



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Queensmill Trust (TQT) believes in a Total Communication Approach. It is important that all of our students are able to communicate using a method that is individualised and right for them and which increases their autonomy; a basic human right for everyone. *Please refer to the appendices 1.0 for more information about communication development.*

2.0. TOTAL COMMUNICATION

At TQT, we use the Total Communication Approach. This is about finding and using the right combination of communication methods for each student. This might be a combination of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems as well as verbal language, body language etc.

This approach helps an individual to form connections, ensures successful interactions and supports information exchanges and conversations. A combination of methods is used, which reinforce each other and strengthen meaning for the individual.

Please refer to the appendices 2.0 for more information about Total Communication.

3.0. AAC

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a range of strategies and tools to help students communicate who struggle with their speech and language skills. These tools may be simple letter or picture boards or sophisticated computer-based systems. AAC helps students to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible.

- Each student at TQT will need to be assessed to find an AAC device or system which suits them. Some may have multiple AAC systems such as, PECS, visual support and Makaton.
- Speech and Language Therapists will recommend the most appropriate AAC systems; the therapists will then work with the student to create a device which suits them. The therapist will train the AAC user and communication partners on how best to use the communication aid.

At TQT we use a wide range of AAC systems and devices which support a student's communication, including, but not limited to;

Low Tech Based Systems	High Tech Based Systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Books • Core boards • Choosing boards • Life books/scrapbooking • PECS • Talking Mats • Makaton • Objects of reference • Comment /chat / communication boards • Communication Passports • Key rings and Lanyards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA) • Proloquo2go • LAMP • PECS • Switches (single message, Multi-modal messages)

No one system suits everyone. At TQT we believe in using all of these approaches, in school CYP will use a range of systems, students will only use the systems that have been recommended and where the decision has been made by the speech and language therapist and the class teacher.

See appendices for full range of systems currently used at TQT.
Please refer to the appendices 3.0 for more information on AAC.



APPENDICES

1.0. COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2.0. TOTAL COMMUNICATION

3.0. AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)





1.0. COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

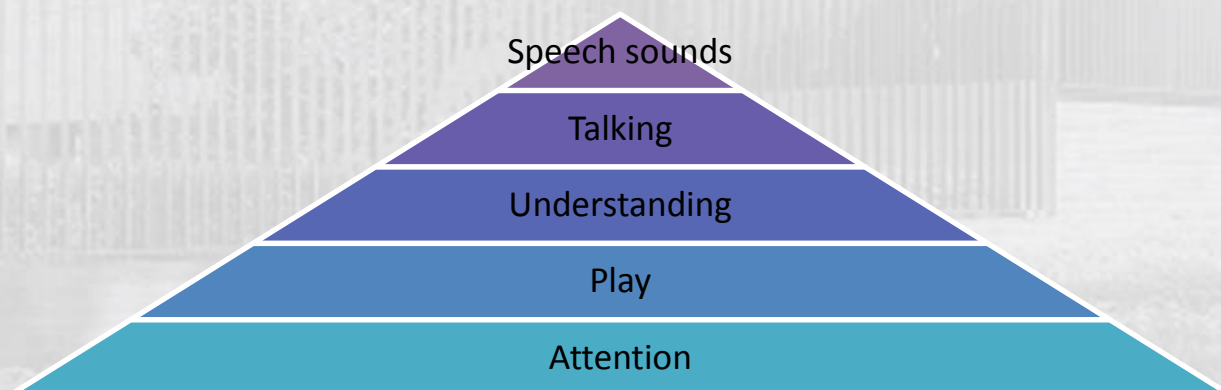
Definition of communication

Communication is the exchange of information between people. Communication may be **verbal and/or non-verbal**. Communication is central to all areas of life from requesting basic needs through to complex social interactions with others. It is also central to the development and education of all individuals.

Children and young people (CYP) attending all communicate for a range of reasons all of which are seen in school and are detailed below:

<p>Giving and getting information</p> 	<p>Comment Direct Express feelings Ask questions Discuss Give opinions</p>	<p>Describe Share news Tell a story Tell an imaginary story Plan Explain</p>
<p>Social interaction</p> 	<p>Greet Be polite Flirt or compliment Start a conversation Set topic Direct a conversation</p>	<p>Change topic Share about self Wrap up a conversation Tease or joke Negotiate</p>
<p>Strategies to be better understood</p> 	<p>Clarify Ask to clarify Say it differently Give a clue Describe Use the alphabet</p>	
<p>Expressing needs and wants</p> 	<p>Make choices Get attention Request Refuse Protest</p>	

How we develop communication:



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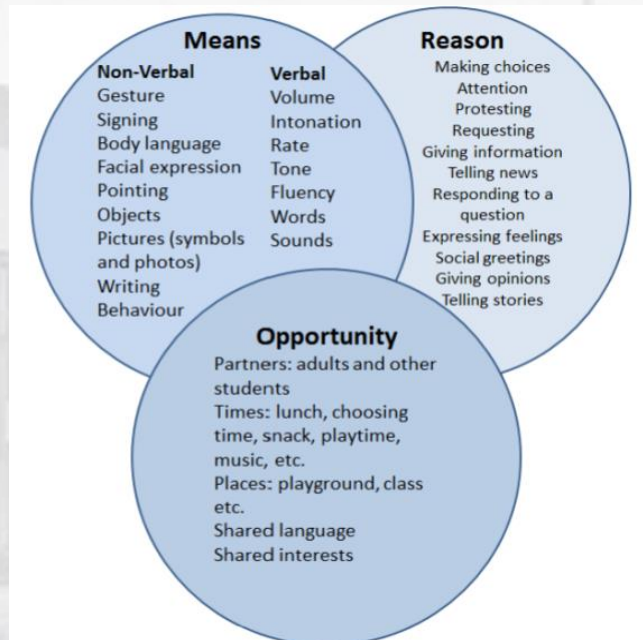
The pyramid reflects the skills needed for communication, for children attending The Queensmill Trust (TQT), it is important that their attention and listening skills, the fundamental skills needed before any of the above areas can develop. As each level develops it supports the next stage of development. It is important to note that this is not always linear in progress or skills that CYP may make but the basis of developing fundamentals of communication will be the starting point for CYP.

Attention & Listening	Is fundamental for all speech, language and communication development as well as all to engage in learning tasks and to attend to communication partners
Play skills	Allow the CYP to explore the world, learn cause and effect, practice interaction and learn/imitate skills from others.
Understanding	Understanding information is often easier than saying or explaining it yourself. It is required to support understanding within an environment
Talking	Can only really begin once you have seen others do lots of it, heard the sounds and patterns used a lot, begin to understand what they're saying, and how to use your language with others functionally and socially.
Speech sounds	Speech sounds are smallest element of communication. These are developed through lots of listening, attending, understanding and practise talking. CYP at TQT may not use their speech sounds but will use a different way to communicate their wants and needs e.g. through visuals.

Supporting a positive Communication environment at TQT: Using the Means, Reasons and Opportunities model

This model highlights 3 areas that need to be considered to support and develop communication skills. The 'means' refer to the ways we communicate must be accessible, reasons refer to the different functions we communicate for and the opportunities refers to the creation of moments to support this.

In each lesson teachers will be thinking about supporting opportunities for communication and with support of the Speech and Language Therapist. Ensuring the CYP has a communication system to use, a reason to use it and different opportunities to use it.





2.0. TOTAL COMMUNICATION

Total Communication at The Queensmill Trust (TQT)

At TQT we use the Total Communication Approach. This is about finding and using the right combination of communication methods for each student. This might be a combination of Augmentative and alternative Communication (AAC) systems as well as verbal language, body language etc.

This approach helps an individual to form connections, ensures successful interactions and supports information exchanges and conversations. A combination of methods is used, which reinforce each other and strengthen meaning for the individual.





3.0. AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)

AAC at The Queensmill Trust (TQT)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a range of strategies and tools to help students communicate who struggle with their speech and language skills. These tools may be simple letter or picture boards or sophisticated computer-based systems. AAC helps someone to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible.

AAC systems used at TQT

- There are a wide range of systems and no one system suits everyone. Each student at TQT will need to be assessed to find an AAC device or system which suits them. Some may have multiple AAC systems such as, PECS, visual support and Makaton.
- Speech and Language Therapists at The Queensmill Trust are familiar with a wide range of AAC devices, and are skilled at modifying and implementing these devices. Speech and Language Therapists will recommend the most appropriate AAC systems; the therapists will then work with the student to create a device which suits them. The therapist will train the AAC user and communication partners on how best to use the communication aid.

Examples of AAC systems used:

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)



PECS is a type of AAC system that uses visual symbols to teach the student to communicate with parents, carers, teachers and peers. The aim is to teach intentional, functional communication and to allow users to communicate their wants and needs. PECS is a well-known communication system, and has enabled many users with little or no communication to express their needs and desires.

- PECS:
- Helps develop intentional communication
- Reduces negative or challenging behaviours caused by frustration
- Increases opportunities for interaction and learning
- Teaching early language skills such as requesting and commenting.

Core Boards






Core boards are a type of symbol-based Communication that uses visual symbols to teach the student to communicate with parents, carers, teachers and peers. The aim is to teach functional communication and **develop language for a range of communication functions**. This includes sharing; wants and needs, commenting, using action words, asking for turns, using people's names to direct communication, directing questions, using social phrases, as well as using concepts to describe. It contains a base of core vocabulary (which is vocabulary that is most commonly used within communication) and lesson specific fringe vocabulary (vocabulary specific to different situations or lessons).

Core Boards:

- Helps develop language for a range of different functions of communication (including: commenting, questioning, turn taking etc.)
- Can be used to extend linguistic levels e.g. from phrases to sentences (e.g. to a 2-3 word sentences)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used flexibly in a range of different contexts • Increases opportunities for learning and interaction. • Reduces negative or challenging behaviours caused by frustration
<p>Core vocabulary i.e. common and frequently used words 75-80% of the words we use everyday</p>	<p>Symbol set: MAKATON SYMBOLS Core words include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbs ("go", "come"), • adjectives ("good", "little"), • prepositions ("to", "on"), • pronouns ("you", "that"), • articles ("the" "a"), and • Conjunctions ("and," "but"). <p>Core words are not usually nouns. Only a few of top 200 core words are nouns. These nouns are very general nouns ("girl", "house") rather than specific ones ("porcupine", "celery").</p>
<p>Fringe vocabulary i.e. words that are more specific everyday</p>	<p>Symbol set: WIDGET/ PHOTOGRAPHS/ MAKATON NB. Dependent on their symbolic understanding*</p> <p>Fringe words are very specific words with a more narrow meaning than core words. These can describe something in as few words as possible. Fringe words are usually nouns. More specific verbs ("leap", "dice") and adjectives ("elegant", "delicious") are fringe as well.</p> <p>Each individual fringe word may not be used as often as each core word. Fringe words are located in other folders/pages. There are many, many fringe words.</p> <p>But not all fringe words are equally important for every person. Each of us has certain subjects that we really love to talk about: the most important people, places, and things in our lives. These words are different for each person.</p>
<p>Choice Boards</p>	
	<p>Choosing boards uses visual symbols to teach the student to communicate with others within a specific setting, situation or function. It often used to support the student to communicate for a specific purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing Boards: • Helps develop language limited to a specific situation setting or activity. • Can be used to support lesson specific teaching. • Require frequent adaption.
<p>Makaton</p>	
	<p>Makaton is a unique language programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable students to communicate. It supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall and organisation of language and expression.</p>
<p>Objects of Reference</p>	
	<p>Is any object which is used systematically to represent an item, activity, place, or person. Understanding real objects is the first stage of symbolic development. Therefore using objects is considered the most concrete way of representing a word. Objects of reference are used with individuals who find it difficult to understand spoken words, signs, symbols or photographs.</p>



	<p>The object can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A real object, for example a toilet roll to represent going to the toilet • Part of a real object, for example part of a towel to represent bath time • Miniature objects, for example a toy desk to represent that it is time to work • Abstract objects, for example a silk scarf to represent a particular person • Smells and sounds of reference can also be used to provide multisensory feedback uses visual symbols to teach the learner to communicate with others within a specific setting, situation or function. It often used to support the learner to communicate for a specific purpose.
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Comment/Chat/Communication Boards

	<p>Can be used for individual topics, these can be used for the student to make a request, comment and for the adult to model new vocabulary.</p>
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Communication books


	<p>A communication book is a form of AAC allowing the student to communicate by pointing or looking at specific sections of various pages. Communication books often contain pictures or picture symbols accompanied by a word or label</p>
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Key rings/lanyards

	<p>Key rings and lanyards are used by the class teams. This is for students to have easy access to symbols or photos to make a request for example to a location or for an object.</p>
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High tech devices/apps

<p>Proloquo2go</p>  	<p>Proloquo2Go is an easy to use communication app for students who cannot speak or need help being understood. Featuring natural sounding voices, including real children's voices, Proloquo2Go is a simple yet powerful AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) tool. A child will always have a low tech option when using a high tech device.</p>
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<p>LAMP</p> 	<p>Language acquisition through motor planning – (LAMP) LAMP Words for Life is structured to enable early success and allow the student's vocabulary and communication skills to grow in a way that doesn't require re-learning along the way. Because this is a pre-programmed vocabulary program, Words for Life doesn't require extensive customisation.</p>
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Key principles considered when setting up AAC systems at The Queensmill Trust (TQT)

Individualised At TQT AAC systems are individualised based on the student's needs. This may include consideration of:

- Level of understanding (i.e. objects, symbols, photos).
- The reasons the individual communicates for
- The learners physical skills / motivation for a system
- AAC should be realised in an individualised manner; two core issues need to be addressed:
 1. **What are the most suitable means of augmenting communication?**
 2. **At what level of sense-making can the chosen means be offered?**

Accessible at all times AAC systems should be available/ accessible at all times to support the individual to express themselves. A student may use a combination of AAC methods to communicate.

Modelled by Communication Partners At TQT, AAC system are used by communication partners to:

- Facilitate understanding of key message
- Teach ways to operate the system (i.e. navigation)
- Teach language skill in context (i.e. using the systems themselves)

Used to develop different functions of communication At TQT, AAC systems are used to develop different functions/purposes of communication relevant to the skill set of the student's skill. This may include but not inclusive of:

























- To reject / accept
- To assert
- To request items
- To request activities
- To use action words
- To describe
- To question
- To express emotions
- To comment



















Considers core vocabulary Core vocabulary refers to common and frequently used words that make up 75-80% of the words that are used within everyday communication. These are made up mostly of verbs (action words), prepositions (I, you) and descriptive language. For full list of core vocabulary that has been agreed by the Speech and Language therapists and the senior management team will be used; see below.














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Core Vocabulary List

 I	 me	 my	 mine
 you	 you	 yours	 yours
 we	 we	 ours	 ours
 he	 his	 him	 their
 she	 her	 hers	 their
 they	 they	 them	 them

 is	 am	 was	 were
 are	 it	 its	 here
 there	 who	 what	 where
 when	 how	 look	 see
 listen	 why	 this	 that
 before	 after	 yes	 no






















 first	 next	 then	 last
 in	 on	 under	 over
 home	 school	 finished	 hello
 goodbye	 please	 thank you	 ok
 girl	 boy	 friend	 and
 how	 today	 tomorrow	 up











 down	 same	 different	 fun
 one	 something	 play	 now
 toilet	 help	 behind	 in front
 stop	 stop	 open	 like
 want	 put	 off	 more
 don't	 need	 choose	 get

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 come	 go	 going	 good
 bad	 help	 take	 give
 give	 know	 find	 walk
 write	 hear	 stand up	 wait
 do	 does	 did	 eat
 make	 made	 have	 had

 drink	 my turn	 your turn	 show
 hurt	 big	 little	 some
 think	 sit	 read	 watch
 say	 all	 can	 to
 with	 any	 question	 out
 again	 feel	 sing	 tell

 will	 happy	 sad	 angry
 excited	 all done	 not	 less
 WoW!	 uhoh!		



Types of AAC used at The Queensmill Trust (TQT)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) includes a wide range of systems and devices which support a person's communication.

Speech and language Therapists at TQT assess and support the implementation of AAC through modelling, discussions and training on each method as either class based or school based training. Teachers will attend trainings ran by the Speech and Language Therapists and a discussion termly will take place as part of the PLP termly target setting and review meetings.

There are a range of low tech based and high tech based AAC Devices. At TQT we believe in using all of these approaches, in school CYP will use a range of systems being used, students will only use the systems that have been recommended and where the decision has been made by the speech and language therapist and the class teacher.

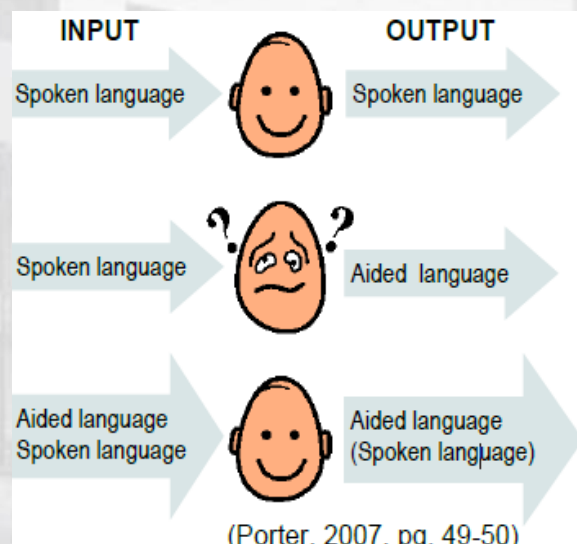
The role of the communication partner when implementing Communication strategies at The Queensmill Trust (TQT)

We all begin to learn language through language models (language examples) from others in our environment. C&YP learning to use AAC need lots of modelling (input) before they can be expected to produce similar messages (output). Much more modelling of language within a system is required of a system before that can be used.

All AAC learners need to see what it looks like, to communicate using their AAC system in real conversations and for various purposes and social functions. Students require lots of opportunities to see their AAC systems being used in lots of different contexts for them for them to learn how to develop this skill.

Teachers, LSAs and other members of the school community are expected to model the use of the CYP's communication system in a range of contexts and will do so throughout the school day. This support understanding of language as well as developing students to use the system as well as.

Communication partners model the use of AAC systems alongside their own spoken language.



Types of prompting to be used at The Queensmill Trust (TQT):

There are various levels of prompts that can be used to support students develop their communication skills. Initially students may require high levels of support to use their own AAC system for a specific function once (e.g. physical prompting), this level of support should then

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be fading to promote independence (e.g. moving towards non-verbal prompts). The eventual aim is always to work towards independence.

A key principle that staff at TQT employ is to see what the students are doing already with a specific skills, and then adapting the level of prompting that provide based on this. See below table for examples of different types of prompting.



Non-verbal Prompts	***Pause***	Give them time
	Body Language	Shrug with body, look expectantly
	Gesture	Tap towards the AAC system to get them started
Verbal Prompts (From Indirect to Direct)	Request a response	'You need to ask me' or 'Now what?'
	Partial verbal prompt	'You went to the.....'
	Direct Model	Show them and then wait for them to imitate
Physical Prompt	Partial physical prompt	Show part of what to do, see if they can do the rest
	Full physical prompt	Provide full hand over hand assistance

All types of prompting can be used depending on the needs of the students; however non-verbal prompts are a step closer to independence than verbal or physical.