AAC

Total Communication

Pupils and staff are encouraged to use every available form of communication. Learners develop a range of skills to enable them to communicate to their full potential in all environments. Staff utilise a range of methods to support understanding, retention and expression.

thank you

What St Mary's offers

St Mary's School & College provides residential and non-residential education, care and therapy for pupils aged 7-19. Our pupils have speech, language and communication needs and may also have associated physical and learning difficulties.

Our therapy, health and wellbeing teams and on-site facilities enable us to deliver provision across the waking curriculum. Our model of integrated therapy means that the pupils' needs are planned, provided, and assessed in natural and functional settings. There is the opportunity to develop high levels of trust and familiarity leading to strong therapeutic relationships. Skills are addressed in the clusters which serve functions in the pupils' life maximising independence levels, and the development of 'tools for life'.

The ultimate aim is for every pupil to achieve as much independence as possible so that they can live a fulfilled life.

st.mary's
Special School & College Bexhill
Making a difference

AUGMENTATIVE & ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)

AAC at a St Mary's

AAC

What is AAC?

Augmentative and Alternative Communication **(AAC)** describes a wide range of techniques pupils can use to support spoken communication. These include gesture, signing, symbols, word boards, communication boards and books, as well as Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs).

At St Mary's the use of AAC is supported across the waking curriculum. We have Speech and Language Therapists with specialist skills and interests in this area. We also have an AAC Practitioner onsite who offers technical support, training and programming to pupils, staff and carers.

Low-tech aids are AAC systems which do not need a battery to work. They may include everyday objects, communication books with pictures, symbols or photos, alphabet charts and even pen and paper.

AAC

Communication Software

- Grid 2
- Symwriter
- Symbols software e.g. Widgit
- Clicker 7

High-tech aids need a battery to work and cover a variety a AAC systems.

High-tech aids enable the pupil to make choices and create messages using pictures, symbols, words or letters that can be linked to an electronic voice.

High-tech aids used at St Mary's:

- Grid player on iPads
- Proloquo2Go
- Gridpad

AAC

Ensure access to AAC at all times

Pupils who use AAC must have access to their system at all times to avoid them feeling isolated and excluded from those around them.

Grid player on iPads

All pupils with Grid player installed on their iPad's will have access to a range of vocabulary, which is then customised to meet individual needs. We work in partnership with staff across the trust and families to identify new vocabulary, including:

- Functional
- Personalised
- Curriculum

gp GridPlayer