Criteria for achieving a Makaton Friendly Award

The Makaton Friendly scheme recognises places that strive to make their services accessible for people who use Makaton to support their communication. Ensuring the people who use Makaton, feel at ease when visiting the organisation, business or attending education.

The following criteria are intended to help you complete the Makaton Friendly application to us; we understand that each organisation is different, so please contact The Makaton Charity if you would like to discuss the details.

A guideline to become a member of the Makaton Friendly scheme:

1. Identify a key person who has attended formal Makaton training to be the Makaton champion at your organisation. They will be the contact name on the application
    - They could update colleagues with how Makaton is being used within the organisation.
    - They could help arrange Makaton training for new staff.

2. Staff and Volunteers at the organisation should have an understanding of how to support communication with someone who uses Makaton. Your application could be signed by the Makaton Tutor delivering the training to you. Below is just a guide:
    - If you are an individual applying to be Makaton Friendly then we advise you should have attended Makaton training.
    - If organisations applying have a small number of staff (less than 20) we would advise that at least 2 people have attended Makaton training.
    - Places applying with a medium sized amount of staff (21 – 60) we would recommend that there was at least one full workshop of training (eg up to 12 participants) for the staff, with additional staff attending a Makaton Taster session.
    - Places applying with a large amount of staff (above 60) we would recommend that at least two full workshops have been attended by staff, with additional staff attending a Makaton Taster session.
    - Attending Makaton training coveys a level of whole organisation support for communicating using Makaton, inclusivity and supporting peoples need to communicate. Which then allows access to the same facilities as everyone else, aiding decision making for Makaton beneficiaries.

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3. Be able to explain and give examples of how you use Makaton within your setting or organisation to support people with communication difficulties when they are there.
    - Are there any particular areas that you can highlight as being Makaton Friendly?
    - Is there accessible information for people attending the organisation.
    - Are there any pictures or materials that are available to support them to make their own choice?

4. Understand and appreciate that different people use alternative ways to communicate. They may use speech, signs, symbols or electronic devices to support or instead of spoken language.

5. Provide a supportive and welcoming environment so that people who have learning or communication difficulties, old or young, can take part in the services that you offer.

6. Use some Makaton symbols and signs. For example, learn key Makaton signs to encourage and support communication or use some Makaton symbols to label important areas around the organisation.

7. Do you promote yourselves and Makaton in your local community?
    - Hold fundraising and information events.
    - Signpost relevant queries to The Makaton Charity for further information.

If you are an organisation applying for a Makaton Friendly award and you have multiple sites, please be aware that this would need separate applications in order to get a personalised pack for each site.

At The Makaton Charity, we are all about helping people to communicate! The ability to communicate opens up a whole new world of possibilities for people and helps them participate in everyday activities that can often be taken for granted. Help us to make sure that everyone is included by being Makaton Friendly.

NB The term organisation includes any type of business, education environment, social care, not for profit, corporate environment etc that could be approved as Makaton friendly.

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