

PRESFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
&
SPECIALIST COLLEGE



Speech and Language Policy

Date ratified: **20th March 2024**

Date for review: **20th March 2026**

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Cooper".

Chair of Governors

Speech, Language and Communication Policy

Presfield High School and Specialist College recognises that language and communication underpin all aspects of learning and development. We are committed to maximising the communication potential of all our pupils by providing a communication friendly environment where students are encouraged to develop and practise their speech, language and communication skills. We seek to celebrate each child's communication strengths and meet their individual needs through a student-centred approach.

Speech and language therapy is integrated into our SEND offer.

Aims

1. To provide opportunities for developing communication and social interaction skills, enabling individuals to access the curriculum through effective differentiation and planning.
2. To maximise individuals communication, independent learning and life skills to assist inclusion in all aspects of the local community and the wider world.
3. To enable students to develop their independence and self-management skills, to be prepared for the world of work and to advocate for themselves.

The Provision

We have a full time specialist speech and language therapist in school.

The schools commitment is to ensure the facilitation of effective communication skills for all of the students to reach their potential. This is achieved through a collaborative model which is focused on enabling students to access the class-based curriculum and to communicate effectively.

Key areas of need for all of our students include communication and interaction skills. When a student starts Presfield, parents/carers are asked to consent to their child having an assessment and/or input from the Speech and Language Therapist.

The schools speech, language and communication provision aims to implement services at three levels to target need: **universal**, for all students; **targeted** provision for those requiring particular input and **specialist** support including direct intervention by the Speech and Language Therapist and support staff. We are also accredited by the National Autistic Society who ensure our school is working within their guidelines of being an Autism friendly environment.

UNIVERSAL PROVISION

Universal Provision includes the dedication of all school staff to providing a communication friendly school, based on managing:

1. **The environment** - for example:
 - Classroom organisation and low distraction, clutter free areas.
 - Clear and consistent visual supports including timetables and first, next and last prompts.
 - Individual table top task boards as well as whole class.
 - Learning outcomes and success criteria are clearly displayed with related vocabulary for reinforcement.

2. **Opportunities to talk, listen, understand and participate** – for example:

- Teaching staff use Kagan structures to engage students in rehearsing, recapping and recounting activities.
- Students access specific teaching of social communication skills as well as opportunities to practice these in life skills lessons and the wider community.
- Key strategies are used by staff when working with individuals to help their understanding and reduce anxiety in social situations using Social Stories and Comic Strip Conversations.
- Teaching staff support emotional regulation and literacy. This promotes students understanding of themselves and others, with a school wide focus on enabling students to self-advocate and carry out their own regulation strategies and readiness to learn.

3. **Interactions** – for example:

- Specifically teaching and modelling the social communication rules (good listening, looking, sitting, turn taking, waiting and staying on topic).
- Staff provide good and clear language models to promote the correct use of vocabulary and grammar structures. To emphasise key words and explain new vocabulary.
- To monitor students comprehension and break instructions into short, simple chunks where necessary.
- To pause frequently during interactions and allow pupils to process verbal information and formulate a response.
- Staff ask a range of open ended questions and encourage problem solving and verbal reasoning.
- The use non literal language in context, providing students with explanations.

TARGETED PROVISION

Targeted provision provides enhanced speech, language and communication support when universal input is not enough. It is targeted at students known to have specific speech, language and communication needs.

This might include:

- Training/skilling up teachers and teaching assistants and or parents/carers to develop particular aspects of a child's speech and language development.
- Supporting teachers and teaching assistants to adapt their language and teaching materials so that a pupil can fully participate in the lesson or wider setting.
- Delivery of group intervention. Examples of interventions include Lego Therapy, which is a popular social interaction strategy as well as 'The Green Zone' for having conversations and 'Social Thinking'.

Specialist Provision

This is when an episode of direct input has been identified as being necessary, by the Speech and language Therapist through assessment and/or from specific request/discussion with teaching staff/parent carers and an agreement for therapy.

- Direct intervention, for example the Speech and Language Therapist works directly with pupils either individually or in groups. An example of group intervention may be a focus on developing working memory skills and strategies for the retention of information and new vocabulary learnt in the classroom.
- Indirect intervention through in-house training so teachers and teaching assistants can carry out specialist interventions.

Specialist support typically involves:

- Detailed assessment
- A child-specific programme
- Direct speech and language therapy (with the speech and language therapist) or indirectly (with a trained teaching assistant or parent/carer)
- Training school staff/parent/carer to deliver the programme
- Monitoring and adapting the programme based on progress.

Individual speech, language and communication targets are incorporated into the teacher's planning.

Each student's speech, language and communication skills are assessed in year 7 or when they enter school (dependent on need) and thereafter during the main school transition points including key stage and moving forward to the next provision, or if there has been a specific request made by school staff and or parent/carer. Information is shared with school staff and parent/carers at annual reviews regarding progress in the core areas and communication targets reviewed and set.

As well as targets set by the Speech and language therapist, social communication and interaction progress is monitored by the school wide use of termly targets from the Autism Education Trust (AET's).

The speech and language therapist can be contacted by parent/carers to discuss their child if they have any particular concerns or need advice regarding their child's communication.