

Draft:

Introductions

Ask participants to spot non-verbal communication between LH & CD

What is communication?- brainstorm – flip chart

Everything we do is communication

- A smile
- A tut
- A sigh
- A nod
- The way we stand
- The tone of voice we use

Recognising that every small gesture sends a clear message to someone helps us to understand how our behaviour affects other people:

- Greeting children with a smile
- Saying something positive but in a stern voice
- Standing with arms folded

What do these communicate?

We are communicating something all the time and our body language and tone of voice are more important than the words used

There are so many things to consider in a classroom:

Is the classroom a welcoming place?

Are children/staff/visitors welcomed and greeted with a smile?

Is the classroom a safe place for everyone?

How is the challenging child seen in the classroom? Visitors will know by feedback from the children.

- In a positive atmosphere other children will tell you what the child has achieved
- In a negative atmosphere other children will tell you what the child has done wrong

Does the child understand?

Children with ASD can be very literal and struggle to read facial expressions

Is the child an effective communicator? (e.g. the child smiles when behaviour addressed: is this learnt behaviour, fear or nerves?)

Is the message age/stage appropriate to the child?

Communicating effectively with the team (All adults working in the classroom)

Does everyone know their role?

Do they understand the child's areas of difficulty/triggers?

Does the team know how to work together to manage challenging behaviour?

After an incident is there a discussion: what went well, could anything have been done differently, who needs support?

Home/school communication

Parents on board – vital if behaviours are to be changed

Home School book- good news, 'I can'

Do parents understand what is in place- are there any issues with literacy at home?

Non-verbal communication – body language

Routines to gain attention- tambourine, clapping routine – minimise negative interactions

Manage behaviour without words – thumbs up, smile, ‘the look’

Eye-contact and personal space - what is appropriate? Everyone has their own comfort zone and eye contact is not always appropriate

What is my body language communicating?

What are others communicating to me?

How do I move around the class? – if I stand over someone is that threatening or supportive? Do I look more to the right because I am right handed (research indicates that this is the case)?

Verbal Communication

Tone of voice is vital – does what we say relay the message? If the words and tone don’t match the message received is likely to be confused

Good listening

Be aware of the loudness and pitch of your voice – lower voice level will quieten class – whispering is a good game!

Literal instructions are important for children with ASD e.g. pull your socks up, are you going to sit there all day could be completely misunderstood!

Language must be appropriate to the child’s stage of development

Be aware that too many instructions and too much language may confuse a child- allow ‘take up’ time before repeating the instructions

‘Chunk’ instructions

Use children to reiterate instructions

Use songs to gain attention rather than ‘sh’ ‘sh’

Scripts

Handout

Game: same instruction different language

Scripting is a very useful tool when managing challenging behaviour. When you know what you are going to say it enables you to stay calm and avoid being drawn in to an argument.

The use of scripts needs appropriate to age and stage of development

If you **ask** a child to do something they have the opportunity to say no

If you **tell them what they are going to do next** they are much more likely to do it