Priority area two: Workforce development

Why is this priority area important?

Staff are the greatest resource in any school. We know many teachers don't feel confident in supporting communication, particularly when pupils are struggling. There is evidence from research and practice reporting positive outcomes when teachers are able to weave speaking and listening into their day to day practice. By providing professional development and supporting greater knowledge and development of skills, staff can be supported to enable pupils to communicate to the very best of their ability.

How does this link to the 2014 SEND Code of Practice?

The Commitment provides actions, tools and resources for the professional development of all staff in supporting speaking and listening for all pupils including those with SLCN.

What are the principles we are trying to achieve?

- Our staff are aware of the importance of speech, language and communication.
- Our staff are building their understanding of speech, language and communication.
- Our staff are developing their practice in supporting speech, language and communication.

The four actions for Workforce Development - Choose one of the actions for this area:

Our action (What are we going to do?)	Our aim (Why are we doing it?)	To help you fulfil your commitment
2.1 Run an all staff briefing on speech, language and communication in school or at a faculty meeting.	We know about communication.	• Share copies of Don't Get Me Wrong as part of the briefing • Find out about any external agencies, such as speech and language therapy services, relevant charities or other organisations who may be willing to come and talk at your meeting. • Show a video as part of the briefing to show what life can be like for young people with SLCN - 'The Way We Talk' or 'One in A Million' - both on The Communication Trust website.
2.2 Identify key members of staff who will undertake professional development activities focussing on communication.	Our staff are more confident in supporting pupils communication.	• Visit the Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF) site, and find out about what it can offer you individually and as a staff team. • Ensure key staff complete their own self-evaluation on the SLCF. • Download the universal and enhanced handbooks on positive practice and plan which professional development activities staff will try.
2.3 Implement a classroom strategy to support communication across school and reflect on it as a staff team.	We are changing our practice around communication as part of our everyday practice.	• Use Elklan's free download on practical activities to support listening and attention and the activity ideas from Commtap. • Organise a planning activity to select strategies to try. Share information and arrange activities for staff to learn about and understand strategies. • Discuss with the whole staff team how strategies might be used, how you'll know if they're useful and how they might be rolled out across school and used in planning.
2.4 Set up a Communication Innovation Bank where staff share activities and ideas they find useful.	We share our good ideas about communication.	• Read the guidance on starting a Communication Innovation Bank. • Set up a 'place' in school for the Bank to share activities and ideas. • Take the best ideas from your Bank and share them with other schools undertaking the Communication Commitment. Choose activities and ideas from other schools to share in your Communication Innovation Bank.