

STC's Inclusive Communication, Literacy and English Policy

Purpose

This policy unites and extends the curriculum areas of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing ('Communication and Language' and 'Literacy' in the EYFS) through the recognition that Literacy and Communication are both broad and cross curricular. This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies for Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting and Assistive Technology.

Communication

Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages through verbal or nonverbal means including speech or oral communication, writing or written communication, signs, signals, and behaviour. More simply, communication is said to be "the creation and exchange of meaning." (Richard Nordquist 2018)

At STC 'Communication' is taken to mean all forms of communication (both expressive and receptive) between two or more people and includes verbal or non-verbal interaction with or without communication aids (Appendix 2) Pre-intentional responses to environmental changes may be interpreted to hold meaning and are used to support the development of skills and so are also included under this heading.

Communication is the way that we make friends and build relationships, express our needs and feelings, make choices, learn and achieve independence. For children and young people, communication is integral to healthy development. The development of appropriate communication skills is therefore a priority for the pupils at STC, as a means of accessing the curriculum and participating in everyday life experiences.

Literacy

'Literacy encompasses the knowledge and skills students need to access, understand, analyse and evaluate information, make meaning, express thoughts and emotions, present ideas and opinions, interact with others and participate in activities at school and in their lives beyond school' (National Literacy Trust)

Children and young people may work to develop their:

- Visual Literacy; the ability to critically read images / objects
- Computer/ Technology Literacy; the ability to use a computer and software / technology for a task
- Media Literacy; the ability to access and think critically about different types of media (including books, newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, film, music, advertising, video games and

the internet). To make effective choices for communication, media consumption and/or creation

- Information / Data Literacy- Ability to know when there is a need for information and to locate, identify, evaluate and effectively use this
- Cultural and Multicultural Literacy- The knowledge and understanding of one's own culture and an appreciation of other cultures
- Foundational Literacy – reading, writing and meaning making

English

English forms part of the core subject curriculum at STC.

Knowledge, understanding and the skills with which to demonstrate these in English both support and are part of the wider cross-curricular areas of Communication and Literacy.

Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing may incorporate the use of AACs or be supported through the use of additional resources or adaptations to promote the best possible access to learning and recording opportunities.

Implications of an acquired brain injury

Cognitive impairments can include memory problems, slowed information processing, and language disturbances. Memory impairment (recalling and retaining information) is one of the most common deficits associated with paediatric TBI (Ewing-Cobbs & Fletcher, 1990).

Communication and literacy are high order cognitive functions that require many underlying functions to work in coordination. Conventional reading and writing are dependent upon many aspects of thinking and social skills as well as some physical ability. An acquired brain injury may interfere with these underlying functions:

- Attention and concentration difficulties
- Memory problems
- Literal interpretation of language
- Reduced reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Cognitive fatigue
- Planning, organisation and sequencing difficulties
- Slowed speed of thought and information processing
- Impaired social communication skills and behaviour
- Reduced insight
- Sensory and Motor system impairment
- Difficulties with new and re-learning

This can manifest in several ways on the ability to communicate, e.g.:

- Word finding difficulties
- Verbal dyspraxia affecting the production of speech.
- Aphasia can affect all aspects of a child's language, such as thinking of the right word, using the correct grammar when they talk or write, or understanding what they hear or read.

This can manifest in several ways on the ability to read or write, e.g.:

- Visual impairments such as hemianopia
- Visual processing difficulties.
- Not being able to understand the text.
- Reading and/or writing results in a headache or makes the person feel ill.
- Difficulty reading/writing more than a few lines without forgetting what has been read or written.
- It is hard to focus on an individual line of text.
- Difficulty in categorising what is seen, heard or read.
- Difficulty in organising and expressing an idea in a piece of work.

Aims for Communication, Literacy and English

We aim:

- to recognise and promote the importance of communication, literacy and English in all areas of learning as well as in emotional wellbeing, independence and individuality
- to enable each student to achieve the best progress in communication (including speaking and listening) and literacy (in its broadest sense as well as in reading and writing) possible during their time at STC
- to provide clear information to parents and professionals in relation to communication, literacy and English in order to promote best support and progress following discharge from STC

How Communication, Literacy and English are taught

Communication and Literacy are cross curricular and form a key part of all teaching and learning. English is a discrete subject. Planning and teaching of Communication, Literacy and English is personalised to address individual strengths and needs at STC and works in collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team. All students are assessed on entry and planning is based on a combination of pupil, parent and teacher set targets for learning (dependent upon statutory age requirements and entry assessment levels). Approaches, resources and teaching materials are adapted to address communication, sensory, attention, physical and learning needs on an individual basis.

Each session is planned to be motivating to the individual, to engage their interest and to allow pupils to experience success at a level appropriate to their stage of development and ability (often employing an errorless / error reduced learning approach). Pre-teaching of knowledge and skills in isolation and targeted differentiation, together with a cross-curricular approach support some pupils to achieve targets and make progress, while a multi-modal / sensory approach supports others to achieve success in their learning. Flexibility, adaptability and targeted planning is key to all teaching of Communication and Literacy at STC.

How Communication and English are assessed and progress tracked

All pupils are assessed on admission and progress is tracked using our online platform *Evidence for Learning*. Progress is tracked in line with a pupils Personal Learning Goals and this progress is documented using Evidence for Learning.

National Curriculum

English is assessed using teacher based assessments and may also include the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension. English is assessed against the subject specific Standards (Reading / Writing). Progress is tracked against a pupils personal learning goals using Evidence for Learning.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Progress is tracked through SMART breakdown of targets drawn from the EYFS Development Matters with additional steps added.

Core Skills curriculum

For students not yet engaged subject specific study, English is not assessed as a discrete subject but may contribute to the pupil's personal learning goals under the communication target. Progress is tracked through personal learning goals and is evidenced and tracked using Evidence for Learning.

Post 16

Entry Levels or the national curriculum are used as benchmarks for pupil's ability. GCSE grades are used for students who will return to their mainstream school to follow a GCSE course.