BLOSSOM HOUSE SCHOOL

Policy for Post 16 Speech and Language Therapy

POLICY FOR POST 16 SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Document Purpose

This policy reflects the values and philosophy of the Speech and Language Therapy Department at Blossom House School in relation to supporting pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) within the school environment. It gives a framework to which all staff, teaching and non-teaching, work. It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

Audience

This document is intended for:

- All teaching staff, therapists and classroom assistants

- Parents and carers

- Inspection teams

Copies are saved on the school centralised computer system – 'shared files'.

Post 16 Speech and Language Therapy- Aims of Service

This document outlines the specific speech and language therapy provision provided at Blossom House School for post 16 pupils. It should be read in conjunction with the Blossom House policy for delivering therapy in accordance with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The post 16 therapy department provides the following specific input, advice and support:

a) Regular support on site at the local FE College (e.g. Nescot, South Thames, and Kingston) to monitor functional progress on an on-going basis, in conjunction with the College Link Mentor (CLM).

b) Weekly small discussion groups facilitated by a Speech and Language Therapist.

c) Weekly Reading Groups where possible and where needed, facilitated by a Speech and Language Therapist.

d) Access to individual Speech and Language Therapy on a needs-led basis.

e) Speech and Language Therapy input integrated into the Post 16 curriculum.

f) Support, advice and training to staff who work with the post 16 cohort as and when required.

g) Speaking and Listening Groups where possible, to support preparation for Functional Skills English exams at Levels 1 and 2.

Monitoring Functional Language Skills and Progress within the FE College Setting

The SLT will carry out session observations in order to support CLMs with decision making around ongoing social/learning issues and inform therapy targets. Whilst onsite, the SLT will also gather information to inform progress reviews. The SLT will also support students in specific lessons where appropriate and will use observations to inform therapy.

Discussion Groups

These weekly group sessions are informal in their structure and are designed to support both language and social skills development. The primary goals of these sessions are to:

- o Enable students to engage with others on a range of discussion topics such as current affairs, relationships, self-awareness, transition, small talk etc.
- o Help students to recognise and fulfil their role in a variety of relationships (e.g. family/friendships/romantic relationships) as well as problem solving common or actual issues which may arise in relationships e.g. peer pressure.
- o Increase the student's self-awareness of their areas of strength and need.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for bringing topics for discussion and initiating conversation around these topics. The specific aims are as follows:

- To raise awareness of, and interest in, current affairs topics
- To be familiar with a range of topics that are appropriate for discussion across a range of environments, including college and the work place, such as stories in the news, and daily events
- To be able to share opinions in a group context on a particular topic
- To communicate directly with other people in the group, for example by asking questions and/or problem solving issues
- To identify appropriate solutions for potential difficulties/problems

Reading groups

These weekly group sessions are designed to support functional Literacy skills needed for college and Post 16. The reading sessions are based around group reading and activities linked to a chosen book to aid comprehension.

Reading groups focus on the following aims:

- To support semantic language development- accurate storage of new words by identifying key properties
- To support receptive language skills by interpretation of written language within a text and summarising meaning
- To identify unfamiliar vocabulary items within a text
- Identification of ambiguous language within a text and comparing the literal versus intended meanings

Individual Speech and Language Therapy

Individual SLT sessions are offered on a needs-led basis in order to target specific areas of language or communication skills development. The SLT will devise a support pathway on the basis of information gathered through observations and discussions with CLMs and/or FE College staff and the students themselves. The primary aims of one to one input are to:

- Support the development of self awareness skills so that students gain an insight into their profile of language and communication needs.
- Raise individual awareness of strategies that they need to use to support themselves in educational, social and functional contexts.
- Support social and emotional development.
- Provide feedback regarding progress across the range of settings and use this to inform/advise regarding therapy support.

The frequency and duration of sessions is determined on a needs led basis based on the nature of the student's difficulties.

Training and Advice

The SLT department also provides indirect, and direct where requested, input in the form of training and advice for college staff. This involves ensuring that teaching staff/LSAs within the FE college setting are aware of individual students' profiles of language and communication needs and understand the strategies that are required to maximise the student's learning within the classroom. The SLT department provides college tutors with a "Pen Portrait" for each student. This is a one page profile including the students' needs and effective ways of supporting them.

The aims are:
- To support CLMs by problem solving and discussing strategies relating to specific students.

- To contribute to establishing protocols for on-going link work with FE Colleges (e.g. communication pathways, contributing to policies and documentation, etc).
- To work alongside CLMs where appropriate to provide direct support to students as and when required on an informal basis, e.g. problem solving specific issues.

Student Placements

As part of the SLT Provision, there are several student placements offered at Blossom House each year as part of their training. These placements are subject to Safer Recruitment checks, receive induction before joining the school and are held to the same standards as Blossom House staff with regards confidentiality, conduct and behaviour. Students work under the close supervision of qualified SLTs at all times and regular meetings are held to monitor and assess progress and the placement itself. If you have any concerns with this arrangement, please contact the school or Head of Speech and Language Therapy to discuss.

Speaking and Listening support

In the summer term students taking Level 1 and Level 2 Functional skills English take a Speaking and Listening exam which requires the students to take part in the following:

- Level1 (1 formal discussion, 1 informal discussion)
- Level 2 (1 formal discussion, 1 presentation)

SLTs help to prepare students for the exam in Discussion groups, Reading groups and individual SLT sessions as necessary.

Transition Monitoring

The SLT will support the monitoring of transition targets for individual pupils within the FE college setting as set out in the student's individual 'Transition Plan'. General objectives for each student are as follows:

- To attend college and school regularly (attendance rate of at least 85%).

- To independently access public transport to and from college and show an ability to negotiate some alternative routes and methods of transport.
- To attend college course lessons on time and to know the procedure of informing the relevant staff in case of illness, accidents etc.
- To display the ability to flag up any problems or specific difficulties in understanding or accessing college lessons to the relevant staff or support team.
- To demonstrate an understanding of their own profile (diagnosis and learning needs) in order to access appropriate support.
- To exhibit behaviour of an appropriate level of maturity expected of a college student.
- To show appropriate interaction with peers on his/her course or at college.
- To demonstrate the ability to use socially acceptable sensory/language strategies within the college environment.
- To show basic organisational ability and have necessary equipment ready for all college sessions as well as having done the necessary preparations independently.
- To present himself at college with appropriate levels of cleanliness.

The day to day programme of lessons and activities in Post 16 is designed to enable the student to meet the objectives listed above.

In addition, each student has four targets per term which are specific to that individual. The student identifies areas he or she would like to work on and is helped to formulate specific targets based on these areas by the relevant member of staff. Two such targets are the responsibility of the SLT: a speech and language target and a college/social/emotional target. At the beginning of each term, the SLT helps the student to set the target for him/herself. The SLT prompts the student to take responsibility for remembering and achieving the target throughout the term, and at the end of each term, the SLT and student review the targets and mark whether they have been achieved or not.

Assessment, Planning and Monitoring

The speech and language therapist regularly reviews the pupil's progress so that therapy is continuously needs led.

Based on the results of formal and informal assessments, SLTs devise short term targets (STTs) for each pupil they see, which are specific to their speech and language needs and reflect EHCP objectives for pupils who have an EHCP. These STTs consist of objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable within the time and realistic (SMART). Students are also provided with a copy of their targets ("pupil friendly targets") that they have available in group therapy sessions in order to develop their self-awareness of their strengths and needs.

Following each therapy session, the SLTs write clinical notes about the activities carried out. Additional goals and activities for the next session are planned. If a pupil achieves therapy objectives before the end of a term, this will be noted in their notes. New therapy objectives may then be devised.

Review of Speech and Language Skills

The STT objectives are formally reviewed on a half termly/termly basis and new targets set each term. The students' language skills are also reviewed in transition years (i.e. Year 12 and year 14) through formal assessment and this coincides with their annual review.

Following each term of therapy, the therapist may:

- Provide a further episode of individual therapy to achieve additional goals
- Change the frequency/intensity/format (e.g. individual, paired or group) of individual therapy
- Allow for a period of skill consolidation before resuming further therapy
- Seek alternative professional advice (e.g. arts therapy, OT)

<u>Liaison</u>

The Post 16 SLTs liaise with the wider SLT team at SLT departmental meetings.

The SLTs liaise with the Post 16 in-house staff (e.g. Post 16 Coordinator, therapy team, in house LSAs) at weekly meetings and to share any concerns that have arisen. They also liaise with FE College staff as appropriate (e.g. class teachers and LSAs).

Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress through the annual reviews and annual assessment reports, termly target feedback, parents evenings and informal feedback as appropriate. Informal liaison is facilitated through the Post 16 Coordinator.

The SLT will formally report back on each student's progress with regard to the in-house SLT support as well as social and functional progress made within the FE college setting via annual review reports for each student.

Updated: July 2018, Laura Bunce