Springfield School
Communication Progression of Skills

- AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)
- Attention Autism
- Colourful Semantics
- Expressive Language
- Eye Pointing
- Intensive Interaction
- Object, Photo and Symbol Recognition
- Objects of Reference and Sensory Cues
- PECs (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- Receptive Language
- Signing
- Switch
- TaSSeLs
- Tracking

Devised by Springfield Teachers for assessment, target setting and planning. Some areas relate specifically to recognised approaches and others relate directly to experience in school and working alongside the Speech and Language Therapists and VI and HI Teachers.

Understandably there is a link to aspects of reading and writing within some communication areas.

AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)

AAC is used with a variety of pupils in school. AAC includes; pictures, symbol use, gestures/pointing and complex technology. AAC can be broken down into two areas; low tech and high tech. Low tech covers; E-tran frame, alphabet & word boards, communication books, photos and symbols, low tech grids. High tech covers; VOCA (Voice Output Communication Aid), buttons & page sets that speak when touched and switches.

Progression Steps	Description
Transference 1	Pupils to look between 2 objects shown.
Transference 2	Pupils to look between 3 objects shown.
Scanning 3	Pupils can scan between 2 objects and fix their gaze.
Scanning 4	Pupils can scan between 3 objects and fix their gaze to make a choice.
Scanning 5	Pupils can scan between 2 objects or pictures and fix their gaze to make a choice.
Scanning 6	Pupils can scan between 3 objects or pictures and select to make a choice by point or touch.
Scanning 7	Pupils can scan between 2 symbols and select to make a choice by point or touch.
Scanning 8	Pupils can scan between 3 symbols and select to make a choice by point or touch.
Low tech 9	Pupils can scan an e-tran frame/picture communication board and make a choice by fixing their gaze towards a specific corner.
Low tech 10	Pupils can make a choice/request using a simple (4 grid) picture/symbol AAC board or grid by fixing their gaze or pointing to a symbol.
Low tech 11	Pupils can make a choice/request using a simple (6 grid) picture/symbol AAC board or grid by fixing their gaze or pointing to a symbol.
AAC 12	Pupils can make a choice/request using a two-part sentence on a low-tech board/communication book/high tech by using "I want", (e.g.; I want ball) to a range of communication partners.
AAC 13	Pupils can make a choice/request using a three-part sentence on a low-tech board/communication book/high tech by using "I want", (e.g.; I want red ball) to a range of communication partners.
AAC 14	Pupils can answer/ask questions using AAC to a communication partner.
AAC 15	Pupils can engage in a simple conversation using AAC.
AAC 16	Pupils can initiate conversation using AAC.
AAC 17	Pupils can initiate and participate in a conversation.

Attention Autism	
Attention Autism/ Bucket Time – This is an approach aimed originally at children with ASD, which aims to develop attention and listening skills rather than exclusively on expressive communication. It is a structured programme in itself, but its principles can be taken as a way of teaching across the curriculum. It aims to encourage natural and spontaneous communication through visual and highly motivating activities. There are 4 stages.	
Stage 1	**The Bucket to Focus Attention-** A bucket is filled with visually engaging objects and toys- the adult leader shows each item to the group and uses simple repetitive vocabulary to comment on the various objects.
Progression steps	**Description**
Stage 1- 1	I can transition to the circle when familiar clues are presented (chairs in circle, AA on whiteboard, timetable etc.
Stage 1- 2	I can occasionally glance at objects
Stage 1- 3	I can shift attention between bucket activity and outside stimuli- (highly distractible in adult led task)
Stage 1- 4	I can focus on highly motivating object only
Stage 1 -5	I will reach for objects
Stage 1- 6	I can share eye contact/near eye contact with leading adult
Stage 1 - 7	I can shift attention to modelling/ guiding adult
Stage 1 -8	I can show willingness to participate/engage with bucket time
Stage 1 -9	I can show excitement/anticipation for/about bucket time
Stage 1- 10	I can sit and remain seated, except to regulate (jump, rock) for less than 1 minute.
Stage 1- 11	I can sit and remain seated, except to regulate (jump, rock) 1- 3 minutes.
Stage 1 -12	I can sit and remain seated, except to regulate (jump, rock) for duration of bucket.
Stage 1- 13	I can sustain my attention for the duration of bucket
Stage 1- 14	I can show an awareness of core vocabulary
Stage 1- 15	I can echo vocabulary/ excitement used by adults
Stage 1- 16	I can offer spontaneous comments
Stage 1 - 17	I can accept the end of activity

Stage 2	The Attention Builder- Visually stimulating activities are shown to the group by the adult leader, aiming to sustain attention for a longer period.
Progression	Description
Stage 2- 1	I can accept the end of an activity (stage 1) and the start of a new one (stage 2) within the same session when a familiar/predictable signal is given (whiteboard "[X] has finished, time for…)
Stage 2-2	I can show interest in objects being used
Stage 2-3	I can show excitement/anticipation for/about stage 2
Stage 2- 4	I can show anticipation of familiar event (e.g. Shares eye contact/near eye contact with leading adult e.g. ready, steady, go before knocking over blocks
Stage 2 -5	I can focus for two consecutive highly engaging adult led activities, following with multiple steps (chained activity) (10 minutes)
Stage 2-6	I can repeat core vocabulary either gesturally or verbally
Stage 2-7	I can offer spontaneous comments
Stage 2-8	I can sustain attention for duration of bucket and stage 2
Stage 2- 9	I can accept end of activity

Stage 3	Turn taking & Re-engaging Attention- The adult leader demonstrates a simple activity/game, often modelled with another adult in the group. Children are then invited to have a turn, teaching the skills of waiting, turn-taking and learning through modelling.
Progression stage	Description
Stage 3- 1	I can accept the end of an activity (stage 2) and the start of a new one (stage 3) within the same session when a familiar/predictable signal is given (whiteboard "[X] has finished, time for…)
Stage 3- 2	I can participate in a repetitive song either verbally or non-verbally
Stage 3- 3	I can follow rules and routine of game/song/activity
Stage 3- 4	I can watch others have a turn
Stage 3- 5	Insistent to have the next turn
Stage 3- 6	I can listen and wait for my turn
Stage 3- 7	I can accept when I cannot have a turn
Stage 3- 8	I can end my turn after they have had a go
Stage 3- 9	I can continue to focus on the activity after taking turn
Stage 3- 10	I can maintain attention for duration of my turn and others turn
Stage 3- 11	I can offer spontaneous comments
Stage 3- 12	I can focus for three consecutive highly engaging adult led activities, following with multiple steps (chained activity) (up to 15 minutes)
Stage 3- 13	I can accept the end of activity

Stage 4	**Shifting & Re-engaging Attention-** Aims to develop the skill of engaging and shifting attention. The adult leader demonstrates a simple creative task, and then gives each child an individual kit to copy the task. The children take their kits to a table, complete the task independently, and then everyone returns to the group to show their completed tasks.
Stage 4- 1	I can accept the end of an activity (stage 3) and the start of a new one (stage 4) within the same session when a familiar/predictable signal is given (whiteboard "[x] has finished, time for...)
Stage 4- 2	I can watch the demonstration activity with interest
Stage 4- 4	I can transition from circle to table with support
Stage 4- 5	I can transition independently to a table
Stage 4- 7	I can carry my own resources (where physically appropriate)
Stage 4- 8	I can engage willingly in own activity
Stage 4-9	I can repeat the steps modelled to achieve the same end goal e.g. adult models making a playdough cake- rolls playdoh, puts it in a cup cake holder and puts a candle on top, child then uses the same resources to repeat the activity with limited accuracy (at the table)
Stage 4- 10	I can comment (verbally or non-verbally) on my own work
Stage 4- 11	I can comment (verbally or non-verbally) on others work
Stage 4- 12	I can make independent decisions about when task is finished
Stage 4- 13	I can pack resources back into tub
Stage 4- 14	I can shift attention from shared activity to independent task and back again
Stage 4- 15	I can transition back to the circle with support
Stage 4- 16	I can transition back to the circle independently
Stage 4- 17	I can show attention to work shared by others
Stage 4- 18	I can celebrate others work
Stage 4- 19	I can share my own work with support
Stage 4- 20	I can share my work independently with pride
Stage 4- 21	I can accept the end of activity

Colourful Semantics

Colourful Semantics helps children to understand how the meanings of words are linked in sentences by giving a colour code to each semantic category/word type. More specifically, each question word is designated a colour.

| Who? | What doing? | What? | Where? | Describe? |

Examples

The man is eating a sandwich in the big kitchen

Progression Steps	Description
1	Pupils use one-part colourful semantics to state subject: – Who? "the man" (Subject – Orange)
2	Pupils use two-part colourful semantics to state verbs: What doing? "is eating" (Verb – Yellow)
3	Pupils use three-part colourful semantics to state objects: "the sandwich" (Object – Green)
4	Pupils use four-part colourful semantics to sate location: Where? "in the kitchen" (Location – Blue)
5	Pupils use five-part colourful semantics to describe: Describe? "big" (Adjective – Purple)

Expressive Language (Verbal)

Expressive language refers to what we are able to say/ express. Although there are different ways of expressing ourselves, the milestones below refer just to what the pupil is able to do in **words** (a word is classed as a group of sounds that that child uses consistently to refer to a specific meaning, whether or not it sounds accurate, or like the adult version of the word). The numbers in the progression steps refer to the age at which typically developing children are usually able to meet these milestones.

Progression Steps	Description
1a)	- Pupils use some vocalisation/babble along with their non-verbal communication (such as hand leading or gestures) to get their message across. - Pupils use a few recognisable single words to get their message across.
1b)	- Pupils can say at least 20 words that are recognisable to a familiar adult.
2)	- Pupils can say between 50-200 words. - Pupils are starting to put together 2-3 words into a short phrase (e.g. 'I want car,' 'more apple,' 'no coat'). - Pupils are starting to say what they 'like' and 'don't like.' - Pupils are starting to ask basic questions (e.g. 'what's that?') - Pupils are starting to use the '-ing' form of verbs ('reading' 'eating'). - Pupils are using the pronouns 'I' and 'it.'
3)	- Pupils are able to form 3-word phrases, including an action word (e.g. 'run' 'go'.) - Pupils are using 's' to make plurals (e.g. 'cat' becomes 'cats') - Pupils are starting to use 's' to show possessives ('mummy's coat.') - Pupils are starting to use simple positional language such as 'in' and 'on'. - Pupils are using the pronouns my/me/he/she/you/your/we.
4)	- Pupils can understand and give a basic answer to the question 'why'? - Pupils can understand and answer a simple problem-solving question e.g. 'what do you do when you're cold?' - Pupils can understand and answer a basic question about a story they have just heard. - Pupils are using 4-6-word phrases, which are mostly grammatically correct (e.g. 'I want to play with cars.') - Pupils are using articles such as 'a' and 'the'.

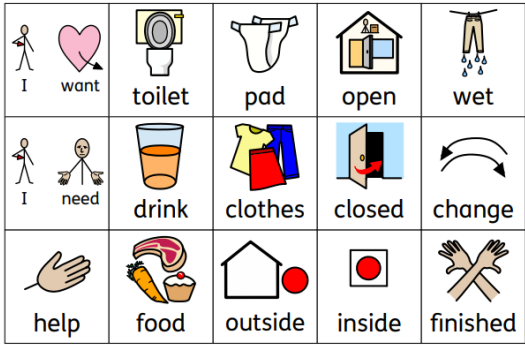|	
	- Pupils are using markers on the 3rd person, e.g. 'he plays' 'she does.' - Pupils can tell a short basic story about what happened to them. - Pupils ask questions such as 'where' and 'why.' - - Pupils can talk about events that happened in the past and future, signalling that this is when they happened (e.g. with tense-played/went- or time marker – yesterday) even if these are not quite right. - Pupils are using the pronouns they/them/his/her/their
5)	- Pupils can use long and detailed sentences, with more than one part (e.g. 'I cut my leg because I fell over in the park.') - Pupils can talk about what happened in the past or will happen in the future, with a good understanding of time. - Pupils talk about abstract or hypothetical situations such as 'I hope that…' or 'I wish…' - Pupils are using pronouns ending in '-self' (e.g., himself, ourselves).

Eye Pointing

Eye pointing leads on from tracking work and includes scanning, making choices and needs known through eye pointing using choosing frames or AAC boards and leads onto communication through technology such as eye gaze. Eye pointing is predominantly for pupils with reduce physical movements.

Level	Description
1 Transference	Pupils can look between 2 objects shown.
2 Transference	Pupils can look between 3 objects shown
During scanning stages check pupils are making a choice by showing a preferred and non-preferred item to begin with. When they are consistently choosing a preferred item check pupils' consistency by swapping the sides of the objects/photos and asking them to re choose.	
3 Scanning	Pupils can scan between 2 objects and fix their gaze to make a choice.
4 Scanning	Pupils can scan between 3 objects and fix their gaze to make a choice.
5 Scanning	Pupils can scan between 3 objects and fix their gaze to make a choice. (Symbols to be presented with the object)
6 Scanning	Pupils can scan between 2 symbols/photos using an e-tran frame or PODD board and fix their gaze to make a choice.
7 Scanning	Pupils can scan between 3 symbols/photos using an e-tran frame or PODD board and fix their gaze to make a choice.
8 scanning	Pupils can scan between 2/3 symbols/photos using an e-tran frame or PODD board and fix their gaze to make a choice and look back at the adult to confirm their choice.
10 Scanning	Pupils can scan a simple AAC/communication board/PODD board (maximum of 6 symbols) and make a choice by fixing their gaze. (Board to include symbols for objects for choosing)
11 Scanning	Pupils can make choice/request using an AAC board or grid on eye gaze by fixing their gaze. (Board to include symbols for objects for choosing and instruction and verb symbols e.g. more, finished, open)
12 Scanning	Pupils can make a 2-word request using an AAC board or grid on eye gaze by fixing their gaze. (e.g. I want balloons)
13 Navigation	Pupils can navigate to a different page/folder using eye gaze book or high-tech program (e.g. find 'friends folder/page' during good morning.)
14 Navigation	Pupils using eye gaze book begin to use colour coded access to move between pages and increase vocabulary. Pupils using high tech program begin to use navigation buttons to help them access different pages/go back to home page.

15 Navigation	Pupils can make a 3-word request by navigating different pages/folders an eye gaze book or high-tech program (e.g. I want red balloon)
16 Navigation	Pupils can answer/ask questions using an AAC/ Eye gaze book by fixing their gaze.
17 Navigation	Pupils can make simple conversation using an AAC/ Eye gaze book by fixing their gaze.
18 Navigation	Pupils can make conversation using an AAC/ Eye gaze book by fixing their gaze.
19 Navigation	Pupils can engage in a simple conversation using AAC/ Eye gaze book by eye pointing or gaze.
20 Navigation	Pupils can initiate conversation using AAC/ Eye gaze book by eye pointing or gaze.
21 Communication	Pupils can initiate and participate in a conversation through eye pointing or gaze.

GLOSSARY

AAC board *Low Tech communication printed*	
AAC *High Tech communication e.g. The Grid 2 accessed via Eye gaze*	

| PODD board/ Eye gaze book | |
| E tran | |

Intensive Interaction	
Intensive interaction is an approach for teaching communication skills to children and adults who have autism, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties who are still at early stages of development. The approach focuses on teaching the Fundamentals of Communication – the communication concepts and performances that precede speech development.	

Progression Steps	Description
1	**Intensive Interaction Level: Encounter** • Pupils encounter communication and communication partners being present during an interactive episode without any obvious awareness of its progression e.*g. a willingness to tolerate a shared social atmosphere or environment is sufficient.* • They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, for example, startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted.
2	**Intensive Interaction Level: Awareness** • Pupils begin to show awareness of communication and communication partners, appears to notice, or fleetingly focus on an object, event or person involved in the interactive episode e.*g. by briefly interrupting a pattern of self-absorbed movement or vocalisation.* • They show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, for example, attending briefly to interactions with a familiar person. They may give intermittent reactions, for example, sometimes becoming excited in the midst of social activity.
3	**Intensive Interaction Level: Attention and Response** • Pupils begin to show attention and response to communication and communication partners, responding (although not consistently) to what is happening in an interactive episode e.*g. by showing signs of surprise, enjoyment, frustration or dissatisfaction.* • *They begin* to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, for example, withholding their attention. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, for example, smiling at familiar people. • They accept and engage in coactive exploration, for example, focusing their attention on sensory aspects of stories or rhymes when prompted.
4	**Intensive Interaction Level: Engagement** • Pupils begin to engage with communication and communication partners, showing consistent attention to the interactive episode presented to them e.*g. by sustained looking or listening, or repeatedly following events through movements of their eyes, head or other body parts.* • Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, for example, reaching out to a favourite person.

	• They recognise familiar people, events and objects, for example, vocalising or gesturing in a particular way in response to a favourite visitor. • They cooperate with shared exploration and supported participation, for example, taking turns in interactions with a familiar person, imitating actions and facial expressions.
5	**Intensive Interaction Level: Participation** • Pupils begin to participate with communication and communication partners, showing anticipation of, and engagement in, taking turns in a sequence of events during an interactive episode e.*g. by intentionally sequencing their actions with another person or by intentionally passing signals repeatedly back and forth* • Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. • They request events or activities, for example, pointing to key objects or people. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. • They observe the results of their own actions with interest, for example, listening to their own vocalisations.
6	**Intensive Interaction Level: Involvement** • Pupils begin to be involved with communication and communication partners by making active efforts to reach out and consistently join in, or even comment in some way on the interactive episode e.*g. by sequencing their actions <u>and</u> speaking, signing, vocalising or gesturing in some consistent and meaningful way.* • *They* use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, for example, prompting another person to join in with an interactive sequence. • They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, for example, pre-empting sounds or actions in familiar poems.
7	**Intensive Interaction Level: Student Initiated Interaction** • Pupil initiate interaction by independently starting an activity (that cannot be described as repetitive or self-absorbed behaviour) and engages another person in the activity with social intent.

Object, Photo and Symbol Recognition

A 'symbol' here refers to any visual item that is used to 'stand for' or to represent something else.

Pupils may show their recognition in different ways- this may be through:

- matching (e.g., an object to symbols, when you give them this task).
- following an instruction that is given to them in symbol form (such as a picture of 'shoes', then fetching their shoes).
- showing recognition of information that is given to them in symbol form (e.g., getting excited or cross).
- using a symbol as a means of asking you for something that they want, by bringing it to you or pointing to it.

For all of them, you need to take into account any visual difficulties- bigger is often better.

*NB, although the table below shows the traditional progression of difficulty, more up-to-date research shows that one form of 2D symbol (photo/picture/line drawing) may not be easier than another. This is likely to vary according to what an individual finds easiest.

Progression Steps	Description
1	Recognising a whole object linked to its meaning (see objects of reference progression steps) (Object of Reference)
2	Recognising part of an object linked to its meaning (e.g., a small piece of astro turf to mean 'outside time') (Object of Reference)
3	Recognising a miniature object linked to its meaning (e.g. a dolls cup to mean 'drink') (Object of Reference)

4	Recognising a photo of an object (best done on a plain background, where the object stands out clearly).
	   a. Matching 1 picture to choice of 2 familiar objects. (Able to do this with 5 familiar objects across contexts e.g. snack, leisure objects)
	   b. Matching 1 picture to choice of 3 familiar objects.
	   c. Matching 1 familiar object to choice of 2 colour photographs.
	   d. Matching 1 familiar object to choice of 3 colour photographs

5	Recognising a colour symbols drawing of an object that looks like the real item (e.g., tree, cat, **e.g., from Widgit/Communicate in Print, or on Proloquo2go**).
	   a. Matching 1 symbol to choice of 2 familiar objects. (*Able to do this with 5 familiar objects across contexts e.g. snack, leisure objects.*
	   b. Matching 1 symbol to choice of 3 familiar objects.
	   c. Matching 1 familiar object to choice of 2 symbols.
	   d. Matching 1 familiar object to choice of 3 symbols.
	   e. Matching objects to 1x2 grid – selecting correct symbol
	   f. Matching objects to 2x2 grid – selecting correct symbol
	   g. Matching picture to a symbol – choice of 2 symbols

	h. Matching picture to a symbol – choice of 3 symbols i. Matching objects to 2x3 grid – selecting correct symbol j. Matching colour photographs to 1x2 grid – selecting correct symbol k. Matching colour photographs to 2x2 grid – selecting correct symbol l. Matching objects to 2x3 grid – selecting correct symbol
6	Recognising familiar symbols whose meaning is not immediately clear from the picture itself such as places (playground, home), colours, or actions (running, eating,).
7	Recognising symbols for familiar, but more abstract messages (e.g., more/help/finished). a. Recognising colour symbols and matching to items b. Recognising size symbols and matching to items
8	Recognising new symbols whose meaning is not immediately clear, having been modelled them in an activity (e.g. 'smooth,' 'sticky'). a. Recognising descriptive symbols and matching to items
9	Starting to recognise written print

Objects of Reference and Sensory Cues

Objects of reference are objects that have a particular meaning to them (e.g. dolly mop – TACPAC) They stand for something, each acting as a symbol/prop in the same way as words/symbols. Sensory cues are smells, textures and auditory cues that have a particular meaning to them (e.g. daily smell/song/texture) They stand for something, each acting as a symbol/prop in the same way as words/symbols. Both objects of reference and sensory cues are used to support pupils to help them anticipate what is happening next.

To ensure objects of reference and sensory cues are useful to pupils they should be introduced 1 at a time, every time you introduce a new object/cue you should introduce from level 1 again.

Level	Description
1	Pupils will encounter 1 object of reference/sensory cue (begin with the most relevant to the pupil)
2	Pupils will explore (with assistance) 1 object of reference/sensory cue.
3	Pupils will begin to respond to 1 object of reference/cue
4	Pupils will consistently respond to 1 object of reference/cue
5	Pupils will begin to anticipate an event happening after being shown an object of reference/cue
6	Pupils will consistently anticipate an event happening after being shown an object of reference/cue
7	Pupils will consistently respond to 3 objects of reference/cue
8	Pupils will consistently anticipate 3 separate events happening after being shown an object of reference/cue
9	Pupils will consistently respond to 4 objects of reference/cue
10	Pupils will consistently anticipate 4 separate events happening after being shown an object of reference/cue
11	Pupils will consistently respond to 5 objects of reference/cue
12	Pupils will consistently anticipate 5 separate events happening after being shown an object of reference/cue
13	Pupils will consistently respond to over 5 objects of reference/cue
14	Pupils will consistently anticipate over 5 separate events happening after being shown an object of reference/cue

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

PECS involves the physical exchange of pictures to communicate with another person for the purpose of requesting or commenting. PECS consists of six phases and begins by teaching an individual to give a single picture of a desired item or action to a "communicative partner" who immediately honours the exchange as a request. The system goes on to teach discrimination of pictures and how to put them together in sentences. In the more advanced phases, individuals are taught to use modifiers, answer questions and comment.

Phase	Name of Phase	Description of Phase
1	How to communicate	Pupils learn to exchange single pictures for items or activities they really want. At this phase this starts with two adults – communication partner and physical prompter. By the end of phase 1, pupil is able to independently exchange a **single symbol** with a communication partner who is next to them, for at least 2-3 items.
2	Distance and Persistence	Still using single pictures, pupils learn to generalise this new skill by using it in different places, with different people and across distances. They are also taught to be more persistent communicators. By the end, pupils will be able to independently (with no prompts) a) travel to their PECs book, b) travel to the right communication partner and give them the symbol, for **5-10 different items**, environments and communication partners. **This skill needs to be maintained at all the later stages too.**
3a	Picture Discrimination (motivating item and distractor)	Pupils learn to select from 2 pictures, one of a motivator, one of something they don't like, to ask for their favourite things. These are placed in a communication book – a ring binder with Velcro strips allowing pictures to be stored and easily removed for communication. Stage is complete when pupil can fairly consistently choose and exchange the symbol of the item he wants.
3b	Picture discrimination (motivating items)	Pupils learn to select from 2 or more pictures of things they might want, including finding it in their PECS book and exchanging it independently. There is no upper limit on the number of symbols in this stage, but you can move to stage 4 when the pupil is consistently recognising and exchanging **12-20 symbols**.
4*	Sentence Structure (moving onto Attributes and Language Expansion)	Pupils learn to construct simple sentences on a detachable sentence strip, initially by using an 'I want' picture followed by a picture of the item being requested. The same teaching method can then be used to add different elements of the sentence, such as adjectives (numbers, colours, sizes), adult names (who to request from) or social elements (please). Pupils MAY start to read the strip aloud, but this is not compulsory. This stage will continue (learning to use new vocabulary), while stages 5 and 6 are being worked on.

5	Answering questions	Pupils learn to use PECS to answer the question, "What do you want?" regardless of whether the object is present.
6**	Commenting	Now pupils are taught to comment in response to questions like 'What do you see?', 'What do you hear?', 'What is it?', etc. They learn to make up sentences starting with 'I see', 'I hear', 'I feel', 'It is a', etc.

There is a lot to learn in phases 4 and 6 so these are broken down into smaller steps, these are:

Phase	Step	Step Name	Aim
4* Sentence Structure	1	Adding reinforcer picture to sentence strip	Learning to put the symbol of the desired item onto the strip, rather than pass it to adult directly, and to give the strip to the adult.
	2	Manipulating the 'I want' picture	Adding 'I want' to the sentence strip, along with the reinforcer picture, before exchanging.
	3	Reading the sentence strip	When sentence strip has been exchanged, adult points to each symbol and pauses before reading it, to see if the child fills in the gap and reads the sentence (if not, the adult reads it anyway and honours the request).
6** Commenting	1	Commenting – Answering the first Comment Question	To answer the questions 'what do you want/hear/see/have? (with only the correct sentence starter present).
	2	Commenting – Discrimination between Sentence Starters	To answer the questions 'what do you want/hear/see/have? To choose the correct sentence starter to answer a question

Receptive Language (Verbal)

Receptive language refers to our **understanding** of what others are saying to us. Understanding of verbal language can often be increased by using additional visual support alongside, such as pictures, objects, gestures, signs, demonstrations and symbols, however the milestones below refer to a pupils' understanding of words **alone**, unless otherwise stated. The numbers in the progression steps refer to the age at which typically developing children are usually able to meet these milestones.

Progression Steps	Description

1a)	Pupils respond to their name.
	
	 Pupils follow a few everyday instructions in context (e.g., 'coat on' 'come' 'lunchtime.')
	
	    a) When supported with objects
	    b) When supported with gestures/actions
	    c) When just the verbal instruction is given alone (e.g. 'no,' 'look').

1b)	Pupils can follow instructions containing one Information Carrying Word, or otherwise demonstrate understanding (such as by looking), e.g. of - Everyday objects - Body parts - Names of preferred foods - Names of familiar people
2)	- Pupils can follow instructions containing two Information Carrying Words (e.g. 'give me the **apple** and the **teddy**,' 'make the **rabbit jump**.') - Pupils understand a range of action words as well as object names.
3)	- Pupils understand and follow instructions with 4 main words in, e.g. 'sit teddy on the box,' 'kick the big red ball.' - Pupils can follow instructions with two parts, e.g., 'get your bag and put it on the table.' - Pupils can understand simple questions such as 'what' and 'where'. - Pupils start to understand simple emotion words ('happy' 'sad' etc) - Pupils are starting to understand simple concepts such as: Big/little On/off Same/different

	Full/empty Up/down Loud/quiet Top/bottom Over/under Hot/cold
4)	- Pupils can understand and give a basic answer to the question 'why'? - Pupils can understand and answer a simple problem-solving question e.g. 'what do you do when you're cold?' - Pupils can understand and answer a basic question about a story they have just heard. - Pupil can understand and respond to some simple colour names. - Pupils can understand simple time concepts (e.g. yesterday, tomorrow, morning).
5)	- Pupils understand a simple story with no pictures - Pupils understand information containing first… next. - Pupils are starting to understand harder positional concepts such as 'above' and 'below' - Pupils are starting to understand adjectives such as 'soft' 'smooth.' - Pupils are able to follow instructions with 3 parts, such as 'find your pencils, draw a picture, and give it to the teacher.'

Signing

Signing is used support other means of communication it also helps listen and attend to the person speaking. As a school we use Makaton signing alongside other forms of communication to support a total communication environment and help support all types of learners. Signing can be used for pupils to express themselves but also to aid understanding. Many of our pupils are visual learners and speech is not a visual system therefore signing can help to focus attention. Signing can be personalised to a child centred approach this form of communication may be chosen due to the specific need/ability of the pupil

Level	Description
1	Pupils can sign 2 words copying an adult
2	Pupils can sign 2 words independently
3	Pupils can use 2 signs to make a request. (e.g. drink)
4	Pupils know 5 signs
5	Pupils know 5 signs and can use to make requests
6	Pupils know 10 signs
7	Pupils know 10 signs and can use to make independent requests
8	Pupils know 15 signs
9	Pupils know 15 signs and can use to make independent requests
10	Pupils know 20 signs
11	Pupils know 20 signs and can use to make independent requests
12	Pupils can make 2-part functional request (e.g. more drink)
13	Pupils know 30 signs and can make requests
14	Pupils can make 3-part sentence (e.g. want red ball)
15	Pupils know 40 signs and can make requests
16	Pupils know 50 signs and can make requests
17	Pupils answer simple questions about an event/story (what, who, where)
18	Pupils ask simple questions about an event/story (what, who, where)
19	Pupils know more than 50 words
20	Pupils can engage in a simple conversation
21	Pupils can initiate conversation
22	Pupils can initiate/participate

Switch

Switch work can have many purposes and educational benefits for our pupils including, cause and effect, making choices, problem solving and communication. Switches can help our pupils have control over an activity and enable them to access and be included in activities with their peers. In school we have switch equipment that can help pupils control electronic devices and computers.

Remember everyone is an individual.

Although the majority of our pupils will activate a switch using their hands this may not be the best method for all pupils.

Pupils can use any body part to activate a switch including head, finger and foot.

Whatever the method is the position of the switch must always be considered and may need adjusting through a session.

Changing the position or method could be the difference between failure and success for a pupil.

Level	Description
1 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil to be shown switch and with adult support press the switch to activate the device, repeat to ensure pupil understands the connection between the switch and the device.
2 Timed Seconds mode	Switch to be presented to pupil and pupil to be given time to touch the switch go back to stage 1 if needed.
3 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil presses switch with little or no prompt
4 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches (1 which activates device and 1 dummy) Pupil to explore what the switches do and press both switches randomly in order to get device to work.
5 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches (1 which activates device and 1 dummy) Pupil to work out which switch activates device and choose that switch consistently
6 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to explore the switches and what they activate. Pupils do not show a preference.
7 Timed Seconds mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to make a preference and choose the correct switch for preferred device.
8 Direct mode	Pupil to be shown switch and with adult support press and hold the switch to activate the device, repeat to ensure pupil understands the connection between the switch and
9 Direct mode	Switch to be presented to pupil and pupil to be given time to press and hold the switch go back to stage 1 if needed.

10 Direct mode	Pupil presses and holds switch with little or no prompt
11 Direct mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches (1 which activates device and 1 dummy) Pupil to explore what the switches do and press and hold both switches randomly in order to get device to work.
12 Direct mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches (1 which activates device and 1 dummy) Pupil to work out which switch activates device and choose that switch consistently
13 Direct mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to explore the switches and what they activate. Pupils do not show a preference and may hold both switches down simultaneously
14 Direct mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to make a preference and choose the correct switch for preferred device.
15 Latching mode	Pupil to press the switch on and adult to switch off.
16 Latching mode	Pupil to press the switch on and off to operate device. (Latch boxes with 2 switch outlets can have an on switch and an off switch.)
17 Latching mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to explore the switches and what they activate. Pupils do not show a preference but switch both devices on and off.
18 Latching mode	Pupil presented with 2 switches which activate different devices, pupil to make a preference and choose the correct switch for preferred device.
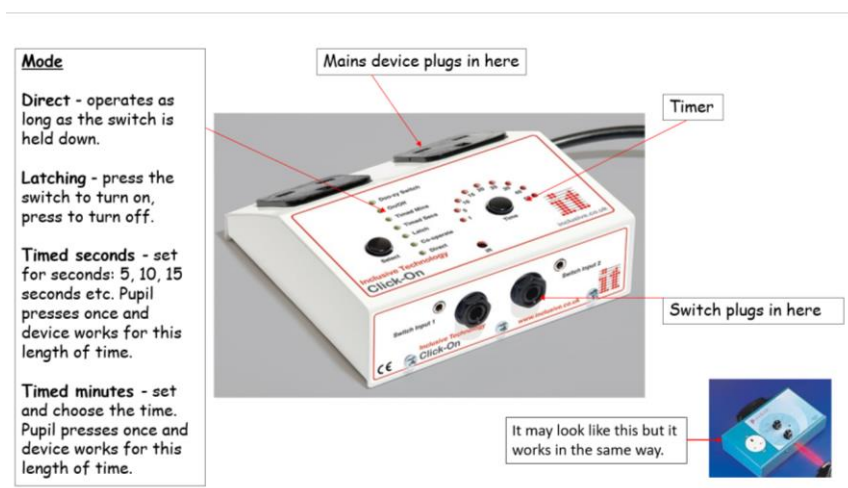
TaSSeLS- Tactile Signing For Sensory Learners

What is TaSSeLS:
- TaSSeLs is designed to support the early stages of communication in children and young people with complex learning needs, many of whom have a visual impairment
- It is a system of cues to aid understanding and alert the learner that something is about to happen
- It is made up of a core vocabulary of everyday words used in daily routines and frequently occurring activities

Why use TaSSeLs?
It fosters a multi-sensory approach to communication to help the learner to:
- Anticipate what is going to happen next
- Interact and respond to others
- Compensate for the visual aspect of communication
- Develop independent use of signs so learners can express themselves

TaSSeLS Signs
The signs consist of an 'alert' sign and a range of core vocabulary signs. The alert sign is always used at the start of an interaction before a specific core vocabulary sign is introduced. This prepares the learner for the communication which is about to follow.

TaSSeLs approaches
1. Hand under hand (preferred method)
2. Hand under hand (adapted method)
3. On – body method

Level	Description	
1	To **encounter tactile signs**	Pre-intentional
2	To **respond to being touched** (awareness /sensation)	Pre-intentional
3	To demonstrate a **consistent response to being touched** (alert sign only)	Pre-intentional
4	To demonstrate **sustained attention** as the alert sign is being carried out	Pre-intentional
5	To demonstrate **sustained attention** as the alert sign and a core vocabulary sign are carried out	Pre-intentional
6	To demonstrate **anticipation that something is about to happen** when one tactile sign is being carried out (the alert sign and **one** core vocabulary sign)	Emerging intentionality
7	To demonstrate **anticipation that something is about to happen** when one additional tactile sign is being carried out (the alert sign and **one further** core vocabulary sign)	Emerging intentionality
8	To demonstrate **anticipation of a specific event** that one tactile sign represents **(within** a frequent / daily routine – **one** core sign in total)	Intentional
9	To demonstrate **anticipation of a specific event** that **two** additional tactile sign represents **(within** a frequent / daily routine – **two** core signs in total)	Intentional

10	To demonstrate **anticipation of specific events** that two additional tactile sign represents (**within** a frequent / daily routine – **four** core signs in total)	
11	To demonstrate **anticipation of specific events** that two additional tactile sign represents (**within** a frequent / daily routine – **six** core signs in total)	
12	To demonstrate **anticipation of specific events** that two additional tactile sign represents (**within** a frequent / daily routine – **eight** core signs in total)	
13	To demonstrate **anticipation of specific events** that two additional tactile sign represents (**within** a frequent / daily routine – **ten** core signs in total)	
14	To demonstrate **understanding of a specific event** that one tactile sign represents (**outside** of a frequent / daily routine – **one** core sign in total)	

Tracking

The first stages of tracking is used in a way to accurately and objectively measure and understand visual attention. This helps us understand what a child may or may not see and how they make sense of the world around them. Tracking is the start of a journey to help pupils with limited movement and verbal skills make their feeling, needs and thoughts known.

Level	Description
1 Fixation	Pupils to encounter a static light going on and off in a dark room 5 cm away from face.
2 Fixation	Pupils to respond to a static light in a darkroom 10 cm away from their face then 30cm away from their face.
3 Fixation	Pupils to respond to sensory wand or torch reflecting off gold shiny card 10cm away from their face then 30cm away from the face.
4 Fixation	Pupils to respond to large (preferably yellow) object (E.g. football or large hand puppet) 10cm away from their face then 30 cm away from their face.
5 Fixation	Pupils to respond to medium (preferably yellow) object (E.g. tennis ball or hand puppet) 10cm away from their face then 30 cm away from their face.
6 Fixation	Pupils to respond to small (preferably yellow) object (E.g. Ping-Pong ball or finger puppet) 10cm away from their face then 30 cm away from their face.
Tracking	Start tracking lights/objects at 5cm and if achieved move to 10cm then to15cm.
7 Tracking	Pupils to follow a sensory wand moved from a central position out to the left, back to centre and out to the right 10 cm away from face to the left/right. Repeat 30cm.
8 Tracking	Pupils to follow a sensory wand moved from a central position 10 cm away from face to the up/down. Repeat 30cm.
9 Tracking	Pupils to follow a sensory wand moved from a central position 10 cm away from face in a circular motion. Repeat 30cm.
10 Tracking	Pupils to follow a sensory wand moved from a central position 10 cm away from face diagonally. Repeat 30cm.
11 Tracking	Pupils to follow movements on an iPad app held 10cm then 30cm away from their face. (list of apps included)
12 Tracking	Pupils to follow a large (preferably yellow) object (E.g. football or large hand puppet) Presented centrally and moved about in and out of vision/visual fields. Moved from a central position 10 cm away from face to the up/down. Repeat 30cm.
13 Tracking	Pupils to follow a medium (preferably yellow) object (E.g. tennis ball or hand puppet) Presented centrally and moved about in and out of vision/visual fields. Moved from a central position 10 cm away from face to the up/down. Repeat 30cm.
14 Tracking	Pupils to follow a large (preferably yellow) object (E.g. Ping-Pong ball or finger puppet) Presented centrally and moved about in and out of

	vision/visual fields. Moved from a central position 10 cm away from face to the up/down. Repeat 30cm.
15 Convergence	Pupils to track item moving slowly towards their nose from 50cm away (Pupil should cross eyes to focus on object such as pen or light pen) This can be repeated daily to strengthen muscles.
16 Stimulation	Pupils to be exposed to a range of light stimulation in a dark room (e.g. bubble tube in sensory room) Pupils to use head movements or eye gaze to observe ceiling lights/bubble tube, light projection etc

Tracking Apps
- Baby fireworks
- Tapnsee
- Baby screen
- Bigbang
- Music ball

Try apps with sound then without to ensure pupils are responding to visual stimuli not auditory.