



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Children with Disabilities Communication  
Rights Charter**

UNCLASSIFIED

## Document Control Information

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*Any questions or concerns about the contents of this policy should be raised with the Quality Assurance and Policy Team via email at: [ImpactAndInspectionTeam@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:ImpactAndInspectionTeam@wokingham.gov.uk).*

## Children with Disabilities Communication Rights Charter

Wokingham Borough Council's Social Care and Early Help services have adopted rights around communication. We place importance on giving children with disabilities as much opportunity as possible to have their views heard and listened to. By adhering to these rights, it is our intention that all children with disabilities will feel part of the decision-making processes that affect important aspects of their lives.

### **Communication Rights**

*Children with Disabilities have the right to:*

- ▶ Be communicated with directly, not just through others.
- ▶ Have their views sought on all issues and decisions that will affect them - with feedback provided on how these views have shaped our decision making.
- ▶ Have their level of understanding accurately assessed so that others can communicate meaningfully to them.
- ▶ Be given access to the most sophisticated method of communication they can manage, at any given time.
- ▶ Be communicated with in an environment and at a level that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- ▶ Have their communication taken seriously and be given sufficient time to process information.
- ▶ Have all forms of communication acknowledged, including behaviour.
- ▶ Have their method of communication understood correctly. This may require the worker to verify the child's understanding, their communication or observe behaviours over several different settings and environments.
- ▶ Be given access to methods of communication which are appropriate and dignified.
- ▶ Be given methods of communication for negative as well as positive feelings and thoughts.
- ▶ Be given methods of communication appropriate to their age, gender, identity, experience, culture or religion.
- ▶ Be given methods of communication for private parts of the body at the earliest possible opportunity.
- ▶ Be given methods of communication to convey instances of abuse or abusive acts (starting with hitting) at the earliest opportunity.
- ▶ Use and maintain all methods of communication they have mastered.
- ▶ Not communicate if they chose or feel unable to.
- ▶ Have a trusted adult or independent advocate present during communication if desired.
- ▶ Have access to someone who can act as an interpreter where this is required.
- ▶ Have their communication accurately recorded.

## **Communication Pledge to Children:**

*To uphold these rights, we will:*

- Directly seek your views on important things that are happening in your life and check that we have understood what you are telling us.
- Communicate in a way that is respectful of your age, gender, identity, experience, culture or religion.
- Be a role model in our own forms of communication and take opportunities for further training, both general and specific, that will help our communication with you.
- Seek support from others with the level of skill or training required to communicate fully with you where this would be helpful.
- Prepare before communicating with you by:
  - Checking how you prefer to communicate.
  - Being clear in what we want to ask you about.
  - Having access to appropriate assistive technology and tools.
  - Checking whether you might want or need someone to support you.
- Give you time to prepare by:
  - Letting you know that we would like to communicate with you and what this will be about.
  - Where possible, asking you where you would like this to happen and who you would like to be there. This might be an adult you trust; someone you know can competently use your preferred method of communication or an interpreter.
  - Asking you whether there are any other things that you would want to discuss with us.
  - Asking you whether there are any other things that might help you to communicate.
- Allow sufficient time for you to communicate at your own pace and make sure that we have understood what you are wanting to tell us. This may require us to visit you more than once and possibly in different places e.g., home, school or clubs.
- Respect your right not to communicate if you chose or feel unable to. Whilst accepting that you might simply not want to communicate with us, we will try to find out if there is anything we can do differently that might make this easier for you.
- Feedback to you and answer any questions you have raised to the best of our ability.
- Record your communication accurately.