



Good communication supports understanding, reduces anxiety and helps every pupil feel heard and included.

Small changes in how we communicate can make a big difference.



REMEMBER

- ✓ Everyone communicates differently,
- ✓ Be patient and give time to respond.
- ✓ Respect all forms of communication.
- ✓ Listen, acknowledge and validate.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



KEEP IT CLEAR & SIMPLE

Use short, simple sentences and clear language. Avoid idioms, sarcasm and complex instructions.



BE VISUAL

Use visuals, gestures, objects, timetables and written supports to help understanding.



GIVE TIME

Allow extra time to process information and to respond. Pause and wait.



CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Use different ways to check understanding (e.g. ask, show, explain back).



REDUCE DISTRACTIONS

Minimise background noise and distractions so the message can be heard and understood.



BE POSITIVE & RESPECTFUL

Use respectful, positive language and tone. Focus on what the pupil can do.



BE CONSISTENT

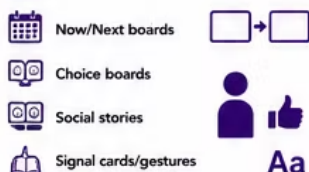
Use consistent language, routines and visuals across people and settings wherever possible.

ADAPT COMMUNICATION TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

COMMUNICATION NEED	STRATEGIES	EXAMPLES
 UNDERSTANDING SPOKEN LANGUAGE	✓ Use short, clear instructions ✓ Break information into steps ✓ Use visuals and gestures ✓ Check understanding	• "Put your book in your bag." • First..., Then..." • Use a visual checklist
 EXPRESSING VERBALLY	✓ Allow extra time to respond ✓ Offer sentence starters ✓ Accept all attempts to communicate ✓ Use visuals or sentence strips	• "I think... because..." • Use choice cards • Drawing or writing answers
 USES AAC (AUGMENTATIVE & ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION)	✓ Model and encourage use ✓ Ensure access at all times ✓ Give time to find and generate message ✓ Include AAC in all activities	• PECS, communication board, book • Speech-generating device or app
 PROCESSING INFORMATION	✓ Present one idea at a time ✓ Use visuals, examples and repetition ✓ Allow thinking/processing time	• Repeat key points • Use visual summaries • Allow wait time
 SOCIAL COMMUNICATION	✓ Teach social phrases ✓ Use social stories or scripts ✓ Model conversations ✓ Provide visual supports	• Greeting charts • Role play • Conversation cards



VISUAL SUPPORT IDEAS



COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

- ✓ Display key visuals around the room
- ✓ Ensure everyone faces the pupil when speaking
- ✓ Keep instructions consistent
- ✓ Reduce background noise
- ✓ Create safe spaces to communicate
- ✓ Celebrate all communication attempts



WHAT CAN GET IN THE WAY?

- ✓ Talking too much or too quickly
- ✓ Long or complicated instructions
- ✓ Assuming understanding
- ✓ Not allowing wait time
- ✓ Distractions or noise
- ✓ Not using visuals when helpful



TOP TIP

Think: "What does this pupil need to understand and be understood?" Then use the tools and strategies that work for them.

EVERY SMALL STEP COUNTS

When we adapt how we communicate, we open doors to learning, connection and confidence.



Inclusion is everyone's responsibility.



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