



## **Beaucroft communication Policy.**

### **Aim**

Communication is of utmost importance at Beaucroft school. Our aim is that all pupils will have a means of communication in which they can make their wants, needs and desires known and to be able to express their opinions and feelings.

In order to do this, we follow a 'Total Communication' approach. This approach is about finding and using the right combination of communication methods for each person. This approach helps an individual to form connections, ensures successful interactions and supports information exchanges and conversations. A combination of methods are used, which reinforce each other and strengthen meaning for the individual.

At Beaucroft school we believe that all behaviour is communication and yet it cannot always be understood by others and is not necessarily appropriate. We aim to teach children to reliably be able to communicate with others and to be understood as well as it being sociably acceptable.

With some pupils we may start by using PEIC-D which is 'Promoting Early Interactive Communication' through play and involves early basic interaction, imitation and turn taking – all skills used in building communication.

Total communication at Beaucroft includes both comprehension and expression and may be formal or non-formal e.g. pointing to a coat verses showing a symbol of a coat or a child looking at a toy they wish to play with rather than verbally asking for it.

### **Rationale**

At Beaucroft we see communication as a basic human right - it is the means by which we are valued by society and ourselves.

We aim to enable every pupil to communicate to the best of his or her ability. Language and functional communication play a vital part in the development of self-esteem and confidence, the ability to make relationships, to make decisions and to have control over one's life.

Beaucroft also recognises that difficulty with communication skills can lead to frustration and consequently forms of challenging behaviour including withdrawal and injurious behaviours.

This policy is a means of organising the different ways of communicating into a "common language" and selecting the best combination for an individual's needs.

### **Key Principles**

- We are committed to the promotion of independence, choice, inclusion and individual rights.
- We acknowledge the importance of collaboration and partnership between School, Speech and Language Therapists, outside agencies, parents and carers.
- We commit to value, respect and promote all attempts to communicate.
- Where possible, and appropriate, we will standardise signs and symbols across the school to ensure continuity and progression.

## Enabling our pupils to THRIVE

- We will provide an environment that supports and enriches communication.
- Total Communication will encompass and support the cultural and religious diversity of all pupils at Beacroft including those with English as an additional language.
- We will promote good practice through relevant training and sharing of expertise across the school.
- We regularly evaluate and upskill practice in line with the Total Communication Policy providing training and encourage peer to peer support.
- We believe that the responsibility for facilitating communication and providing a 'communication positive' environment rests with every member of staff and we have established a Communication team with representatives from all departments to further total communication across the school. Next term we intend to have a staff rep from each class who will have the responsibility to specifically promote communication opportunities throughout the day – and in particular visual communication.

Staff are skilled at reading the innate talents and capabilities of our students and new staff are trained to do so as they work alongside experienced staff.

We believe that each individual has core abilities, sometimes emphasised within a particular subject area. Individuals at Beacroft learn in different ways and may have 'preferred learning styles.' It is our job to match our approach to the needs of the pupils as we recognise that students learn most effectively in a way that most suits them.

We aim for all children at Beacroft school to have confidence in using their own abilities to maximise their learning.

### **At Beacroft we all have the right to:**

- request desired objects, actions, events, and persons, and to express personal preferences, or feelings.
- be offered choices and alternatives.
- reject or refuse undesired objects, events, or actions, including the right to decline or reject all proffered choices.
- request, and be given, attention from and interaction with another person.
- request feedback or information about a state, an object, a person, or an event of interest.
- active treatment and intervention efforts to enable everyone to communicate messages in whatever modes and as effectively and efficiently as their specific abilities will allow.
- have communicative acts acknowledged and responded to, even when the intent of these acts cannot be fulfilled by the responder.
- always have access to any needed augmentative and alternative communication devices and other assistive devices, to have those devices in good working order.

## Enabling our pupils to THRIVE

- environmental contexts, interactions, and opportunities that expect and encourage persons with disabilities to participate as full communicative partners with other people, including peers.
- be informed about the people, things, and events in one's immediate environment.
- be communicated with in a manner that recognises and acknowledges the inherent dignity of the person being addressed, including the right to be part of communication exchanges about individuals that are conducted in his or her presence.
- be communicated with in ways that are meaningful, understandable, and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

**It is every member of staff's responsibility to be aware of and follow strategies outlined in the Beaucroft communication booklet.**