



***CROMWELL HIGH SCHOOL***

# **Communication and English Policy with Information Technology**

**Covering the National Curriculum Areas of:**

- **Speaking and Listening or Communication**
- **Reading including Phonics**
- **Writing**
- **Incorporating the Information Technology elements of Computing**

Status: Agreed

Date: 08.06.21

Review Date: Sept 2023

**Governor Leadership: Implementation Committee for policy, Intent and Impact for reporting**

**Executive Leadership: Headteacher**

**Key Manager: Kath Kirton**

**Core Consultation group: SLT, teaching staff**

**Wider Consultation group: All stakeholders**

**What the pupils need to know:**

- We will help you to talk.
- We will help you understand.
- We will help you read.
- We will help you write, record or mark make.
- We will help you to use computers and stay safe.

**What every adult (including parents) needs to know:**

- We will encourage communication in all pupils.
- We will support understanding in all pupils.
- We will help pupils to read or enjoy books and other texts.
- We will help pupils to write or record.
- We will help pupils to use technology for different purposes, safely & effectively.

**What every supporting member of staff needs to know:**

- We will we strive to give all of our pupils a voice.
- We use whatever means we can to help our pupils understand words, symbols and gestures.
- We will encourage all pupils to access age appropriate motivating texts.
- We will help all pupils to express themselves using symbols, writing, printed words or technology.
- We will find the right technology for each pupil access English and teach them how to stay safe using it.

## **Vision**

Communication is at the centre of everything we do at Cromwell High School. It affects behaviour, motivation, social interaction, independence and self-esteem. At Cromwell we strive to support

communication within all parts of school and home life e.g. after-school clubs, in the classroom, on trips out, at dinner time and in the community. We view reading, writing and computing as different forms of communication and plan individualised teaching approaches including the use of technology to suit the needs of the age phase, cognitive level, specific learning difficulty and motivations of each pupil.

**School mission statement:**

**Pupils will learn:**

• **About the world; we believe in the entitlement of all our students to a broad, balanced and relevant education. To learn about the facts, processes, principles, interests and wonders of-**

- Through topics in our scheme of work pupils will have access to a wide range of age appropriate fiction, non-fiction and poetry including newspapers, magazines and other media especially as they move to our sixth form.
- English in every form will be made more relevant to each pupil through individual planning at the appropriate level. Pupils will use the skills developed in their English lessons to support learning in all other areas of the curriculum for example, to communicate with when out in the community and to recall and record what they have done in previous lessons.
- Pupils will learn to research and access the world more effectively with the help of technology such as chat PCs, eye gaze and Clicker 7.

• **To be effective in the world; we will teach our students to optimise their success in achieving their goals in the world by teaching them the essential skills that will enable them to thrive in a changing world. Especially the skills of-**

Communication

- Requesting the things they really want using their voice, PECS, TOBIs, communication computers etc.
- Chatting to people and developing other social communication skills using Intensive Interaction, Talkabout, PODD books and other language boards and devices high and low tech.
- Describing things using systems such as Colourful Semantics, Narrative Therapy, PODD books and ALBs (Assistive Language Boards) and chat technology such as Proloquo to Go.

Reading

- Reading or sharing texts with adults or their peers at an individual level, in small groups (guided reading) or as a whole class.
- Learning to read words, pictures, symbols or signs using systematic synthetic phonics if appropriate, visual memory, multisensory strategies etc.
- Accessing a wide range of texts through topic teaching and sensory stories.
- Developing a love of reading through the use of technology (books on touchscreen computers) & bespoke motivating reading books.

Writing

- Recording their findings, ideas, descriptions using pens, pencils, Clicker 7, chat PCs, Smart Notebook, microphones, Switch it maker etc.

*Pupils will access the appropriate specialist strategies that will allow them to make progress from their own starting points.*

• **to be confident, caring, safe, citizens; we will teach our students to be;**

- Able to tell us when something is not right by using their voice with the support of emotion books and boards, visual systems such as schedules, well-being trained staff who are trained to listen and support appropriately.

- Follow safety rules inside and outside of school supported by aids such as social stories, schedules, routines and verbal, sign and symbol instructions.
- Follow social speaking rules within taught sessions to learn skills such as turn taking, listening and responding to others, respecting differences and adjusting their communication behaviours to different situations e.g. raise voice when talking to whole class soften voice when supporting peer.

## **Intent - Ambitious, Accessible Curriculum**

### **National regulations**

- To access an ambitious curriculum designed to give all learners the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life appropriate to meet their individual needs.
- To have a curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and adult opportunities including education.
- For learners to study the full English curriculum based on their entitlement to access age appropriate literature, poetry and non-fiction texts. Specialising by using bespoke learning aids, motivating resources and planned interventions e.g. speech and language therapy tools to ensure all pupils make progress appropriate to their starting points.

### **Key skill themes of the curriculum that will be reinforced for our learners**

- Reading and Phonics
- Writing
- Spoken English
- Computing
- Functional English (post 16)

*Please read detail in mission statement skills (above)*

### **Key knowledge themes of the curriculum that will be reinforced for our learners-**

KS3&4 Pupils will be taught to: develop an appreciation of reading in whatever format motivates them e.g. magazines, ebooks, bespoke reading materials, sensory stories, specific interest books. Our library will encourage a 'love of reading' and make reading materials more accessible for the Cromwell population.

All pupils will have opportunities to access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including in particular whole books, short stories, poems and plays with a wide coverage of genres, historical periods, forms and authors. The range will include high-quality works from: English literature, both pre-1914 and contemporary, including prose, poetry and drama, Shakespeare, seminal world literature. This will be through topic work in English lessons.

For pupils at Cromwell the topics above will form their 'cultural capital' and be delivered each term in their classes alongside individualised targeted learning based on their next steps in English. For many pupils at Cromwell individual target work will form the majority of planned learning within English lessons. They will work for a large proportion of time on skills linked to their own motivators and understanding. Skills work will be planned and executed to help pupils learn to become confident communicators, early readers and writers.

Sixth Form Pupils will be taught English in a more functional fashion with topics linked very closely to life in the adult world after school. In the sixth form individual targets will fit in with their learning topics much more easily and they will have more opportunities to communicate in the community, read signs, write shopping lists etc.

## **Curriculum planning and sequencing**

Schemes of work allow pupils access to age appropriate texts linked to the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum or real life in sixth form. Teachers plan simplified access based on pupils starting points and motivations.

The majority of planned learning is linked to individual learning needs and motivators and takes on the form of skills-based teaching and learning.

### **Access for SEN groups**

Particular support and adjustments will be made for pupils with the following needs:

**Autism** - Visual supports and prompts to help with understanding key concepts and the connections between concepts and to facilitate social interactions during group work. Clear structure and expectations of lessons through the use of lesson schedules and the use of destination guides, multiple choice questions and, where open ended tasks are used, success criteria. Independent 'Box Tasks' to reinforce key skills and knowledge. Sensory diet and/or reward breaks to optimise positive learning time. Particular support will be required around the recognition of feelings and empathy for others, usually through the use of visual support and where appropriate the use of comic strip conversations or social stories.

**Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs** - Subject matter will be dealt with sensitively. Where staff foresee that the lesson content may cause distress for an individual, adjustments should be made. It may be necessary for alternative provision to be put in place for a particular lesson if the lesson content will place the pupil under additional significant distress.

**Sensory impairment needs** – To support visual impairment; enlarged text and images, use of different coloured paper or text, coloured overlays or magnifying devices as appropriate to meet the needs of different individuals. To support hearing impairment; instructions available in written or visual form to support verbal instruction, use of individual hearing devices, use of signing, staff to ensure that they are facing pupils with hearing impairments to aid lip reading. To support speech impairment; allow pupil to finish sentences, do not finish for them, using written or picture form to aid communication is needed. Pupils with visual and hearing impairments will often benefit from being sat near the front of the classroom close to the board and/or near to the teacher or TA delivering content.

**Physical disability needs** – Physical aids such as standing frames, adjustable tables, writing slopes and pens with grip supports to help access to learning. ICT may be used as an alternative to pen and paper for recording work.

### **Cross Curricular References- additional subjects and core skills areas linking to English:**

Significant cross curricular links will be clearly identified and referenced on teachers' medium term planning.

#### **Key non-core subject links:**

**Computing** – Through the use of relevant software including the preparation of written work, presentations, videos and animations. In particular:

- Please refer to SoW items in **red** come from Computing programme of study.

**Cognition: Maths & Computing** – Through the fundamental principles of thinking skills including categorisation, sub-sets and the use of sets (including the size of the set- number), sequences and routines, and comparisons (including scales and measurement). In particular:

- Positional language and other instructions linked to the Derbyshire Language Scheme.

- Use of schedules and now and next boards linked to TEACCH.

**Improving own Learning-** pupils will be taught to improve their attention, focus, working memory and independent problem solving by:

- Please see IEP targets

**Working with others-** pupils will be taught to improve their ability to interact positively and safely, cooperate and work as a team by:

- Intensive Interaction and Jabadao.
- Group discussion & debates.
- Speaking and listening programmes such as Socially Speaking, Lego therapy etc.

**Personal Growth** - pupils will be taught to make relevant links to PG (including the use of money) issues as follows:

- Recording of practical activities using individual writing/recording techniques.

**Careers-** pupils will be taught about the following aspects of adult life opportunities:

- Recounts linked to life skills and enrichment using strategies such as Colourful Semantics.
- Following sequences of instructions to complete work tasks using schedules, written or spoken instructions.

## Implementation

### **Organisation of curriculum delivery and sequence of learning-**

Cromwell High School is split into three departments and learning is planned and delivered in quite distinctive ways in each of the departments. Every pupil at Cromwell has access to age appropriate texts based on the schemes of work. The pupils in each class access these topics in different ways and to varying extents. In addition, all pupils work towards their individual next steps in all of the areas within English and this is linked very closely with the outcomes on their EHCP. For example, within the main school (11-16) of the 4 English lessons each week pupils may work on individual reading, writing and communication targets for at least 3 lessons each week with 1 lesson linked to topic. Alternatively, a teacher may plan skills teaching every lesson and put aside 1-2 weeks to cover the topic. For many of our pupils the topic is their access to 'cultural capital' but their priority next steps of learning need to be planned to motivate and make sense to them, taking into account their ability to imagine things outside of the concrete of their everyday life. Differentiation within English and communication is often planned at an individual level.

Within the FE pupils have 3 English lessons per week and these address skills although link to a more real-life topic. The HLTAs teaching the pupils their other subjects incorporate these IEP based English targets into all subjects in school and when out in the community.

### Within the Structured Department

Topic – The cultural capital can be very difficult to access for pupils with autism and severe learning difficulties and therefore topic is often delivered through sensory stories with just short sections of the term's topic covered. At most one of the four English lessons each week concentrates on the topic. However, structured skills based learning can be planned to engage and focus learners and teach the priority next steps in order for them to develop and progress.

Spoken English - The teaching of communication is a priority learning need for the majority of pupils within the structured department. Pupils all have individual comprehension and expression targets and work on these through lessons and in planned snack, and break times. Pupils commonly use symbols, signs, schedules and visual timetables to understand what is expected of them. All pupils follow a version of the TEACCH structure, which means they complete work and earn a reward, known as a 'Purposeful Choose'.

Expression - Classrooms are planned to be low distraction environments so that pupils can concentrate. Within this department, there are a range of communication systems in place, planned to meet the individual needs of our pupils. Most of these systems prioritise requesting behaviours, such as their Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), use of True Object Based Images (TOBI), Objects of Reference and Pro-Loquo To Go.

Comprehension is often very hard for pupils to access. We teach elements of language taken from the Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS), ranging from basic vocabulary to following instructions of increasing length and complexity. For some pupils we work through Blanks Questions with support from SaLT. In addition, we use visual systems such as Colourful Semantics, Narrative Therapy and Clicker 7 to help pupils to compose simple sentences, short stories and recounts. In addition their understanding of language is supported by the use of sign (Signalong)

Social Communication is very important for all pupils across the Cromwell population. For pupils working at early levels of development or with social communication difficulties we use Intensive Interaction to model and encourage

Reading - Pupils learning to read work on individually planned activities that enable them to make tiny steps of progress in their early reading skills. All pupils have an individual reading book and this can be sent home with them each day at parent request. Shared reading sessions and sensory stories give pupils the opportunity to access age appropriate texts. Some pupils within the department work on early listening phonics skills whilst others who are assessed as ready to start learning phonics may access teacher planned phonics based on Letters and Sounds. A minority of pupils within the department may be identified to complete the intervention Fresh Start Phonics. Others learn early reading using visual methods or concentrate on comprehension skills as their decoding skills far outweigh their understanding of text.

Pupils also have access to the school library where we promote the sharing of motivating books, magazines and ebooks. Cromwell has had to make many of these resources itself and designed to meet the interest levels and needs of the pupils so that they can access them independently and want to read or explore them.

Writing, recording and mark making is encouraged in all of the structured classes and pupils are encouraged to enjoy mark making or early writing experiences. Often for pupils who are able to record letters and words in the form of writing or typeface teachers will plan work for them around understanding and using their imagination to describe pictures and write simple sentences, stories and recounts. Symbols and visual systems are frequently used to aid in composition, pupils may describe what they can see using PECS and 'I see...' sentence starters or they may describe pictures by making subject-verb-object sentences using Colourful Semantics resources.

### Curriculum Overview Sensory Department

Topic – The cultural capital can be highly motivating and engaging for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and therefore topic is often delivered through multisensory stories which concentrate on just a small part of the story, poem or topic or a simplified version. At least one of the four English lessons each week concentrates on the topic.

Spoken English - The teaching of communication is a priority learning need for all of the pupils within the sensory department. Pupils all have individual comprehension and expression targets and work on these through lessons and in planned snack, and break times. Pupils commonly use large symbols, signs, positive looking strategies, objects of reference, eye gaze technology, BIGMacks and other chat devices or software such as ProloquotoGo.

Expression - Classrooms are planned to be a mixture of low distraction or attention directing environments and really stimulating environments, so that pupils can both concentrate and be encouraged to be more alert. Within this department, one of the main priorities is social use of language and early communication. Intensive Interaction and Jabadao are taught on a regular basis and pupils are encouraged to develop eye contact, shared interest and initiate communication. Alongside this pupils are taught how to make choices for preferred foods and activities. Often for pupils, assessments are made of their individual responses to establish their preferences e.g. reactions to stimuli that they like/dislike. Alternatively, some pupils can use eye pointing, reaching, spoken language, chat PCs to communicate their wants and needs.

Comprehension is often very hard to demonstrate as many pupils in this department cannot move their limbs or speak to show this understanding. Often single word level understanding of objects and familiar adults is taught linked to the Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS). In addition their understanding of language is supported by the use of sign (Signalong)

Reading - Pupils work on sharing individual reading books with an adult and developing the skills of shared attention, book handling, and reading/recognising pictures and photographs. The positive looking strategies help pupils in the sensory department to direct their attention effectively. All pupils have an individual reading book and this can be sent home with them each day at parent request. Shared reading sessions in the form of sensory stories give pupils the opportunity to access age appropriate texts. Pupils work on early listening skills to get them ready for phonics.

Pupils also have access to the school library where we promote the sharing of motivating books, magazines and ebooks. Cromwell has had to make many of these resources itself and designed to meet the interest levels and needs of the pupils so that they can access them independently and want to read or explore them.

Writing, recording, object exploration and mark making is encouraged in all of the sensory classes and pupils are encouraged to enjoy mark making or early writing experiences. Most pupils in the sensory department use adapted writing tools, paint brushes or their hands to make marks and explore different materials e.g. sand, shaving foam, water. Some pupils may be able to compose single or two-word phrases with the aid of their voice or technology. Symbols, objects and visual systems are frequently used to aid in composition.

### Curriculum Overview Conceptual Department

Topic – The cultural capital can be very motivating and engaging for pupils within the conceptual department. It is often delivered through sensory stories with just short sections of the term's topic covered, through film or slideshow simplified adaptations. At least one of the four English lessons each week concentrates on the topic or it is delivered for two-three weeks of a term as a block. Sometimes individual target work can be designed around the topic where the pupils have an understanding of the story and can imagine characters and events.

Spoken English - The teaching of communication is often taught in a different way within the conceptual department. Pupils all have individual comprehension and expression targets and work on these through lessons and in other lessons throughout their day. Pupils commonly use symbols, signs, schedules and visual timetables to understand what is expected of them. A few pupils follow a version of the TEACCH structure, which means they complete work and earn a reward, known as a 'Purposeful Choose'.

Expression - Social communication is very important for pupils within the conceptual department and is taught at the appropriate level using programmes such as Talkabout. Pupils work hard on skills such as turn taking, adjusting their volume and language to meet the needs of their audience, listening to others and making appropriate eye contact. In addition, pupils also work on their speech and developing the correct word order, word finding, and using longer and more complex phrases and sentences. They may use teaching programmes such as Colourful Semantics, PECS, Narrative Therapy to help with this.

Comprehension and short term memory are things that pupils within the conceptual work hard on. We teach elements of language taken from the Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS), ranging from basic vocabulary to following instructions of increasing length and complexity. For some pupils we work through Blanks Questions with support from SaLT. In addition, we use visual systems such as Colourful Semantics, Narrative Therapy and Clicker 7 to help pupils to learn about different word types e.g. verbs, nouns and descriptors. In addition their understanding of language is supported by the use of sign (Signalong)

Reading - All pupils have an individual reading book and this can be sent home with them each day at parent request. These come from a reading scheme that starts at a very early level and reading packs incorporate learning to read high frequency words and phonemes alongside the book work. Pupils in the conceptual department may also access guided reading sessions although this is often not appropriate until they are working at a level of C9c or above. Most pupils within the department work on early listening and/or phonics based on Letters and Sounds whilst others are assessed and offered additional phonics through a daily Fresh Start Phonics intervention. Others learn early reading using visual methods or concentrate on comprehension skills as their decoding skills far outweigh their understanding of text. Shared reading sessions and sensory stories give pupils the opportunity to access age appropriate texts.

Pupils also have access to the school library where we promote the sharing of motivating books and magazines. Cromwell has had to make many of these resources itself and designed to meet the interest levels and needs of the pupils so that they can access them independently and want to read or explore them.

Writing, recording and mark making is encouraged in all of the conceptual classes and pupils are encouraged to enjoy mark making or writing experiences. Often for pupils who are able to record letters and words in the form of writing or typeface teachers will plan work for them around understanding and using their imagination to describe pictures and write simple sentences, stories and recounts. Symbols and visual systems are frequently used to aid in composition, pupils may describe what they can see by making subject-verb-object sentences using Colourful Semantics resources or longer and more detailed multi-sentences writing using Narrative Therapy strategies. A number of pupils within conceptual also work on spelling strategies and may take spellings home each week to learn for a weekly test.

Home learning is encouraged through pupils accessing Lexia which is accessed from school or home at the correct level for each pupil.



**Monitoring and adjustment for pupils-** Teachers monitor and assess how well students are learning and adjust support as necessary through discussions within teaching teams, reviewing annotation forms and work at the end of each lesson. Learning outcomes are modified on a regular basis to reflect progress and adjust delivery methods.

**Feedback and student involvement in their learning:** Teachers will follow the school's marking policy in order to ensure that pupils receive meaningful and accessible feedback and are included in their own learning and next steps to the maximum extent possible.

### **Staff CPD**

All staff will receive in house training in strategies such as ELKLAN, Colourful Semantics, Narrative Therapy, Read Write Inc Fresh Start Phonics and some teachers will have opportunities to access external training e.g. 2 day PECS course where appropriate. The subject lead will have access to training opportunities and moderation meetings run by various different bodies e.g. SSSP & Manchester Special School Network when appropriate this may also be extended to other colleagues. The English and/or reading lead also attend a termly reading forum with schools within the Kingfisher partnership. The reading group is working on a shared understanding of what reading is and should look like within our settings.

### **Monitoring and feedback for staff**

Staff delivering the curriculum area will be monitored and receive feedback to improve, sustain and build on success through the following systems:

- Planning scrutiny
- Book/evidence of learning scrutiny
- Lesson observations
- Reading record monitoring

### **Impact**

The impact of the teaching and learning within this curriculum area will be evaluated through:

- Formative and summative assessment reviewed through termly pupil progress meetings between teachers and their line managers
- Scrutiny of 'evidence of pupil learning'
- Accreditation
- Pupil and staff questionnaires

### **Improvement Planning**

The curriculum coordinator is a member of SLT and formally reviews the improvement plan and reports to governors at Intent and Impact sub-group meetings on a termly basis. There is a suitably experienced governor who is linked to English and Communication who visits school and takes part in drop ins, work scrutiny etc at least once per year. An action plan for the subject is made early and reviewed termly under the scrutiny of governors. Data from progress is analysed in detail and where pupils are falling behind their expected progress pupil progress interventions are planned in during each summer term.

It will use the school's self-evaluation model:

- Review and revise our understanding of "best practice" – 'intent'
- Review and evaluate the results of monitoring and feedback against current understanding of "best practice"- 'implementation'
- Review and evaluate the data and accreditation results
- Identify strengths and gaps
- Plan and cost to build on strengths and address gaps

- Act to build on strengths and address gaps
- Monitor the impact of actions

## **Appendix 1 –Website Mission Statement**

- Learn as much about the world as possible.
- Learn how to maximise their opportunities in the world.
- Learn to be confident, caring, responsible citizens.

Also see:

- Schemes of Work
- Action plan and Governor Report PowerPoint.

Completed by KK 26.06.21 Checked by Cromwell teachers summer 2021

Updated by KK 28.01.23 & 21.05.23 and checked by Intent and Impact sub committee 24.05.23

Checked and updated KK 21.09.23