**Social Communication Group Planning**

**Rationale:**

**Participation within conversations, group discussions and whole class activities relies on the use of higher level language and conversational skills to:**

* Listen to and understand another person’s point of view;
* Express your own ideas clearly and in sequence;
* Recognise the knowledge and experience of others within the group so that your language and information matches their level;
* Negotiate with others when there are different ideas/viewpoints within the group;
* Use language to problem solve, both individually and as a group.

**In addition to this the following social skills are required:**

* Sharing space and equipment with others;
* Working alongside others within a group;
* Working cooperatively with others to achieve a common goal;
* Understanding and using appropriate eye contact and body language to enable effective communication;
* Taking turns within an activity and/or a conversation (both verbal and non-verbal).

Developmentally, children usually acquire non-verbal social skills before conversational skills. These skills are developed through play and interaction with adults and then peers. Children learn first to play alongside their peers, which then leads to the development of cooperative and social play. It is likely that many children with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs have not had the same opportunities as their peers to develop these skills through play, due to their SEMH needs, additional needs such as ADHD and ASC, and reduced opportunities to socialise with peers due to the difficulties many of these children have in accessing education.

Therefore, through delivering a social communication group within Hope High School, we hope to develop pupil’s non-verbal communication and social play skills, as well as the higher-level language and conversational skills needed for classroom activities and discussions. To address these skills from a developmental perspective, non-verbal communication/social skills should be targeted first.

**Targets for the group (in the order they will be addressed):**

1. To work alongside others within an activity, sharing space and equipment.
2. To take turns within a group game/activity, both verbal and non-verbal.
3. To work co-operatively with others in a group to achieve a common goal.
4. To show an awareness of the importance of eye contact and body language to enable effective communication.
5. To use appropriate non-verbal communication skills (eye contact, gestures, body language) within activities and conversations.
6. To listen to another person’s point of view and understand that it may differ from your own.
7. To express ideas clearly and in sequence.
8. To be aware of the needs of the listener when sharing information with the group.
9. To negotiate with others when there are different ideas/viewpoints within the group.
10. To use language to solve problems as a group and provide explanations.

**Planning**

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| **Weeks 1 and 2** | **Focus/Aims:**   1. To work alongside others within an activity, sharing space and equipment with others. 2. To work co-operatively with others in a group to achieve a common goal. |
| **Activities:**   1. **Group Activity** 2. **Choice of 3 activities – children choose which activity they would like to participate in:**  * Lego * Jigsaws * Domino rally |
| **Visual Support/Learning Tools**  Week 1: Key vocab map: cooperation, negotiation  Week 2: complete self-awareness questionnaire for social skills |