

Under Pupil Premium funding sixteen students (5-16yrs ) were identified for additional support with communication. Each student was reviewed through discussion, observation, and 1:1 assessment. Additional targeted sessional support to develop communication was provided by school funded Speech and Language Therapy, HLTA for ICT and Access, Specialist Teacher and Teaching Assistant for ASD. Class staff were also trained and supported to continue this work on a daily basis.

Student A communicates at an early stage through a combination of pulling adults/hand leading, body language, facial expressions and vocalisations. He showed limited motivation for toys and activities. Through discussions with class staff, we established a motivator of listening to pop songs. We trialled a series of communication boards so that he could request 'change song' and 'stop', 'play' when listening to a CD – He found it difficult to accurately point to a symbol , even when the board was adapted to meet his visual needs(black background, bigger symbols). We then trialled a specially made grid on Gridplayer on an Ipad. Student A benefitted from the auditory feedback from the buttons. By the end of the sessions, he was able to request more music by linking 2 buttons together to say 'I want – CD'. We plan to further develop his communication by gradually introducing more symbols on the Ipad so that he can also request other motivators e.g. 'hand massage', 'clap me'.

Student B continues to make good progress in our 1-1 structured sessions. He is now using a Pragmatic Organisational Dynamic Display communication book, (PODD) A5 x 40 words on a page. His class staff phased out his old communication book as it lacked the capacity and access he needed and gradually introduced the PODD book, calling it his 'chat book' to avoid confusion. The new communication book uses a different structure, different symbols and has considerably more pages. Although he doesn't use it as originally intended, having more visual vocabulary has helped him enormously and his use of language has improved considerably. He can now converse with an adult using simple language and responding appropriately. Recently he appropriately questioned an instruction; he said 'reason' when his work was corrected.

Student B now uses his PODD book to support conversations with adults, share his ideas and to look for spellings.

Student C has made good progress this year, he has been developing his skills using symbol communication boards to support his speech and language development. Student C uses total communication; Level 2 communication board, signing, and speech. Student C was seen in 1-1 structured setting playing with toys, sharing books and playing simple requesting games.

Student C uses the core vocabulary well; I want, I see, I hear but needs support to use the topic vocabulary. He knows what he wants and will point to the correct symbol but cannot always label the object and will point to the symbol and say 'I want this one' or 'I want that one'.

Student C uses language over and above what is on the communication boards but frequently only linking 2 words. With the support of a communication board and familiar vocabulary Student C can now make up to a 5 word sentence e.g. I want red peg please.

Student D has been developing her ability to use symbol communication boards to support her speech and language development. She uses total communication; Level 2 communication board, signing, and speech.

During these sessions Student D has been using a Level 2 communication boards in a 1-1 structured setting to play with toys, share books and play simple requesting board games.

Student D uses the core vocabulary well; I want, I see, but needs support to use the topic vocabulary. She knows what she wants and will point to the correct symbol but doesn't always know the word, and will point to the symbol and say 'that one' or 'what's that?.'

With the support of a communication board and familiar vocabulary Student D can now make up to a 4 word sentence.

Student E has made excellent progress this year achieving her speech and language targets. By the end of the Autumn Term she was able to make a choice between 2 cause and effect toys and use a Big Mac (single switch communication device) independently to ask for more. By the end of the Spring term she was able to discriminate between two symbols to indicate her preferred choice of toy and use a Big Mac to complete a sequence of ready, steady ... go. As well as use a Little Mac to indicate yes (right hand side) no (left hand side). In April Student E was introduced to PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), she has successfully achieved stages 1-3 in PECS, she can consistently pick up, reach and release a symbol into her communication partners hand. She can now choose from 4 symbols including non-motivating objects and takes the correct toy when asked to 'take it'.

Student F has working to improve his speech clarity. He has worked on specific speech sounds , some of which have been of his own choice as he is very aware of his difficulties. As some sounds have been hard for him, we have used a range of strategies strategies to help and advised class staff of the best way to support him. Student F has worked very hard during the year and persevered with the most difficult sounds with excellent results. He is now generalising these within his everyday talking. He has become a much more confident speaker and no longer becomes upset / frustrated when people are unable to understand him. When these times occur he has learnt to use various strategies e.g. slowing down his rate of speech, using gestures/signs, writing the words etc. Student F feels that he no longer needs his communication book.

(Comment from Student F..."Thank you for helping me talk better" - 😊)

Student G confidently uses communication boards for a variety of activities. He is able to make requests for items and use commenting eg. I see / I hear. We are currently working to extend his sentences to incorporate 'action' words eg. ' I see man sleeping' and prepositions e.g. on/ under, top/bottom to support class topics. Student G is encouraged to use speech alongside pointing to symbols. His speech is improving and he is now using a wider vocabulary of single words and short phrases during targeted activities and play. Some words are unclear and we are currently working on 10 functional words, suggested by parents and class. Student G is showing improvement in the clarity of these words. Student G works really well during the sessions and is always keen to attend. Student G now has a personalised Communication Book to further develop his skills.

Student H worked on speech sound awareness and production of targeted speech sounds e.g. 'b' which he has now achieved at the beginning and in the middle of words and he can now use these in short phrases e.g. I want ball / red ball. Class staff have been given ideas/ activities to continue this work on a daily basis.

Student H is a very keen communicator and is using more spontaneous language now. He can now construct sentences of 4+ words but out of context it can be difficult for the listener to understand him. Within sessions he uses communication boards to support his speech. He can make requests / comments and we are currently working to extend his sentences.

Student I can be difficult to understand at times and often uses single word responses. Within the sessions we have been working to extend his sentences using 'Colourful Semantics'. When focused, Student I was able to construct sentences using SVO (subject /verb /object) eg. 'man eating cake'.

Student I has also worked on his understanding of prepositions eg. in front/ behind/next to – this is still inconsistent and class have been given activities to work on.

We also targeted Student I's understanding of pronouns...he/she/his/hers and using the appropriate pronoun expressively. He worked well on these activities within sessions and is now achieving the targets 75% of the time.

During the Autumn and Spring term Student J was using PECS to support his expressive language. He can now use a sentence strip to request items eg. I want + toy/ I want+ colour + toy etc. and also to make comments eg I hear cow/ I see dog etc.

Student J's expressive language has increased with his use of PECS and he is spontaneously adding extra words at times eg. "I hear dog" then added.."dog garden". We are currently trialling communication boards with Student J and extending sentences to include concepts of colour and size. Student J is confidently using boards to request toys eg. "I want big yellow car" and only needs occasional prompts for the whole sentence. At times he will spontaneously request items but having the boards available remind and support him to use whole sentences.

Student K is using PECS to support his spoken language and is now confident at Phase IV being able to request items eg. 'I want dinosaur' and travelling to find his folder and to exchange with an adult. He also has a PECS folder to use at home.

Student K is using more spontaneous spoken language, linking 2-3 words at times. We are currently working on a core vocabulary of 10 words, which involves activities using repetition of the same words. The class team have also been provided with a copy of these to practise regularly with Student K. He is now showing some improvement in the clarity of most of these words.

Student K's understanding is also improving and he is now consistently following 2 key word level (KWL) instructions eg. put the dinosaur in the bed and beginning to follow some 3 KWL eg. make mouse jump on the bed.

In September 14, Student L was using PECS for a few activities and had some spoken language, but found it difficult to make himself understood. Student L has been working on creating sentences 'subject –verb' and 'subject-verb-object. Student L has been using a communication board to request 'I want'... using a collection of toys and playground activities. This has enabled him to be able to construct between 3 and 5 word sentence which is also helping to develop his expressive language.

In September 14 Student M was using PECS for some activities, he also had some spoken language, but his speech was not clear and others found it difficult to understand what he was saying. Student M has been using communication boards to help encourage spontaneous communication. He is now requesting 'I want'... using a collection of toys and playground activities which has enabled him to construct between 3 and 4 word sentences which is helping to develop his expressive language.

Student N is developing his skills in Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). In September 14 Student N was using PECS phase 4, but needed prompting to travel and gain adult's attention, he was using some single word verbal language, but not spontaneously. In a structured session out of the classroom, Student N is now travelling, gaining an adult's attention and attempting to verbalise in order to make requests. He will travel a short distance to his PECS book to request a motivating object. He can also make comments about what he can see in a book, he can distinguish between different symbols to make comments and he is joining in with class Big Book sessions using PECS.

Student N can now choose correct symbol between I want and I see. He is now working at Phase 6 of PECS and using some verbal language spontaneously when he is using PECS.

In September 14, Student O was working at PECS phase 1, but not always spontaneously, he used single word verbal language, but not always in correct context. He can now choose from a range of pictures/symbols in a PECS book, make a sentence 'I want\_\_\_', travel across a room and gain an adult's attention to exchange the sentence strip. He also verbalises the request as he points to the symbols, he consistently says 'I want' and can verbalise familiar words. Student O has started making comments e.g. 'I see \_\_\_' using PECS, he can do this for very clear familiar pictures. He can distinguish between the symbols 'I want' & 'I see'. He is now working at phase 5 of PECS.

In September 14 Student P was working at Phase 1 of PECS, he used verbal language in learnt phrases, but did not gain an adult's attention before speaking. He is now able to make a request by travelling to PECS book and then to an adult to exchange a sentence strip. (I want \_\_\_\_), he will also verbalise his request whilst pointing to the symbols. By the end of the autumn term Student P was able to complete multiple exchanges during 1:1 sessions and using these skills within the classroom environment. For a period of time there was been a significant decrease in motivation to spontaneously communicate and a variety of activities were trialled, resulting in a recent improvement in Student P's motivation to request familiar toys. He is able to use phase 4 of PECS spontaneously, but this is not as yet consistent.

In addition 6 students who meet the criteria but are outside the 5-16 years funding boundaries, also received additional support

Following discussion with class staff and observation of Student Q in class, it was established that Student Q was exposed to the use of symbols, Makaton sign and simple language. Student Q is not retaining Makaton signs although she will occasionally copy them back to an adult. She will also pull her hands away when staff attempt Hand-Over-Hand modelling (HOH) of signs.

We focussed on encouraging the following spoken words 'more' and 'finished' through motivating activities. Alongside continuing to use the Makaton signs to support her understanding and encouraging Student Q to develop her tolerance of HOH.

The Class Teacher reported some progress with spoken language and Student Q will occasionally use spoken words in a functional manner when highly motivated.

Student R can communicate through single words and has a consistent yes/no response which can be recognised by familiar adults. Student R has a communication book but showed his dislike of using it by turning his head away. After a discussion with his teacher, we agreed the use of a key ring with a selection of activity symbols. Adults use this, first to run through Student R's options, holding up the symbols for support and then repeating the options, pausing after each one, allowing time for Student R to accept or reject using his yes/no response. This provides Student R with more independence and supports his understanding of spoken words.

Student R now uses the key ring consistently to indicate his preferred activity, responding to the pictures with his personalised 'yes' or 'no'. This is also been used successfully at his home and has enabled family/carers to have improved understanding of Student R's 'wants'.

Student S has a communication book which she is able to use independently. After discussion with class staff her book was re-designed, re structured and relevant vocabulary was added. Student S also trialled Grid Player on the Ipad (a communication aid). Student S was able to use this to communicate during simple activities.

Student S now has functional vocabulary in her book and is able to use it to communicate her everyday wants and needs. She is also able to independently construct some two word phrases using the Ipad communication aid.

Following discussion with family and staff and observation in class Student T's communication book was updated, re-structured and extended to include an index and further pages to encourage use

The index supports him to navigate to desired pages (adult turns to the page Student's requests). E.g. first page now says 'I want to do something' – 'I want to go somewhere' – 'I want to tell you something' – 'I need the toilet' – 'it's not in my book'. These then enable Student T to navigate to relevant sections himself, providing more independence. Class staff were given additional training to support this. Student T's family and class teacher provided more information on the activities Student T enjoys at home/school, so this was also added to his book. Student T was been reluctant to carry out essential physiotherapy activities during the year, we have added a 'physio page' to Student T's communication book in the hope that enabling him to communicate about these activities would increase compliance. Physiotherapist agreed that Student T can choose which activity to carry out. Additional vocabulary was also added to enable Student T to negotiate e.g. 'I'll do it later'. This has proved successful.

Student T can now use his communication book to express his wants and needs and navigate to pages himself giving him greater control and more independence.

Student U has continued to make good progress this year and has grown in confidence. Having access to her communication book or communication topic board has supported her speech and she has been able to accurately make simple requests, answer simple questions and convey what she has been doing.

Student U has been using a computer, and symwriter programme to record events and news. Although she can type a simple 'learnt' sentence, e.g. I am 'name', she needs verbal prompts and questioning to type a more complex sentence. She is very resourceful and will look around the room or in her communication book for spellings, if she needs help she looks up, gives eye contact and hovers her fingers over the keys. She doesn't ask for help but if you ask her does she need help, she will say 'help'. Student U gets great enjoyment from typing and can accurately type a piece of text copying from a model.

Recently Student U did her work experience placement with me. She has made communication boards and resources for literacy and cookery lessons. She learnt to use 'Boardmaker' and following verbal instructions, understood how to navigate around the program, use the search facility, paste a symbol into a cell on a grid and then use the boards she made to support her in her lesson.

Student U continues to have access to a symbol supported communication book, boards, and an ipad with 'grid player' to support her in lessons and the community.

Student V uses a level 3 symbolised communication book and a mini ipad to support his communication.

Last year Student V trialled 2 different dedicated communication aids; both were durable, portable tablet devices. They are powered by the grid 2 communication package, it is a system that Student V is familiar with and has been using on a mini ipad in school. Following the trial period it was decided that 'The Grid Pad' would best suit his needs. The Speech and Language therapists have put in a request to NHS England for a device for Student V.

Student V has made good progress this year; in a structured one to one situation he has been using a mini ipad to describe, comment, and request. We have chatted about what he likes to do, played games and looked at books. This term he is paired with another student who also uses total communication so that they can work collaboratively.

Student V has good categorisation skills and can navigate around folders to find what he wants. He can jump between folders to find vocabulary he needs; e.g.

I want (sentence starter) 3 (counting) red (colour) cars (transport)

He has learnt and remembered where most of his favourite/ topical vocabulary is saved.

Student V is very resourceful and uses total communication; Makaton signs, gestures, spoken word, his communication book and his ipad. His preferred method of communication is speech and gesture.

He is encouraged to use his VOCA (voice output communication device)/ipad to extend his vocabulary and communication skills and to aid others in understanding his speech.

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