



**malikara**  
specialist school

# INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

in Supporting Student  
Communication

Presented by

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Allied Health Manager



**malkara**  
Specialist school  
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# Session Outline

- **Why, what and how?**
- **Developing and Implementing the Malkara Communication Profile Tool (MCPT)**
- **Next steps...embedding the tool as an effective source of evidence.**



# A Solid Foundation

Malkara School's strategic journey in enhancing communication supports for students.

# 2018



# 2020



# 2023



# 2024



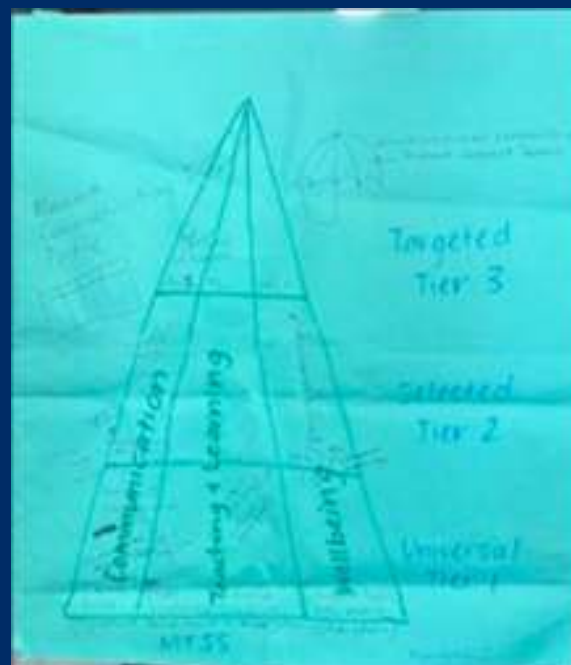
## Priority 2: Increase student wellbeing outcomes

1. Develop systematic improvement of socioemotional learning ILP goals
2. Develop systematic improvement of communication ILP goals

Where	Who will implement it?	What is the measure (goal) to assess learning outcomes, and/or wellbeing?
<p>Where may include lesson reflections (e.g., pedagogical framework), processes (e.g., staff allocation in response to identified student need), or changes to the physical environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather baseline data on Personal and Social Capabilities</li> <li>• Gather baseline data in Readings of Communication Competence (RCCC)</li> <li>• Teachers engagement in Communication and PSC focus groups</li> <li>• Learning Support Assistant (LSA) goals in supporting student Communication and Personal and Social Capabilities</li> <li>• Register whole staff professional learning in Communication</li> <li>• Targeted coaching in Communication for teachers</li> <li>• Development and implementation of Makers Communication Profile Tool (MCPPT)</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCCC Assessment Data</li> <li>• RCCC Assessment Data</li> <li>• Data plot time to whole school staff meetings and LSA meetings to develop skills and knowledge in all staff</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with external PSC coach</li> <li>• Collaboration planning with School Health Manager and relevant supports</li> <li>• Makers Communication Profile Tool (MCPPT)</li> </ul> <p><b>How will impact be measured?</b></p> <p>This may include both qualitative and quantitative data including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCCC Assessment Data</li> <li>• RCCC Assessment Data</li> <li>• Documented achievement of LSA goals aggregated across the school</li> </ul>	<p>Who may include any staff with the responsibility who will undertake specific components. May include teachers and students. Consideration should be given to RCCC and specific measures that the school may implement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Teachers</li> <li>• All staff</li> <li>• Leadership Team</li> <li>• School Health Manager</li> <li>• Communication Focus Group</li> <li>• PSC Focus Group</li> </ul>	<p>After your implementation plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change are you expecting?</li> <li>• Will be the effect on people?</li> <li>• Will change for systems?</li> <li>• Will be the direct impact on student wellbeing?</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrate growth in Personal and Social Capabilities measured as RCCC tool, aggregated across the school</li> <li>• Students demonstrate growth in RCCC domains, aggregated across the school</li> </ul>

RCCC LEVEL	Domain 2: To initiate communication in a way that is accepted and recognised by others when the individual has something to say. Communication Goal: (select text appropriate students RCCC level)
1	Student will initiate communication using a behaviour, vocalisation or physical movement that is sometimes recognised by others.
2	Student will use a socially appropriate and/or clearly recognised method for initiating communication, but may continue to use less appropriate/undesired methods on majority of attempts.
3	<p>Student will use a socially appropriate and clearly recognised method for initiating communication much of the time.</p> <p><b>Action Steps:</b></p> <p>Teaching Simple Phrases &amp; Gestures:</p> <p>Use one-on-one (and captions): Start with simple phrases like "Come play" or "Help, please."</p> <p>Visuals: Pair each sentence with visuals, using C.L.I.'s communication system.</p> <p>Modeling and Expanding Sentences:</p> <p>Eg: When: use a simple sentence, staff repeat it with one added word to expand vocabulary and phrasing.</p> <p>If: says "Play," staff can say, "Come play."</p>
4	Student will use a socially appropriate and clearly recognised method for initiating communication on majority of attempts in limited situations and surroundings with familiar partners.






Communication	Teaching and Learning	Wellbeing
Tier 3 - Targeted		
Referrals to AHS SLP Engagement with NDIS/Private Speech Pathologists Individual AAC systems	Professional Learning Learner Profiles	Behaviour Support Plans
Tier 2 - Selected		
Professional Learning Communication Focus Group Communication Coaching in Classroom	Teacher Coaching	PBL Classroom Settings
Tier 1 - Universal		
ROCC Assessment PODD Whole School Professional Learning Malkara Communication Profile Tool	ABLES A-D and Australian Curriculum Curriculum Planning Tool Leadership Coaching	Student Profile PBL Matrix
Signature Behaviours, Staff PBL Matrix, Staff Induction		

Staff at Malkara are committed to demonstrating the behaviours listed below at all times.

**We:**

1. ensure quality time for each student, every day
2. see the child first and the disability second
3. don't talk about the students in their presence without including them in the conversation
4. tell children what we are going to do with them before we do it
5. promote independence by letting each student 'have a go' first before offering assistance
6. demonstrate respect for our teaching space and times by not interrupting when learning is happening
7. protect students' dignity at all times
8. allow children the time they need to respond
9. respond to each response, whether intentional or not



 <b>MALKARA STAFF BEHAVIOURS</b>									
	Ensure quality time for each student every day	See the student first	If you need to talk about students in their presence, make sure you include them in the conversation	Prepare students for what is going to happen next	Promote independence by letting each student have a 'go' first before offering assistance	Demonstrate respect for teaching space and times by not interrupting when learning is happening	Always protect students' dignity	Allow students' the time they need to respond	Respond to each response, whether intentional or not
<b>We are Safe</b>	<p>We use supportive and encouraging language.</p> <p>We include interactions with students.</p> <p>We respond to student needs.</p>	<p>Introduce yourself to students.</p> <p>Get to know all students.</p>	<p>If appropriate, ask for consent, and accept the response.</p>	<p>Inform student if you are going to do something to them, e.g., "I am going to help you wipe your nose."</p> <p>Include students in routines.</p> <p>Use 'First and Then'.</p>	<p>Use explicit, supportive language to encourage students to try new experiences or tasks.</p> <p>Expect errors and respond with a 'no blame' attitude.</p>	<p>Knock and wait before entering a classroom.</p> <p>Schedule necessary visits where appropriate so students know who is coming.</p>	<p>Where possible, have familiar staff support students with routines and learning.</p>	<p>Maintain appropriate use of space depending on interactions: personal, social.</p>	<p>Use active listening skills, and positive body language when interpreting and responding to communication.</p>
<b>We Learn</b>	<p>In our teams we share responsibilities and communicate positively with other staff.</p>	<p>Provide age-appropriate lessons and resources.</p>	<p>Encourage students to actively communicate first, before doing it on their behalf.</p>	<p>Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).</p> <p>Frequently refer to a clear visual schedule.</p>	<p>Use strategies such as prompting, chaining, cuing, and modelling to scaffold tasks.</p>	<p>Use methods of communication such as sending a note, waiting until a break, and emailing.</p>	<p>Positively name and accept student behaviours and feelings, e.g., "It's okay to feel sad".</p>	<p>Provide options for students to respond in: penic, PADD, gesture.</p> <p>Use various ways of requesting, questioning, instructing.</p>	<p>Provide hints to enable students to have a voice during learning.</p> <p>Interpret communicative intent and make connections.</p>
<b>We Care</b>	<p>We greet all students warmly.</p> <p>We take the time to listen to what students have to say.</p>	<p>Use age-appropriate language and tone of voice.</p> <p>Show an interest in each student.</p>	<p>Positively frame messages.</p> <p>Acknowledge the student before sharing necessary information.</p>	<p>Allow students processing time.</p> <p>Encourage students to do things for themselves before offering assistance.</p>	<p>Give positive reinforcement for effort.</p>	<p>Write letters to be used for safety only.</p> <p>Acknowledge that a 'not now' response is appropriate.</p>	<p>Speak positively about students and families.</p> <p>Use non-disparaging language and/or gestures.</p>	<p>Allow 30 seconds before expecting a response or presenting the request/ instruction a different way.</p> <p>Honour student responses.</p>	<p>Positively acknowledge all attempts at communication.</p>

# Malkara Staff Induction

The information presented in this induction is designed to orient staff to Malkara School's culture, values, and policies. It presents an essential understanding of workplace expectations and provides an overview of tasks and processes relevant to the school. It also gives guidance and expectations regarding performance and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Each module should take around 30 minutes to complete.

Once you have completed each module, answer the questions and submit your response.





Meeting 27/02/24

Sarah, Cathy, Leah, Imogen, Mackayla, Bron

1. Why a Malkara communication profile tool?
  - It's a journey-need to know where we do things well and areas of development
  - Important-does a couple of things, it will share ideas about what is good communication practice-ideal,
  - Shared understanding-as a school (underpinning philosophy-visual supports
  - Sets children up for success
  - As a group we will know what to target as a group
  - Getting on the same page-like our PBL poster-its a common understanding
  - Don't have to interpret, no mixed messages
  - Expectation of good practice
  - People know different things
  - Each class is different-focus on communication, should have a consistent approach
  - Guides support across the school -ind staff/ind class.
  - Set goals in classrooms
  - Consistent e.g. PECS
  - Observations on use of POOD-new LSAs don't have a strap or apron
2. How are we going to roll this out?
  - Scope and sequence? For staff



## Malkara Communication Profile Tool

### BACKGROUND

Malkara School's mission is that the community works together to provide a positive, student-centred learning environment that enables students to develop towards their full potential and be valued and contributing members of society. Students are at the centre of all we do. Students voice is valued and respected.

We believe that supporting student communication development enhances student learning outcomes and student wellbeing. The Malkara Communication Profile Tool was developed to support all staff work towards excellence in supporting student communication.

Malkara School utilises the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to support student outcomes. The MCPT has been developed with this framework in mind to capture what supports and strategies are embedded at a universal level to benefit all students, what supports and strategies are needed for selected groups of students and what supports and strategies are required for individual students.

### ADMINISTRATION

This is a self-assessment tool. The Executive Team and Communication Focus Group will work with staff to complete the tool via observations and interviews. Teams can then set goals for each section and develop strategies to progress towards these goals. Teams can seek support from their Executive Lead or the Allied Health Manager to discuss strategies to help them progress towards their goals.

#### Administration notes:

- The tool should be completed via observation and interview
- Evidence should be obtained to support the rating
- Start in the left (emerging) column, if all criteria are met, move to the right (evolving) and continue this pattern. Only move to a higher rating when lower ratings are achieved (e.g., the 'evolving' rating assumes that the 'emerging', 'evolving' and 'emerging' criteria are met).

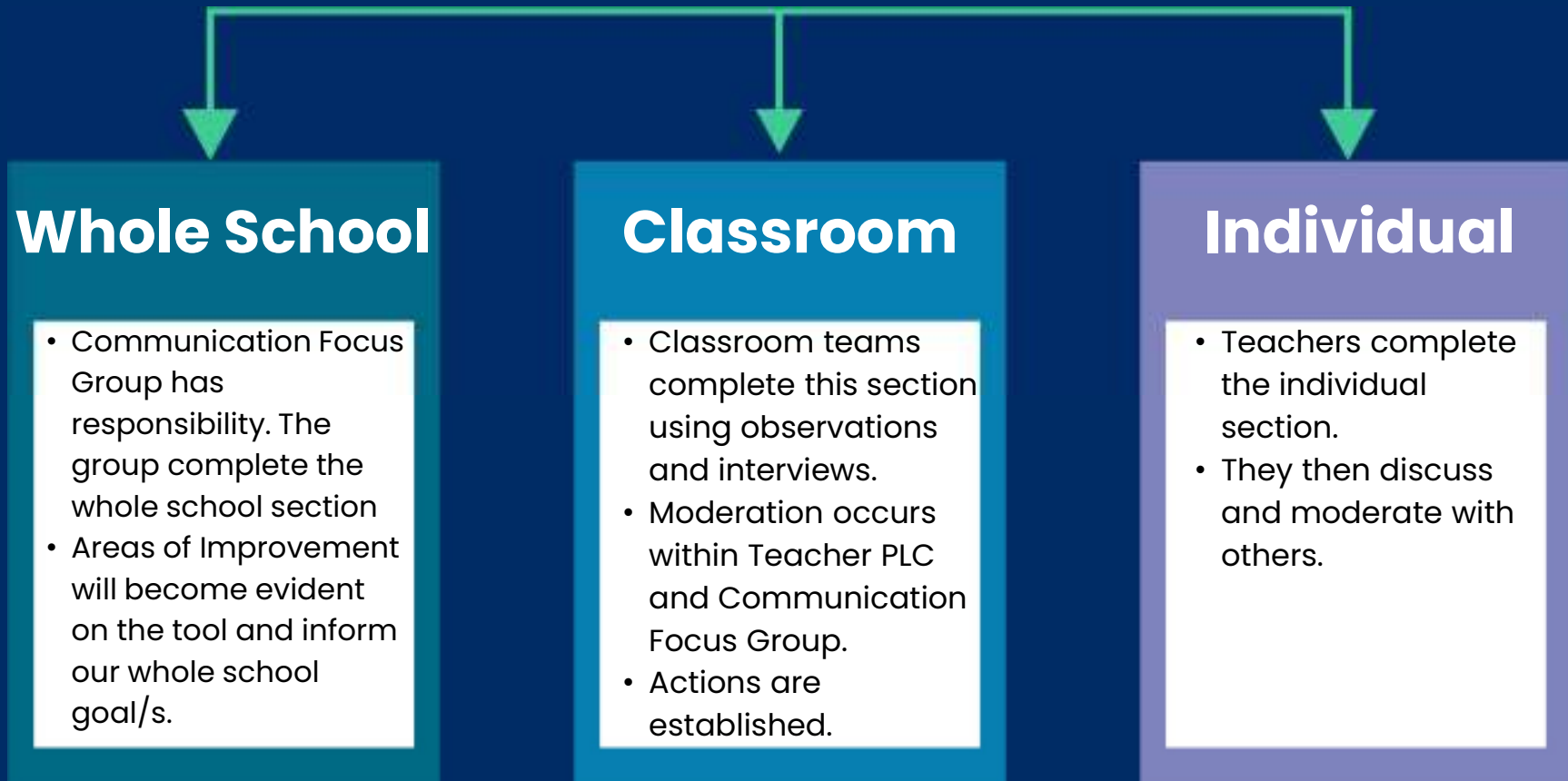
### Whole School

At Malkara School, we believe that all students are communicators. We have high expectations of our students. Decisions around communication goals and strategies are informed by research evidence and individual student assessment. All staff are provided with the tools and training to provide added language input using PDEB communication tools and to respond to student's communication.

	Emerging (We are aware of it)	Evolving (We are beginning to do it)	Establishing (It is done but not yet strong)	Excelling (We are doing it consistently, effectively and sustainably over time)
<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>			
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	Staff understand that students require prompts to tools to support their communication in all school environments.	Staff assess school environments and collect data to develop an understanding of the need for communication supports across school environments.	Based on data gathered, staff trial tools and strategies to support student's access to communication across school environments.	Students can access required communication tools in all school environments. Staff systematically evaluate the environments and adjust tools and strategies. Students know how to access communication supports in all environments.
<b>LEARNING</b>	Staff understand that students need tools to support their understanding of changes in their routines and that students need a way to communicate during all school-based activities (e.g., special events, assemblies). Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to accept (yes) and reject (no) to choose and to access learning.	Staff consider the need for tools to support student's understanding of changes to their routine when planning events (e.g., assemblies). Staff evaluate whether existing communication tools (e.g., PDEB) will meet student's communication needs during special events and activities. Staff observe for any students accept and reject choices.	Staff identify and develop/level development of the tools required to support student's understanding of changes (e.g., preparation stories, adjustments to visual schedules) and to communicate about social activities (e.g., chat boards/texted language) to staff.	Student's understanding of routine and changes is supported with preparation stories and other visuals developed in response to student need and shared with families. Students can engage in, and communicate about, all school and community-based activities using a variety of communication tools. PDEB results are used to inform goal setting. Student agency is supported. All staff are confident in supporting students to say 'yes' and 'no' to choices.
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	The Executive Team are aware of the importance of providing staff with training in communication partner skills. Staff are aware of the need to assess student communication to support goal setting. Staff are aware that students need access to AAC across the whole school.	Training in communication is considered by the executive team as part of planning each year. Training is embedded into how staff induction. All staff wear their PDEB and use to engage with students. Teachers complete PDEB assessments for all students.	Training in communication is delivered via training sessions, staff meetings, new staff induction and teacher coaching sessions. A process for staff to self-identify areas of support is implemented and requested support provided. Staff use PDEB confidently to engage with students. PDEB results are monitored.	Staff are confident in assessing, supporting (e.g., using aided language input) and responding to student communication. Staff use appropriate tools to access student communication and use this data to inform a whole school communication focus. Staff value all forms of communication, student voice and agency (student in all activities).

# MCPT – How to guide

Select specific area to assess



### Whole School

At m:ikara, we believe that all students are communicators. We have high expectations of our students. Students should demonstrate language and language use in all contexts, including individual student workbooks. All staff are provided with the skills and training to provide a high level of support using RSCD communication books and to respond to student's communication.

	Emerging (10% of students)	Developing (30% of students)	Exceeding (60% of students)	Excellence
<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>NON-COMMUNICATIVE</b>			
<b>EMERG</b>	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.
<b>DEVELOP</b>	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.
<b>EXCEED</b>	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.
<b>EXCELLENCE</b>	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.	Staff understand that students need to be supported in their communication. Staff understand that students need a way to communicate during all school and based activities. Staff are aware that all students benefit from a method to communicate and need to be able to choose and to access learning.

### Whole School - Timeline

	Emerging (10% of students)	Developing (30% of students)	Exceeding (60% of students)	Excellence
<b>EMERG</b>				
<b>DEVELOP</b>				
<b>EXCEED</b>				
<b>EXCELLENCE</b>				

### Whole School - Action Plan

	Goal	Action	Support	Review	Person Responsible
<b>EMERG</b>					
<b>DEVELOP</b>					
<b>EXCEED</b>					
<b>EXCELLENCE</b>					





# Whole School

This section of the tool is about things all staff do to support students across the whole school.



**Environment**



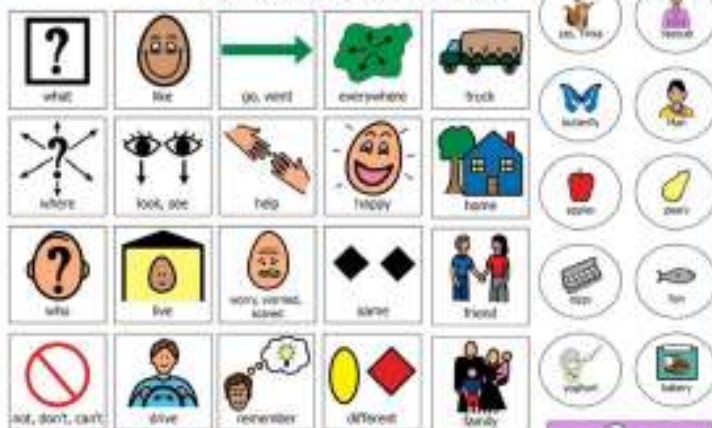
**Learning**



**Communication**

	Emerging <i>(We are aware of it)</i>	Evolving <i>(We are beginning to do it)</i>	Embedding <i>(It's in place and we are doing it)</i>	Excelling <i>(We are doing it consistently, confidently and individualising when needed).</i>
ELEMENT	IMPROVEMENT PHASE			
ENVIRONMENT	Staff understand that students require access to tools to support their communication in all school environments.	Staff assess school environments and collect data to develop an understanding of the need for communication supports across school environments.	Based on data gathered, staff trial tools and strategies to support student's access to communication across school environments.	Students can access required communication tools in all school environments. Staff dynamically evaluate the environment and adjust tools and strategies. Students know how to access communication supports in all environments.

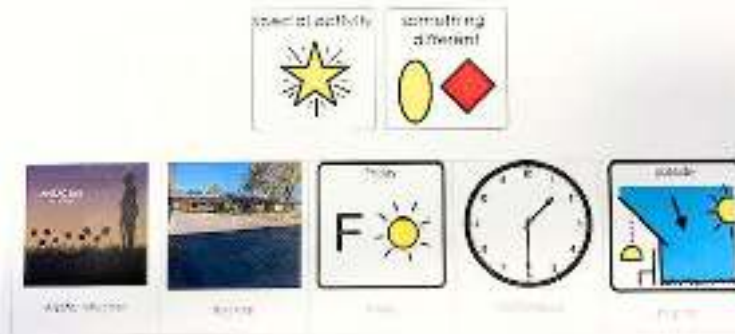
### Aided Language Display - "The Truck Cat"



This aided language display (ALD) contains vocabulary to support students to participate in the National Simultaneous Story Time 2025 reading of "The Truck Cat" by Deborah Maack and Danny Aron. This ALD may be used in conjunction with a story book chat board and/or without AAC system. PCS and Boardmaker are trademarks of Tobi Dynamics LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission.



### ANZAC reflection



# Whole School Evidence

### Malkara Olympics



### Malkara Olympics Chat Board



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# Classroom

This section of the tool focuses on things staff do to support students within the classroom.



**Environment**

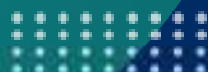


**Learning**



**Communication**





	Emerging <i>(We are aware of it)</i>	Evolving <i>(We are beginning to do it)</i>	Embedding <i>(It's in place and we are doing it)</i>	Excelling <i>(We are doing it consistently, confidently and individualising when needed)</i>
ELEMENT	IMPROVEMENT PHASE			
ENVIRONMENT	Staff are aware that the classroom environment must be set up to support student's understanding and ability to express themselves.	The classroom has a visual schedule that can be seen by all students. First/then boards and visuals representing school activities are available in the classroom. Tools to allow students to make choices are available in the classroom.	The visual schedule is updated and referred to across the day. Staff use observation and assessment to inform decisions about classroom visuals and implement required supports (e.g., choice boards, schedules, first/then, timers).	Staff dynamically assess the classroom environment to ensure that tools needed for students to communicate their needs, choices, opinions, ask questions, understand their daily activities, changes to the routine and visitors to the room are available. Students have been taught how to access and use these tools.





# Classroom Evidence





# Individual

This section of the tool is about things staff do to support individual students.



**Environment**



**Learning**



**Communication Partner**



LEARNING	<p>Staff are aware of the importance of student voice and agency in their learning. Staff are aware that students need individualised adjustments for communication to allow them to access the curriculum and demonstrate their learning.</p>	<p>Staff consider individual communication skills (e.g., ROCC results) when planning adjustments to learning activities.</p>	<p>Assessment and learning activities are adapted dynamically based on student's communication needs. Staff work collaboratively with a range of team members (e.g., executive team, external providers) to make targeted adjustments to learning activities.</p>	<p>Students can access learning at their level and the products of their learning represent their own voice. Students have agency and autonomy in their learning. Staff feel confident that assessment results and learning outcomes reflect student ability. Families feel engaged in their child's learning. Required adjustments are documented in the learner profile and reviewed regularly.</p>
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# Individual Evidence



I talk by using  
gesture, vocalisations  
and sometimes my  
device.



I talk by moving my  
body and using my  
facial expressions.

- Zach



### WHOLE SCHOOL - EVIDENCE

	Emerging <i>(We are aware of it)</i>	Evolving <i>(We are beginning to do it)</i>	Embedding <i>(It's in place and we are doing it)</i>	Excelling <i>(We are doing it consistently, confidently and individualising when needed)</i>
ELEMENT	EVIDENCE FOR RATING			
Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff induction completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of data collection (e.g., notes, data, documentation of discussion in communication focus group)	<input type="checkbox"/> Viewed evidence of tools trialled (e.g., saw visual supports displayed).	<input type="checkbox"/> Tools observable across school environments (including pool, gym, playground, library). <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of tools being reviewed (e.g., notes from comm focus group). <input type="checkbox"/> Observations or evidence of students using tools.
Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff induction completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of staff considering changes to routine (e.g., requesting visuals, use of preparation stories, updates to schedule) <input type="checkbox"/> Staff can explain how students accept (yes) and reject (no) choices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Questions asked when planning excursions/events. <input type="checkbox"/> Observations of staff teaching an accept (yes) and reject (no) response.	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of stories used, updated schedules, communication supports taken on excursion/whole school events. <input type="checkbox"/> ROCC results shared and used to develop goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of students being supported to accept (yes) and reject (no) choices.
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff induction completed <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of training organised and offered to staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of executive team discussions about and planning for training in communication. <input type="checkbox"/> PDD audits. <input type="checkbox"/> ROCC audits.	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of training offered. <input type="checkbox"/> Observations of staff using PDDs. <input type="checkbox"/> ROCC moderated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of communication adjustments (receptive & expressive) in unit planner. <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of levels of required support documented in unit planner. <input type="checkbox"/> Observations of staff responding to all forms of communication.



# Future Plans

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- Launch the digital version of the MCPT
- Recorded PLs that are included in our induction for teaching and learning support staff.
- Regular reviews of the MCPT to ensure continuous improvement, maintaining quality and relevance.





# Reflections

- Make a start – don't wait for perfection.
- A strategic priority and shared vision.
- Staff involvement in tool development increases investment.
- Evidence is essential – how do we know, and how do we demonstrate?





# References



## Research and References

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### Coaching communication partners in classrooms in communication strategies:

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# Acknowledgements

- **PODD** – <https://www.cpec.org.au/podd>
- **ROCC** – <https://rocon.roccassessment.com.au>
- **Two Way Street** – <https://twowaystreet.com.au>
- **Kylie** – technical support and creative vision
- **Malkara Communication Focus Group**



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