Strathmore College

Curriculum Design

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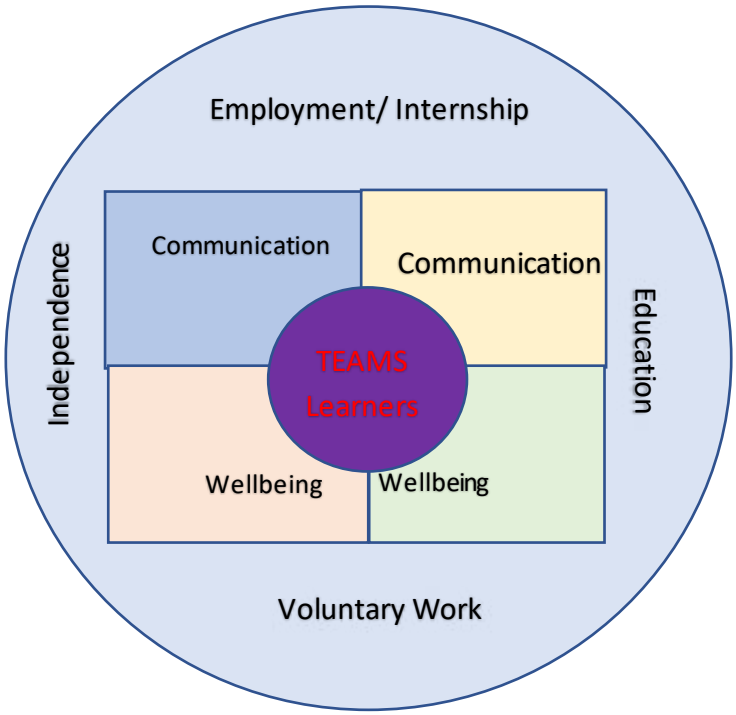


Why are we different?

Learners' programmes are developed with the learners' primary need as a focus. A personalised programme is developed through the four pathways and weighted according to their presenting need. The programme, flexible in its approach will change direction as the needs of the learner changes with the outcome and destination always in mind.

All our leaners have highly complex needs, with some having a comorbid diagnosis. They are within a wide range of functioning ability, pre-entry to working towards Level 3, often with a spiky profile.

Teaching and Learning:

Tutors ensure that:

- Learning activities are planned and structured to enable each individual to make progress towards their individual learner targets.
- Sessions provide contextualised and relevant learning opportunities that enable learners to make progress in the relevant curriculum area.
- Sessions respond creatively to the needs and interests of learners and reduce barriers to engagement in activities that embed functional skills development.

- Development and implementation of strategies designed by the Multi-Disciplinary Team are incorporated successfully to enable learners to achieve their potential and demonstrate and execute their understanding, knowledge and skills.

- Strathmore College implements a total strategy that includes the use of individualised visual resources, sign, differentiated questioning, the use of body language and the use of informal communication systems.

- Sessions respond creatively to ensure opportunities are created to ensure the generalisation of newly acquired communication skills.

- Development and implementation of individualised visual resources to increase learners' independence and develop their communication skills.

- Assistive technology is used where appropriate to support and maximise learners' potential enabling them to achieve greater independence within their learning.

- Sessions enable the transference of skills to different environments with a focus on ensuring that learners are able to apply relevant skills in the community and work place.

- Sessions are planned to reinforce and develop wider skills, which are naturally embedded within the context of learners' sessions to ensure that there is opportunity to develop the broader skills essential for adult life.

Staff training and development:

Staff receive training, advice, guidance and coaching in the following areas:

- Developing individual learning targets in relation to literacy, numeracy and problem-solving and in incorporating these into session planning
- Accurate evaluation of learners' progress in relation to literacy, numeracy and problem-solving and development of strategies and approaches to ensure learning targets are meaningful and achievable.
- Planning activities for learners to enable them to confidently apply literacy, numeracy and problem-solving to practical activities of daily living and work.
- Supporting those learners with low self-esteem and confidence relating to their literacy and numeracy.
- Developing individual learning targets in relation to communication and in incorporating these into session planning.
- Group training and individual support on the use of differentiated levels of questioning.
- Where, relevant, accredited Makaton training.
- Creating and adapting visual resources, including editing the language used to be learner specific.

- Training in communication systems as appropriate and identified by SaLT
- Group support through team teaching and learning meetings and 1:1 support as identified.

Quality Assurance:

Leaders and managers will ensure quality improvement plans are implemented successfully. QA processes highlight any objectives not being achieved within a set time scale so that actions can be taken to ensure required improvements are quickly acted upon. They ensure fully compliance with exam boards and JCQ requirements. QA matrixes and qualification trackers outline the timescales for standardisation, assessment and tracking. Learner starting points and reviews of starting points are recorded during the first six weeks of term (September) or within six-weeks of starting Strathmore College.

Strathmore College monitors the registration of the speech and language therapist through their statutory body (Health Care Profession Council). The Makaton training is delivered by a registered Local Makaton Tutor.

Leaders and managers will ensure quality improvement plans are implemented successfully. QA processes highlight any objectives not being achieved within a set time scale so that actions can be taken to ensure required improvements are quickly acted upon.

Leaders and managers will audit ILPs and target setting and feedback outcomes to QA management meetings to ensure continuous improvements

The quality and effectiveness of the integration of functional skills in teaching and learning will be evaluated and reported to QA management meetings to ensure any further improvements are made

Governors have robust oversight arrangements, ensuring leaders and managers are supported and challenged to deliver continuous improvements.

Our Team Approach:

At Strathmore we believe in the Team Approach. Each learner has a Team Base they are associated with. Each Team has a focus of need associated with their primary diagnosed, or presenting need. Alongside the learners we match the staff team with specific qualifications, experience and or abilities to deliver the support and build essential relationships to start the learner on their journey.

Intensive Communication – Learners within this team have a significant communication barrier & require an inclusive communication approach. Staff matched to this team are experienced in using communication systems.

Social Communication – Learners experience communication barriers and can access work and the community with a varying range of support. Learners will need support in approaches to social communication.

Intensive Wellbeing - Learners within this have significant mental health/ wellbeing concerns and require a therapeutic approach to enable them to build their self-awareness, self-belief and coping

strategies to be enable them to face each day and enhance their skills. They need a responsive approach that provides swift intervention through fluctuating periods of instability and uncertainty often triggered by traumatic life experiences and or hidden debilitating levels of anxiety. Staff are matched with their experience and ability and being able to focus on the wellbeing.

Transitional Wellbeing – Learners within this team present with both the above areas but to a lesser degree. They are able to manage with focused support to apply and build on their skills. They will be able to, or working towards, accessing the community to meet a range of their needs and will be preparing for next steps into work, volunteering or education.

Work / Supported internship - Learners within this group have been on a college programme, developed the ability to better manage and cope with situations especially in the workplace and are focused on being ready for employment. Staff are matched & focus on the development of work skills.

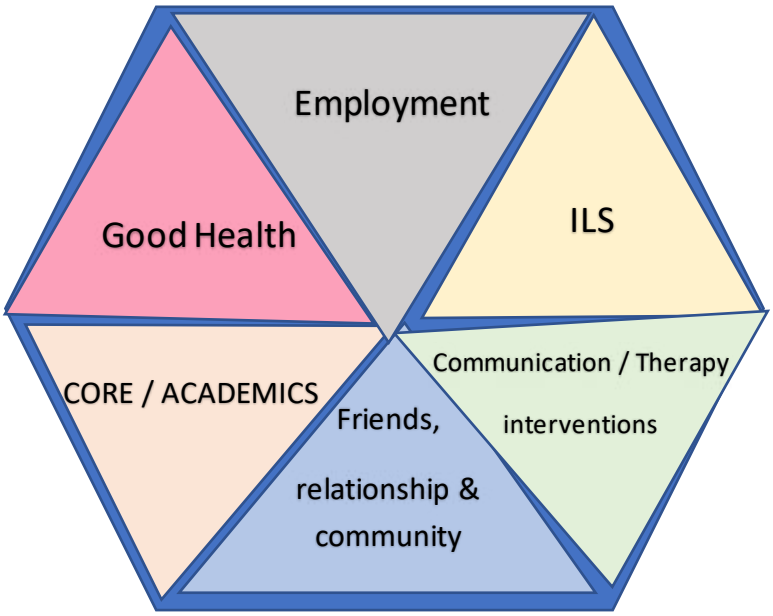
Identifying the right Team:

We take account of previous experiences whether positive or negative and the pre-existing data and information available to allocate a learner to a team. In doing so, we can best tailor the team for each learner. During the first few weeks at Strathmore we will add to this body of knowledge through our own assessments and observations which will allow us to mould the most appropriate team around the learner. Through ongoing assessment and learner development, a learner will be able to move within teams if the primary focus changes.

Our Team Programmes:

All learners have a programme developed within the four pathways under preparing for adulthood. All learners aim to achieve sustainable volunteering, employment or education outcomes and life outcomes. Learner programmes, irrespective of team, will link to their starting points and aspirational outcomes. The programme enables each learner to develop and aspire to reach their potential. With improved life opportunities, that enables them to contribute to society, assess the community safely taking account of modern-day times, work paid or higher education as their next steps.

To achieve this it is important learners get access to similar programmes and opportunity but tailored through the specific lens and expertise of the chosen TEAM. Our programmes include:



1. Pathway to Employment

Overview:

This pathway involves preparation for the future opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adulthood and volunteering/ work-life. The pathway aims to facilitate the transition from college to training, employment and/ or volunteering. The pathway provides learners with a wide range of experiences to help them to make informed choices for their futures, as well as the opportunity to reflect and develop transferable workplace skills and behaviours.

Intent:

For learners whom Employment is their primary aim; college programmes may include a combination of opportunities across the curriculum with outcomes from each activity that focus on the specific skills they need to succeed in work.

For those learners interested in setting up their own business the college provides the opportunity to explore and develop skills in micro-enterprise through individual projects and development of business skills.

The recent development of supported internships facilitates the transition into paid work opportunities. This is an area that the college continues to expand building on the success of the previous year.

Implementation:

Key skills and learning outcomes

- Improved communication for the workplace
- Understanding of Health and Safety in the workplace
- Able to complete a range of tasks to a high standard
- Able to follow workplace routines and disciplines
- Improved time management skills
- Improved finance and budgeting skills
- Ability to work independently and within a team
- To be able to use functional Maths, English and IT in the workplace
- To be able to manage work environments (social and sensory)
- To travel to and from work with increased independence
- To be able to manage break-times
- Where relevant, to achieve work-based qualifications
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Examples of employability skills development activities

- College based sessions: Woodwork & product design, assembly, catering enterprise, business enterprise
- Voluntary work: Conservation and grounds work, farming & animal care, animal sanctuary, Duke of Edinburgh
- Work placements (college led): Aynsley Tea Rooms, Rugeley School, Berry Hill Retirement Village
- Work placements (individual): Geek Retreat, Deeset, bespoke opportunities to meet need
- Internships: Berry Hill Retirement Village, Brewers Fayre, IAE

Progression route:

Typical progression for learners involves the development of skills in college-based activities and community based voluntary sessions, progressing on to work placements within real working environments lead by college staff, and then onto work placements that are closely linked with the learners vocational aspirations during their transition year. Individual needs and abilities are assessed at the start of the learner's college programme and learners can access the curriculum at any point with a structured progression route planned from their starting point to the end of programme outcomes.

2. Pathway to Further/Higher Education

Overview:

This pathway involves preparation for and integration into, or back into, a 'mainstream' Further Education (FE) setting. The pathway aims to facilitate a smooth transition ensuring learners:

- are ready to engage in vocational or academic learning
- are able to manage their wellbeing and emotions in a larger FE setting
- know what support is available to them in a larger FE setting
- are able to engage in planning their education and work beyond FE.

Intent:

The pathway provides learners with opportunities to develop essential study skills, alongside experiences of vocational and academic learning as appropriate. Learners can study for qualifications that are relevant and meaningful to them. Meanwhile, learners may continue to undertake a range of work-based learning and work experiences to help them to make informed choices for their futures post FE.

Where relevant and possible, college links will provide learners with the opportunity to experience courses in a larger college environment, whilst supported by Strathmore staff.

Learners will have the opportunity to identify courses of interest and will be supported to achieve realistic entry requirements.

Implementation:

Programmes at Strathmore are created to meet learner needs and provide learners with new experiences in learning and work.

In their first year of study, learners will be able to choose from a range of vocational sessions alongside work sessions, independent living sessions and/or community access. As learners experience these sessions, tutors will also be assessing their starting points and monitoring their progress so that they can support learners to identify their talents in relation to potential further study.

Learners will be supported to develop self-regulation, using strategies to enable them to cope and manage anxiety, minimizing impact on learning

In their second year of study, identified learners will focus their skills further on their chosen subject or subjects and will often take further qualifications. Learners may be able to attend courses at local colleges through college links.

Learners will be taught key study skills to support their transition to larger colleges environments and will be guided to understand the support services available to them and how to access these.

Learners will be supported to be confident to use local services to maintain their wellbeing

Learners will have access to Independent Advice and Guidance throughout their time at Strathmore.

Key skills and learning outcomes:

- Readiness to study in a larger FE College
- Knowledge of support services available in FE College
- Developed understanding and improved skills in chosen subject area(/s)
- Able to complete a range of study tasks to a high standard
- Improved academic/vocational planning and organisational skills
- Ability to work independently on subject-related activity
- Able to use IT for study purposes
- To be able to manage college environments (social and sensory)
- To travel to and from college with increased independence
- To be able to manage college social times
- Where relevant, achievement of qualifications

Progression Route:

Typical progression for learners is the successful transition into a college that enables them to hone their interests and talents into a specific vocational or academic programme at a level that is accessible to them and is relevant to their future aims.

3. Pathway to Independent Living

Overview:

This pathway facilitates the development of skills to enable learners to become more independent in activities of daily life. The pathway develops learners' ability to maintain good health and hygiene through developing skills in cooking, personal care and looking after their home, belongings and personal budgets. The pathway enables learners to make their own choices about how they live, what they eat, what they spend their money on and their personal appearance.

Intent:

The pathway provides learners with opportunities to develop essential skills required for independent living. This includes all aspects of independence required to thrive.

Implementation:

Learning environments:

The college has a fully equipped catering kitchen& and a two bedroomed terraced property where they develop life skills. Learners are supported to transfer their skills to more realistic living environments through use of our residential facilities & home (as day Learners) which enables the learners to progress with their ability to carry out a range of domestic tasks and to be more independent.

Key skills and learning outcomes:

- Shopping for food and personal items
- Managing personal finances
- Looking after personal belongings
- Domestic tasks
- Health and Personal hygiene
- Managing medical appointments
- Preparing meals
- Food hygiene
- Safe use of kitchen and domestic appliances.

Examples of activities:

- Bespoke individual ILS sessions
- Group ILS sessions
- Lunchtime sandwich and snack service
- Best baking buddies
- Preparing food for home

Progression route:

Typical progression for learners involves the development of skills in college-based sessions, progressing on to accessing structured and facilitated community based activities, and then on to being able to plan and carryout activities of personal interest with peers, developing their ability to access these activities independently outside of college time. Individual needs and abilities are assessed at the start of the learners college programme and learners can access the curriculum at any point with a structured progression route planned from their starting point to the end of programme outcomes.

4. Pathway to Friends, Relationship & Community

Overview:

This pathway facilitates the development of skills to enable learners to develop and maintain friendships through engagement in community-based activities. It enables learners to feel a part of and contribute to their local community. The pathway develops learners understanding of how to stay safe both online and in the community whilst engaging in social activities with others. The pathway enables learners to explore a range of activities that they may wish to continue into their adult lives and prepares them to make informed choices about their future.

Intent:

The pathway provides learners with opportunities to develop essential skills required for make and maintain friends and relationships within a community.

Implementation:

Learning environments

A graded exposure approach is taken to enable learners to develop their ability to manage increasingly demanding social emotional and sensory environments. Learners social and emotional needs are matched with appropriate groups. Learners can progress from 1:1 work into sessions with peer and then into group sessions to enable them to make progress with their social and emotional skills at a pace which is challenging but manageable. Learners' individual sensory profiles are used to match sensory environments and activities which facilitate reduction in their anxiety level supporting their ability to then manage social interactions in a calmer state.

Key skills and learning outcomes:

- Social communication and interaction
- Managing sensory environments
- Managing social environments
- Managing emotions and self-regulation in interactions with others
- Accessing recreational facilities
- Planning and carrying out social activities with peers
- Travel within the local community
- Choose, plan and carryout social activities as part of a group or with a friend.
- Personal safety in the community and online
- Building a social network - for life after college

Examples of activities

- Sports
- Performing arts
- Trampolining
- Swimming
- Gym
- Photography

- Duke of Edinburgh
- Personal Programmes (focused on developing learners' abilities to access activities of shared or personal interest in the community)

Progression route:

Typical progression for learners involves the development of skills in college-based sessions, progressing on to accessing structured and facilitated community based activities, and then on to being able to plan and carryout activities of personal interest with peers, developing their ability to access these activities independently outside of college time. Individual needs and abilities are assessed at the start of the learners college programme and learners can access the curriculum at any point with a structured progression route planned from their starting point to the end of programme outcomes.

5. Pathway to Good Health

Overview/Intent:

Individual health outcomes are embedded throughout the learners' curriculum. Learners are encouraged to build on and develop their existing skills to help meet their physical, mental, emotional, social and sensory needs. This is through learner engagement with college therapists as well as the strategies embedded in their individual learning programmes.

Implementation (Our Multi-disciplinary Team Approach):

Counselling and Psychology

Strathmore College has access to a clinical psychologist who provides 1:1 psychological therapy to learners, as well as delivers behavioural interventions, offers training, and provides mental health support to staff. The Clinical Psychologist at the college contributes to the MDT process also.

Occupational Therapy

The occupational therapist delivers 1:1 sensory integration sessions to support learners to develop the skills to regulate their sensory sensitivities and meet their own sensory needs. Learners develop their understanding of how they process sensory information and strategies that help them to manage difficult sensory environments and activities.

Speech and Language Therapy

The Speech & language therapist completes initial and annual reassessment, delivers 1:1 and when identified group work.

Key skills and learning outcomes:

- Improved emotional and behavioural self management
- Increased awareness and understanding of ways to stay safe and reduce the risk of harm
- Increase in meaningful social interactions and friendships
- Improved engagement in individual learning program and the curriculum
- Increased motivation and improved self-esteem and social confidence
- Improved ability to communicate health needs to others
- Increased understanding of value of physical exercise
- Increased awareness of knowledge of value of healthy eating
- Increased willingness and confidence in managing personal care
- Developed strategies to manage anxieties
- Developed strategies to manage sensory needs and sensitivities

The college recognises the need to extend its curriculum offer to meet the needs of a growing number of learners who have had significant periods out of education due to mental health needs such as; trauma, anxiety and depression, as well as neurodevelopmental difficulties such as autism, ADHD, sensory integration difficulties and learning disabilities.

The college recognises that these learners need continued wellbeing support to access their programme and develop the self management strategies to improve their life opportunities.

- Motivation
- Communication and interaction skills
- Processing skills
- Self-regulation
- Ownership of learning
- Self-esteem and confidence

Maths & English (Literacy/ numeracy)

Overview:

The college is ambitious for all of its learners and committed to developing the maths and English skills of all learners. Development of maths and English is focused on enabling learners to acquire the skills they need in order to achieve higher levels of independence in their adult lives. The college meets ESFA requirements for study programmes as outlined in the ESFA guidance document ***16 to 19 funding: maths and English condition of funding***, and fully considers the EHCP of each individual learner.

Intent:

To successfully assess learners' potential and identify key maths and English skills they require to improve their ability to achieve a more independent life. To ensure learners gain qualifications such as Functional Skills, those designed to support bespoke patterns of learning and, where possible and relevant, GCSE. To enable learners to achieve individualised and challenging maths, English, literacy and problem-solving targets that enable them to achieve their preparation for adulthood outcomes. Provide meaningful experiences across the learner's programme that utilise natural and practical opportunities to embed maths and English that will be essential for their adult lives. To provide ambition, stretching and challenging learners to achieve optimum outcomes.

Implementation:

Baseline Assessment

Individual assessment procedures will be implemented to ensure that a true and accurate assessment of ability, challenges and potential is made to give a meaningful starting point.

The purpose of baseine assessment is to:

- identify a learner's current working at level from which we can identify strengths, areas for development and measure and report progress made
- determine if the learner can work towards the next level of qualification
- inform the agreed programme of study in maths and English
- Identify if further assessment is required (e.g. phonics assessment)

Baseline Assessment includes:

- exploration of prior attainment
- Identifying previous Access Arrangements, where we have been informed of these
- Identifying learner motivation, volition and wider needs that might impact readiness to study for qualifications
- sensory, praxis, and language difficulties that impact on execution of functional skills.

Types of Baseline Assessment:

- BKSB- baseline assessments
- Milestone assessments
- A Functional Skills paper

- Observational assessments
- Tutor devised questions
- Communication assessments carried out by a qualified practitioner (Speech and Language Therapist)
- Phonics Assessments

Baseline Assessment process:

- Learners will usually take a baseline assessment in both maths and English at the start of their course and progress will be measured against this assessment. For some learners, this will be a measure of academic achievement (e.g. completion of qualifications) and, for others, achievement of targets and milestones in literacy, communication, numeracy and problem-solving.

Pathways:

The table below presents the standard enrolment process for learners. However, all learners will embark on a programme of learning that meets their holistic needs, alongside their work, education and life ambitions. It is acknowledged that not all learners will enter the college ready to engage or re-engage with formal qualifications in maths and English.

Prior qualification (FS or equivalent)	**Baseline Assessment Outcome**	**Regulated qualification**	**Non-regulated provision**
None/pre-entry	Pre-entry		Appropriate literacy, numeracy, communication and/or problem-solving targets
None	E1 – L2	FS at level identified	At level identified
E1	E1+	FS at level identified	At level identified
E1	Below Entry		At level identified previous attainment is achieved.
E2	E2+	FS at level identified	At level identified
E2	E1 (or below)		At level identified previous attainment is achieved.
E3	E3+	FS at level identified	At level identified
E3	E2 (or below)		At level identified previous attainment is achieved.
L1	L1+	FS L2	At level identified
L1	E3 (or below)		At level identified previous attainment is achieved.
L2	L2+	GCSE	At level identified
L2	L1 (or below)		At level identified previous attainment is achieved.

GCSE D/Grade 3	Any	GCSE	At level identified

Regulated Provision:

- Where a learner's baseline assessment is in line with or above their prior attainment, the learner is encouraged to take a Functional Skill, or, where relevant, GCSE in maths or English.

- Functional Skills is delivered in discrete lessons. Learners take examinations through the City and Guilds board.

- GCSEs are delivered either internally or through working with local providers. Currently, learners take examinations at one of our sister organisations.

- A number of learners will take City and Guilds Awards in Maths and English. This is a route for learners who it is felt a piecemeal approach to learning and accreditation is appropriate and for learners who can aspire to their next level of functional study but who are not yet ready to take examinations.

Non-regulated Provision:

- Learners will develop their maths and English through targets set after baseline assessments have been completed. Targets will link to learner starting points and EHCP milestones. These targets are regularly monitored and recorded and evidence through Recognising and Rewarding Progress and Achievement (RARPA).

- Learners that are assessed in phonics knowledge and application (identified during the baseline assessment process) may then be identified for regular phonics activity through staff trained in a phonics program written specifically for learners with Special Educational Needs' (produced by Ann Sullivan). The aim being to improve their reading and writing skills, developing their functional potential in a work or community setting.

6. Communication

Overview:

The college recognises that all of our learners have identified needs with regards to expressive and receptive language skills. Each learner is known to the speech and language therapist

who will provide specific recommendations based on their individual assessments and EHCP outcomes.

Intent:

- To baseline individual learners in terms of their current ability and needs.
- To provide recommendations for support and development of areas.
- To ensure the curriculum is taught at a level of language that the learners can access to optimise learning.
- To provide individualised resources which enable learners to develop their independence and transfer key skills.
- To provide specific speech and language input as identified.
- To embed identified strategies within all aspects of the learner's programme
- To be responsive to individual needs as they arise.
- To influence individual learners progress through target setting within the ILP.
- To monitor progress through review of learning, dedicated SaLT intervention and annual reassessment

Implementation:

Assessment considerations will include:

- Prior speech and language reports.
- Diagnosis and the impact of the diagnosis on speech, language and communication skills.
- The type of assessment that the individual learner will be the most responsive to.
- Learner consent.
- The learners' social, emotional and behavioural presentation.

Types of assessment:

- Full speech and language and communication assessment on commencement of studies.
- Annual re-assessments for those with identified needs
- Formal assessments
- Informal assessments based on accepted speech and language models of communication
- Observations
- Discussion with staff

Assessment process:

- For the majority of new learners, the initial assessment will be completed within the first term of their placement. In exceptional circumstances this can be extended through agreement by the SLT.
- Re-assessments will take place annually for those with identified needs.
- Informal reviews and updates can be provided on request should the need arise.

Target setting:

Recommendations are made from the speech and language reports and these are then used alongside the EHCP outcomes to set highly individualised, specific communication targets.

Learners will have targets to develop their expressive, receptive and social communication skills.
Individual learner targets are reviewed on a six weekly basis & evaluated within sessions where further strategies, resources or modifications will be made to ensure timely progress.