

TRANSCRIPT: Communication

Simon Knight and Craig Clarke

Simon Knight: Effective communication is a fundamental part of any successful classroom. You need to be very aware of the communicative needs of the children and be both sensitive to and responsive to those needs. Trying to define a child as being a particular type of communicator is not an approach that we would necessarily advocate, so whilst a child may have a primary communication tool such as symbolic communication, we would always be looking to supplement that with other layers of communicative support and underpinning all of that is verbal communication

Craig Clarke: Depending on the pupil that we're working with, we will use whichever form of communication is the most appropriate, so some pupils will be using symbols, other pupils using photographs and for other pupils it helps to supplement your communication with signs so they have a much clearer idea of what you're asking them or talking to them about.

Making sure that I'm at the children's eye level is a great starting point, so that I make sure that the pupils, it's easy for them to make eye contact with me and then waiting for that eye contact so that we can then exchange or share a conversation.

In today's lesson, we had lots of sensory stimuli and input for the children to make it more stimulating, engaging and interesting so that, when it came to key points in the poem, the pupils were able to respond and, therefore, participate and enjoy the poem with their peer group.

You have to be very creative with your planning and though each child's needs are very specific, it's still possible to meet all of their learning needs within any sort of learning situation.

Simon Knight: One of the things that's really important is to ensure that, not only the classroom, but the school is a communicatively rich environment where children can draw upon a range of different communication tools and sources of information to supplement their broader understanding of what is either happening in the lesson or of their routines as they move through the school day.

We, obviously, aspire for all our children to be effective and successful communicators beyond the school, in the wider community, and ensuring that we're meeting their individual needs in school will, hopefully, enable them to transfer those skills out of school.

