Glyne Gap School

Curriculum Guideline 5 (CG5): Supporting the development of Communication & Language

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Curriculum Intent

We believe it is our moral purpose to enable pupils to live happy, purposeful and fulfilled lives both now and in the future. Our whole school curriculum focus is on the areas of learning that are going to bring happiness, purpose and fulfilment to our pupils. Therefore, our curriculum intent is that all pupils have opportunities and develop skills to:

- be as independent as they can be
- understand and be understood to support their choice and autonomy
- develop and enjoy purposeful play and leisure activities
- make a contribution to their families, communities and society
- have and maintain positive relationships and friendships
- build aspiration, self-confidence and resilience

Speaking and listening, communication and language are fundamental to children's development. They are central for them to be able to meet their basic needs and to progress nearly all other learning. It is vital to children so they are able to progress their social, emotional and cognitive development. Particularly in the SLD/PMLD school context, the ability to communicate, (as effectively as an individual's disability will allow), is the fundamental human right.

Communication, Language and Literacy Curriculum Overview

Communication… the Bridge to Literacy

(An Overview)

COMMUNICATION

ESSENTIAL skill for learning and life

Skills learnt are central for pupils to be able to meet their basic needs and to progress nearly all other learning.

An integral pre-cursor for all pupils "literacy"

COMMUNICATION

Once pupils have achieved GGA6 in Communication, they are introduced to early functional literacy skills alongside their continued work within the Communication curriculum.

Pupils working below GGA6 will continue their essential learning in Communication and experience a breadth of literacy experience in their tier2 learning supported working within the engagement profile.

GGA Assessment areas include: Expressive Language, Social Communication & Speech, Receptive Language, Attention & Listening, Comprehension & Imaginative Play

CORE SKILLS FOR FUNCTIONALITY

Functional Literacy

For pupils working GGA7+

Emphasis on teaching the core skill of literacy is in terms of 'what it can do' to develop pupil's independence and confidence through its functional use to support their learning in school, in the community and in their future lives, rather than teaching the skill in isolation.

GGA Assessment areas include: Independence & Organisation, Leisure, Mechanics of Reading and Writing (7-10)/ Independent living (11+) and Core Vocab.

CORE SKILLS FOR FUNCTIONALITY

Phonics & Early Reading

For pupils working GGA11+

(Pupils demonstrating capacity to develop higher reading skills)

Emphasis on teaching the mechanics of reading (i.e. word reading and Lang comprehension) to support the functional application of literacy. Taught alongside ongoing learning in Functional Literacy.

Assessed using READ, WRITE, INC phonics screening tool & GGA National Curriculum Literacy Based Profile

IMPACT

The *impact* of this curriculum is that pupils will be able to:-

- *Apply their skills of communication & literacy to advocate for themselves, make & express informed choices to the best of their ability*
- *Apply their skills of communication & literacy to independently access purposeful leisure and vocational opportunities (including where appropriate work) that are meaningful to them*
- *Maintain and develop meaningful relationships and friendships (including where appropriate using functional technology to keep in touch)*

This policy outlines how the Curriculum area of COMMUNICATION implemented in order to support the achievement of our Curriculum intent and should be read in conjuncture with the Curriculum at Glyne Gap Policy (CG1), Core Skills for Functionality (CG8), and Phonics & Early Reading at Glyne Gap (CG18)

1. Aims of this Policy

1. To increase understanding of how communication and language develop (...and its integral link to the development of Early Literacy and Reading skills) and ensure it is central to the school aims for all pupils

2. To ensure a total communication approach is adopted and applied to support the development of communication and language, encouraging and empowering all staff to use a range of communication strategies and understand that these should not be used in isolation….a pupil may use several methods/strategies to communicate and so should we.

3. To ensure staff are skilled (and therefore trained) in supporting pupils to develop, embed and maintain their receptive and expressive communication and language.

4. To consolidate and develop our whole school approach to supporting the development of communication and language using low, light and high-tec forms of AAC (Alternative Augmentative Communication).

5. To promote a strong and productive interdisciplinary approach involving Parents/ Carers/respite, Class Teams Specialist Teachers, SALTs, OTs, Physiotherapists and other relevant people to the pupil. This is essential, with the pupils' voice being at the heart of this work and the Class Teacher being the coordinator of this.

6. To empower and en-skill parents to support and continue their young person's Communication development at home

7. **To ensure that every pupil reaches their full communicative potential as fundamental to building relationships, finding happiness and living fulfilled lives.**

All staff are responsible for implementing this policy.

2. Communication… The Bridge to Literacy

Communication and Language (along with personal and social development) is at the very centre of of SLD/PMLD education and as such our Curriculum. We define it as an Essential Skill for Learning and Life, and is prioritised as such in all pupil's individual learning plans. In our setting, we believe EVERY child is a "Communicator", and should be provided with Outstanding Teaching and Learning opportunities to develop these skills, to the best of their ability.

There is a complex link between communication and literacy. At Glyne Gap we define literacy as reading and writing with a focus on teaching skills for functionality. **Communication** should not be seen as a separate subject, but as an **integral pre-cursor** to all literacy development. Although all pupils are working below national standards at key stages 1 and 2, the DFE programme of study (2014) makes explicit: "the National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum- cognitively, socially and linguistically. The document goes on to say that 'spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing'. As such all pupils' development in "reading" is underpinned by and integrated into their learning within the Glyne Gap Curriculum area of Communication.

3. Philosophy

Beliefs and Values

We believe that the individual child is at the centre of all that we do……. that every child is an individual and is to be respected, valued and nurtured.

Glyne Gap School caters for a wide range of pupils who all have significant communication needs. Communication is vital for pupils' social and academic development; it is a significant part of our daily experiences and an essential element of learning.

We believe it is every pupil's right to have a voice and express their thoughts, needs and feelings. It is our duty to enable each child to communicate to the best of their ability. We recognise that communication can take many forms, it is both verbal and non-verbal and we seek to support every aspect of pupils' communication.

We believe parents are our pupils 'first teacher', and it is essential to empower our parents as such through enabling them to build the knowledge, skills and confidence to support their child's communication at home. We understand that this may mean working on different skills at different times between school and home to achieve a shared long term aim…that is ok. We believe for learning to be truly transformational, it must be applied across all settings and used in the home context…as such working with parents is ESSENTIAL.

Through the development of pupils' communication, we aim to support them in their ability to make choices, become confident, independent and prepare them for their future lives.

Total Communication Approach

In order to support our beliefs and values, the school adopts a Total Communication Approach.

'Total Communication is a communication philosophy- not a communication method and not at all a teaching method……Total Communication is an approach to create a successful and equal communication between human beings with different language perception and/or production…….To use Total Communication amounts to a willingness to use all available means in order to understand and be understood'. (Hansen)

We strongly believe that *"real communication is motivated by real life situations and the opportunity that pupils have to control elements of their environment.*

The importance of facilitating communication in "real-life" settings, and in a range of environments should not be underestimated. If a skill is not transferred across all settings, with a range of people, it is not yet fully learnt. It must be applied in all contexts for it to be truly functional and meaningful.

4. Meeting the needs of our Pupils

Communication is 'fundamental to children's development; children need to be able to understand and be understood; it's the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play and social interaction.' (Hello Campaign)

Before pupils can become purposeful in their communication they must become 'switched on' to their environment - they must be interested and attend to what's in it before they can learn to take control over elements of it. If a pupil becomes curious their level of motivation will increase. The degree of alertness and curiosity determines in large part how motivated a pupil will be to deliberately control their immediate environment - will a pupil want to operate a switch toy if they haven't learnt to look, watch and appreciate what the toy will do?

The Glyne Gap curriculum is designed to be both **incisively relevant to the needs of individual pupils** and ensure an entitlement to curricular **breadth** and **balance**.

Within school, the pupil population falls within various categories of need i.e. ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition), SLD (Severe Learning Disability) and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disability). Within these groups pupils could be described as different types of communicators:

- Informal Communicators: Pupils communicate in a very basic way, without using formal language skills (e.g. speech, sign, and symbols). Pupils may move through a simple progression of skills, and it is important to recognize the wide spectrum of ability that this group represents – from pupils whose reactions are reflex responses to stimuli and situations e.g. crying when hungry or uncomfortable (pre-intentional) to pupils who clearly want to communicate meaning and are purposeful in their intent to control aspects of their environment e.g. reaching towards cup when thirsty (purposeful).

- Formal (AAC) Communicators: Pupils show clear intent and motivation to initiate an interaction i.e. they have some form of purposeful or intentional communication (e.g. using vocalization, gestures, facial expression, eye contact, eye pointing, body language, signs or symbols to interact with other people), but due to various reasons (physical impairment, oral-motor issues, echolalic speech, etc.) have a receptive language level in advance of their ability to express themselves. These pupils are likely to require an AAC system in some form or another e.g. objects bag, simple choosing book, photo/symbol book, etc. Pupils at this stage will expect a response to their attempt to communicate.

- Verbal Communicators: Pupils use speech as their primary means of expressive communication, but will still benefit greatly from being immersed in a Total Communication environment. This will not only support their communication and language development, but will also enhance friendships and relationships through a mutual understanding and use of all communication methods.

5. The Communication Charter

The **Glyne Gap School Communication Charter** devised and agreed by all staff is a vitally important part of the school's ethos and values. Its principles are to be followed by all staff, and it is prominently displayed for all staff, students, and visitors to access.

This charter was created through discussions & reflection with all staff at the Communication Twilight Series 2026. All staff acknowledge and agree that:

- **Being able to communicate is the most important skill we need in life. It is pivotal to a happy and fulfilled life.**
- **Every Pupil is a "Communicator" and has a fundamental right to express their "voice" – i.e. their thoughts, needs and feelings.**
- **Total Communication is an approach which values ALL the different ways that we communicate; verbal and non-verbal; it supports both receptive and expressive language.**
- **It is everyone's responsibility to use the school's Total Communication Approach, using every means possible to enable pupils to understand and be understood.**
- **We consider and respect how each pupil can and wants to communicate.**
- **We endeavour to be skilled communication partners – tuning in; being available; being responsive; acting as positive role models and maintaining high expectations.**
- **We will provide pupils with the appropriate means, motivating reasons and engaging opportunities to communicate in their everyday life.**
- **We never underestimate the importance of our relationships in facilitating pupils' communication.**

6. Communication, Language & Literacy - Definitions and Descriptions

Glyne Gap School Curriculum Design refers to the terms **Tier 1** and **Tier 2** learning. (A full explanation of this is found in the Curriculum at Glyne Gap Policy CG1).

The Communication is defined as a **Tier 1** area of learning. Teaching at Tier 1 is characterised by the Essential Skills for Learning and Life. Skills taught in Communication (along with the additional tier 1 areas of PSHE and Core skills for building functionality), will be the skills that make the biggest impact on a young person's life, and open up the most opportunities of independence and autonomy in the future.

In order to understand the link between communication and literacy it is important to have clear definitions of both terms.

Communication:

At Glyne Gap we define Communication as how we interact with others.

Communication incorporates:

- The use of non-verbal methods e.g. listening, looking, facial expression, body language
- how we understand others and the world around us (receptive skills) and
- how we make ourselves understood (expression)

Language:

At Glyne Gap language is described as the comprehension of a vocabulary (receptive language) and how this vocabulary is used (expressive language).

The teaching of "Language" at Glyne Gap includes the use of the following systems:

Speech:

The sounds used to produce words. This includes how people speak, the fluency, volume, intonation and pitch used to support meaning.

AAC:

Alternative and Augmentative communication refers to any approach designed to support, enhance or augment (increase) the communication of individuals who are not independent verbal communicators in **all situations.** (Beukelman, Yorkston & Dowden, 1985 as quoted by the ACE centre).

Most of our pupils will need to use some form of AAC to gain information, support their understanding and/or express themselves. *(See appendix 1 for further description of AAC used at Glyne Gap).*

Literacy:

The New National Curriculum (2014) does not contain a definition of literacy, however the English framework divides 'language and literacy' into three sections: spoken language, reading and writing and vocabulary development.

The Department for Education (DfE) does not maintain a definition of literacy as schools are free to develop their own literacy practice around statutory requirements.

Here at Glyne Gap we define literacy as reading and writing, with a focus on teaching skills for functionality. (See CG8 Core Skills for Functionality)

Early Reading:

There is a complex link between communication and literacy. In this setting, all pupils have difficulties with their Speech, Language and Communication due to the nature of their learning disabilities. The development of formal literacy requires a certain level of language skills. All pupils need to establish the pre requisite skills of communication (Essential Skills for Learning and Life) before progressing to early literacy skills (Core Skills for Functionality). (See Appendix 1- The Glyne Gap Curriculum Model)

For pupils demonstrating they have the capacity to develop skills at a higher level, we believe that teaching of reading (decoding and encoding written text), supports them to have greater opportunities for their independence, personal autonomy, independent living and work in the future, and as such is a priority area of learning. For these pupils, alongside the whole school curriculum area of Communication, they will in addition, engage in subject specific learning in the areas of Phonological awareness, Comprehension and grammar.

These pupils are identified through the completion of GGA10 in the Functional Literacy Assessment, and through teacher discussions at Pupil Progress and liaison meetings. Once identified, formal assessments are completed and specific targets are planned and bespoke 1:1 reading sessions are delivered to support them extending their early reading skills.

For full guidance in the delivery of the Phonics and Early Reading Curriculum, please refer to CG18 Supporting the Teaching and Learning of Phonics and Early Reading at Glyne Gap

Curriculum Implementation

7. The Communication Team

The role of the Communication Team is to lead, drive and develop a whole school (including Nursery and College), **approach to Communication**. We work in an interdisciplinary way, endeavouring to empower pupils, parents/carers and professionals, by providing them with the knowledge, skills, confidence and appropriate structures/methods to support the development of communication and language.

i) Core Aims of the Communication Team

- *To maintain the vision and direction for the Communication Curriculum across the whole school*
- *To support teachers to maintain the right direction of travel for every pupil in their individual long term Communication Aims.*
- *To ensure all pupils have the right 'Kit' (i.e. relevant and up to date Communication systems and resources) to facilitate them to communicate to the best of their ability*
- *To empower and enskill families to facilitate and extend their young person's communication at home/ in the community*
- *To develop teaching and learning in the area of communication through high quality training and support.*

ii) Roles & Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the Communication Curriculum sits with the Senior Leadership team, with oversight by Assistant Headteacher, Sarah Tidmarsh. She is responsible for maintaining the vision and direction & development of the Communication Curriculum as well as line management for the Communication Team.
The Communication Team consists of both Glyne Gap & other professional partners to ensure the best progress for pupils.

In School Communication Specialist Teachers & Teaching Assistants consist of:

- Rebecca Gander – Communication Teacher for supporting Home Learning & Communication Team Lead
- Pippa Shaw –Specialist Communication Assistant
- Faye Fernandez – Phonics & Early Reading Curriculum Lead
- Will Watson - High Tech AAC Assistant
- Stephanie Ward – Resource Assistant
- Jodie Hearne – Switch Progression Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Jinny Goodsell – Picture Exchange Lead /Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Teaching Assistants with the specific role of Signing Ambassador for the school

In addition, the Glyne Gap team work in collaboration with NHS CITES colleagues including:

- NHS Speech & Language Therapists
- NHS Occupational Therapists
- NHS Integrated Therapy Assistants
- Sensory Needs Service for VI/HI

Please see Appendix 5: Supporting Communication needs of Glyne Gap Pupils – CITES Working Partnership, which outlines the working agreement of roles are responsibilities for Glyne Gap and our CITES partners.

8. Planning for & Delivery of the Communication Curriculum

Communication is planned and assessed according to individual pupil needs, with incisively relevant targets set for each pupil using the Glyne Gap Assessment for speaking and listening. The skills and knowledge addressed directly impact on the quality of pupils' lives now and/or later.

All Class Teachers from the Nursery, School & College departments evaluate and set communication goals 3xper year (Terms 2, 4 and 6). Progress for **Every pupil** is evaluated against their current communication programme and a new programme is created for the following 2 terms. This forms part of the pupils' termly goals and IEP. There will be at least 2 goals set which are Glyne Gap Assessment referenced for each pupil unless exceptional circumstances apply.

For pupils who attend Glyne Gap College the focus is on using their current communication skills in a variety of real-life situations, with different people and ensuring they have fine-tuned their skills for their next steps in life. Communication goals for pupils at the faculty will be referenced under 'Personal Autonomy' from the PSHE Glyne Gap Assessment to ensure the focus is on the functional application of their communication skills.

Where there is a need identified for an individual pupil, Bespoke Communication planning 'problem spots' are offered by the Communication Team. Teachers are able to book as required to discuss individual pupils within their class who may require additional support/change of system/ "stuck" etc within their Communication/Sensory needs. Teachers can book for pupils as they feel is necessary or may be directed for a specific pupil as an action from liaison by their HoS. Other appropriate persons working with the pupil/student from the schools internal or external communication team (including CITES colleagues, SaLT and SaLTA) will attend as required.

Following the setting of goals, Teachers hold a Department Curriculum planning meeting to include opportunity for discussion/group planning for activities to support pupils Communication Goals e.g. cross department groups. Teachers are able to request additional input from the team for individual pupils, specific communication resources or training for class teams where needs are identified.

Requests for input are submitted through the "Requested Input Record" provided for each class. Additional input includes individual work/support in class, group sessions, contact with families, Multi-Disciplinary Forums (see below), assessment by one or more of the team dependent on the needs of the pupil, resource/equipment requests and referrals to other services (see below – Communication Team Input).

Enhanced Communication planning meeting.

Teachers working as Foundation Practitioners within GG Teaching Standards, (within their first 3yrs of teaching) or within their first 2yrs working in SEN, will be supported to develop their skills and knowledge in planning for the Communication curriculum through Enhanced Communication planning meeting.

The Teacher meets with a Senior member of the Communication team/identified Advanced Practitioner, to plan Communication Programmes for every pupil. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure incisive planning for pupils Communication needs in order for them to make the best possible progress, AND to support teacher development in understanding how children's Communication develops and how to effectively facilitate this development. Through discussions, it is identified where pupils are currently working in regards to their communication; and the priority for their next steps in learning. Goals are then jointly written ensuring the small steps learning for individuals is captured. How to this learning will be achieved is discussed and additional input for pupils/ class team training is agreed and implemented.

Teachers working as a Proficient Practitioner but who feel they may benefit from an Enhanced Communication Planning meeting at a specific time to support their pupils' learning/ their own professional development (e.g. if they have moved class and are working with a group of Picture Exchange users) can request this in discussion with their Head of School, and/or an Enhanced Communication Planning meeting may be identified as an action from Liaison to support teacher development as required.

Communication Team Input

Following Communication Planning, The Communication Team Leader gathers all the requested input. These are prioritised according to need, and it is then decided who will deliver the requested input over the following two terms. Input from the Communication team may take on of the following forms:

i) Direct work with pupils

One of the key roles of the Communication Team is to provide bespoke interventions for pupils learning in Communication. This can take the form of 1:1 sessions, small group communication cafes, support in class to provide intensive adult support when implementing a new communication system/ model use of new system to class team, receptive/expressive language assessments etc.

There is a commitment that pupils identified for individual or group sessions will then receive regular sessions, and these will be negotiated, timetabled and circulated in advance to Class Teachers. A copy of the communication programmes are given to Class Teachers at the meeting and a copy given to the Speech and Language Therapist for those pupils on their caseload.

Copies of any communication assessments carried out by the team will be discussed with Teachers, and added to the pupil's assessment file. The Communication team members will contribute to the annual review reports of any pupil who has received individual support by them.

Through the evaluation and feedback, every seasonal term the team identifies one pupil per department to receive Communication Star of the Term. These awards are given to pupils who have made exceptional progress within the term and are awarded in assembly.

iii) Staff Training and Continued Professional Development

As communication is essential to all aspects of pupils' lives, it is vital that staff receive the appropriate training and opportunities to experience and see examples of good practice. The Communication Team take the lead on this training for this Curriculum Area.

When working with pupils in the area of communication there are some simple but fundamental principles that all should endeavour to employ in order to best support and facilitate their communication and interaction. We refer to this as being A Good Communication Partner. The principles of being a good Communication Partner include:

- A Total Communication approach is essential. Communication partners should use a mixture of speech, sign and visual supports (using the appropriate from of representation e.g, objects, photos, symbols, text) to give pupils information and allow them to express themselves using their own method(s)
- consider and respect how the pupil wants to communicate
- the communication partner should try to get on the same face to face level as the pupil they are talking to
- the communication partner should be aware of the age and language level of the pupil and give clear simple messages using a Total Communication approach
- communication partners should respond to pupils' communications, and give them time to respond
- staff working with pupils should have consistently high expectations
- provide a breadth of communication and language experiences throughout the day
- all those working with pupils should understand the importance of the use of language and communication and the primacy of its social function and links with behaviour
- **no one working with pupils in Glyne Gap School should ever underestimate the central importance of strong relationships in empowering and facilitating pupils– particularly in this area.**

Upon employment as part of staff's induction training, there is specific training on key areas of Communication including Total Communication, Being a good communication Partner, The use of Signing and the use of Communicate in Print. In addition, within their Employee Support Year, specific targets in the area of Communication are identified.

As part of Whole School CPD, all staff will engage in a 2 year rolling cycle of CPD for Communication which includes in Year 1 a series of Communication Twilight training on the fundamental principles of supporting Communication, and in Year 2 a bespoke INSET training day on a key area of Communication linked to an area of CPD highlighted within the Whole School Development Plan.

In addition, there are ongoing CPD opportunities for all staff to develop their knowledge & skills. This includes:

- termly (6xper year) Communication team updates and signing refresher as part of whole school CPD briefings (WSB);
- weekly signing updates at briefings,
- termly core and topic signs shared with class teams,
- weekly class team meetings to discuss aspects of communication within their class
- Seasonal termly (3x per yr) Team Development meetings in which Communication is part of the focus
- Targeted Class team training on an identified aspect of communication. This may be planned and delivered to class teams as a result of communication planning meetings or Class Team Development Meetings to meet the needs of individual pupils. A member of the communication team may attend a class team meeting, or deliver sessions alongside a member of staff within a class team in order to meet this training need.
- Signing refresher as required (available 3x per year)
- Communication in Print refresher as required (available 3x per year)

As part the 2025/26 development cycle, in order to support all Staff CPD and building their skills as effective communication partners, the school implemented a "Communication Partner Passport" for all staff. This document outlines the critical knowledge and skills they need to build and develop to support pupils within our setting; the training they can expect to build these skills; and their own area of development focus within Communication. These passports are the responsibility of all staff to maintain and update. As part of the 26/27 development cycle, a focus is to ensure these passports are embedded for all new and existing staff, ensuring they are revisited annually as part of Communication CPD.

iii) Support for Home Learning

We know that for learning to be truly transformational it must be transferred across all settings with a range of different people. We also know that pupils' families are their life-long teachers, and will be their biggest facilitators for their opportunities in the future. As such it is essential that parents/carers are equipped with the skills and resources to enable Communication to happen outside the 9-3 school context. Through parent discussion following the period of enforced COVID19 school closure, we identified that parents often felt ill-equipped to continue learning at home.

We therefore, (in addition to direct support from class teachers) created the "Supporting your Child's learning at home" pathway for Behaviour and Communication. *(For more information please see Glyne Gap Parent Leaflet for Supporting your Child's learning at home)*

This pathway includes the following initiatives to support learning in Communication at home.

Communication at Home learning support

Following discussion at pupil progress and liaison meetings, or following requests at annual review meetings, families who would benefit from support to extend their young person's communication at home are identified. This is often when a young person's use of a communication system is not consistent across all settings.

Families meet with the Communication at Home learning support teacher and identify a specific outcome for their child to achieve at home. The home learning teacher then meets weekly with the

family and young person in school and at home to support the family understanding how a system is used and transferring its use into the home environment.

SPEC (Supporting Picture Exchange) at Home Programme

For families of pupils in the early stages of using Picture Exchange as their primary means of Communication, the school developed this initiative to offer all families.

When a pupil is using Picture Exchange consistently and functionally in the school setting, the Specialist TA for Picture Exchange use meets with the family and delivers a 6 week programme of support to train families in how to support this system. Parents will meet with the TA in school and engage in Picture Exchange sessions with their child, before being supported to transfer this learning through a final session with the child in the home.

Parent Workshops

Across the year, the Communication team offer a programme of workshops for families on supporting Communication at home. These include Total communication, signing workshops, supporting Early Communication and use of visuals.

Parent Resource Making Workshops

Throughout the year, resource making workshps and run in the school, with parents being able to access communication software in order to make up visuals to support their child's communication at home. The Communication resource assistant is available to support parents with any questions they may have, however the focus is to enable parents to take ownership of the management of their young person's communication system to ensure its' functional and appropriate for their home context and therefore used in all settings.

Communication Team drop-ins & Parents evening

Parents evening is held twice a year at which the Communication Team is available for parents to 'drop in' to discuss any queries they may have about communication. The Communication team also offer an open-door policy and families can at any time request a meeting for further support. (See below)

Parent 1:1 Communication Review meetings

This is available to any parent upon request. A regular weekly slot is available for parents to book, where parents can come in to meet with a member of the Communication team about any area of their child's communication that they have concerns about or wish to problem solve. The communication Team support parents to identify actions to support next steps and offer guidance as to how to implement.

iv) Inter-Disciplinary Working & Requesting Specialist input

School has access to a number of services. Referral may happen in a number of ways, and the Communication Team Lead will co-ordinate the process with the Class Teacher having gained agreement from the parents/carers to progress with this.

Definition of Interdisciplinary Team

- *team may carry out own assessments*
- *team meeting devises collaborative recommendations*
- *delegation of implementation to one team member*

Specialist input may include (but is not limited to):-

- Dysphagia Assessment and review
- SCAMP Clinic (Specialist Communication Access & Mobility Potential ((SCAMP)) Assessment)
- High Tec AAC Assessment (Chailey AAC Hub)
- Sensory Needs Service – for advice on visual & hearing impairments
- Occupational Therapy

Communication Meetings

In addition to communication planning meetings, the following meetings take place within the school to ensure pupils make the best possible progress in Communication.

- Class Teams meet weekly led by the class teacher. They will always be focused on pupil learning with one of the key discussions being around supporting pupils to make progress in communication.

- The school-based Communication team meet every term. Within this meeting key achievements for pupil learning or staff work are identified and celebrated, staff will share what their current priorities for their workload are that work is running on schedule and plan for next steps.

- Signing ambassadors meet termly to plan for the whole school signing initiatives of the term. As part of this meeting they also have their own refresher training and plan for the whole school staff refresher training as part of WSB, to ensure all staff are supported to maintain and develop their skills in signing and maintain the profile of the importance of signing as part of the Whole School Total Communication approach.

In order for effective joint planning and joint working with our NHS colleagues:

- Communication Team Lead and Band 7 representative from each therapy discipline meet termly to agree key priorities in work for pupils and any outstanding pupil therapy needs that require addressing.

- In addition, the school hosts a Joint Planning Meeting termly to agree whole school therapy provision and development needs. This consists of all Band 7 therapists, The CITES (Children's Integrated Therapy and Equipment Service) Locality Manager, Communication Team Lead.

Complex Needs Forums

Multi-Disciplinary Forums are a Glyne Gap initiative that are completely child centred. They are an opportunity to bring a range of professionals and parents/carers together to discuss a specific area of Tier 1 learning (PSHE, Communication or Essential Physical Skills) for pupils who require specialist advice to move on.

The Communication Team schedule 6 forums a year and staff can refer pupils who(se):

- Are 'stuck' in a specific area of Tier 1 learning that requires additional advice or intervention.
- Require a multi-disciplinary assessment. This may be suggested through Liaison Meetings, Annual Reviews, Behaviour Planning Meetings, Communication Planning Meetings or via other professionals.
- Needs change due to their disability, medical needs or surgery and require new or alternative ways to access learning.
- Join the school with highly complex needs and specialist advice is needed as a baseline for future learning.

Forums are chaired by a Senior Leader in the school. The agenda is flexible and contain all or some of the following:

- A discussion including introductions, the aim of the forum and the class teacher to inform the group about the pupil and their needs.
- Practical activities with the pupil if appropriate or the teacher presents a video of the pupil.
- An action plan is agreed that may include activities such as creating a 'passport', IPA (Individual Pupil Arrangement) equipment orders or further research. Specific staff will be identified by each action with a time frame.
- The group will identify long term and short term goals.
- Plenary ~ a brief summary of the findings and action plan and a review date will be agreed if necessary.
  (Each forum is minuted and circulated to the relevant people).

v) Resources

The Communication Team has a large resource bank which is shared with classes across the school. Requests for communication materials and resources can be made at the communication planning meetings and through team meetings. The Resource Assistant makes individualised resources in partnership with class teams which support the development of pupils' communication skills across the school. In addition, the resource assistant is always available to parents at Parent resource making workshops to support them with any help they may need.

Curriculum Impact

9. Measuring and Monitoring the Impact of the Communication Curriculum

Assessing Progress within Communication for an individual

There is a great deal of information and literature on how the normally developing child progresses through language development. This understanding usually focuses on the acquisition and development of verbal skills. In our school context, the Glyne Gap Assessment for Expressive and Receptive Language provides a clear assessment of the progression of communication skills.

For pupils working within GGA1-6, the expressive & receptive Language assessments support teachers in identify pupils next steps for their Communication, alongside their learning within the Engagement Profile. Once pupils reach GGA7, The Expressive Language assessment has been sub divided into the areas of expressive language, social communication, speech and advocacy. The Receptive Language assessment has been sub divided into the areas of comprehension, attention

and listening and imaginative play. Goals set for pupils Communication link directly to the GGA Communication assessments, and learning is tracked over time using this.

Formative assessment is used by teachers and TAs throughout every lesson and class teams share these observations with the class teacher. Communication goals in IEPs are assessed by class teachers termly (3x per year) and then peer reviewed in Communication Planning meetings.

Pupils learning in Communication is then shared and discussed at termly liaison meetings with Heads of School and reported to Head teacher and governors via Teaching and Learning governors' reports and meetings.

Pupil's annual progress in Communication forms the discussion as the discrete area of learning focus for Term5&6 liaison. Liaison outcomes are used to inform pupils PPIs to give a judgement on how well the pupil is learning against their own individual curriculum.

Evaluating and Tracking progress in the Communication Curriculum

There are 8 assessment instruments we use in school to show achievement and can be used to track progress for pupils- see CG 10 Assessment, Recording and Reporting.

For communication the 6 most compelling assessment instruments are:

1. Supergoals written to develop an area of communication for some pupils. Supergoals can be transformational to pupils lives, they are hugely relevant and will set a direction of travel for approximately 18 months to 2 years. They are discussed and with agreed with parents.
2. Pupils IEP's which include communication goals that are written and evaluated on a termly basis and are Glyne Gap Assessment referenced.
3. Pupil GGA Assessment Files- contain a summative assessment of the Glyne Gap Assessment for speaking and listening which are updated at least annually.
4. Annual Review Reports- which provide summative description of communication progress during the past year which is referenced from the Glyne Gap Assessment and goes to parents.
5. Zig Zag Books – which are cumulative pupil records of achievements that describe attainment and progress they are Glyne Gap Assessment referenced and are completed on a termly basis.
6. Liaison Meetings – Evaluated communication goals are reviewed termly within this meeting and an Annual judgement for Communication, attainment and progress are made in terms 5&6 liaison meetings which inform annual PPI data for every pupil.

Aspects of the Glyne Gap Assessments in ICT and PSHE are also used to assess elements of a pupil's communication skills. Within ICT – the area of communication and information skills could be used to inform a pupil's level of communication. Within PSHE – personal autonomy, self advocacy, friendships, relationships, sex education and personal learning strands would all be used to inform a pupil's communication skills.

All pupil outcomes are collated and considered in the annual Whole School Curriculum Impact data analysis meetings, used to identify next steps/ developments needed for the next year within the curriculum. Communication is one of the key areas discussed in terms of whole school progress, key stages, classes and specific groups such as free school meals. (See CG10 - Impact of the Curriculum- Assessing, Evaluating and Tracking Progress.

Measuring, monitoring and evaluating Impact of the Communication Team

Alongside the school's 3year strategic development plan and the CPD plan, every year following consultation between the communication team members, an annual communication development plan is drawn up. The Team Lead identifies individuals to lead on specific aspects of the development work at the beginning of each academic year. The plan is evaluated every term with each item RAG rated. Evaluations from the Communication Development Plan are included in the whole school strategic development plan, and outcomes are shared termly at the Teaching and Learning Governors meeting.

Updated: September 2026

10. Next Steps/ Developments for Communication

Development plan 2026 - 27

- To ensure that pupils using all and any mode of communication make best possible progress

(See SDP for further detailed planning and key tasks for this academic year)

Links to Other Policies

CG1 - Curriculum at Glyne Gap School
CG10 - Impact of the Curriculum- Assessing, Evaluation and Tracking Progress
CG8 –Guidance for Teaching Core Skills for Functionality-Literacy, Numeracy and ICT
CG18 - Supporting the Teaching and Learning of Phonics & Early Reading at Glyne Gap

Appendices

Appendix 1: Glyne Gap Curriculum Model
Appendix 2: Description of AAC Systems used at Glyne Gap
Appendix 3: The Communication Ladder
Appendix 4: Supporting Communication needs of Glyne Gap Pupils – CITES Working Partnership
Appendix 5: Supporting the Occupational Performance of Glyne Gap Pupils – CITES Working Partnership – Currently under review Sept 2026
Appendix 6: The Glyne Gap Communication Charter 2026
Appendix 7: Moving from Low Tech AAC to High Tech progression guidance
Appendix 8: Communication Partner Passport
Appendix 9: Parent Workshop flyer – (to be included within Supporting your Child's learning at home offer to parents – parent leaflet (Available from Oct 2026))