

COMPUTING POLICY

Computing Policy

The National Curriculum for Computing has four main aims to ensure that all pupils are able to:

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation.
- Analyse problems in computational terms and have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems.
- Evaluate and apply information technology analytically to solve problems, including new or unfamiliar technologies.
- Become responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology.

Within BeyondAutism Schools, Computing covers the information and communication technologies that support teaching and learning using various computing and communication facilities and features. Computing, in school, comprises the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to use technology appropriately in learning, employment and everyday life. Computing is used in many ways for the presentation, analysis and storage of information, but also to model, measure and control external events, to solve problems and to support learning in a variety of contexts, not least through the use of the Internet across the whole curriculum.

Through the use of computing in the school curriculum we aim to help pupils become confident with a range of technologies and have the ability to achieve their potential using IT resources. The use of computing is promoted within all subjects where possible as well as being a subject in its own right.

Curriculum Aims

The overall aim of using Computing is for all pupils to select and use appropriate applications with confidence and to derive a sense of achievement whilst developing practical skills in the use of Computing. There are also some specific school curriculum aims:

- Use Computing where possible to enhance pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- Introduce the pupils to a wide range of Computing tools and experiences such as iPads, word processing and software for control technology (i.e. any system designed to operate or perform a task – video/camera etc.).
- Help pupils acquire the skills to use such Computing tools effectively, appropriately and with purpose.
- Have access to a range of adapted Computing tools for pupils with special needs such as touch screen monitors, large key keyboards and roller ball mice.
- Help pupils to use technology independently.
- To meet the National Curriculum requirements where possible and help all pupils to achieve their full potential.

- To use Computing tools, software and equipment to aid pupils' communication if deemed appropriate depending on individual needs, i.e. using the communication application 'Proloquo' ©.
- To promote pupils' independent skills across the areas of language, communication and literacy.

Forms of Curriculum Provision

Computing skills are recognised as cross-curricular and are used to both enrich pupils' learning and to enable them access to all aspects of the curriculum.

Computing can be taught during group sessions. Lessons are delivered on a weekly basis. Each week's lesson builds upon the previous week.

Computing plans are based on themes written in medium-term teaching plans based on previously conducted assessments.

Each pupil's individual needs are taken into account when planning and delivering the Computing curriculum. Computing programmes are prepared for each pupil and are taught on an individual basis in a highly structured way, either within a small group setting or on a one-to-one basis.

The Computing curriculum at BeyondAutism Schools is based on the curriculum guidance for the Foundations Stage (2000), the QCDA, Early Years Foundation Stage planning documents, the 2013 National Curriculum programs of study at KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4 and elements from various assessments, such as; the VB-MAPP (Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Programme), ABLLS(R) (The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills) and AFLS (The Assessment of Functional Living Skills).

Teachers are responsible for Schemes of work and lesson plans – they will ensure differentiations of the learning objectives and are responsible for keeping a record of learning that occurs within each lesson.

Communication

We place a strong emphasis on the developing and enhancing of the pupils' communication skills. Our young people are encouraged to use their preferred method of communication, and where possible we encourage vocal, verbal communication. Individual programmes are aimed at: teaching them to express their needs; to interact socially; to develop listener responding; develop the ability to identify people, places, and objects; answer questions and have well developed conversational skills. Children and young people who are unable to express their needs vocally are taught to communicate using sign language (Makaton) or use another augmentative communication system, such as PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), iPad or other interactive device. Tram House School support staff on Makaton training courses and we are a signing community. Parents are given information, training and materials to enable them to use the same communication system in a functional way at home.

What is AAC?

AAC stands for 'Alternative and Augmentative Communication'. AAC refers to the methods by which an individual can replace ('alternative') or supplement ('augment') spoken communication. AAC may also be used to support a pupil's understanding, by providing the pupil with a more permanent visual representation of language.

AAC encompasses a variety of communication methods and can be further broken down into unaided and aided communication.

Unaided communication

Unaided communication refers to the use of no additional equipment. This includes:

- Body language- e.g. facial expression, gesture, posture
- Sign languages – e.g. Makaton, British Sign Language
- Gestural strategies – e.g. pointing, leading others to items/ locations

Aided communication

Aided communication refers to the use of additional resources. This includes:

- Symbols – low-tech systems e.g. communication books, PECS, Choice Boards etc
- Photos – low-tech systems e.g. communication books, PECS, Choice Boards etc
- Objects – e.g. Objects of Reference (using a cup to request a drink), Attention Buttons
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs) – high tech devices, for example; iPads with Communication Apps such as ProLoQuo2Go, Predictable and GridPlayer, as well as GoTalks, eye-gaze devices, attention buttons (vocal programmed) amongst others.

AAC Use at BeyondAutism

BeyondAutism is committed to accepting all forms of communication and viewing these equally. Pupils at BeyondAutism have a range of AAC methods available including:

- Symbols (Widgit is BeyondAutism's preferred symbol set)
- PECS
- Photographs/ Pictures
- Objects of Reference
- Communication Books
- Makaton/ Adapted Sign

- Single message devices – e.g. Big Mack buttons
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA)/Speech Generated Device (SGD) e.g. iPad with a Communication App.

At BeyondAutism, we expect the student's AAC device to be:

- Used by the learner as independently as possible
- Accessible to the student at all times throughout the school day in **all** appropriate and feasible situations.
- Used by the adult working with the student. This is called 'Aided Language Stimulation'.
- Charged (if applicable), complete and accessible.
- In sound working order. Any technical issues need to be reported to the SaLT or OT and if appropriate given to Site Managers to fix as soon as possible and **within one working day** of any issues being noted.
- Readily available to the learner at all times
- Backed up electronically & replaceable (e.g. Choice boards etc should have a saved soft copy, high-tech app profiles should be saved to Dropbox with an equivalent low-tech method available as back up if the iPad/ app should break)
- Never withheld or removed in any circumstance without consultation with the Speech and Language Therapist
- Used in the home environment, if appropriate and possible

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is necessary to show continuity and pupil progression. It is important to enable teaching staff to use individual pupil records and assessments to support future planning and reporting to parents.

Teaching

Each pupil has an individualised programme based on their IEP targets, and these are updated and assessed regularly. New IEPs are produced termly and if a pupil achieves a specific target in advance of this then a new target will be set quickly. If a pupil does not make progress on their Computing target over a two-week period then an ABA Supervisor or teacher will assess the situation and make changes accordingly, either regarding the teaching procedures used for the target, or by reviewing the precursor skills that need to be taught instead.

All targets set are specific and bespoke to each pupil. These targets vary depending on the individual and where on the P-levels or National Curriculum they are assessed to be. If a pupil is working on early learner skills, such as using switches and pushing buttons, then these resources will be made available to the pupil in an age appropriate and functional way.

The school uses consistent Computing vocabulary but will keep in mind the need for all skills to be generalised and easily used within the natural environment. All skills being taught at school will be discussed with and explained to parents and wherever possible these skills will also be practiced at home.

Some pupils are learning to use the iPad with the software package 'Proloquo', to enhance their communication skills. All staff that use this software receive appropriate training and are supported by the school's Speech and Language Therapists (SaLT).

Group sessions are supported by the use of an interactive plasma screen and interactive white boards. Classes are timetabled to use the screen to support teaching in all sessions where appropriate.

Resources

Adapted resources for pupils with special educational needs are available in the school, such as touch screen monitors and roller ball mice. All computers are on the BeyondAutism Schools network and staff access the Internet for appropriate resources and teaching materials only. Pupils can access a range of educational as well as recreational items on YouTube. Many pupils are learning to use iPads and similar tools to enhance and complement their communication skills.

The interactive whiteboards and plasma screen are used for both group and individual sessions. Each classroom contains a range of Computing resources such as: computers, iPads, CD player, portable DVD players, digital cameras, video cameras, digital and analogue clocks, a programmable floor robot (Bee Bot), etc.

E-Safety and Health & Safety

The school is aware of the health and safety issues involved in students' use of Computing. All electrical appliances are tested on a regular basis and all staff receive training on E-Safety alongside regular Safeguarding training.

Please see the E-Safety policy for more details.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to support the implementation of their child's Computing targets and skills where appropriate in the home and in community outings. There is ongoing communication between the parents and school in each pupil's Home-School book. Parents

are encouraged to ask for specific advice or questions. Parents are involved in the discussion regarding target setting during the production of a new IEP every term.

Cross-curricular Activities

Linking Computing with other subjects aids the development of a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils are to be given opportunities to use and apply their Computing skills in other areas of their learning and in the local community. Opportunities for cross-curricular work are to be included in planning.

Related Policies

Assessment, Moderation and Reporting Policy, E-Safety Policy, Health and Safety Policy

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Review Group: Executive Head