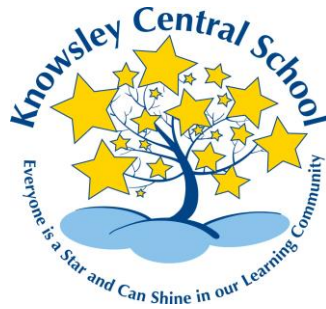


Knowsley Central School

Communication Policy



Approved by:	SLT	Date: September 2023
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Last reviewed in:	September 2023
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Next review due by:	September 2024
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Everyone is a **Star** and can **Shine** in our Learning Community



Introduction

At Knowsley Central School, we believe communication is central to learning. School places a high priority on developing and supporting pupil's speech, language and communication (SLC) skills. All pupils at Knowsley Central benefit from a highly skilled staff base.

The Senior Leadership Team and all staff within school acknowledge that communication is a fundamental life skill, and the school aims to provide a '**whole school approach**' in supporting and promoting pupil's language and communication skills.

'Autism with learning associated difficulties.' is the designation of Knowsley Central School. This policy is written to reflect that each individual pupil is given the appropriate support in relation to their own individual needs. Considering the pupils diagnosis and relevant research that demonstrates appropriate approaches required to ensure that all pupils make progress within all areas of communication.

Our School will:

- Adapt a **total communication approach** throughout the school, whereby pupils have access to many different means of communication throughout the school day
- Develop a means of communication appropriate to each child's level
- Create opportunities throughout the school day to enable each child to communicate to the best of their ability

Our Service

Knowsley Central School is working in partnership with Bridge Speech Therapy Ltd. to provide Speech & Language Therapy (SALT) input directly within the school. The aim of this input is to provide specialist SALT support within the school, and promote SLC skills across the whole school, working closely with all teaching staff. Within Knowsley Central we have a highly skilled **Communication Team**.

The school has identified 3 dedicated Communication Lead Practitioners (CLP) within school who have enhanced training in SLC (Elklan Level 4). The Communication Lead Practitioners liaise closely with the SALT in school to offer support, advice and training to all staff. In 2019 the school was accredited for being a 'Communication Friendly School', via Elklan. This accreditation lasts for 3 years.

The school has also identified two Level 3 Teaching Assistants (TA) who have a designated role in speech, language and communication support across the school. The TAs work closely with the SALT and Communication Lead Practitioners.

The SALT works across all of school; providing specialist advice, high-quality training, diagnostic assessments and direct therapy.

Three Tiers of SALT Input within School

Provision of Speech and Language Therapy services within school are described in terms of **Universal, Targeted and Specialist input**, based on The Balanced System[®], developed by Marie Gascoigne.

The underlying premise is that **all children** within Knowsley Central access the **Universal level** within school, and Targeted and Specialist levels of interventions are brought into the child's overall learning/package of care based on the needs of the child at a given moment in time.

Not all children will be seen directly by the SALT, but the SALT works jointly and collaboratively with all teaching staff to ensure they incorporate language & communication strategies into everyday teaching practice. The school aims to provide a '**whole school approach**' in supporting and promoting pupil's language and communication skills.

It is expected children will move through different levels at different stages of their learning journey and time within school. Some may start at Specialist level (e.g. assessment or 1:1 direct intervention with the SALT) and then move into a different tier. Other pupils may start at Universal (e.g. whole school approach), and then require more Targeted interventions (e.g. SALT programme delivered by teaching staff). It is a fluid and changing provision.



Pupils Starting School

Upon entry to school, all parents will be asked to provide some basic information about their child's communication skills. Regular discussions are taken place between class teachers and the Speech & Language Therapist to see which children require a more specialist assessment and direct input from the SALT. This assessment can include: formal/informal assessment; classroom observations; liaison with parents/carers and teaching staff.

If the therapist is working directly with specific pupil's parents/carers receive information on their targets and progress.

Monitoring of Progress

At Knowsley Central School, we provide continual support throughout the school year. This can be through direct intervention, observations/support within class, developing communication systems throughout school (e.g. PECS, Communication Boards, Makaton Key Word Signing), and regular liaison and training of teaching staff. We place a high value on communication systems being consistent across the whole school, with regular opportunities to develop the child's communication skills being a priority across all classes. This means ensuring **pupils have access to their preferred method of communication at all times**. Whether this be symbols, photographs, objects, communication boards or words. We aim for parents, where possible to support their child's communication using the methods used within school within the home environment.

The Speech and Language Therapist within school will work closely with class teachers and support staff to monitor the student's communication skills and levels of need/support.

Methods of Communication

At Knowsley Central School we provide a Total Communication environment. This means that children can use a variety of different methods to express themselves, with all attempts and methods being accepted by staff. Alongside this, methods of communication will be scaffolded and developed to help the students make progress with their communication skills.

Professional Development of Workforce

The school will regularly review teacher's knowledge and skill base. A large percentage of teachers have an enhanced level of training (e.g. Ekkan Level 2 or 3, Attention Autism, PECS, Makaton Key Word Signing) to support children within the school. All new school staff (both permanent and temporary) receive training in supporting SLC skills as part of the school induction programme which is ran on a regular basis across the school year.

Speech and Language Therapy Service Objectives

- To provide specialist SALT input within school, supporting pupils with SLCN.
- To develop the knowledge and use of a wide range of communication strategies within school, to support pupils in accessing their learning.
- In collaboration with teachers identify pupils who would benefit from specialist speech and language therapy assessments/interventions.
- To produce positive impact/change in regards to children's SLC skills with clear outcomes and evidenced based results.
- To work collaboratively with teaching staff to incorporate SLC targets into Individual Education Plans (IEP).
- To identify training and development needs in the area of SLC for all staff within school.
- The provide training to all new staff via Induction Training Workshops
- The SALT will operate within standards and guidelines established by a clinical governance framework (RSCLT and HCPC Professional Standards).

The relationship between the 'Communication Team' and the school is central to the success of the SALT provision. The SALT works collaboratively with all teaching staff taking an active role in joint target setting, prioritising levels of intervention & need for individual pupils.