
Autism Network Scotland connects and communicates with individuals on the autistic spectrum, their families and carers, and practitioners working in the field of autism.

National Autism Implementation Team https://www.thirdspace.scot/nait/education-resources/
NAIT are a practitioner researcher partnership based at Queen Margaret University who support local implementation of evidence informed practice for neurodiversity. The section titled 'A programme of autism training' contains many helpful resources for education professionals and is frequently updated with new resources.

National Autistic Society https://www.autism.org.uk/
NAS are the UK's largest provider of specialist autism information, advice and services for autistic people, parents and carers and professionals.

Scottish Autism https://www.scottishautism.org/
Scottish Autism are the largest provider of autism-specific services in Scotland and a leading authority and advocate for good autism practice. Scottish Autism seek to share knowledge and expertise with parents, carers, and other professionals in order to support the development of skills and strategies needed to provide the best care and support for autistic people.

The Autism Toolbox http://www.autismtoolbox.co.uk/
The Autism Toolbox is a resource to support the inclusion of children and young people with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream education services in Scotland.

Speech and Language

Action for Stammering Children https://actionforstammeringchildren.org/
Based in The Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children, the charity is a strong supporter, commissioning specialist assessments and therapies, appropriate research, and the training of speech and language therapists across the country.

AFASIC https://www.afasic.org.uk/
AFASIC aims to help parents understand and help their children with speech, language, and communication needs. AFASIC have been supporting parents and helping children and young people since 1968

CBeebies https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/speech-and-language-difficulties
Advice for parents on speech language and communication development.

Cleft Care Scotland https://www.cleftcare.scot.nhs.uk/
Cleft Care Scotland is a national managed clinical network, bringing together people born with a cleft lip and/or palate, their families and everyone involved in caring for them throughout their life to look at improving services

Communication Matters https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/
Communication Matters is a UK-wide organisation committed to supporting people of all ages who find communication difficult because they have little or no clear speech.

Makaton https://www.makaton.org/
Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order.

Speech and Language UK https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/educators-and-professionals/
Speech and Language UK's mission is that no child should be left out or left behind because of a difficulty speaking or understanding. You will find information, advice, and resources to help on their website.

STAMMA https://stamma.org/
STAMMA is a registered charity which helps people who stammer. It helps by providing inspiration, encouragement, information, support, and advice, funded through a mixture of trust grants, fundraising and donations.

The Speech Language Communication Company http://www.speech-language-communication-company.uk/
SLCC are a Scottish registered charity which represents the interests of children and young people who have lived experience of speech, language, and communication impairments.

Other Supports

Contact https://contact.org.uk/
Contact support disabled children and their families with the best possible guidance and information. Contact have online information on issues such as education, benefits and family life, and parent resources which cover a range of topics including health and social care services.

National Deaf Children's Society https://www.ndcs.org.uk/
The National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity for deaf children. They provide information and support to all children no matter what their level or type of deafness or how they communicate.

NHS KIDS https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/
Kids Independently Developing Skills helps children and young people to live meaningful, healthy, independent lives by providing information from NHS staff about child development, assessments, and resources.

The Literacy Trust https://literacytrust.org.uk/
The Literacy Trust are an independent charity dedicated to giving disadvantaged children the literacy skills they need to succeed.