HOW TO COMPLETE THE ELKLAN COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY AUDIT CHECKLIST

The Communication Friendly Setting (CFS) audit sheet should be completed at the beginning (before the first Communication Counts session is delivered) of the setting's CFS journey and at the end (before requesting a CFS verification). This will be the main way of demonstrating change.

Creating a Communication Friendly Setting is complex and will vary depending on the many different factors that make each setting distinctive. This makes it very difficult to provide precise, measurable 'standards' as to what a Communication Friendly Setting should look like. However, there are common features and the following CFS audit is based on evidence provided in papers such as 'Developing a communication supporting classrooms observation tool', Dockrell, J., Bakpoulou, I., Law, J., Spencer,S. and Lindsay, G. (2010) and 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: an overview of the results of the Better Communication Research Programme', Dockrell, J., Lindsay, G., Roulstone, S. and Law, J. (2014). In view of this complexity, **the aim is to create change** and not work towards a narrowly defined set of absolutes.

The Lead Communication Practitioners should work with all the staff within the setting to agree on each rating description that is the 'best fit' and note this rating in the 'Initial' or 'Final' ratings column. There is space at the end for additional observations and/or comments to be used at any time by the LCPs or auditor. Once agreed, the CFS Audit Checklist should be uploaded to the LCPs' Learning Log. (This means that the LCPs involved will have the same checklists in their Learning Logs).

Once the final rating and Level 4 Learning Logs have been completed please contact your Elklan Tutor to request a verification. This may comprise two settings visiting each other to verify the accuracy of the final rating or an Elklan CFS professional advisor or Elklan Tutor (but not one employed by the school) will complete a virtual visit and learn about the changes you have made.

Name of the setting: Bridgelea Primary School

LCPs names: Kelly Eyre & Angela Hughes

Date of the initial audit: 15.10.2025 **Date of the final audit:** 08.02.2026

Name of the verifier: Beth Devereux **Date of final verification of the audit:** 12.02.2026

Signature of the verifier: 

Observations by the verifier are made in a minimum of two classrooms from two different Key Stages. The total observation time is a minimum of one hour.

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CFS AUDIT CHECKLIST

	1		2		3		4		5		Inital rating	Final rating
Teacher support for communication												
1. Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN.	Staff are **not** aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN. There is no evidence of differentiation of the curriculum for pupils with SLCN.		Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN, but there is **no** evidence of differentiation of the curriculum for pupils with SLCN.		Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN and there is **some** evidence of differentiation of the curriculum for pupils with SLCN.		Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN and there is clear evidence of differentiation of the curriculum for **most** pupils with SLCN.		Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN and there is clear evidence of consistent and appropriate differentiation of the curriculum for **all** pupils with SLCN where this is appropriate.		4.00	4.38
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
Interaction												
2. Pupils are given time to absorb information, respond when spoken to, answer questions and contribute (the 10 second rule).	The 10 second rule is **not** applied.		The 10 second rule is used **less than 25%** of the time.		The 10 second rule is used **less than 50%** of the time.		The 10 second rule is used **50-75%** of the time.		The 10 second rule is used **more than 75%** of the time.		3.82	4.46
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
3. Short, unambiguous sentences are used when communicating with pupils.	Short, unambiguous sentences are **not** used when speaking with the pupils.		Short, unambiguous sentences are used **less than 25%** of the time.		Short, unambiguous sentences are used **less than 50%** of the time.		Short, unambiguous sentences are used **50-75%** of the time.		Short, unambiguous sentences are used **more than 75%** of the time.		3.73	4.38
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		

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	1		2		3		4		5		IR	FR
4. Idioms and sarcasm are carefully considered and when used, explanations are given asap.	Idioms and sarcasm are used **more than 75%** of the time. Staff are not aware of its use and no explanation was given to the pupils.		Idioms and sarcasm are used **50-75%** of the time. Staff had little awareness of its use and **no or minimal** explanation was given to the pupils.		Idioms and sarcasm are used **less than 50%** of the time. Staff had some aware of its use and **minimal** explanation was given to the pupils.		dioms and sarcasm are used **less than 25%** of the time. Staff were aware of its use and an explanation was given for the pupils at some point.		Idioms and sarcasm are used **less than 25%** of the time. Staff were aware of its use and appropriate explanations were consistently given asap.		3.64	4.38
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
5. Pupils are taught in an atmosphere which encourages them to seek help and request clarification.	Pupils are **not** encouraged to seek help or request clarification.		Pupils are encouraged to seek help and request clarification **less than 25%** of the time.		Pupils are encouraged to seek help and request clarification **less than 50%** of the time.		Pupils are encouraged to seek help and request clarification **50-75%** of the time. Teaching staff use a variety of strategies to support this.		Pupils are encouraged to seek help and request clarification **more than 75%** of the time. Pupils are encouraged to say what sort of help they need and accurate feedback is given by the adult.		4.27	5.08
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
6. Pupils' understanding of information and tasks is consistently checked.	When the need is indicated, teaching staff **do not** ask pupils to explain what they have to do to complete a task and/or there is poor monitoring of the pupils' task progress to check their understanding.		When the need is indicated, teaching staff ask pupils to explain and/or they monitor the pupils' task progress to check their understanding but **less than 25%** of the time.		When the need is indicated, teaching staff ask pupils to explain and/or they monitor the pupils' task progress to check their understanding but **less than 50**% of the time.		Teaching staff ask pupils to explain and/or they monitor the pupils' task progress to check their understanding **50-75%** of the time.		Teaching staff ask pupils to explain and/or they monitor the pupils' task progress to check their understanding **more than 75%** of the time.		4.00	4.46
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		

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	1		2		3		4		5		IR	FR
Extending vocabulary												
7. A range of strategies is used to extend pupils' vocabulary.	There is **no** evidence of strategies to extend pupils' vocabulary.		There is **little** evidence of strategies to extend pupils' vocabulary.		There is evidence that **some** strategies are used to extend vocabulary, however these are not used consistently nor differentiated for individual pupils.		There is evidence that a **range** of strategies is used to extend pupils' vocabulary. These are consistently used by all teaching staff		There is evidence of a **range** of strategies to extend pupils' vocabulary. These are consistently used by all teaching staff and are differentiated to meet pupils' needs.		3.27	4
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
8. Teachers know which children need support with Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and vocabulary learning.	Teaching staff have **little** awareness of pupils' vocabulary learning needs.		Teaching staff are aware of which pupils have vocabulary learning needs but do not assess or monitor vocabulary learning consistently.		Teaching staff are aware of which pupils have vocabulary learning needs and can state which Tier 2 and 3 words are probably not known by these pupils.		Teaching staff are aware of which pupils have vocabulary learning needs, assess and monitor vocabulary learning and use the results to plan and differentiate vocabulary learning.		Teaching staff are aware of which pupils have vocabulary learning needs. They assess and monitor vocabulary learning (particularly of Tier 2 and 3 words) and use the results to plan and differentiate vocabulary learning consistently.		3.55	4.00
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		

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	1		2		3		4		5		IR	FR
Think about questions												
9. Teaching staff can give examples of specific types or levels of questions pupils can or cannot answer.	Teaching staff are **not** able to demonstrate an ability to differentiate questions.		There is **little** evidence to demonstrate that teaching staff can differentiate questions.		There is **some** evidence that teaching staff can differentiate questions, however this is not used consistently with all pupils.		There is **clear** evidence that teaching staff can differentiate questions consistently and this is observed with **2 or more pupils.**		There is **clear** evidence that teaching staff know how to differentiate questions to meet the needs of all pupils consistently. Information about Blank levels of pupils with verbal understanding needs is shared appropriately with teaching and non-teaching staff across the school.		3.64	4.08
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
Communication Friendly Environment												
10. Appropriate visual tools are used to support learning.	**No** visual tools are used to support learning.		There is **little** evidence of visual tools to support learning.		There is **some** evidence of visuals tools to support learning. They are used appropriately, but this is not consistent across all staff.		A **range** of visual tools is used appropriately and consistently to support learning by all staff. All visuals have a clear purpose.		A **wide range** of visual tools is used appropriately and consistently to support learning by all staff. All visuals have a clear purpose. Their use is carefully monitored and adapted according to need.		3.64	4.08
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		

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	1		2		3		4		5		IR	FR
11. Auditory and visual distractions are kept to a minimum and managed appropriately.	There is **no** evidence of a calm and distraction free environment with minimal clutter.		There is **little** evidence of a calm and distraction free environment with minimal clutter.		There is **some** evidence of a calm and distraction free environment with minimal clutter.		There is **clear** evidence of a calm and distraction free environment with minimal clutter. Background noise is managed appropriately.		There is **clear** evidence of a calm and distraction free environment with minimal clutter. There are quiet and calm areas for both **inside and outside**. Background noise is managed appropriately.		3.45	4.00
	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2	KS1	KS2		
										Total rating score:		

	Pine	Elm	Lime	Cedar	Damson	Fir	Hazel	Maple	Oak	Rowan	Yew	Total	Average
Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN.	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	44	4.00
Pupils are given time to absorb information, respond when spoken to, answer questions and contribute	5	2	3	4	3	5	3	4	4	4	5	42	3.82

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(the 10 second rule).													
Short, unambiguous sentences are used when communicating with pupils.	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	5	41	3.73
Idioms and sarcasm are carefully considered and when used, explanations are given asap.	3	3	3	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	40	3.64
Pupils are taught in an atmosphere which encourages them to seek help and request clarification.	5	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	47	4.27
Pupils' understanding	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	3	44	4.00

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of information and tasks is consistently checked.													
A range of strategies is used to extend pupils' vocabulary.	5	3	3	3	2	4	3	3	4	3	3	36	3.27
Teachers know which children need support with Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and vocabulary learning.	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	39	3.55
Teaching staff can give examples of specific types or levels of questions pupils can or cannot answer	4	3	3	4	3	5	3	4	5	2	4	40	3.64

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Appropriate visual tools are used to support learning.	5	4	2	4	3	4	2	3	5	4	4	40	3.64
Auditory and visual distractions are kept to a minimum and managed appropriately.	4	4	2	4	3	5	2	3	5	3	3	38	3.45
Total	49	39	33	40	36	50	33	40	49	39	43		
Average	4.5	3.5	3.0	3.6	3.3	4.5	3.0	3.6	4.5	3.5	3.9		

Rokaya	Chloe	Phil	Kelsey
• Making sure everybody knows blank level questioning. • How to teach vocabulary different ways	• Lee to spend more time in Rowan class to get to the know the pupils' Blank levels. • Victor to look into an Elklan accredited course. • Joel to continue to develop his awareness of Blank levels. • Vocabulary to be more explicitly taught as part of the wider curriculum.	• Checking for understanding and monitoring of task. • Limited distraction • Teaching of vocabulary	• Appropriate use of visuals to support learning, we use communication in print friendly work sheets to support learning, some visuals around the classroom but I feel as • a class team this could be embedded more into the classroom for example consistently updated working walls to support children's learning. • Auditory and visual distractions are kept to a minimum and managed appropriately. Providing children with a safe nurturing environment where children have got a • safe comforting place to go when unsettled to avoid disruption and background noise that is overstimulating for children.

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Molly	Nikki	Simon	Kayleigh
• All staff to give children 10 second processing time before moving on. • Staff not to use sarcasm or to have 'jokes' with the children. • To use a Mr Word to introduce new vocabulary in English sessions. • To include colourful semantics into English planning – then start embed it into other surjects throughout the year. • Make sure the classrooms haver the blank level questioning on display and write the initials of children and where they on up to.	• Teacher knowledge and understanding of Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is strong. Within the learning environment the following strategies are embedded: • Teacher prioritises a calm and predictable environment with as much consistency as possible. This is essential in order to provide a safe base where children know with certainty what will happen and when. • Environment – A range of visual supports including visuals for listening, what good communication looks like, • Now & Next Board and Zones of Regulation visuals on desks are used. • The importance of a sound awareness of cognitive overload is understood and verbal information is imparted with recognition that children require an incremental • approach to information delivery with frequent opportunities to revisit in order that the learning is transferred from the working memory to the long-term memory. • Processing time is provided and the amount of time given is dependent on individual need. • Social Skills development features strongly within the classroom and the skills of cooperation, waiting, patience, turn-taking and sharing are delivered throughout lessons and discretely within Nurture Lunchtime and Boxall time. • Supporting children to understand how they are feeling (interoception)	• Develop differentiation and consistency with differentiation. Staff evaluation of suitable and feedback to team for updating • Continue to develop and utilize different areas of the classroom for processing of information • Continue to model for all staff, and for staff to model more Makaton • Staff to explain sarcastic responses in line with students initiated jokes and awareness of understanding of age appropriate jokes • Team to utilize to communication maps and also facilitate private conversations • Staff ask students why or how they got their answers and model appropriately • Dictionaries and word banks to be used on PP consistently and worksheets • Staff to upskill in tier 2-3 in different vocabulary • Staff to model and extend pupils at their level • Now/next, reward charts and TFT writing symbols. Staff to be consistent in all areas and scripts associated to them • Staff will look at further options through sensory equipment and evaluate daily as to the effectiveness of the equipment and area	2. Ensure that all staff are implementing 10 seconds processing time. 3. Staff to shorten sentences and chunk information/instructions. 7. Vocabulary explained during reading sessions and phonics sessions. Displays to have vocabulary included with inprint symbols. Vocab activities to be used (eg Mr Word) when teaching vocabulary during lessons. 8. Staff feel that they know which children have vocabulary learning needs. This needs to be planned into lessons with differentiation. 9. Children's Blanks levels to be displayed for staff. 10. Task plans to be introduced where appropriate. 11. Consider how we can reduce visual and auditory distraction from the corridor and playground (perhaps calming music to be played during sessions). Consider introducing a calm corner.

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	and helping them to name these physiological feelings is another focus of the learning environment. • Feelings of frustration are sometimes observed in some of the children and self-esteem and fear of failure impact on children's willingness to 'have a go' or 'take risks'. • A large portion of the focus is on developing children's sense of themselves as capable and competent young people. Using Growth Mindset (Carol Dweck) to create an environment in which children learn that mistakes are a normal and natural part of the learning process is an important part of teaching practice. • Different TAs and support staff are at various stages with their knowledge and understanding of SLCN. • Areas for development are to understand the importance of not talking too much/lessening the use of sarcasm/coregulation).		
Angela • Visual task plans for children to outline expectations of the lesson. • To avoid distractions and low level noise in lesson breakfast and snack routine to embed. • More visuals to support early learning eg alphabet strips, phonics mats, number strips. • Colourful semantic displays for sentence construction and early literacy skills.	Havana • I feel that I could refer to the working walls more and make use of the visuals to support teaching and increase independence. • I also feel that things can be done in the classroom during teaching to check chiuldren's understanding and this should be embedded in the classroom.	Iram • Visual task plans for children to outline expectations of the lesson. • To avoid distractions and low level noise in lesson breakfast and snack routine to embed. • More visuals to support early learning eg alphabet strips, phonics mats, number strips. • Colourful semantic displays for sentence construction and early literacy skills	

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January 2026 Audits	Ash KS1	Birch KS1	Cherry KS1	Pine	Elm	Lime CT Absent	Cedar	Damson	Fir	Hazel	Maple	Oak	Rowan	Yew	Total	Average
Staff are aware of the importance of identifying and providing support for pupils who have SLCN.	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	57	4.38
Pupils are given time to absorb information, respond when spoken to, answer questions and contribute (the 10 second rule).	4	4	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	58	4.46
Short, unambiguous sentences are used when communicating with pupils.	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	5	57	4.38
Idioms and sarcasm are carefully considered and when used, explanations are given asap.	3	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	5	57	4.38
Pupils are taught in an atmosphere which encourages them to	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	66	5.08

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seek help and request clarification.																
Pupils' understanding of information and tasks is consistently checked.	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	58	4.46
A range of strategies is used to extend pupils' vocabulary.	3	4	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	51	4.00
Teachers know which children need support with Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and vocabulary learning.	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	5	5	4	52	4.00
Teaching staff can give examples of specific types or levels of questions pupils can or cannot answer	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	5	3	4	5	4	5	53	4.08
Appropriate visual tools are used to support learning.	3	4	3	5	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	53	4.08
Auditory and visual distractions are kept to a minimum and managed appropriately.	4	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	5	3	3	5	4	4	52	4.00
Total	38	43	40	49	44	33	42	42	50	37	46	52	49	49		

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Summary of Audit Visit:

Thank you for a welcoming visit and showcasing how you are supporting children/YP's SLCN. It is clear that leadership and LCPs are working very hard and continue to strive to ensure practice is consistently delivered to a high quality.

Initial discussions highlighted high levels of staff mobility and that many permanent staff were absent. This is a challenge which was highlighted in delivering training and maintaining CPD for staff. However, robust systems are in place to support staff and ensure that all staff have a good knowledge of SLCN. This is carefully monitored by leadership and regular opportunities for CPD are provided for new and existing staff. This is demonstrated on a detailed CPD summary which included each staff member. As a result staff have good knowledge of SLC and how to identify and support children/YP. Staff are encouraged to be reflective and plan how they are going to develop any gaps in knowledge or skills.

There is a robust system to screen, track progress and support identification resulting in the creation of a personal and detailed communication profile for each child/YP. This is used by a range of professionals to ensure the most appropriate support is provided including on site SaLT team. Children's progress and communication profiles are reviewed regularly and when needed they will have a specific individual intervention plan.

Interactions

A range of teaching staff were observed across a spectrum of classes within the school where children of different ages and stages of development were present.

All staff observed were calm and allowed time for the children to respond. They were also positioned at the child's level across all observations. Staff were also observed using short sentences to explain tasks to children. Children/YP were given opportunities to speak and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

During time spent in one class, the adult used lots of NVC to support her explanations which included pointing, demonstration and referring to visual pictures. Staff in this room also modelled back lots of language for the children to hear good examples.

Vocabulary

Leadership highlighted this was an area that they are focusing on and would like to develop further to ensure consistency. A Vocabulary plan has been developed and this is an ongoing focus of the school.

Vocabulary planning and focus was evident in each room visited, this was shared in a variety of ways. Some classrooms displayed target topic words, some were more detailed and included symbols for each topic target word. Key vocabulary was displayed on IWB and children were asked to match the meanings or similar words to reinforce understanding. Words lists and charts were being used by individual children.

NVC and further clarifications were provided by staff e.g. an adult encouraged a child to understand 'touch' by stroking the back of their own hand and the children copied. The adult also then went on to relate this to a personal experience for the child by referring to their pet rabbit.

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Reference to Tier 2 and 3 words were seen in some classrooms but not all. Further discussions, focused on how the school could develop a more consistent approach across the classes and perhaps focus on tier 2 words for vocab planning in addition to universal topic words or used vocab flowers (3-5yrs LB book).

Questioning

Open ended questions were frequently used and one staff member was heard changing the Blank Level to ask the question a again so the child could understand what was being asked.

Understanding of Blank Levels of questioning were used and it was clear that systems were in place to identify children's Blank level of understanding as Blank level posters were displayed in rooms with children's initials attached to a specific level. This means all staff are aware of each child's level of understanding.

Environment

Extensive use of visuals consistently used throughout the schools which included visual timetables, timelines, now and next boards, colourful semantics, labels, class expectations, talk for writing visuals, detailed communication books, zones of regulation.

The environment was calm and clutter free to reduce visual distractions and each classroom had a quiet space/area.

N.B. – during the observation the Final rating for parameter 7 was changed to 4 as a range of vocab strategies were observed and this was agreed with both LCPs.

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