

TRANSCRIPT: Communication

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We place communication at the heart of everything that we do. Without an ability to communicate our youngsters have a severely impaired life chance.

We personalise communication to the needs of the youngster and our communication team work with each teacher to help personalise the targets each term and we devote time to that because we think it's so important. And some youngsters will need social use of language targets, some will need symbol exchange targets, others will need targets relating to signing. Some will need narrative approach, objects of reference, TEACHH systems, visual timetables. It just depends on the child.

All of our staff have regular training in communication. We try to train all of our staff in Makaton. We have our own regional trainer and that trainer not only trains our teachers but trains the entire school community and beyond. So the local police, the local FA, the local hospital, care providers, all come to us for training in Makaton.

It's important because our youngsters need to have people around them that can communicate with them in the same way as they communicate in school, and by training the wider community they begin to understand the youngsters they will meet from our school in the wider community. They will know how to react to them and they will teach others how to react to them as well. So it's a case of spreading the word, reducing the myths about youngsters with learning difficulties, breaking down the barriers that exist between them and the wider world.