



Communication Policy

Policy Written by/date: Date Ratified by Governors:	Signed/Date: Chair or Vice Chair	Policy due for review:
Tracey Press: AAC Coordinator November 2015		November 2017

This Policy is linked to the following School Policies and/or Procedures

Curriculum Policies	School Policies	School Business/Finance Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum • SEN • English (incl Library) • Art • DT • Forest Schools • Humanities • Maths • P.E • PSHE • ICT/Computing • R.E • Collective Worship • Science • Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) • Careers • Post 16 (inc Consortium) • Communication • ASD • Music • School Council • Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural/British Values • Teaching and Learning • Conductive Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection and Safeguarding • Inclusion • SEN Report • Appraisal • Positive Intervention • Prospectus • Pupil Attendance • Anti—Bullying • Designated Teacher (LAC) • Exclusions Policy • Volunteers • Animal Visits • Educational Visits • Exams/Accreditation • Staff Dress Code • First Aid Health and Medications • Intimate Care • Manual Handling/Mobility • Initial Teacher Training • Planning, Preparation and Assessment • Continuing Professional Development • Teaching Assistants • Well-Being of Staff and Student • SEF • SDP • Bereavement • Management of Incident Involving Drugs • Use of Video and Photography • Acceptable Use • E-Safety • Non-Smoking Policy • Complaints • Assessment, Recording and Reporting • Parental Involvement • Student Participation • Home School Agreement • Healthy Eating • Transition • Pupil Premium • Lone Working • Staff Induction • Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection • Confidentiality • Pay Policy • Register of Business interests of HT and Governors • Accessibility Plan • Charging • Freedom of Information • Publication Scheme • Staff Grievance • School Companies • School Income • Lettings • Code of Conduct • Governor Allowances • Allegations of abuse against staff • Health and Safety • Retention of data • Recruitment and Selection Policy (Safer Recruitment) • Governing Board Succession Planning • Whistleblowers • Instrument of Government • Staff Discipline, Conduct and Grievance procedures • Equal Opportunity Policy • Equality Duty • Staffing Structure • Staff Attendance Planned • Staff Attendance Unplanned • Anti-Harrasment • School Emergency Plan • Critical Incidents • Transport • Pool Safety and Procedures

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All policies at GSSC are written to reflect Statutory Requirements or National Guidance and updated in accordance with this. There are times when the Government or Local Authority provide updates to policies that are outside of the policy review schedules. In such instances, an appendix will be added to policies to reflect these updates until the Governing Board can ratify these amended policies. These appendices will supersede previously issued Statutory Requirements or National Guidance.

GSSC January 2016

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GSSC

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Introduction

This reviewed policy was written in November 2015 by the AAC Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Curriculum Committee. It was approved and adopted by the Governors This policy was written with guidance to Developing augmentative and alternative communication policies in schools Information and guidelines Editors: Sue Chinner, Gillian Hazell, Paul Skinner, Pat Thomas, Gill It will be monitored and reviewed bi- annually as part of the school's monitoring cycle or sooner if required.

Rationale

The study of Communication at GSSC aims to supply a systematic way of exploring the world. Through the teaching of Communication we endeavour to encourage the following skills:

Observing, experimenting, recording, patterning and inferring, predicting, communicating, questioning, evaluating and applying what they have learned. We also aim to foster the following attitudes: confidence, self-respect, respect for others, care and compassion for all living things, curiosity and co-operation. It is through communication that the child has access to education, through shared learning, discussion and exploration.

It is recognised that pupils' self-esteem, communication and language will be enhanced if there is a community of AAC users with whom they can use, share and develop communication. At GSSC we endeavour to ensure equal access to all learning opportunities. The organisation of the environment is the key to providing the necessary teaching and structures for developing language and communication skills.

Curriculum Development

As part of Whole School Curriculum Development at GSSC, we are continuing to work collaboratively with other Special Schools in Northamptonshire to develop a 'skills based curriculum' for all of our pupils that will focus on the learning of and consolidating of key skills across all curriculum areas.

Entitlement, Access and Equal Opportunities

All our pupils have equal opportunities to access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of race, age, creed, gender or sexual orientation. The balance of the curriculum may, however, vary to respect their individual needs and priorities.

Aims and objectives

At GSSC, we aim to provide a rich and varied curriculum in all subjects that will challenge and channel pupils' natural curiosity, encouraging them to explore and make sense of the world in which they live. Our principal aim is to develop pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding and to enable them to take part in the whole school curriculum. We aim to give every student access to the most effective form of communication in a given situation and to provide as many opportunities for the students to develop their communication skills as possible. We aim to use

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technology as a medium to enable access to the whole curriculum and to improve opportunities for learning.

We aim to empower our students by providing them with a structure for the development of AAC from their own perspective and environments and by helping the students to communicate we aim to enable them to become an active participant in society and to have more control over their adult lives.

Teaching and Learning Styles:

It is through communication that the student has access to education. (AAC) is integrated into daily school life as a means of fostering all students' access to and participation in the curriculum. Communication may range from any movement or behaviour that can be interpreted by another person as meaningful.

AAC is both a means of accessing an educational curriculum and language in its own right. It is appropriate for individuals who have difficulty with receptive and expressive language due to physical, sensory or learning disability. It provides an opportunity to attain emotional, social, educational and vocational goals.

Examples of communication are divided into unaided and aided communication.

Unaided communication Unaided communication can be described as communication modes that use only the user's body.

Body language, eye pointing, natural gesture, facial expression
Sign language (Makaton, adapted body signing, British Sign Language).
Intensive Interaction. Verbal/gestural strategies used to compensate for poor speech (e.g. cued articulation, cued speech).

Aided Communication; This can be described as communication modes that require equipment in addition to the communicator's body.

Objects of reference
Picture Exchange Systems (PECs)
Symbol Assisted Communication (SACs)
Communication aids which produce speech and/or text, (Voice Output Communication Aids)
Moon Text
Communication Books
Communication Passports
VOCAs

AAC systems may be integrated with other systems – they may be linked to mobility systems, computers and printers, or they may be able to access environmental control systems

To be effective, all AAC users will need to be taught to use more than one mode of communication according to their individual needs and abilities. Even an able user of
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a sophisticated VOCA will also require simple aided and unaided systems. Both low and high tech systems of communication are essential. For example, a VOCA cannot be used in a swimming pool, but a communication chart on a float can. Use of a variety of modes of communication, including speech, can be referred to as total communication. At GSSC we facilitate and encourage the use of total communication. Student are encouraged to use every available form of communication and use whatever system they feel is most effective in a given situation.

Staffing And Resources:

The AAC team at GSSC will consist of a consistent multidisciplinary group of staff who are involved with the needs of any pupil with AAC needs.

Equality of opportunity is evidenced when staff recognise that they are AAC users when in school. This means that:-

Staff will be encouraged to sign.

Staff will be encouraged to use symbols

Symbols will be visible in all areas of school.

Symbols will be incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum and not just AAC sessions.

AAC will have a high status in terms of staff training and sharing of expertise.

The student will be encouraged to acquire, use and develop his/her language and communication skills across subjects, people and situations throughout, outside and beyond school life.

Teachers with the support of the AAC team are responsible for AAC across the curriculum including signing and symbol resources. .

The AAC team are responsible for the assessment of children for high technological aids and for computer based communication aids. They will provide training as appropriate for staff and parents.

Curriculum Planning:

Communication is taught as part of the whole school curriculum for pupils across Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5.

We carry out the curriculum planning in all subjects. in three phases (long-term, medium term and short term). The long term planning provides a termly focus on number whilst ensuring there is even coverage of all other areas of mathematics throughout the school year. AAC is delivered through all subjects and accredited schemes of work feed into this through Medium Term planning.

Medium Term planning for all subjects is completed within Teaching Teams to ensure there can be valid, well-thought-out links made to other subject areas and the creative theme for that term.

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Short Term planning is completed by individual teachers to ensure it meets the individual needs of each pupil within the class. This allows teachers to plan for pupil's specific targets and accreditation as appropriate. The class teacher and subject leader can discuss these plans on an informal basis.

Contribution of Communication to Teaching in other Curriculum Areas:

We integrate Communication into whole school topics, with teachers capitalising on the many and varied opportunities that a topic presents. However, we also present Communication as a subject in its own right, recognising that it is not possible to develop skills in all aspects of the subject through an integrated approach.

Implementation:

Communication development is enhanced when a partnership exists between home and school. Parents share their knowledge of their children's abilities and difficulties and assist by implementing strategies to encourage communication at home.

Consultation with the Speech and Language therapy service will be provided by the Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. Advice and support will be given to develop specific systems appropriate to each student. Teachers will ensure that AAC is available at the appropriate level to the pupil in all areas of the curriculum following the guidance of the AAC team. The Speech and Language Therapist will also be consulted when a student has difficulties with behaviour or eating and drinking difficulties where a multi-disciplinary approach is essential.

Each student will be set Communication targets by the class teacher and the SALT. These targets will be monitored daily.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

All subjects and areas of the curriculum play a key role in pupils' spiritual and moral development, as well as making a distinctive contribution to their social and cultural development.

British Values

Pupils explore the values and attitudes that underpin being British, both in society and the wider world across the school curriculum. This includes developing respect and sensitivity for others whilst celebrating the important days in the history of Britain. This supports the pupils in learning the history of where we have come from and where we are going. This prepares them by giving them a range of views, opinions and beliefs to become valuable citizens.

Communication:

As a 'Communication School', the focus for all pupils at GSSC is to enable pupils to 'have a voice'. Pupils at GSSC all display varying levels of communication difficulties and access to the curriculum will be provided for all pupils using their own preferred method of communication

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Staff Training:

All staff will be offered appropriate training and support necessary to implement this policy, within the available resources of the school.

Areas for staff development include:-

What is communication?

Communication and equal opportunities.

Existing AAC systems in the environment

Modelling good practice

Talking with AAC users.

Observational skills in the following areas; physical needs, seating, interaction and sensory abilities at a functional level.

Developing opportunities for communication.

Providing rich communication environments.

Practical ideas and activities.

Seating and positioning – general principles.

Access to symbols and technology for communication.

Signs, symbols and speech output devices – recommendations and appropriateness to the individual child.

Vocabulary selection and use of language.

Using ICT to develop communication skills.

Awareness of when to call in the next level of support/assessment.

Intensive Interaction

TOBI's

Symbols

Objects of Reference

BSL sign

Maketon sign

Tassle body sign

The Grid2

Bespoke Communication aid training

PEC's

Communication Partners

Communication and play

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment procedures will provide information regarding pupils' progress and inform further planning. These will be developed in line with other curriculum areas and form part of a whole school approach to assessment recording and reporting. B-Squared assessments will be completed for each pupil throughout the academic year. All pupils will be assessed within the P-Scales and through National Curriculum Levels at present. Developmental Descriptors are in the process of being developed in conjunction with The Northamptonshire Special Schools and Resources Provision SEN Data Development Group for pupils who are working 'beyond P8'. There are two assessment points in the year – January and June/July.

Pupils who are shown to require additional input are identified and an Action Plan will be written and monitored. This information is shared with parents and carers in the form of a report for the Annual Review.

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Reporting to parents and carers takes place through the Annual Review process, Parent's Evenings and end of year academic Assessment reports.

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