

Capturing views of a child who isn't able to communicate verbally

This is a piece included in an assessment of a child who isn't able to communicate verbally, he has a physical disability which means that he cannot point but he has a good level of understanding. We will call him 'Child A'.

Pen picture and communication

Child A was born in Romania and has olive skin and dark hair like his Mum. He has a wide and cheeky smile. He gives eye contact readily and is keen to communicate with others. Sometimes he has a 'funky' hair style such as a long braid down his back, with the rest of this hair very short, on another occasion he had an auburn highlight in his hair. Child A enjoys working with an adult to accomplish things in his life. He has good understanding of everyday life and showed by his comments when I was speaking to his Mum that he understands some of the challenges they face in their house and how much he loves his Mum who looks after him.

Child A willingly entered into the 'Mind of My own' communication application. Using his facial expressions and eye pointing, he chose every box in 'Things I like to do' section: Being outside, Being inside, Being with other people, Staying on my own, Watching TV, Listening to music, Playing sport, Playing on the computer, Playing with my pet, and in the extra box Mum supported him to say 'bikes', cars and playing pool. In the 'I keep fit by' section Child A chose 8 of the 9 options, choosing swimming, walking, trampolining, football, biking, dancing, basket ball and horse riding. He did not choose tennis (he did not know what tennis was). Child A explained to his Mum that he wanted to add 'muscles' into the extra box especially abs - Mum's boyfriend has lots of muscles and Child A wanted to be like him.

Child A requires close adult support for eating, drinking, dressing/undressing, bathing, getting to the toilet and wiping himself. He uses a wheel chair for all his mobility which he finds very challenging at home as the house has lots of steps including between rooms. He has started at a new school, Riverbank Academy, in September for his secondary education. Child A's Speech & Language therapist said that Child A was very pleased that he would be able to use his Eye Gaze communication equipment at school soon.