

AUTISM ACCREDITATION REVIEW REPORT



Radlett Lodge School
Review Date: 23/06/2015

Review Team

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Amend as appropriate

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INTRODUCTION

The review report is designed to provide a concise and focused insight into the organisation's performance against accreditation teaching/learning standards. The Review Report focuses to the criteria for Autism Accreditation.

1. The service has a specialised knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders.
2. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the organisation, resources and management of the service.
3. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the individual assessment and planning for all people with autism.
4. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently results in positive outcomes for all people with autism.

The Review Report will be submitted to the Autism Accreditation Panel and forms part of the decision making process.

Title/Name of Registered Service/School	Radlett Lodge School
Accreditation Registration Number	184
Service Manager/Head of school	Jo Galloway
Contact Person	Jo Galloway
Address	Harper Lane Radlett Hertfordshire WD7 9HW
Telephone	01923854922
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Email address	radlett.lodge@nas.org.uk
Description of Service/School	<p>Radlett Lodge specialises in providing education and care for children with Autism between the ages of 4 and 19.</p> <p>We are an independent special school run by the National Autistic Society (NAS) providing day and boarding places for pupils with an Autistic spectrum disorder. We are part of the NAS education group which includes 8 schools.</p> <p>We provide day, weekly and termly residential places. We also offer flexiboarding (overnights and playschemes) for students who attend the school. We are currently awaiting the outcome of an application to Ofsted to open a 'Holiday Residential Scheme for Disabled Children' which will enable us to open our provision in holidays to young people with autism who do not attend the school. The leadership team across all aspects of the provision work extremely closely and are committed to providing consistency of autism practice across all aspects of the school.</p> <p>There are 55 pupils on roll, all of whom are full time . All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and a diagnosis of Autism. Most pupils have severe learning difficulties and some have moderate learning difficulties. There is a range of additional needs such as challenging behaviour, epilepsy, ADHD and physical impairments. In recent years the school has had an influx of more complex pupils with extremely difficult</p>

	<p>behaviour and specific curricular needs. For example pupils with severe sensory issues, sexualised behaviour, poor self esteem and hyperactivity. A significant number of these pupils have failed in mainstream school</p> <p>Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and a wide catchment area. A high proportion of pupils come from central and north London boroughs (we currently have pupils from 14 local authorities). A significant number of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Some of our pupils from the inner London boroughs live in relatively deprived areas.</p> <p>Although we have a high percentage of children from different ethnic backgrounds the predominant language spoken at home is English. We have a small proportion for whom English is not their first language. For the children this applies to, they are unable to access spoken language and use visual communication systems. Visual systems can consist of a mixture of gesture, symbols, photographs and objects of reference depending on the individual ability of the child. Where the child's parents do not speak English, the skills of translators are employed and documents such as training notes, letters of information and reports are translated into the relevant language.</p> <p>The school has been rated by Ofsted as outstanding in all areas in both education and care. The school has high aspirations and as such has an uncompromising commitment to the pursuit of the highest quality of teaching and learning</p>		
Total number of individuals supported	55	Number of people with autism supported	55
Management and Staff Structure	<p>Senior Leadership team: Principal Deputy Principal (Education) Deputy Principal (Care) Head of Care Finance manager Business manager Flexi boarding and weekend manager</p> <p>Multi-Disciplinary team:</p>		

Autism Lead Practitioner
Clinical Psychologist
Speech and Language therapist
3 behaviour co-ordinators
Speech and language therapy assistant
Occupational therapist

Other non-contact posts:

HR officer
Service Development co-ordinator
ICT support officer
Administration team
Maintenance team
Housekeeper / cook
Cleaners

Contact posts:

Learning support assistants
Breakfast learning support assistants
Specialist learning support assistants
Team leaders
Residential care workers (waking nights)
Residential care workers (evenings)
Residential care workers (weekends)

Philosophy of Service/School

Radlett Lodge School is a warm and welcoming school for children with autism, and we work hard to make sure that the children in our care have the best education, the best opportunities, and the best start in life.

Our staff are committed to the pursuit of excellence and this commitment can be seen every day. Whether that is **through seeing students' joy when they discover that they can do something they thought they couldn't or their excitement and sense of achievement and personal growth.**

We specialise in educating children with autism. And to do this successfully we believe we need to invest in our staff and as such we believe firmly in the importance of providing high quality training.

As with all other National Autistic Society schools and services the philosophy and teaching is based on the SPELL framework. SPELL is an acronym for Structure, Positivity, Empathy, Low Arousal and Links. This is a common thread running through all of the specialist services provided by The National Autistic Society and underpins all areas of practice and environment.

We believe that we are all different, we all have needs. Children with autism have special needs and require individual care and attention to ensure that their needs are well met. At Radlett Lodge School we know how to identify these needs. We know how to build relationships with the individuals themselves and their families and carers. We know the positive difference this support can make and the positive impact it can have for the future. We believe that there is no template for educating children with autism, every child is different and we recognise this difference and capitalise on it. We find the best way for each child to learn and develop, using a range of approaches that we have assessed and tested so that we can be confident of their effectiveness.

A low arousal philosophy is central to the management of challenging behaviour within the school. And as such pupils are supported with empathy and understanding, rather than confrontation, force or unnecessary demands. We work out what is important and how to support the pupils to be calm and to learn how to regulate their own behaviour. By doing this we believe pupils are much more able to feel ready for learning and make far more

progress across their school life.

We work closely with our families and our communities, and together we prepare our students to take their full place in society. Above all, we believe that our students deserve the very best.

We work closely with the wider organisation, the National Autistic Society. As part of this we share their vision, mission and values:

VISION

We want a world where autism is understood and people with autism have the support they need to ensure that their rights are upheld and that they have the same opportunities as others in society.

MISSION

We champion the rights and interests of all people with autism and aim to provide individuals with autism and their families with help, support and services that they can access, trust and rely upon and which make a positive difference to their lives.

VALUES

1. We are straightforward - we tell people what we believe to be the truth about autism, its effects, causes and interventions. They have the right to know it – even if it is not always what they want to hear.
2. We are demanding - **We won't stand for situations** where people affected by autism do not receive the help, support and understanding they deserve.
3. We enlighten - We give people the information they need to understand autism, make crucial decisions and live better lives.
4. We are experts - autism is complicated and can challenge us. But 50 years of living with autism has given us an unparalleled level of understanding.
5. We are passionate - we were formed by a group of parents who were passionate about ensuring a better future for their children. That passion is still

	behind everything we do today.
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<p>Autism Specific Aims for Care / Education</p>	<p>The school seeks to recognise the strengths that our children and young people have and capitalise on these and use to support motivation and engagement.</p> <p>We aim to support pupils in working on the areas of Autism that can be barriers to learning, independence and wellbeing. Therefore all pupils will be working on developing their communication, social understanding and flexibility of thought.</p> <p>We understand how sensory needs can impact on learning and ensure we understand how each individual needs to be supported and can learn best.</p> <p>One of our most important aims is to encourage all pupils to be as independent as possible. This is achieved through an emphasis on the teaching of social interaction and communication, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Children with autism have to learn new skills in a highly structured teaching environment and will not readily transfer these skills to similar less structured situations. This must be actively taught. Hence a high priority is placed on the waking day curriculum and on community based education.</p> <p>There is a commitment to ensure inclusion in its broadest sense starting with access to the curriculum, social activities with their peers and through positive links within the local community.</p>
<p>Description of Physical Environment / Buildings</p>	<p>Our school is purpose-built for children with autism. It is the ideal place for your child to learn, be supported and feel safe. Our primary, secondary and post-16 departments are on one site, as is our residential lodge, so everyone here feels part of a close-knit school community. The departments are clearly separated within the school, however, so that children of the same age learn and play together in a suitable environment.</p> <p>We have 9 classrooms all designed to be low arousal and highly structured whilst incorporating bespoke elements as suited to the needs of the class group.</p> <p>We have the following specialist rooms: Library Soft play</p>

	Chill out room Sensory room Hall Additional quiet working rooms Teaching kitchen Post 16 teaching kitchen post 16 horticultural area
Service Provider / Company/Owner Name	National Autistic Society

DETAILS OF PROVISION

(Please complete table below for each individual provision included in registration, please add or delete tables as appropriate)

Name and address of provision	Radlett Lodge School Harper Lane Radlett Hertfordshire WD7 9HW For any contacts given, please indicate if they are not to be published		
Type of Service/School	Residential special school		
Total number of placements	55	Number of people with autism	55
Specialist Standards used	Residential schools		



<p>PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS (if applicable) As identified by the Panel</p>
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No Recommendations were made following the schools last review.

<p>POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT As identified in the IDR</p>

Potential Area 1

Core Standard 15: Sensory Issues

The school is to have an annual focus on the sensory standard and produce an action plan detailing training needs and focussed work that will enable the school to build on its existing practice and take this into an area of strength.

In September 2014 a comprehensive action plan was drawn up with the **aim of 'Re-establishing the school as a centre of excellence in the field of sensory needs.'** The action plan identifies actions in relation to sensory profiling, sensory based interventions, sensory strategies, use of the sensory room, environmental audits and training. Scrutiny of the action plan indicates that the school has achieved most of its targets with others being well on the way to full achievement.

Documentary evidence indicates that a systematic approach has been taken to developing skills, expertise and practice in this area with targeted training delivered to different staff groups; guidance documents produced; specific objectives identified for staff through the MSD process, and monitoring of practice taking place through observation and discussion.

All pupils were seen to have a completed Sensory Sensitivity Assessment Proforma. Documentation and discussion with staff indicates that these are compiled following completion of the Radlett Lodge Sensory Perceptual Profile Checklist by the staff/Lodge team in discussion, where possible with parents.

A new Occupational Therapist has been in post since June 2014, she delivers targeted support to 11 pupils. During the session observed a range of activities to address needs in relation to areas such as proprioceptive, vestibular and motor skills had been set up in the hall. The session was seen to have a clear focus but also to be responsive to pupil mood and interest, resulting in a very successful session during which particular sensory areas had been worked on in an enjoyable way.

In addition to providing direct interventions to pupils the Occupational Therapist has begun to devise Sensory diets to provide both general and specific guidance to staff and families in

relation to addressing sensory issues. Similarly general, specific class and individual sensory circuit activities are beginning to be identified for staff to implement.

Specific sensory needs were seen to being addressed to some degree within class sessions with pupils accessing and using equipment such as: fidget items, chewy items, and ear defenders, and being enabled to take movement breaks out of class, however on occasions it was felt that increased use of planned sensory diet/circuit activities may have reduced the need for pupils to request/take time out of classes. The impact of sensory sensitivities on anxiety and subsequent behaviours is recognised for example one pupil was seen to have a visual support which he could use to request and access ear defenders to help him calm. Behaviour plans also reflect sensory need with reference to movement breaks, low arousal approaches etc.

Both policy and practice observed indicates that sensory strategies are seen as part of a whole school approach not only in relation to meeting sensory needs but also as a tool to enhance teaching and learning. During many sessions observed there was a strong focus on providing multi-sensory input e.g. during a science lesson learners were encouraged to taste, smell, feel and look at the resources (cornflour and water), and a literacy session involved not only hearing a story and looking at pictures but also exploring items by touch and dancing along with the story characters.

Considerable thought has also been put into how the schools resources such as the sensory room can be used to best effect. A member of staff has been allocated a lead role in supporting the use of this facility. Guidance for use has been written and training delivered to staff.

A significant amount of consideration and work has been put into identifying and meeting sensory need. Sensory assessments are in place for all pupils and sensory programmes are delivered to targeted pupils by the occupational therapist. Class teams utilise a considered multi-sensory approach to learning. Whilst sensory diets and circuits have been introduced to some individuals or targeted groups, it is felt that more extensive use of these approaches would benefit most, if not all, learners.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas for Development

A significant amount of consideration and work has been put into identifying and meeting sensory need. Sensory assessments are in place for all pupils and sensory programmes are delivered to targeted pupils by the occupational therapist. Class teams utilise a considered multi-sensory approach to learning. Whilst sensory diets and circuits have been introduced to some individuals or targeted groups, it is felt that more extensive use of these approaches would benefit most, if not all, learners.

Potential Area 2

Core Standard 12: Behaviour support

To further develop use of data in behaviour management, maximising the evaluative functions of SERS behaviour data software.

The school has a systematic approach to supporting pupils in relation to anxieties and behaviour. Data is used to: analyse behavioural incidents, inform behaviour plans and risk assessments, monitor the impact of behavioural interventions, and to inform staff training and support. The robust procedures, resulting in clear evidence based practice is considered to be a strength.

The school collects data with regards to behaviour incidents using CareSys Significant Event Recording System (SERS). Members of the psychology team indicate that incident data from across the school and residential setting is monitored on a weekly basis.

Incident Forms record a range of information about the incident including: location, duration, intensity, people involved, type of behaviour, triggers, staff actions and outcomes. Detailed guidance has been produced, and training provided to support staff in completing these forms.

An example of the weekly summary of incidents was seen with data provided in relation both individual pupils and class groups. This summary sheet is colour coded using a RAG rating to identify; priority concerns and improvements. It is reported that this data is then used to inform discussions during class and school meetings.

Information which has been inputted onto the SERS system can be analysed in many different ways e.g. by activity, duration, triggers. The behaviour team describe how this data is then used to inform and monitor plans and interventions. For example when completing Individual Behaviour Support Plans the team use data analysis along with discussion with relevant staff across the school and lodge to identify key triggers and cues.

Whole school and class data is also used by the psychology team to inform training and support for staff, for example the review team observed a training session delivered to Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) focusing on typical play development and autism, this included data about the relatively high number of incidents recorded during playtimes and how the introduction of more structure play had decreased this. Strategies and approaches to provide routine and structure at playtime were then looked at with a group task

activity used to promote discussion and thinking in relation to adapting a playtime game to make it autism friendly.

Data and staff concerns may trigger the involvement of the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Examples of case studies were seen which exemplified the input of this team. The case studies describe and provide documentary evidence of how a highly systematic approach is taken to observing and base-lining behaviours, providing on-going support during the assessment process, creating a formulation and devising clear intervention plans. Discussion with members of the psychology team indicates that this process can involve a range of school staff, parents and other professionals such as the Occupational, and Speech and Language Therapist. Data will continue to play a key part in the monitoring of intervention plans.

Overall data analysis re the use of restrictive physical interventions indicates that over the last 3 years the incidents of use remained stable in the first year and were significantly reduced (by 25%) during the last year for which data has been collated i.e. 2013 2014.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas of Strength

The school has a systematic approach to supporting pupils in relation to anxieties and behaviour. Data is used to: analyse behavioural incidents, inform behaviour plans and risk assessments, monitor the impact of behavioural interventions, and to inform staff training and support. The robust procedures, resulting in clear evidence based practice is considered to be a strength.

Potential Area 3

Specialist Standards 8 - 11: Wellbeing standards

The school is to undertake a review of how we support pupil's health:

- a) Sport and exercise and how much this includes aerobic activity
 - b) Meals and calorific intake (and weight gain / loss)
 - c) Teaching of self-care and hygiene
-

The policy on diet, nutrition, food and drink clearly states that the school should provide a healthy range of nutritious, varied, balanced food, but allows for consideration of obsessive behaviour with strategies to manage this. It also states that pupils will be responsible for preparing and choosing a range of food and that a variety of fresh fruit and veg will be available with an aim to achieve at least 5 portions daily. It also indicates that children should be including in shopping and food choices using their preferred communication method.

There is clear evidence that there has been a big drive within the school for healthy eating and increasing exercise intake. A proportion of the school improvement plan has a section on health linked to the suggested areas for benefit within this area with clear targets for development. There has been progress made on some of the objectives but the school have assessed themselves as having further work to do on many of the objectives. There is evidence of this work as noted in the observations outcomes notes below.

The school have documented ongoing contact with parents on the diets and packed lunches that the pupils bring into school. From the observation it was clear this had been taken on board by some parents. There is also open discussion with parents at annual review in relation to the diet of day pupils and this line of communication is being kept open with discussions with parents where relevant.

The school has made a recent change in the food that is available at snack in line with new government guidance on healthy eating in schools. The pupils now make a choice from a range of fruit and vegetables. Those that do not already eat a range of these foods are encouraged to at least try them during this session. Where pupils voiced a particular favourite this was considered and offered as an option later in the week. The introduction of fruit and veg at snack has broadened the horizons of food in some of the pupils, but the use of sweets and biscuits etc. has not been taken out of completely and is still used within teaching where appropriate.

Within the Lodge there is a healthy menu available. A range of foods are prepared taking into account the dietary requirements of all residents with a vegetarian and fish option one night of the week and main meals adapted to meet dietary requirements of pupils rather than completely different meals being offered. Students are encouraged to make a vegetable choice to accompany their main meals, puddings vary but include a fruit or yoghurt option.

There is clear evidence from annual reviews and IEP targets that self-help, diet and activity is considered and person centred when targets are considered for the young people to help them to become more active and healthy.

Some of the pupils have been introduced to a range of physical activities through attending a week long residential where they got to experience climbing, assault courses, basketball and fencing among others.

Alongside the PE curriculum the school also have trampolining, rebound therapy and exercise sessions where positive aerobic movement is encouraged. The students in post 16 will access mainstream activities – gym, Zumba classes and outdoor aerobics and yoga as part of their weekly activities.

Apollo class reported that they have timetabled sessions for physical activity in addition to their normal PE sessions this has involved a range of aerobic and anaerobic activities that the students are able to choose from including – running, circuit training and insanity DVD.

A curriculum created specifically for personal care/health and life skills using designated learning outcome has been created by the school to track and monitor progress in relation to these areas.

The children pupils are encouraged to wash their hands before and after snack times and after activities where they may have got dirty hands. This is monitored by staff and the pupils are reminded how to do this effectively if needed. There are posters that display the appropriate time and manner to wash hands.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

POTENTIAL AREAS OF STRENGTH As identified in the IDR

Potential Area 1

Specialist Standard 2: Teaching and Learning – Curriculum and Activity Content

The Post 16 curriculum generally and how work in the community and person centred planning prepares young people for the life ahead.

The Post 16 curriculum policy states this is a curriculum which promotes and develops transferable skills to provide the basis for an adult life, whilst encouraging social interaction life skills and access to the community. This is achieved through having an adaptable curriculum tailored to each individual. This is built up through a range of qualifications and developmental learning objectives. Various topics are taught within the curriculum:

- Shopping and Food Prep
- Community Based Education
- Independent Living Skills
- PSHCE
- Sex and relationships
- Science
- Expressive Arts
- Physical Education
- Work related learning, enterprise and careers
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- ICT
- PE
- Vocational skills
- Art/DT

The school uses a range of community based facilities and covers many of the activities that the young people will experience/use in their adult life. The school has a range of additional policies that sit alongside the curriculum which clearly reference autism and include careers education and guidance, and transition.

There is a focus on Person Centred Planning (PCP) in terms of the curriculum for each individual learner with the student being fully involved in the decision making process using methods that they are able to access, with appropriate language and visuals for support including photos of the young people doing activities that

they enjoy. Views of all stakeholders are gained for the PCP meeting creating a balanced view of the young people their likes and dislikes and aspirations for the future. The school endeavours to have a close working relationship with parents with their involvement in the **PCP meetings and also throughout the young person's education**, through home school communication and annual reviews.

The curriculum is planned, on one of two pathways, for the three years that the young person is at the school, showing the progression and development that is expected to be made. There is a combination of curriculum levels and expectations mixed with designated learning outcomes where the school have designed the curriculum to meet the needs of individuals with autism.

This individualised curriculum is clearly seen within the planning with medium terms plans not only differentiated by class but also by group and in some instances by pairs or individuals. The daily planning and timetables of the young people show the individualised nature of their programmes. The personalisation is clearly balanced with the group teaching of skills to prepare the young people for adult life and covers a balance of life skills, personal care and subject sessions. Sharing exercise and relationship sessions among others provide the young people with an opportunity to interact and learn together.

Much of the learning in the post 16 unit is experiential with many activities happening out in the community where skills are learnt, generalised and practiced. This has included for some work experience in a supported environment in the community. All young people complete a unit on work based skills and there are opportunities for young people to learn and practice the skills with in-house work experience. The unit also run their own enterprise where the young people are involved in creating and selling the items made, with each young person having a role within the enterprise to extend their skills and develop their learning.

Preparation for young adults within the post 16 department considers their individual aspirations and prepares them well for adult life ahead. Through individualised curriculum planning, teaching and the use of experiential learning students develop the necessary skills to equip them for the life beyond Radlett Lodge School and this is considered a strength of the school.

The outcomes for young people are good with all young people who have left the school successfully transitioning onto either college or into supported lodgings.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas of Strength

Preparation for young adults within the post 16 department considers their individual aspirations and prepares them well for adult life ahead. Through individualised curriculum planning, teaching and the use of experiential learning students develop the necessary skills to equip them for the life beyond Radlett Lodge School and this is considered a strength of the school.

Potential Area 2

Core Standard 1: Consistent Understanding of Autism

The work of the Autism Lead Practitioner in ensuring continuity and consistency of Autism practice in classroom.

The role of Autism Lead Practitioner is reported to have been in place at the school since September 2014. The Job Description indicates that the key role is **to 'take the lead role in ensuring outstanding autism practice across the school.'**

In the period immediately before and since the post was created the school experienced a significant turnover of staff. As a result of these changes the focus of the Lead Practitioners work was initially to support the induction of new staff and to ensure pupils received a consistent high quality education as staff arrived and left the school. In order to facilitate this the lead practitioner; set up classrooms, taught classes in partnership with new staff allowing them to shadow her before she shadowed them; supported planning and preparation of resources; give advice and support re teaching and behaviour strategies, and modelled the use of particular strategies and interventions.

As new staff have become more established at the school the Lead Practitioner has increased the work that she is able to do to support good practice across the school. Learning environment checklists have been completed across all school classrooms, and observations have been undertaken. Following both these activities clear feedback has been given with regards to further developing practice, and training has been delivered to develop staff understanding of Visuals and their use.

Targeted support has and continues to be given to staff across the school in order to address specific issues related to learning and development, and behaviour support. This has included advice for escorts

As noted the school has undergone significant changes in terms of staffing over the last 2 years. It is all credit to the school that within this context high levels of continuity and consistency were seen in relation to the delivery of key autism approaches such as: transition routines and strategies, use of visual supports, consideration of language levels and processing time and understanding of hierarchy of prompts. The role of the lead practitioner, along with thorough induction procedures and extensive targeted staff training and

development all play a key part in ensuring that this a strength of the school

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas of Strength

It is all credit to the school that within the context of significant staff changes over the last 2 years high levels of continuity and consistency were seen in relation to the delivery of key autism approaches such as: transition routines and strategies, use of visual supports, consideration of language levels and processing time and understanding of hierarchy of prompts. The role of the lead practitioner, along with thorough induction procedures and extensive targeted staff training and development all play a key part in ensuring that this a strength of the school

Potential Area 3

Core Standard 12: Behaviour support and Assessment, reporting, recording and Evaluation

The work of the multi-disciplinary team in assessment, formulation, intervention and evaluation and its impact on pupil's behaviour and their ability to self-regulate as demonstrated through the schools comprehensive baseline assessments and case studies illustrating pupil's progress.

(Please see Potential Area of Development Area 2)

REVIEW STANDARDS

SPECIALIST STANDARD 1
Environment

The physical environment is fit for purpose/suits its stated purpose and meets/is responsive to the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the needs of people with autism in relation to their environment.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

There are various policies within the school that reference autism and reflect the needs of children, young people and adults on the spectrum in terms of the environment, its use and layout. These include the Accessibility Policy, Bedrooms and Personal Individual Space Policy which refers to the SPELL framework. All policies seen by the review team show a consistent knowledge of autism.

The 'Setting up a classroom at Radlett Lodge School' referred to as the Classroom and Lesson Organisation Programme has a clear outline as to the expectations of classroom layout and the creation of a low arousal environment. It achieves this through the use of the SPELL framework and a room audit which encompasses all expectations of an environment for a person with autism.

2. The physical environment reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and meets the needs of the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
	X		

Radlett Lodge uses a variety of settings within the school and residences to enable a range of activities.

It is evident that environments within the school are set out as per the classroom organisation programme. In many situations the

furniture is plain and suitably arranged to deliver a low arousal environment which effectively promotes engagement within the lesson.

The environments within The Lodge have the similar arrangements of furniture to provide the low arousal environment with no unnecessary furniture or clutter seen in rooms or corridors.

The classroom space is well utilised and is often used for a range of activities, including the opportunity for time alone. Many of the classes had an outdoor space that they were able to utilise for this and other activities. Classroom layouts are flexible and during some sessions pupils were seen to be involved in rearranging furniture to create larger spaces. In a few additional situations it was felt that furniture could have benefitted in being moved for example during some snack sessions to promote further opportunities for social interaction.

Corridors at the school are narrow and it is all credit to the school that staff are able to manage the movement of learners both planned and unplanned without this causing potential difficulties. Effective communication minimises the likelihood of issues arising as pupils move around, for example at a specific time of day all staff are aware that one corridor must be kept clear to ensure a smooth, stress free transition for a learner.

Rooms take into considerations the sensory needs of children with autism; in one particular example one child was struggling with the lights in the classroom and therefore the lights were kept off with the class due to be trialling the use of new autism friendly lighting before it was rolled out across the school.

With the increase in pupils at Radlett classrooms have been created using Portakabins, whilst these are not the ideal environment for young people with autism the school manages and has developed the environment well through creating a low arousal environment. During observations it was noted that noise does carry through significantly from one class to another, and during one session in particular it was felt that this was impacting on pupils remaining settled and engaged in class.

Whilst the school makes good use of the accommodation they have available the review team were aware that the environment, particularly in the porta-cabin impacts on sensory issues for some pupils. The team supports the school in the work they are doing to identify solutions to address space issues in a way which supports

the needs of learners within the school and would see this as an area of development.

3. The physical environment is used effectively to promote well-being and progress for the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

Environments at Radlett Lodge are regularly audited and monitored by members of the senior leadership team and this can trigger training or work with a specific team of staff.

Each pupil at Radlett Lodge has a sensory assessment which considers all 7 sensory areas, additionally individual support plans show those students that particularly need a low arousal environment or have specific sensory needs.

The hall is used for several different activities such as assemblies and trampolining. For each activity the hall is arranged giving thought to the best layout, using furniture to show expectations and clearly define the activity. The use of benches and chairs in both activities were placed to direct the attention of pupils towards the activity enabling them to engage with limiting the distractions. Symbols were used to reinforce this, directed at either individuals or the whole group of pupils.

In the main playground area there is a range of activities for pupils to engage in, including a woodland area with tipi which was designed and chosen by the pupils through the student council. The review team saw the difference in the playground spaces between the younger and older pupils and how they were created with the needs of the pupils in mind.

4. People with autism are able to function effectively within the physical environment and their well-being is enhanced.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

The school operates a fob system due to its confined nature. This enables pupils to walk independently throughout the school whilst maintaining the necessary safeguarding protocols. Where the doors are locked with a fob a help symbol is available to encourage the pupils to ask should they want to go through a door.

The low arousal environment created throughout the school was perceived by the review team to be having a positive effect on students, creating a calm, purposeful atmosphere conducive to learning and general well-being.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas for Development

Whilst the school makes good use of the accommodation they have available the review team were aware that the environment, particularly in the porta-cabin impacts on sensory issues for some pupils. The team supports the school in the work they are doing to identify solutions to address space issues in a way which supports the needs of learners within the school and would see this as an area of development.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 2

Teaching/Learning - Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

The programme/curriculum and the content of activities are informed by an understanding of autism/takes into account the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. Within policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines there is a clear written description of the needs of people with autism in relation to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

The National Autistic Society provides a Curriculum Policy for its schools which outlines the key skills which will be focused on within the curriculum in order to meet the needs of pupils with autism.

This policy is supplemented by a wide range of school specific policies and protocols including a Radlett Lodge School Teaching Learning Policy and Curriculum Framework at Radlett Lodge School document. Within these documents it is indicated that the school curriculum is based on the National, EYFS and FE Curriculums but that the principal focus is on the specific learning needs of the pupils.

The Curriculum Framework indicates that all schemes of work reference autism specific issues and that the areas of communication, social, behavioural, personal, citizenship and self-help skills are specifically addressed. The importance of the 24 hour curriculum is noted along with a strong focus on PSHCE and community cohesion.

Each child has an Individual Educational Plan with 3 key targets identified every six months. Examples seen indicate that these targets specifically relate to developing skills in areas of difficulty directly related to the impact of the pupils autism. e.g. developing food tolerances, developing social play skills, developing self-advocacy skills. **Targets seen were noted to be 'SMART' with clear strategies described.**

At the Lodge Developmental Learning Outcomes are identified for each resident these will relate to personal independence tasks such as road crossing, food preparation, self-care etc. A checklist of skill development is maintained across all areas with key targets identified for focused work.

2. The programme/curriculum and the content of sessions reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and are informed by the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

As indicated above the school's curriculum is reported to be based on the National Curriculum with adaptations made to address the individual needs of pupils. A new curriculum has recently been put in place to reflect the revised National Curriculum this is less prescriptive and gives teachers greater flexibility when planning and delivering sessions.

Medium term plans and daily planning sheets are used to plan and record lessons within the school, with a recently revised format for session plans used in the Lodge. Planning across school and residential was seen to include clearly defined learning objectives (for the whole group and/or individuals) a description of the activity and bullet point information indicating opportunities to promote skills and understanding in areas such as: communication and social understanding, flexibility of thought, sensory need.

My Progress Files provide detailed evidence of progress made in relation to all aspects of school and Lodge life and are considered to be a strength of the school. These are working documents with information added and updated on a regular basis. Colour coded **'RAG rating'** gives a very visual summary of areas where expectations have been exceeded, met or not met. Photos and certificates supplement written information and contribute to a very informative dynamic record of each pupils achievements. The recording of Magic Moments also ensures that important achievements which may not be reflected in the standard documentation are noted and celebrated.

3. The programme/curriculum and the content of activities promote the independence, well-being and progress of the individuals with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

During observations the review team were able to see pupils engaged in a wide range of curriculum activities including: science experiments, storytelling, yoga, shopping in the local community, food preparation.

During each session seen it was clear that the specific difficulties experienced by individuals with autism were considered and addressed. In the best sessions the opportunities to develop skills in relation to autism noted on session plans were well realised with pupils; responding to problem solving questions, exploring a range of sensory items, interacting with others during paired activities etc.

As noted earlier in this report a multi-sensory approach to learning is well considered throughout sessions.

Communication and social interaction skills were seen to be addressed during most sessions seen, for example during a **'Soundbeam'** pupils followed instructions, and spontaneous vocalisation was promoted through the use of visual supports, during snack sessions students used PECS and visual communication to request items.

The school places significant emphasis on the development of personal independence skills and this is considered to be a strength of the school. Observations indicate that staff across all areas have high expectations that learners do things for themselves and understand the importance of giving necessary time for the completion of tasks such as getting out/putting away equipment, moving furniture to create appropriate activity spaces, prepare food, manage clothing, moving independently from place to place etc. Further personal independence skills are specifically taught across the school and lodge, with shopping and food preparation activities observed by the review team during their visit.

Within almost all sessions observed it was noted that there were opportunities for pupils to make and express choices. Choice making was seen in relation to activities e.g. at playtime, equipment e.g. cushion for yoga, food items e.g. for snack etc. During some sessions good use was made of questions to promote problem solving and forward planning e.g. during a food preparation session learners were encouraged to identify what they needed.

During several sessions it was evident that staff take a flexible approach in response to individual need. This may involve changing the location where activities may take place, or changing tasks to **follow the child's lead**

4. The people with autism respond positively to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities and maintain skills or make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

Parent’s comment that they are kept well **informed of child’s progress**, with one parent noting that **‘we are in constant contact, which means we are carrying out things at home and school.’**

Pupils were interviewed during the review and talked very positively about the Radlett Rappers who were formed to perform at school Christmas event. They then took part in Autism has got talent and performed at the Autism Show. As a result of this during Autism Awareness week the **‘Big Brovers’ visited the school.**

During sessions seen the review team noted that pupils were largely well engaged, and on many occasions clear enjoyment was seen as pupils participated in sessions. When learners became disengaged staff supported them well, allowing a short break before encouraging them to re-join activities, or enabling them to undertake planned tasks in areas outside of the classroom.

The school is meticulous in its work to monitor progress. CASPA Data Analysis in relation to curriculum targets for the year ending July 2014 indicates that all but one pupil made at least expected progress with several exceeding expectations. Records indicate that between 84 and 90 percent of IEP targets have been fully achieved over the last 3 years.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas of Strength

The school places significant emphasis on the development of personal independence skills and this is considered to be a strength of the school. Observations indicate that staff across all areas have high expectations that learners do things for themselves and understand the importance of giving necessary time for the completion of tasks.



My Progress Files provide detailed evidence of progress made in relation to all aspects of school and Lodge life and are considered to be a strength of the school. These are working documents with information added and updated on a regular basis. Colour coded **'RAG rating'** gives a very visual summary of areas where expectations have been exceeded, met or not met. Photos and certificates supplement written information and contribute to a very informative dynamic record of each pupils achievements. The recording of Magic Moments also ensures that important achievements which may not be reflected in the standard documentation are noted and celebrated.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 3

Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation & Resources

There is a planned approach to the organisation of activities and resources that takes into account the needs of people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the organisation of activities and resources in relation to the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

As indicated throughout this report there are a range of policy documents and guidelines that inform all aspects of practice. The Classroom and lesson organisation protocol also includes information regarding lesson materials and organisation in terms of resources. Discussion with the Staff Development Co-ordinator and review of training materials indicates that staff across the school and college are all provided with training and support to supplement and explain written guidance given.

2. The organisation of activities and resources reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and takes into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

Lessons across the school follow a clear consistent format with transition into the lessons/the lessons/transition out of the lesson carefully structured.

Resources within the school are regularly updated with visual supports in particular created to suit individual sessions and individual needs. These follow a similar format whilst being **differentiated for pupil's abilities e.g. some in symbol or word format**, and A4 page or broken down into separate instructions. These are all ready, prepared and laid out prior to the lesson starting so that they are to hand for staff and/or pupils to use.

Differentiation was seen within lessons, sometimes in terms of activity but often in relation to support given. For example in an art lesson pupils were creating a mosaic on the lid of a box. Within the group of 5 one pupil worked independently following his jig, supported by an LSA where required. Each of the jigs guided the pupils through the activity but the language and amount of symbols used was different to meet the needs of the pupils in the class.

3. The organisation of activities and resources promotes the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
	X		

All staff within the school have the same training with regard to approaches used with pupils with autism which is robust and comprehensive. There was evidence **during the review that LSA's** could be and were given responsibility of teaching and working with individuals and groups of pupils. Additionally there was evidence of teaching staff stepping in with particular pupils when the pupil **wasn't responding to the** staff member they were working with. This was done with consideration for the staff and the pupil concerned. Throughout all observations staff were seen to be clearly deployed and to remain highly focused on their work and the young people they were supporting

The format and pace of lessons was consistent with staff directed activity or demonstration followed by student participation and a plenary following the format of self/peer evaluation or checking of the activity.

During sessions observed opportunities were seen of pupils to take part in whole group sessions, individual work and on some occasions paired activities. In the best examples these types of activities were well balance with group activities used for short introductory tasks before pupils moved into individual or paired work. During some activities it was felt that whole group tasks in which students took turns to give individual responses were overlong leading to some pupils becoming disengaged. Small group or paired activities may have reduced waiting time and provided more potential for peer to peer interactions. Reviewing the balance between whole group, small group and individual work is considered to be an area for development.

In the early years class pupils were seen to use work stations and in Post 16 work boxes are used to facilitate independent work.

However with these exceptions the review team saw few opportunities for pupils to undertake independent study as in the sessions observed pupils were often supported in the activities that they were completing leaving little time for self-occupancy or self-directed study. Learners at Radlett Lodge have high levels of need and subsequently there is a high staff to pupil ratio to ensure they receive appropriate and necessary support. Whilst recognising the need for adult support and direction in many learning activities the review team consider that pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop self-occupancy skills and to take part in self-directed/independent activities.

Independence is developed with pupils being expected to participate in clearing up at the end of an activity, finding their own resources for an activity and given the time and space to make their own choices. Clear labelling and organised cupboards ensure that pupils are enabled to do this.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the activity and the resources used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

Behaviour is monitored through the use of incident reports these are then analysed to discover the periods of high incidents. This data is then used within the robust training package that has been developed by staff at Radlett and overseen by the Staff Development Co-ordinator. Data from 13/14 showed that the top times for incidents were during transition and playtime. Training and resources have been developed to make playtime more structured. Pupils now have access to activity bags during playtime and the transitions to and from mirror those in the classroom. All this work has resulted in playtime going from second to third in the top activities that cause incidents.

During an interview with pupils they spoke very positively about the staff and school enjoying many things about school life. They particularly mentioned enjoying the time that they spent in the community undertaking activities that they planned and carried out with support from staff.

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas for Development

Learners at Radlett Lodge have high levels of need and subsequently there is a high staff to pupil ratio to ensure they receive appropriate and necessary support. Whilst recognising the need for adult support and direction in many learning activities the review team consider that pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop self-occupancy skills and to take part in self-directed/independent activities.

During some activities it was felt that whole group tasks in which students took turns to give individual responses were overlong leading to some pupils becoming disengaged. Small group or paired activities may have reduced waiting time and provided more potential for peer to peer interactions. Reviewing the balance between whole group, small group and individual work is considered to be an area for development.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 4 Teaching/Learning – Methods

There is a range of methods and approaches used with people with autism that respond to their needs and are informed by a knowledge and understanding of autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the approaches and methods used with the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

The National Autistic Societies Curriculum Policy gives an overview of teaching methods which are used within its schools. SPELL is cited as the overriding framework, with TEACCH and Studio III behaviour strategies indicated as key approaches.

A range of discussion documents/policies written by staff at Radlett Lodge supplement this over-riding policy including: Sensory Interventions Policy, Autism and Social Understanding, Lack of Imagination and Flexible Thought, Autism and Independence, Autism and Motivation, Autism and Sensory Perception, Autism and Transition. Each of these includes a description of the strengths and difficulties individuals may have in the named area along with clear **guidelines with regards to 'What we can do to help'**

Approaches and methods cited within documentation include:

- Intensive Interaction
- Soundbeam
- TACPAC
- Sensory Massage
- Sensory Food Play
- Sensory Circuits
- Jolly Phonics for Interaction
- Play and Interaction Intervention
- Multi-sensory Literacy
- Direct teaching
- Using 'real life' contexts**
- TEACCH systems
- Visual Prompts and supports including choice boards
- Use of motivators and interests
- PECS

Social Stories
 Structured play
 Use of photographs.

2. The approaches and methods used reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and take into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The philosophy of creating and maintaining a low arousal environment as outlined in the SPELL approach is highly evident throughout all areas of the school and lodge. This is reflected in both the physical environments created but also in the manner in which staff conduct their work and interact with pupils. The calm, low key approach used by all staff when supporting pupils is considered to be an area of strength. Within sessions support staff give quiet, targeted support and when challenging behaviours occur staff remain composed using minimal physical intervention to redirect and reengage pupils.

Opportunities to reflect on activities and progress were seen to be planned for and implemented across both the school and residences. In the best examples visual supports including symbols and real objects were used effectively to enable pupils to recall activities undertaken and how well they had done. In some instances it was felt that the schools going for gold system of **'scoring' performance in lessons may not have been fully understood by pupils with adults using quite complex language to identify why a colour had been awarded.**

Strong highly consistent structured strategies and routines were seen to be used to support transitions throughout the school and lodge. Strategies used include: short period of quiet, sand timers, count downs, songs, and reference to individual or group schedules.

Intensive Interaction approaches were used to good effect in some **sessions with staff copying children's actions or vocalisations before** introducing new elements for pupils to respond to and copy.

3. The approaches and strategies promote the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

As indicated previously visual supports are used extensively throughout the school to support communication, reduce anxiety and to promote independence. Differentiated supports (objects, photos, symbols, words) are used to reinforce verbal information, promote choice making, inform and encourage independence in following routines, give stepped instructions etc. Staff generally show a good understanding of appropriate prompting giving gestural and occasional physical prompts to support use of visual schedules etc.

Pupils were seen to use a range of aids and approaches to support their communication. PECS is used by many pupils within the school and examples of both planned and spontaneous PECS use was seen. For example during one session a pupil spontaneously asked for a drink. Signing was seen to be used by one pupil to support his vocal language and an iPad was also used by this (and other pupils) to enhance their communication. Staff were also seen to respond to less overt forms of communication e.g. recognising when a child was eye pointing and responding accordingly.

As stated previously in this report support for behaviour is strong and throughout the review incidents of behavioural challenge were managed calmly and sensitively with staff using strategies such as diversion and redirection to prevent the escalation of behaviours.

Some use of motivation strategies and special interests was noted with for example the Disney store used to illustrate the notion of a public place and Mr Potato Head, a favoured item, used as reward/transition tool between activities.

Across the school and residential provision a high level of consistency was observed in relation to the use of key strategies and approaches. Discussion with staff indicates that staff working **across both settings, along with 'correspondence checks'** undertaken by senior staff play a key role in ensure this level of continuity is maintained.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the approaches and methods used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

As indicated in the Teaching and Learning policy the school employs a range of monitoring procedures including quality of displays, feedback form parents and others, external inspections, pupil

progress, lesson observations, meeting minutes, quality of medium and sort term planning, progress in school imp plan to review practice and assess the impact of work undertaken.

During the review observations pupil were seen, for the most part to be actively involved in sessions was seen. In the best examples high levels of engagement throughout sessions for example during a group yoga session all five pupils participated throughout, managing their own equipment and undertaking a range of exercises.

Activities during which intensive interaction techniques were utilised or during which staff followed the child's lead were clearly enjoyed with smiles, giggles and on-going engagement seen.

Pupils talked positively about opportunities they had to go out and learn in the community. They also reported that they appreciated having a student council which enabled them to fund raise and go out and buy things they liked

Feedback from parents indicates that for the most part parents feel **their children are very well supported with comments such as 'child very happy to go to school every day!', 'They listen to him and make sure he knows he is being listened to = just what he needs'**

Sources of Evidence:

See summary at end of report

Areas of Strength

The calm, low key approach used by all staff when supporting pupils is considered to be an area of strength. Within sessions support staff give quiet, targeted support and when challenging behaviours occur staff remain composed using minimal physical intervention to redirect and reengage pupils.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Accessibility Policy
Activities for a Sensory Diet
Annual Review documents
Autism and Choice

Autism and community participation policy
Autism and Independence policy
Autism and Motivation
Autism and Play
Autism and Transitions
Autism and sensory perception policy
Autism and Social Understanding
Bedrooms and individual space policy
Careers Education and Guidance Policy
Case studies
Class meeting notes and follow up work
Classroom and lesson organisation programme
Communication and Language in the Sensory Room
Curriculum Policy – National Autistic Society
Curriculum Framework at Radlett Lodge School
Daily planning sheets for classes
Data extracted from SERS system - examples
Designated Learning Outcomes
Destination Data
Incident form
Individual Behaviour Support Plans
Individual Educational Plans
Individual Risk Assessments
Informal Reflection forms from new staff
Intervention Plans
Introduction to the Radlett Lodge Sensory Perceptual Profile Checklist
Job description – Autism Lead Practitioner.
Lack of Imagination and Flexible Thought
Learning Environment Checklists
Medium term plans
MSD records – examples
My Progress Files
NAS Incident Form Manual
NAS Psychology Service Strategies to help manage Sensory Sensitivity
NAS Sensory Profile Checklist
Newsletters
Nutrition and diet policy
Observations of Activity and Learning and summary feedback sheets.
Person Centred Plans and Reviews
Photographs, PowerPoint Presentations
Post 16 Unit Curriculum Policy
Post 16 Overview, organisation and rationale (guideline)
Post 16 Curriculum breakdown including pathways
Post 16 Staff and student timetable examples

Psychology Team Referral Form
Pupils about me book
Radlett Lodge School Teaching and Learning Policy
Records of awards/qualifications
Restrictive Physical Intervention at Radlett Lodge School- annual whole school data.
School Improvement Plan
Sensory Circuit Activities
Sensory circuits - examples
Sensory Diet – example
Sensory Diets – guidance
Sensory Interventions at Radlett Lodge
Sensory Interventions Policy (including sensory room)
Sensory Sensitivity Assessment Proforma
Session plans
Students view symbol worksheets
Training Presentations
Training Records.
Transition Plan
Weekly Summary of Incidents - example

Interviews & Discussions with:

Principal
Deputy Principal Education
Head of Further Education Provision
Head of Care
Staff Development Co-ordinator
Occupational Therapist
Lead Autism Practitioner
Sensory Co-ordinator.
Apollo Class

Observations:

Occupational Therapy Session
A range of sessions throughout the school.
A range of sessions in residential provision
Outdoor play
Snack and meal times
School Council meeting
Training session.

SUMMARY

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION SCORES				
Number of observations completed:				22
	NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET	MET	MET & EXCEEDED
Environment	0	1	21	0
Activity Content	0	0	17	5
Activity Organisation and Resources	0	5	17	0
Methods	0	1	18	3
TOTALS	0	7	74	8
PERCENTAGES	0%	7%	84%	9%

22 observations were recorded in a range of situations within both the school and residential facilities. Incidental observations were also noted and are reflected in the report.

Comments:

- **“Not Met”** There were no observations of practice where scores of not met were awarded.
- **“Partially Met”** 7% of all observational scores had elements where partially met was awarded. These included:
 - Significant Loss of pupil engagement whilst waiting for turn during group activities.
 - Potential for further support to address sensory need.
- **“Met”** The majority of observations during this review fall into the category of met.
- **“Met & Exceeded”** 9% of observational scores had elements were met and exceeded was awarded. These included:
 - Opportunities to develop/generalise range of skills related to autism needs considered and utilised in addition to curriculum focus.



- Flexible approach utilised to follow child's lead when undertaking tasks resulting in high level of engagement and achievement.

QUESTIONNAIRES

SCORES					
Number of Questionnaires sent out (information provided by the school):					54
Number of Questionnaires returned:					19
Number of sections not scored (figures only reflect sections scored):					
	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	SATISFIED	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
Contact	0	0	2	6	11
Support	0	0	4	4	11
Advice	0	0	4	6	9
Involvement	0	0	4	6	9
TOTALS	0	0	14	22	40
PERCENTAGES	0%	0%	18.4%	29%	52.6%

Comments:

19 questionnaires were returned. All sections were scored on all those completed. Scores and comments were overwhelmingly positive.

Statements included:

Contact

Excellent! Daily diary plus the teacher phones me if anything in particular has happened that may upset my son.

Very well, often receive emails and telephone calls relating to either our son or matters to do with school

Only when problems arise

Because my son is residential, I am sometimes left out of the communication which takes place between home and school.

Support

They have tried really hard to help, even changing his class in order for things to improve

More (could be) done in the area of personal care

If there was a box for very, very happy I'd tick it. Amazing support for my child!

Advice



Support and advises on what would work at home as well as school
He is very sensory and they are really helping with this area. Lots of support.

Involvement

The school keep me very involved in any new strategies they are putting in place and also strengths my son has and improvements made by him in school.

A few more parents evenings would be good in order for me to see what work my son is actually doing

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Core Standard 12: Behaviour Support

The school has a systematic approach to supporting pupils in relation to anxieties and behaviour. Data is used to: analyse behavioural incidents, inform behaviour plans and risk assessments, monitor the impact of behavioural interventions, and to inform staff training and support. The robust procedures, resulting in clear evidence based practice is considered to be a strength.

Specialist Standard 2: Teaching/Learning – Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

Preparation for young adults within the post 16 department considers their individual aspirations and prepares them well for adult life ahead. Through individualised curriculum planning, teaching and the use of experiential learning students develop the necessary skills to equip them for the life beyond Radlett Lodge School and this is considered a strength of the school.

Core Standard 1: Consistent Understanding of Autism

It is all credit to the school that within the context of significant staff changes over the last 2 years high levels of continuity and consistency were seen in relation to the delivery of key autism approaches such as: transition routines and strategies, use of visual supports, consideration of language levels and processing time and understanding of hierarchy of prompts. The role of the lead practitioner, along with thorough induction procedures and extensive targeted staff training and development all play a key part in ensuring that this a strength of the school

Specialist Standards 2: Teaching/Learning – Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

The school places significant emphasis on the development of personal independence skills and this is considered to be a strength of the school. Observations indicate that staff across all areas have high expectations that learners do things for themselves and understand the importance of giving necessary time for the completion of tasks.

Specialist Standards 2: Teaching/Learning – Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content



My Progress Files provide detailed evidence of progress made in relation to all aspects of school and Lodge life and are considered to be a strength of the school. These are working documents with information added and updated on a regular basis. Colour coded **'RAG rating'** gives a very visual summary of areas where expectations have been exceeded, met or not met. Photos and certificates supplement written information and contribute to a very informative dynamic record of each pupils achievements. The recording of Magic Moments also ensures that important achievements which may not be reflected in the standard documentation are noted and celebrated.

Specialist Standard 4: Teaching/Learning - Methods

The calm, low key approach used by all staff when supporting pupils is considered to be an area of strength. Within sessions support staff give quiet, targeted support and when challenging behaviours occur staff remain composed using minimal physical intervention to redirect and reengage pupils.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Core Standard 15: Sensory Issues

A significant amount of consideration and work has been put into identifying and meeting sensory need. Sensory assessments are in place for all pupils and sensory programmes are delivered to targeted pupils by the occupational therapist. Class teams utilise a considered multi-sensory approach to learning. Whilst sensory diets and circuits have been introduced to some individuals or targeted groups, it is felt that more extensive use of these approaches would benefit most, if not all, learners.

Specialist Standard 1: Environment

Whilst the school makes good use of the accommodation they have available the review team were aware that the environment, particularly in the porta-cabin impacts on sensory issues for some pupils. The team supports the school in the work they are doing to identify solutions to address space issues in a way which supports the needs of learners within the school and would see this as an area of development.

Specialist Standard 3: Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation and Resources.

Learners at Radlett Lodge have high levels of need and subsequently there is a high staff to pupil ratio to ensure they receive appropriate and necessary support. Whilst recognising the need for adult support and direction in many learning activities the review team consider that pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop self-occupancy skills and to take part in self-directed/independent activities.

Specialist Standard 3: Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation and Resources.

During some activities it was felt that whole group tasks in which students took turns to give individual responses were overlong leading to some pupils becoming disengaged. Small group or paired activities may have reduced waiting time and provided more potential for peer to peer interactions. Reviewing the balance between whole group, small group and individual work is considered to be an area for development.



APPENDIX

SCHOOL COMMENTS

Please note that comments must only pertain to the report and not to the performance of the review team. Any feedback on the performance of the review team must be sent separately to the Accreditation office on the Review Team Evaluation form at the end of your review.



PANEL REPORT

TERMINOLOGY

The Audit Programme may be applied to services for people with autism spectrum disorders. In this folder the word 'autism' is used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome, so that unwieldy phrasing is avoided. Similarly, to avoid repetition of alternative titles, generic terms have been used throughout the text.

To be consistent with the Care Standards ACT 2000 UK, this document refers the term Autism Spectrum Disorders, whilst recognising that some may refer to this as Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

Accredited: When a service/school has successfully completed their self audit, IDR and review and is awarded accredited status by the Accreditation Panel.

Advanced Documentation: Self-evaluation documents that include the pen picture describing the establishment, the Core Standards and the Specialist Standards. It is to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted in preparation for an Autism Accreditation review. It includes recommendations from the previous panel report (recorded under **Development Need**), the Core Standards, and the Specialist Standards (recorded under **Self Audit**).

Areas for Development: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR-summarised under further action to be taken) and Review Team (within review report) describing areas for improvement. To be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Recommendations.

Areas of Strength: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR) and Review Team (within review report) describing aspects of strong practice within the service/school locally to be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Good Practice or Commendation.

Autism: Term used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome.

Carer(s): Term used to refer to parents, guardians and other family members that are responsible and care for a person with autism.

Commendation: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength that reflects outstanding practice within the service/school.

Deferred: Status of service/school determined by the Panel. Neither not Accredited nor Accredited for a maximum of 6 months until recommendations from the panel have been addressed. A re-visit will be arranged in which a second report will be produced on these recommendations, no IDR required. This report will then be presented to the Panel to determine whether Accredited status can be granted or not.

Good Practice: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength within the service/school that reflects good practice within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Interim Development Report (IDR): Report completed by the Accreditation Advisor and service/school at the 18 month visit and includes further actions, key documents and areas of potential strength.

Key Documents: Is a binder/file that remains at the service/school as a reference tool. It includes proof of evidence that supports the self-audit and advanced documentation and includes items such as policies, procedures, local protocols, guidelines, brochures, handbooks, and manuals. The key documents file is maintained on a regularly basis at the service/school to be available if required by the Accreditation Advisor or the review team.

Not Accredited: Accredited status not granted or removed by the Panel after the service/school review. No IDR required, but there will be a minimum of 12 months before the next review.



Panel: Makes the judgement on whether there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate whether the service/school meets the criteria for accredited status. The Panel consists of a representative from the Accreditation department and a minimum of two individuals from a pool of professionals selected based on their expertise and qualification in the field of autism. Panel members are selected based on their area of expertise as it relates to the type of service/school being reviewed and any potential conflicts of interest with the specific service/school presented at the Panel meeting.

Pen Picture: A factual description/overview of the service/school(s) being reviewed that forms section B of the Advanced Documentation (see page 18). Accreditation Advisor agrees and completes at initial visit with the service/school and updated as necessary. This document is required as part of the final self audit submission.

Person with Autism: Any individual who is using a service/school, including pupil, student, client, customer, resident, or service user.

Policies, Procedures, Local Protocols and Guidelines: Documents which establish the groundwork for good practice and which refer to or evidence methodologies developed to successfully support the needs of people with autism e.g. Individual Plans, or Transition Policy.

Procedures Manual: Autism Accreditation programme's review process manual, describing mission statement, overview of the Department, Accreditation Advisor role and specifics of the review process.

Recommendations: Determined by the Panel from areas for development within the service/school that reflect areas of concern within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Registered: When a service/school registers with Autism Accreditation and begins the process of completing the self audit in preparation for the IDR and review with the prospect of being awarded accredited status.

Self-Audit: Is the self-evaluation documents of Core Standards and Specialist Standards. They are to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted for every IDR and review. As described in the Advanced Documentation above.

Service/School: Includes all types of organisations and schools that provide education, care or support for people with autism.

Service/School Manager: Any person who has the direct management responsibility for a service/school, including Principal, Head Teacher, Manager, General Manager and Home Manager.

Service/School Provider: Any organisation or individual that owns a service/school, including local/education authorities, health authorities, trusts, national charities, local charities and private organisations.

Specialist Standards: Separate Standards for areas of service/school provided, including:

- Playscheme
- **Children's Home**
- Day Schools
- Residential Schools
- Colleges and Continuing Education Services
- Adult Day Services
- Adult Residential Services
- Secure Residential
- NHS and Independent Hospitals
- Educational Outreach Support Services
- Community Outreach
- Fostering Agencies
- Employment
- Short Break and Shared Care
- Supported Living

Standards: A set of Core and Specialist requirements set by the Accreditation Standards Body. The Standards are the basis that:

- The service/school uses for their self-evaluation for the self-audit document;
- The IDR is compiled through the self audit and other key documents
- The review team makes their observations to compile their review report.

Standards Body: Establish and review the Standards annually. The Standards Body consists of individuals recognised for their high achievement, expertise and qualification in the field of autism research and practice. Their names are listed on our website www.autism.org.uk.

Statutory Requirements: These include all statutory and legislative bodies' requirements that must be met in order for care provision to be allowed in the United Kingdom. They include CQC, OFSTED, HMie, Health & Safety Executive Council etc.

The use of these terms avoids duplication of documents and also ensures consistency of terminology throughout the text.