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Communication standards audit: Secondary

What is the Communication standards audit?
The Communication standards audit is a tool to help schools and settings support young people's speech, language, and communication development. In this tool, we use the terms 'speech and language challenges' and 'challenges with talking and understanding words' to refer to 'speech, language and communication needs'.

Why is it important to have a whole-setting approach to supporting speech, language and communication?
Strong speech, language and communication skills are linked to better outcomes for children and young people in school and beyond. These skills are the foundation of learning, and a key part of the curriculum and the Ofsted Framework. The Communication standards audit will help you to:

- see what you are already doing to support young people's speech, language and communication development
- identify areas where you could do more to support these skills
- plan actions that will make your setting more communication-supportive.

How do we complete the Communication standards audit?

- We recommend that you complete the audit at least once a year, and whenever there are significant changes to staffing.
- The audit should be done by staff who have completed our free course Introduction to speech, language and communication, or have equivalent knowledge and experience.

	Name(s)
Who will complete the audit?	

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Who will review the audit? (include at least one person in a leadership role)	
Who will complete the action plan?	

Date audit completed (mm/yy): _____

Priority area	Good practice indicators	✓ x	Evidence *How do you know that you do this?*
Leadership	**1.1.** There is someone on our leadership team and governing body who leads on young people's speech, language and communication development. Their role includes updating and sharing policies that link to speech, language and communication.		
	1.2. We follow a clear process for identifying young people who are struggling with talking and understanding words.		

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	1.3. Our policy documents show a clear focus on speech, language and communication development, and identifying young people with challenges. This includes staff training, working with families, and recognising links between behaviour and speech, language and communication skills.		
	2.1. We all recognise the important role that speech, language, and communication skills play in every part of young people's learning and development.		
	1.4. We have a clear offer of support (universal, targeted, targeted plus and/ or specialist) for speech, language and communication development. We have clear processes for evaluating how well support is working for each young person.		
	2.2. We all have access to training and development opportunities to learn about speech, language and communication skills and challenges with talking and understanding words. This might include face-to-face or online training (like courses on our Learning Centre), shadowing, peer coaching, publications, trusted online information (like our Resource library), and time to reflect on new learning.		
Staff development			
	2.3. We embed our learning about speech, language and communication into daily practice through supervision, practitioner observations, appraisals, and performance management.		

	2.4. Key members of our team take part in more in-depth professional development that focuses on supporting young people's speech, language and communication skills, and they share this knowledge and expertise with the wider team.		

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Communication-supportive practice	**3.1.** The physical environment - inside and outside - supports communication and learning. For example, we arrange tables and chairs so all young people can see and hear what is happening, we have areas that encourage interaction and conversation. We consider how the sensory environment impacts on their ability to pay attention and stay regulated. We use visual support strategies consistently throughout the school day. For example, we use written words, gestures, pictures or demonstrations to back up spoken instructions and information.		
	3.2. We all use a range of communication-supportive strategies with young people. For example, we pre-teach vocabulary, model words and sentences, give clear instructions and create an asking-friendly environment.		
	3.3. We plan opportunities for young people to use their speech, language and communication skills. For example, we plan talking partner activities and create opportunities for quality adult-young person and peer-to-peer interactions.		
	3.4. We use tools to evaluate how communication-supportive our environments are (like the Communication-supportive environments checklist) or have learning walks to observe how staff use supportive strategies in their daily practice.		

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Supporting speech and language challenges	**4.1.** We all feel confident identifying a young person who has challenges with talking and understanding words. We use the tools available (like Universally Speaking 11 to 18) to explore our concerns. We all understand the process for raising concerns internally and with external agencies.		
	4.2. We can all differentiate and remove barriers to learning for young people who have challenges with talking and understanding words. For example, we pre-teach vocabulary, simplify language, give extra thinking time, and use extra visual support.		
	4.3. We offer evidence based, targeted interventions (like Talk for Work) for young people who have challenges with talking and understanding words.		
	4.4. We follow a clear transition process that includes extra support for young people who have challenges with talking and understanding words when they start school, move class, or go onto further education.		

Engagement with others	**5.1.** We have processes in place that help families understand language development and know how to raise any concerns. For example, we have information evenings, and we send home information or share links to trusted online resources (like our Advice library).		
	5.2. Speech, language and communication skills are a central part of our feedback to families about their child's progress.		
	5.3. We collect and listen to young people's views in an accessible way. For example, we involve the young person in choosing goals relating to their speech, language and communication.		
	5.4. We make sure that relevant information, knowledge, and skills are shared with other professionals. We maintain active engagement with speech and language therapy services.		

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Action plan

Choose three or four of the good practice indicators from the audit to focus on in your action plan. Choose actions that would make the most difference to the young people you support. Complete the action plan table below.

Actions	How will we know we have achieved this?	When will we review this? Who will review this?	Date and outcome of review (✓ x)
Example: 2.1. We all recognise the important role that speech, language, and communication skills play in every part of young people's learning and development.	All staff will have completed the free online course: Introduction to speech, language and communication.	3rd July Charlie Lopez (SENCo)	✓
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
Date of next audit (mm/yy)			

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You can find a range of training options to support you to complete your actions on our Learning Centre: https://learningcentre.speechandlanguage.org.uk/

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