

Total Communication Approach

At Pens Meadow School we operate a Total Communication Environment, which provides a range of approaches to enable the pupils to communicate effectively. We have a Communication Policy for effective communication which staff and visitors are expected to follow consistently.

Using Total Communication approaches helps people with learning disabilities develop their understanding and expression in order to communicate more effectively.

All pupils attending Pens Meadow have communication difficulties.

All pupils will have outcomes relating to communication in their EHCP.

All pupils will have had an assessment by a speech and language therapist (SaLT).

Most pupils will have targets set by SaLT and delivered by class staff.

When pupils have achieved their targets or staff feel they would benefit from a re-assessment, they request this from SaLT

Parents can also request a reassessment

Behaviour as Communication

At Pens Meadow we recognise that pupils display challenging behaviour for a variety of reasons.

However, all behaviour is a form of communication by children.

We focus on supporting pupils with effective communication strategies.

Consistency of approach is really important to ensure our pupils get clear messages from all adults supporting them.

We aim to help pupils improve their social, emotional and communication skills and to promote and reinforce self-esteem through individual or class based support.

If you feel that your child would benefit from additional input around communication please contact us at school.

How is total communication delivered?

We use a variety of approaches, in accordance with pupil preference and needs. These include:

- Aided Language Displays (ALD's)
- Communication Books
- Gestures, body language, vocalisation/speech, eye pointing and facial expression
- Intensive Interaction
- Makaton signing
- Objects of Reference
- On Body Signing
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- Photographs/pictures/symbols/schedules/first you, then you strips
- Social stories
- Talking Mats
- Voice output communication aids/ AAC equipment/VOCA Group

If you would like further information on any of these approaches, please talk to class staff