



Autism Accreditation

Specialist Award

AUTISM ACCREDITATION SPECIALIST AWARD: Assessment Report

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| Name of Service | Delamere School |
| Reference Number | 28120 |
| Dates | 20, 21, 22 March 2023 |
| Lead Assessor | Rachel Gittens |
| Moderator | Tracy Morvinson |
| Status prior to assessment | Advanced |
| Committee award | Advanced |

About this Assessment

This report states key findings on how well autistic individuals are supported according to our framework of good autism practice. Evidence has been primarily obtained from observation, supplemented by evidence from interviews, a sample of support plans and information provided by the provision. If opportunities to observe has been problematic or limited greater weighting has been given to other sources of evidence. Where appropriate, feedback has been obtained from autistic people supported by the service and/or family members and this feedback has been considered in findings

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The school promotes a Total Communication environment, the commitments to which are set out in the Communication Policy. There was strong evidence throughout the assessment that autistic children are very well supported in all aspects of their communication.

The challenges or barriers each autistic person may experience in social communication and interaction are recorded. For example, learning support plans, including body maps and one-page profiles describe what approaches or tools are being employed to enable autistic people to understand others and to express themselves.

Prior Learning Journeys, capturing what works/doesn't work and Learning Plans identify what approaches or tools should be employed to enable autistic pupils to understand others and to express themselves. Prior Learning Journeys are used to inform One Page Profiles and strategies to inform planned support.

Annual Review Meeting documentation includes clear references to the individual strengths and progress made for each pupil in terms of their communication and interaction. Documentation, describing the goals and expected outcomes, and plans that are written to address different aspects of communication were shared. Examples of the impact of specific interventions, such as those carried out by the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) were also shared.

Personal Learning Targets break down the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Outcomes, examples of recorded communication targets that some autistic children are working towards include:

- to make requests using size and colour attributes, using PODD and/or Snap Core AAC device
- to correctly use pronouns in spontaneous speech, using approaches such as adult modelling, scaffolding language and Blanks Level questioning
- to begin to request the repeat of an action or activity through exchanging a more symbol from a choice of two

Plans take account of what motivates autistic pupils to socially interact with others. To help children to engage in communication, Intensive Interaction is one of the approaches used, in one sampled plan an autistic learner was working towards being able 'to consistently respond at the involvement level within a range of familiar adults and settings'.

Some learners have achieved Signalong for Learners accreditation, a recognised award, the first cohort of children have been supported to work towards this during the last two years. Children document their evidence towards the award, staff report this has supported them to develop in their communication and confidence to communicate.

In interviews, speech and language therapists and school based staff gave examples of how autistic pupils communication is assessed and the support in place to foster their preferred method of communication. Further to this staff talked about some of the different ways that they support the communication and interaction needs of learners, including Intensive Interaction and Attention Autism. The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) intervention was also discussed, with information shared in respect of how staff take account of the children's individual needs and how approaches are adapted to ensure the interventions are accessible for them.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities

Staff recognised vocalisations and gesture as communication and responded to it accordingly, helping teach autistic pupils about the cause-and-effect nature of communicating. They also made excellent use of a range of methods and approaches used to provide autistic pupils with access to augmentative or alternative communication systems, for example, to support receptive language and to help make themselves understood, staff were consistent in using the following approaches:

- Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display boards (PODD) used to model using key words in context
- Sign supported speech, signing a single key word
- Symbols on lanyards to give instruction such as 'wait', 'sit' and quiet'
- Keeping their language short and simple

Examples of observed support, seen to be employed consistently well to develop children's expressive language and communication, and to foster positive social interaction, included consistent use of visual symbol supports used alongside spoken keywords and staff signing key words alongside spoken language. First/Next, communication boards and Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA), and modelling social use of language were all observed to be used to good effect and appeared to be firmly embedded working practices. Lessons were well paced and all staff were observed to adapt their communication approach for different learners, and during most interactions allow adequate processing time, as required.

Whilst engaged in learning outside a number of different staff members were observed joining autistic pupils at activities they demonstrated an interest in, sometimes this involved simply sitting alongside them and mirroring their vocalisations, using Intensive Interaction to foster moments of shared attention. Other times staff joined children and played alongside them mirroring play actions such as sifting leaves, patting different surfaces whilst providing commentary language, allowing them to hear words, sounds or phrases that linked to what they are doing. When using descriptive commentary to interact with pupil's staff adapted their approaches to be suited to each child's stage of language.

When teaching Phonics staff used a range of active learning approaches to make lessons fun and interactive, for example using a Treasure Box of interesting objects that all began with the same letter sound and using sand to promote children's active participation in mark making.

Staff planned classroom learning activities to promote opportunity for autistic learners to engage in shared communication as part of a group and 1:1 with staff, and with each other, this extended to outdoor learning in the activities that were observed.

Consistent use of a range of visual approaches were observed being used to good effect to facilitate these activities such as using a traffic light system to support waiting and turn taking and the passing and receiving of tangible objects which made clear whose turn it was. When engaged with children, both individually and in groups staff were mindful to ensure they were always communicating whilst at the child's level and they demonstrated a strong knowledge of early communication approaches such as using verbal routines, familiar words and short phrases to support language.

During outdoor play and learning staff utilised incidental opportunities to facilitate children playing and exploring the environment alongside each other by joining them in activities they demonstrated interest in, and sometimes they were observed encouraging children to play together.

Functional Skills and Self-Reliance

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

Review meetings are used to discuss and document each autistic pupil's strengths and the progress made in terms of personal challenges and functioning life skills. In interviews staff said that they had been working closely with the local authority to improve the quality of all Education, Health and Care Plans so as to ensure that identified outcomes were specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. This approach is reported to have led to a much better process where children's achievements are recognised and next steps in learning are identified.

The individual's wishes and aspirations of learners are taken in to account during the formal review process, in consultation with those who know the children best. In interviews staff spoke about how they continue to reflect on the ways that they engage autistic pupils in the review process so as to give them meaningful opportunities to contribute.

Transitions are planned and take account of how individual learners cope with changes and make choices, and agreed strategies of support are recorded. The school has in place a system that starts in Year 5 to support the transition to high school, this includes a programme of support for parents and carers which is delivered over 5 sessions.

The skills and challenges of autistic pupils are outlined in a number of documents, such as One Page Profiles and Personal Learning Plans which evidence things such as dietary challenges and toileting needs, providing opportunity for staff to address functional life skills and provide tailored support to help learners to become more self-reliant and autonomous. Within each, tools and approaches have been identified, which staff employ, in order to provide suitable levels of support whilst fostering opportunities to further develop skills and to work towards identified goals.

Plans provide information on:

- identified goals and the agreed strategies of support, identified to address specific skills and challenges in functioning life and daily living skills
- tools and approaches, used to support autistic pupils in activities, during transitions, and in how to cope with changes and making choices
- how staff can best help pupils overcome recognised barriers to learning, for example by giving access to appropriate self-regulation, and use of approaches such as visual timetables and visual choice boards

In interviews, both staff and parents spoke about the way they work collaboratively to support children for example working together to help children develop communication skills, to following daily routines and to cope with change. Three parents spoke to the assessment team and said that they felt that the staff in school had a very good understanding of their child as an individual and that, as a family, they had been very well supported in helping their child in all aspects of their development.

When staff spoke about how they provide a flexible curriculum with personalised learning for every individual pupil their passion for learning and for providing autistic pupils with high quality learning experiences was palpable. Staff said they facilitate children's access to Cultural Capital activities and the opportunities provided to learners which develop their cultural awareness, knowledge and experience. They also spoke about the achievement of gaining the Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award which recognises that the school champions children's rights. The Gold Award indicates that children's rights are fully embedded throughout the school.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Children are supported to understand what they should do through a number of different visual tools and approaches, these include the use of 'First/Then' boards and individual visual schedules. Some children are encouraged to 'work towards' a preferred activity.

During transitions around school and to support children to move between activities staff made good use of symbol references which were carried with them and referred to as required. In observed sessions, the transition between activities and lessons were seen to be managed well with staff making good use of visual and auditory approaches to help autistic pupils understand what was happening 'first' and what was going to happen 'next'.

Staff provided graded assistance to support access to the Curriculum, for example they adapted the type and level of prompting used and they used visual tools alongside spoken language. In all observations, teachers deployed teaching assistants well and fully utilised their skills, this approach ensured that children were very well supported at all times.

The outdoor learning environments at Delamere have been developed to provide a range of high-quality play opportunities, these have been developed with consideration of how children play and the importance of understanding schemas to support their learning. For example, in one observation children were observed exploring an area that included a mud kitchen, children enjoyed posting, transferring and positioning. The learning environment, and staff approaches, encouraged the children's exploration and creativity by allowing them to follow their own particular interests confidently.

Staff demonstrated that they know the children in their classes very well, using listening and observing to understand how each child makes and takes decisions. Staff sometimes used commentary language, providing pupils with a positive interaction whilst also affirming their choices and giving value to their decisions. Throughout the observations staff facilitated opportunities for choice making and they used differentiated approaches to meet individual need. Examples of strategies seen to be used to good effect included the use of:

- structured language to offer a managed number of choices
- real objects as references
- symbols that were representative of the available options

The learning environments are planned so as to provide autistic pupils with accessible learning experiences in which they can develop and consolidate daily functional skills, for example staff make excellent use of quiet spaces and outdoor learning environments. Staff plan for the different ways that pupils like to learn by utilising a range of approaches that motivate and engage them, for example time for exploratory play where children used their senses to examine objects by looking, touching, listening moving and through social play.

For experiential learner's staff use Engagement Profiles to record the children's responses and engagement, for those working towards developing skills such as exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence, realisation. This tool helps staff to understand the current skill profile that children have and aids them to plan next steps for learning. A staff member was observed using Intensive Interaction to engage one learner, utilising the approach well to gain a few moments of shared attention and in another observation a teacher used strategies through Attention Autism to provide opportunity for a small group of autistic children to work on these skills.

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions

The school has a Sensory Policy in place which recognises that autistic people experience sensory perceptions in different ways, the role of professionals in helping autistic learners and the processes in place that ensure sensory needs are assessed, planned for, monitored and reviewed.

Sensory Assessments provide opportunity to gather information on the challenges each autistic pupil may have in regulating sensory experiences and allow staff to identify those that provide them with positive feedback. In interviews staff discussed how sensory assessments inform personal support planning, for example taking account of the environment when planning for learning.

An internal process is in place to ensure all autistic learners have a sensory assessment, and where required a plan is written that describes how staff can best support them. Approaches and responses from children engaged through sensory plans are recorded and are used to inform the process of evaluation, review and planned support.

Plans provide a summary of sensory processing difficulties that learner's present with, alongside examples of personalised strategies. Examples of sensory strategies seen to be used to good effect during the period of assessment included provision of purposeful movement breaks and use of in class strategies such as use of chewy sticks and ear defenders.

Plans describe what sensory experiences autistic people enjoy and what they might find challenging; All About Me documents, used to record the views of pupils for annual reviews give opportunity to record sensory differences. In interviews staff spoke about how they engage autistic learners to voice their views, for example using symbols for children to make choices and to indicate likes and dislikes. Sensory needs are also captured in other working documentation as required, for example body maps, one-page profiles and behaviour profiles sometimes include information on sensory needs.

Staff said that they feel very well supported in addressing sensory needs of autistic learners; in interviews, staff explained the process they follow to make a referral for assessment from an occupational therapist and about the role of the person in school identified as 'sensory lead'. Where required, staff also work in partnership with Trafford Sensory Impairment Support Service.

Staff spoke confidently, describing the different ways that autism impacts individual pupils, they shared examples of the different ways that autistic children communicate and spoke about how their approaches to learning differ. They could give examples of how autistic pupils are supported to self-regulate and how staff help them to avoid sensory overload.

Staff said that by incorporating a range of appropriate sensory-rich play and learning opportunities throughout the day they help children to be regulated and ready to learn. In addition to this, and where required, pupils' access further planned support and interventions that utilise more specialist resources, for example hydrotherapy, soft play, Rebound Therapy and sensory regulation in the 'Engine Room'.



Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Structured teaching and learning provided tailored experiences which ensured autistic pupils had access to a range of sensory activities; children were observed enjoying various different sensory stimulus and making choices about which activities to participate in and which to avoid.

During observations staff promoted opportunities for autistic pupils to explore their senses in different ways and to experience a range of sensory play experiences, at levels in which they individually felt comfortable. Examples included, smearing shaving foam on a window, splashing in puddles, mark making in sand and moving their bodies to music.

Staff were seen to be mindful of individual sensory needs in their approaches and were sensitive to the needs of learners. During the observations it was noted that staff recognised when children would benefit from taking a break and offered this suggestion, sometimes using a visual cue card to support this. Within all observation's learners appeared to be well supported in their sensory needs.

Planned support to help autistic learners access the curriculum which were observed being used to good effect included allowing learners:

- opportunity to watch to learn how to do things before engaging
- to use pictures to help them make a choice
- to take regular breaks between work tasks

Pupils benefit from staff utilising activities that incorporate sand and water, music and the school benefits from a soft play room and hydrotherapy pool. The outdoor provision at the school has been developed to address the self-regulatory needs of learners, this includes equipment such as a sunken trampoline, swing, climbing apparatus. Taking account of how children play and how they might navigate the space the different outdoor environments also include:

- good use of paths and landscaping to provide flow between equipment
- quiet areas
- interesting structures to climb
- play resources that give a feeling of being cocooned

Using sensitive approaches staff supported autistic learners to understand and regulate their emotions and to know what strategies were available to them. For example, staff were seen to facilitate movement breaks, to provide comfort and to listen and respond to pupils in a timely way. A range of individual resources were seen to be consistently used in classrooms such as fiddle toys, ear defenders and chew sticks and these were seen to be carried around school and used to equally good effect in different areas, such as outside, in the dining room and whilst participating in the signing choir.

At times, given the young age of the children, and the range of activities they were engaged in led to increased noise levels in classrooms, staff were quick to put in place strategies to address this so as to manage the learning environment and to ensure the volume of sound did not inhibit or cause discomfort to those in the classroom. Visual stimuli were mostly managed well, however in some classrooms the areas around teaching focal points were somewhat visually cluttered, and information extended across wall spaces and was displayed on windows which created somewhat of a visual distraction.



Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions

The school has a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy that sets out the school's commitment to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of staff, pupils and their families. Intentions set out in the strategy include to promote the voice of pupils and their parents, to foster life skills across the curriculum and to develop emotional resilience. The examples of what constitutes a 'Mentally healthy environment' cited in the strategy were reflective of those observed during the assessment.

Plans show an appreciation of activities which each autistic person finds enjoyable, for example All About Me profiles describe what make pupils happy and things they can do by themselves. Where applicable they also include references to physical and sensory needs.

Established routines enable autistic children to feel a sense of belonging, staff gave examples of how the structured approaches in school make the environment more predictable to children which helps them to develop self-confidence and supports them to manage change.

As required, the school liaise with other agencies such as CAMHS and educational psychology. Children's wellbeing is monitored and tracked and agreed approaches are recorded in learning plans. Staff could confidently describe how autistic pupils are actively engaged in determining how they are supported, what activities they take part in and what goals they are working towards.

Annual review meeting documentation includes clear references to the individual strengths and progress made for each autistic pupil in terms of their social, emotional and mental health. For example, identified needs include difficulties regulating emotions. Staff prepare a PowerPoint presentation which they share at annual reviews, these include photographs and represent the child's view in terms of what is important to them. The documents set out the child's achievements in all areas of learning and identify suggested next steps.

Educational visits are planned for, including within the local community, inclusion opportunities at local mainstream schools for The Arts and Sport, and through links with a local care home and theatre. All provide children with positive experiences that impact on their quality of life.

In interviews, staff spoke about the ways they work to support families, the parent liaison officer for example said that their role is really varied and has a foundation in forming positive working relationships. All staff demonstrated a keenness to work with parents and carers in ways that are most meaningful to them and they could give examples as to the ways they facilitate positive home/school relationships that recognise the positive contribution that families make when identifying, reviewing and planning for their children.

Information on the way staff support autistic learner's mental health and wellbeing was shared and discussed, including therapeutic interventions such as Play Therapy, Pet Therapy and Lego Therapy. Staff also spoke about Speak Out Stay Safe, a programme developed by the NSPCC designed to safeguard children who have additional needs and Scrummy Crew, a therapeutic intervention that uses the medium of food to enable children to explore, experience and nurture the feelings connected to this, whilst also providing an opportunity to develop life skills.



Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

During the period of assessment most pupils presented as feeling safe and calm, and where support was required, staff were quick to de-escalate and provide personalised support to those that presented as anxious or distressed. Proactive approaches used to avoid anxiety, distress and confusion for autistic learners included ensuring that classrooms were organised and structured in ways that helped pupils understand what they needed to do and staff were very consistent in communicating their expectations. During the period of assessment there were no restrictive practices used.

Autistic children presented as feeling secure in all observed activities; learning environments were organised and activities structured, visuals to help make daily routines predictable were in use and there was a high level of consistency in how staff communicated with pupils.

Some staff were observed making good use of Zones of Regulation, and in some classes, this was used very well. Where best practice was observed, staff used key words to help pupils understand the language label to be able to name how they were feeling and also encouraged their access to activities which promoted self-regulation. The active use of Zones of Regulation, is helping learners to identify their emotional state and feelings and to provide them with a visual means of communicating this to staff, alongside which the known strategies, used to support children in each Zone, were recorded. For example, one staff member was heard to say to a child "I can see that you are feeling upset" before using strategies such as modelling 'I need a break'.

There were many examples where strategies of support were differentiated to ensure that learning was accessible to all, and where staff were mindful to adapt lessons and work flexibly in the moment, in response to pupils learning and emotional wellbeing needs. In all observations, autistic pupils were treated with dignity and respect. So as to boost the children's confidence and self-esteem, staff provided suitable levels of challenge whilst differentiating their approaches and adapting expected outcomes.

In all observations autistic pupils were found to be engaged in meaningful activities which they found fun or interesting and staff ensured that children had access to a wide and varied Curriculum. The school has a singing and signing choir, many children participate in this group activity, staff said that the children have enjoyed participating in performances both in school and in the local community. Observation of the choir gave opportunity to see autistic children fully engaged in singing and signing within a large group and staff spoke passionately about the positive impact this activity has had for some learners, for example they said it had helped children to develop skills such as initiating interaction and had improved their attention and listening skills.

In interviews staff spoke about how they engage learners in experiences that provide them with opportunity to learn and try out new things, such as working towards a Signalong Learners Award, The Arts Award and to participate in group activities such as School Council and to have additional responsibilities, for example through the work to address the Rights Respecting Schools programme.

Staff structure lessons so as to provide learners with a clear beginning and end to activities which helps pupils to know what they are doing and provides them with a sense of completion. Staff made good use of a range of ways to recognise and celebrate effort, contribution and success, for example clapping, giving high fives and providing verbal feedback and praise.



Feedback from Autistic People

There was opportunity to speak to four pupils during the assessment, some of the things they said they liked about school were:

- staff give helpful advice
- we can play with fidget toys
- I like to play sport

The children spoke excitedly about some of the local community activities they have participated in including about a visit to a farm, local walks and a shopping centre.

Six pupils responded to the pre-assessment survey, the results can be found in the appendix to this report.

Feedback from autistic pupils, which was obtained from surveys, shows that;

- 5 said the help they get is good
- 5 said staff know what they find hard and what they are good at
- 6 said staff ask then how best they can help
- 4 said staff help them to do things in my life that I want to do

Two learners shared the additional comments:

1. Hello I get support. But i find some things stressful like missing out but the staff helped me
2. i get help to be smart and faster and stronger

Feedback from family members, which was obtained through 33 completed surveys, shows that;

- 91% of family members feel the support given to their relative is mostly or always good.
- 97% of family member feel staff's understanding of their relatives' needs is good or always good.
- 91% of family members feel the way they are kept informed and asked about their views is good or always good.
- 91% of families feel the advice they receive form the school is good or always good.

8 people shared further comments which can be found in the appendix to this report'

According to information shared by the school, staff provide frequent opportunities throughout the year to keep parents and carers informed about the ways they are working with their children. Families are involved in transition arrangements and annual reviews, and staff work closely with families on a day to day basis, including face to face meetings, phone calls and emails.

The school shared some whole school data, including the following responses from 57 respondents to the End of Year Parent Questionnaire R-Y6 Summary (14/09/2022)

The school helps me to support my child's learning

- Strongly Agree 80.7% 46
- Agree 19.3% 11
- Disagree 0% 0
- Strongly Disagree 0% 0

The leaders of the school encourage parents to be involved

- Strongly Agree 89.5% 51
- Agree 10.5% 6
- Disagree 0% 0
- Strongly Disagree 0% 0

The school provides the specialist support my child needs to succeed

- Strongly Agree 86.0% 49
- Agree 14.0% 8
- Disagree 0% 0
- Strongly Disagree 0% 0

The school is good at communicating with parents

- Strongly Agree 78.9% 45
- Agree 17.5% 10
- Disagree 1.8% 1
- Strongly Disagree 1.8% 1

In interview, the Parent Liaison Officer spoke about some of the ways that the school supports families, including:

Parent Council; a half termly meeting with a parent representative from each class. The group has been involved in different work such as developing a welcome pack and preparing for annual reviews. Mental health and well-being is currently being discussed, with a focus on reviewing the school approach and developing a parent friendly policy, awareness of the local offer and how do families know what is available to them.

Parent and carer support groups that have been provided include one for families new to the school, a group called autism after diagnosis and a further group for parents of children in Year 5 which has a focus on helping to plan for transition to high school, this group is delivered over 5 sessions.

Summary of the Assessment

| Topic | What the provision does particularly well | Development |
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| <p>Social Communication, Interactions and Relationships</p> | <p>Staff made excellent use of a range of methods and approaches used to provide autistic pupils with the means to communicate.</p> <p>To make themselves understood staff were consistent in using a range of differentiated approaches including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PODD Boards • Keyword signing • Symbols on lanyards • Keeping their language short and simple <p>Staff planned classroom learning activities to promote opportunity for autistic pupils to engage in shared communication as part of a group, 1:1 with staff, and with each other, this extended to outdoor learning in the activities that were observed.</p> | <p>Continue to explore meaningful ways in which pupils can express their views so that learner voice informs annual reviews and to give opportunity for autistic pupils to be fully engaged in whole school initiatives such as School Council and the Rights Respecting Schools Crew.</p> |
| <p>Functional Skills and Self-Reliance</p> | <p>All learning environments are planned so as to provide autistic pupils with accessible learning experiences in which they can develop and consolidate daily functional skills.</p> <p>In observed, sessions the transition between tasks and sessions were seen to be managed well with staff making good use of visual and auditory approaches to help autistic pupils understand what was happening 'now' and what was going to happen 'next'.</p> <p>In all observations, teachers deployed teaching assistants well and fully utilised their skills, this approach ensured that children were very well supported at all times.</p> | |

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| <p>Sensory Experiences</p> | <p>The school has in place an embedded process whereby autistic children’s sensory needs are assessed, planned for and addressed.</p> <p>Structured teaching and learning provide tailored experiences that provided autistic pupils with access to sensory activities they enjoyed and which were meaningful to them.</p> <p>Outdoor playgrounds are very well resourced with equipment that supports children’s sensory needs whilst also fostering physical development.</p> | <p>Reduce the visual stimuli and amount of information displayed on walls in some classes, taking particular note of information displayed around the focal teaching areas.</p> |
| <p>Emotional Wellbeing</p> | <p>In all observations autistic pupils were found to be engaged in meaningful activities which they found fun or interesting and staff ensured that children had access to a wide and varied Curriculum.</p> <p>So as to provide suitable levels of challenge, whilst boosting children’s confidence and self-esteem, staff differentiated their approaches and adapted the expected outcomes.</p> <p>Active use of Zones of Regulation helps learners to identify their emotional state and feelings and to provide them with a visual means of communicating this to staff.</p> | <p>Continue to embed the use of Zones of Regulation so as to increase children’s understanding and independence in this area.</p> <p>Staff could also consider introducing more planned opportunities for learners to reflect on their zone throughout the day.</p> |
| <p>Feedback from Autistic People</p> | <p>Feedback, including that from pupil interviews and from learners who completed the pre-assessment survey demonstrated an overall high level of satisfaction.</p> <p>In all observations, children were found to present as being happy in school and engaged in learning.</p> | |
| <p>Families, Carers and/or Advocates</p> | <p>Feedback from family members returning the pre-assessment survey demonstrates an overall high level of parental satisfaction.</p> | <p>Whilst feedback from the parent survey is overall good, feedback from a minority of parents suggested that there is scope to improve the way that the school communicates with parents and carers.</p> |

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| | | <p>Due to the confidential nature of the survey and low ratings not being backed up with comments, it is difficult for the school to directly act on this feedback. However, it is advised to carry out its own investigation to identify how the experiences and perspectives of the minority of parents who express dissatisfaction could be improved.</p> |
| <p>Other</p> | <p>In interviews staff spoke passionately about the children and families, demonstrating their commitment to working in partnership and providing high quality teaching and learning experiences.</p> <p>The school website is very easy to navigate and it includes accessible information for families.</p> | |

To be completed by the Quality Manager

The Autism Accreditation Committee have great delight in confirming that the school meets the criteria for an Advanced specialist Award.

The Committee found evidence from the Accreditation report that the provision met the following standards to a high level of quality and consistency.

- Staff have a working knowledge of evidence-informed approaches associated with good autism practice.
- They can adapt these specialist approaches so that support is personal-centred and tailored to individual abilities, interests, preferences and challenges.
- Adaptions are made to the environment to support individual well-being and self-reliance.
- Each autistic young person develops skills and confidence in communicating with others and engaging in a range of rewarding social activities.
- Each autistic young person develops skills and confident in carrying out tasks independently and in being empowered to make their own leading to them having greater control and self-autonomy in their lives.
- Each autistic young person enjoys an increasing range of sensory experiences whilst developing regulation strategies to help them avoid sensory overload.
- Support enables autistic young people to take part in activities which are purposeful and engaging and which promotes their emotional well-being and social inclusion.
- Proactive and preventative strategies are employed to help each autistic person avoid anxiety or distress and to help them understand and regulate their emotions.

In making this decision, the Committee also considered the positive feedback from surveys as well as specific strengths highlighted in the report. Whilst some suggested areas for development are identified the Committee consider that these are under the realm of building upon existing good practice and do not detract from what the school is already achieving in terms of positive outcomes.

Congratulations again for demonstrating standards of excellence in supporting autistic young people.

To be completed by the Quality Manager

What happens next

Once you have agreed terms and conditions you can expect to receive your certificate and logo. You can continue with your current Autism Accreditation plan or amend it by increasing or reducing the number of consultation visits. Please contact your consultant to discuss your options.

We recommend that you undergo another assessment in three years' time to show that you have maintained standards of excellent and to highlight new initiatives and developments. You can though request an earlier reassessment.

As an Advanced Service you can now apply for Beacon Status. This is awarded to provisions which in addition to providing consistent high quality support to autistic people, share their knowledge and understanding of good practice with families, external professionals and the local community.

Applying for Beacon Status

Application forms can be obtained from your consultant and should be returned to the Autism Accreditation Quality Manager at Stephen.dedridge@nas.org.uk.

The Panel can award Beacon status if the application form provides clear evidence that the provision carries out exceptional work that has had a significant impact on how:

- families understand relatives who are autistic.
- other professionals understand and respond to autistic people, including helping them to appreciate the personal experiences of autistic people.
- the local community or members of the public understand and respond to autistic people and which promotes the social inclusion of autistic people.

The application form should also explain how the provision works in partnership with autistic people and can provide details of awards or other examples of external recognition.

Beacon status will be withheld if the provision requires improvement in meeting statutory requirements.

APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION FROM THE PROVISION

Please note this information will be included in the final report,

Type of provision: Primary Special Day School

How many people are supported by the provision? 124

How many of this number are autistic? 52

What is the range of autistic people supported by the provision? e.g., age; learning disability; verbal or non-verbal etc.

Delamere school is a generic remit special primary school. We admit children from 3 – 11 years of age. We have 4 departments – Early Years, Experiential Learners, Structured Learners, and Independent Learners. There are children with autism represented in all 4 departments but they form the majority of children in the Structured Learners department.

We are a community maintained school with an Outstanding Ofsted Rating in all areas (June 2017). We have also maintained our award of Centre of Excellence by Inclusion Quality Mark (June 2020).

All pupils at Delamere School have an EHC plan [Education and Health Care plan] that defines them as having a learning difficulty. Most pupils who are under the umbrella of Structured Learners have a diagnosis of autism.

Children in the Structured Learners may also present with a range of additional needs, such as physical or health needs and behaviours which challenge.

All pupils within Structured Learners benefit from a structured approach to teaching.

There is a wide range of cognitive ability within the Structured Learners department which ranges from children working below P4 on the Engagement Profile through to children working above P8 within Delamere Steps. This includes both verbal and pre-verbal children.

The curriculum will look very different according to where children are at within this continuum.

As an example;

Children at a higher cognitive level (above P6) must have access to formal phonics regardless of them being within the Structured Learners department.

At the other end of the scale, children at a lower cognitive level (below P4) must have access to Intensive Interaction regardless of them being within the Structured Learners department.

Outcome of last statutory inspection if applicable.

| Body | Date | Outcome |
|--------|-----------------|-------------|
| Ofsted | 20-21 June 2017 | Outstanding |

Please include a hyperlink to the report: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/25/106394>

Other accredited awards:

| Body | Date | Outcome |
|--|--------------|------------------------|
| ArtsMark | May 2020 | Silver Award |
| Rights Respecting Schools | Oct 2020 | Silver Award |
| Rights Respecting Schools | Oct 2022 | Gold Award |
| Making a Difference Primary School of the Year | Nov 2020 | Silver Award |
| Leading Parent Partnership | July 2021 | Pass |
| One Education Reading Award | July 2022 | Bronze Award |
| Inclusion Quality Mark | July 2023 | Gold (Flagship School) |
| Investors in People | January 2023 | Gold Award |

What are the main specialist approaches used in supporting autistic people in their social communication and sensory regulation and promotes their independence and well-being?

We have dedicated staff who lead the areas of communication, sensory integration and social, emotional and mental health who attend, plan and deliver relevant training.

Lead for communication – Catherine (Assistant Head)
 Lead for Sensory – Rebecca (Head of Structured Learners)
 Lead for SEMH – Gemma (Head of Independent Learners)
 Lead for Physical – Sheila (Head of Experiential Learners)

At Delamere, we offer a wide range of specialist approaches, personalised to the needs of the individual child:

- TEACCH
- SPELL
- SCERTS
- Team Teach (positive behaviour support)
- Intensive Interaction
- PECS
- PODD communication mats
- TD Snap
- Signalong
- Zones of Regulation
- Lego Therapy
- Social Stories
- Attention Autism
- Sensory Integration / sensory diets
- The Engine Room
- Rebound Therapy
- Splash
- Calm areas / Safe Space
- Scrummy crew
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- Art interventions
- Art inclusion project
- Smarty Crew
- Therapeutic music interventions
- 1-1 or small group music lessons
- Signing Choir
- Band
- Music inclusion project
- Sports inclusion project
- Speak Out Stay Safe
- Pet Therapy

What training or support do staff receive in delivering these approaches?

All teachers work closely with Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) to consistently provide appropriate communication strategies for all children, including Intensive Interaction, Signalong, PECS, PODD communication mats and TD Snap. SALT complete assessments, observations and 1-1 work with the children, and collaborate with teachers to develop appropriate SMART outcomes for children.

Whole school training or workshops are delivered by SALT or the communication lead to ensure consistent high-quality support.

Lead staff have opportunities to attend bespoke training such as Zones of Regulation, Lego Therapy or Sensory Integration. All full training attended by staff is then disseminated to the whole school teaching team and refreshed on a regular basis.

Intervention teachers have time dedicated to planning and recording the impact of individual or small group interventions. They have regular check-ins with the lead member of staff for this area to report on progress, review the timetable and identify further support needed. Our ELSA also has access to supervision.

There are opportunities for staff to work with external agencies such as Venture Arts, which gives an exciting, high quality experience to children but also supports the development of skills within staff.

Teachers participate in Joint Practice Development groups, which allows teachers to share ideas through joint planning, complete peer observations and give informal feedback to support best practice.

Inclusion opportunities with other schools also allow staff to learn & share good practice.

Recently, one of our lunchtime Personal Support Worker's received a diagnosis of autism at age 19. We conducted an environment walk together to identify what worked well and areas for improvement.

We have since supported a college student with a diagnosis of autism, who attends weekly and also successfully supported a student teacher with a diagnosis of autism. Regular check-ins with the PSW and students has provided us with positive feedback and ensures we are continually evaluating and adapting our environment for all people with autism.

What processes are in place to ensure that each autistic person has a regularly reviewed personal support plan that identifies strategies and sets targets in their social communication and sensory regulation and promotes their independence and well-being?

All children at Delamere will have an EHC plan or will be undergoing assessment.

Children will have personalised learning targets (PLTs) which link to their EHC outcomes which are reviewed and updated 3 times each year.

Assessment outcomes are reported as part of the Annual Review process.

Analysis of pupil progress data is carried out throughout the year.

Detailed observations, photographs and video evidence are recorded and form the basis of our evidence for our summative annual review reports.

End of Year reports are provided for parents.

All children with a diagnosis of autism have a short sensory assessment, completed by the class team and updated yearly as a minimum.

Referral systems are in place for children with more complex sensory or SEMH needs. Lead staff will complete observations, discuss challenges with the staff team and put appropriate interventions in place (e.g. Individual Engine Room Plans, targeted ELSA interventions, Speak Out Stay Safe).

How are autistic people consulted in the support they receive?

Children are given choices (visuals used as appropriate)

Child-led approach to teaching and learning

Annual review – pupil voice section (where appropriate, children are invited to attend their Annual Review)

Evidence of learning (e.g. children writing book reviews)

Class newsletter created by children

School council

Rights Squad (Rights Respecting Schools)

How are the family who represent the best interests of the autistic people consulted about the support their relative receives?

Regular communication with class team (face to face, telephone or email)

Annual review

Parents evening (Autumn & Spring Term)

Parent visits to a session in class (Summer Term)

Parent council

Cultural Capital Survey

Social media / school website

Support groups with the Family Liaison Officer or SALT:

- Mums Supporting Mums
- Dads Supporting Dads
- Autism: After Diagnosis

Parent feedback regularly gained for;

- Annual review (before and after meeting)
- Parents evening
- Transition to secondary school
- Support groups (e.g. After Diagnosis)
- School performances

What do you consider to be the main areas of development for the provision?

Developing effective early interventions for children and families around eating & drinking difficulties.

Developing consistency in the use of Zones of Regulation to support children's sensory and emotional regulation and increasing their independence in this area.

Research into the impact of Attachment & Trauma in children with additional needs and autism, and strategies to support and promote positive outcomes.

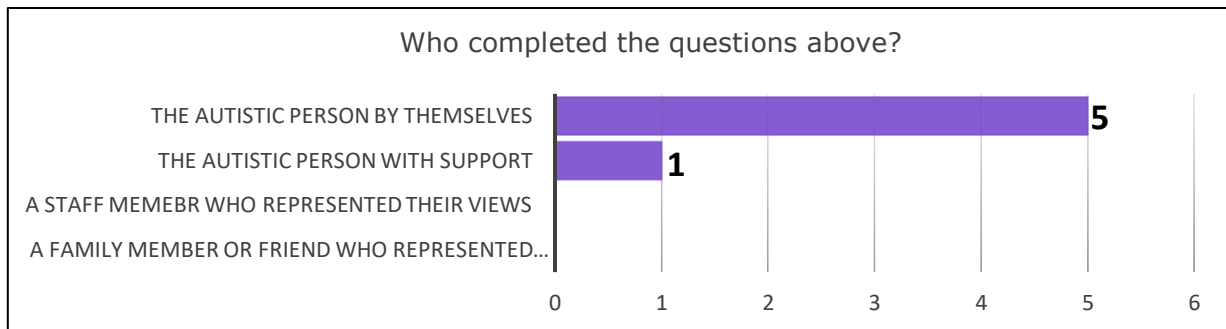
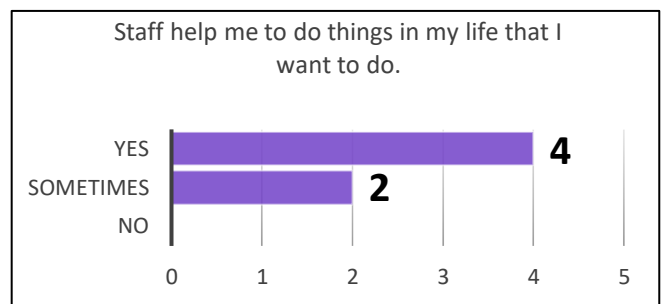
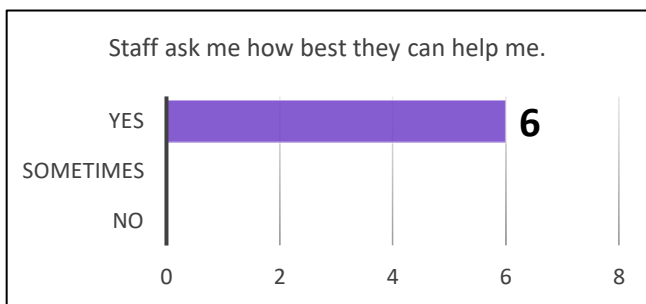
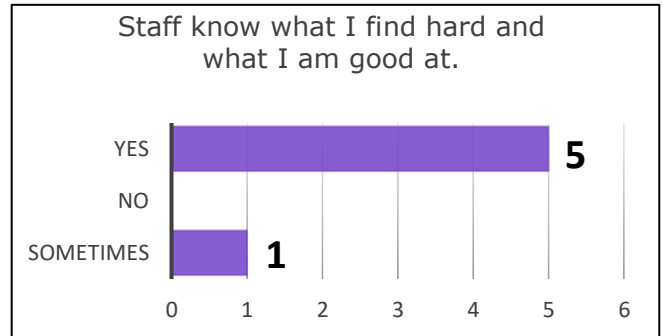
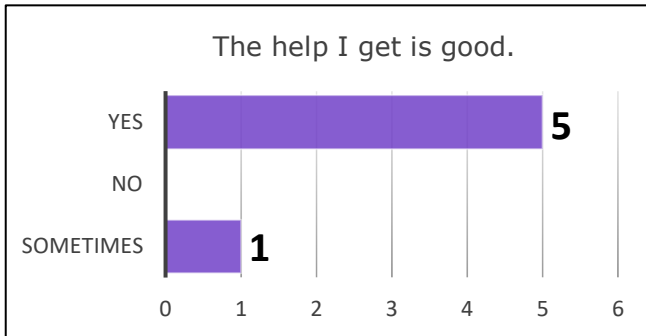
What do you consider to be the main areas of strength for the provision?

At Delamere we strive to provide the best possible outcomes for children. Our strengths are;

- All staff are consistently aspirational for children
- We have a flexible approach to provision across the different departments (e.g. where appropriate, children with a diagnosis of autism will be in an Independent Learners class)
- A broad, enriched curriculum for all
- Attachment Aware Positive Behaviour Management Ethos
- Data driven interventions
- Collaborative approach to working; including with colleagues, other professionals and families
- Research based practice
- Outreach offer

APPENDIX 2: Pre-assessment Surveys

Autistic Person Survey - Questionnaire Responses (6)

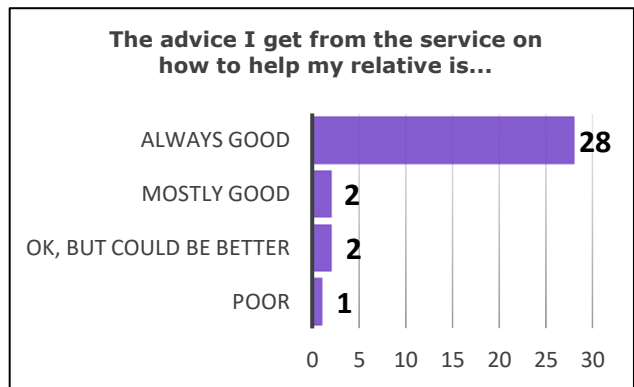
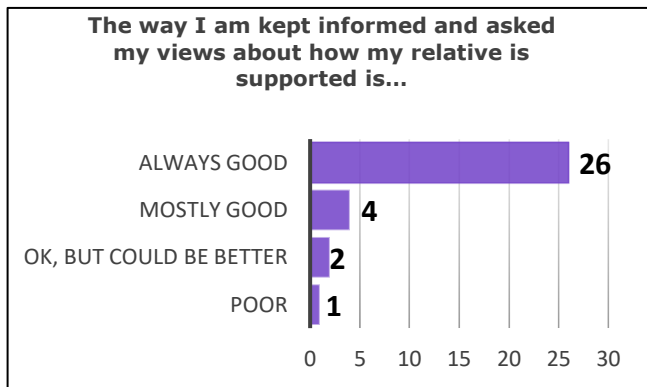
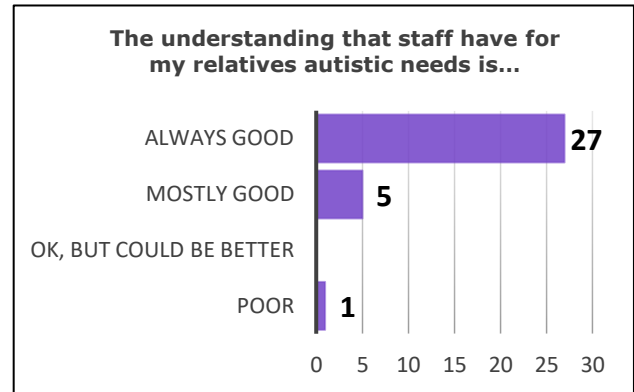
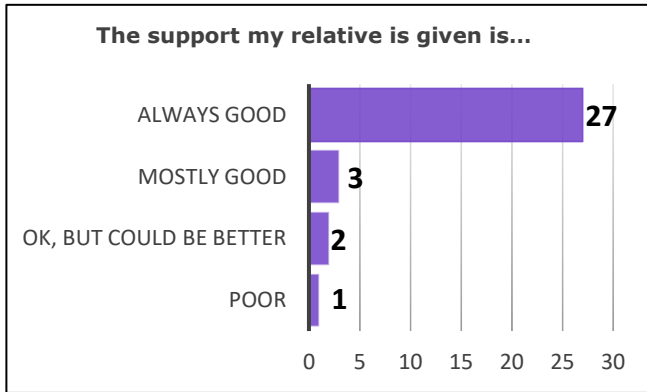


Further Comments:

No further comments were shared.



Families of Autistic Persons - Questionnaire Responses (33)



Further Comments:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Delamere is an excellent learning environment for my child, in terms of academic, social and emotional development. I would have no hesitation in recommending Delamere to parents with autistic children. The school takes a holistic approach that lays the foundations for the development of key life skills and is a caring environment. |
| 2 | School amazing always their for not only my child but.my family aswell |
| 3 | Staff are always supportive and respond to any questions i have very quickly. i can always ask School staff any questions or advice and know i will get the help we need. |
| 4 | I can not praise the staff at Delamere School enough. They go above and beyond to support not only the children but parents as well. They have taught me so much. Amazing! |
| 5 | Delamere school goes above and beyond for my child, they always offer me support as well as my child and give me ways to help manage situations at home and out and about and also ideas to try at home in situations which can be stressful for us all. I know that the staff go above and beyond to make sure my |



| | |
|---|---|
| | child is given a voice and that his needs come first. I feel supported by all the staff at delamere and all show an interest in my child and myself. |
| 6 | The team at Delamere school continue to exceed expectations relating to the care and support provided to my Autistic child. |
| 7 | My son is being looked after as much as he can be. |
| 8 | All the staff is very friendly and helpful. Always on the toes. Willing to help and always send feedback for each day via email to keeping parents up to date with the things kids have done in school. |

APPENDIX 3: CASE-STUDIES

Case Study 1

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Provision: Sports Inclusion Project | Period of time covered: March 2022- June 2022 |
| Name of individual (First name or initial): P | |
| <p>Pen picture of individual before support was introduced, including challenges, difficulties etc.</p> <p>P will use verbal communication as their main method of communication. P enjoys sports but would often get upset/ angry during competitions or mini games if she conceded a goal or if her team wasn't winning. She would often come to me demanding why she wasn't on the winning team, asking questions such as; "is it because girls aren't as good as boys" and "why am I always on the losing team, is it because I'm rubbish?" Often wanting to talk/ play with an adult rather than her peers</p> | |
| <p>What support was introduced? What approaches/ strategies/methods were used?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for P before a competition/ match teaching her to self-regulate. • Lots of changes of teams and shorter games allowing P to play with different peers and more opportunities to win. • Speaking to P after games and asking her what she thought went well. • Using peers to support her and encourage her when things weren't going too well. • Encouraged to interact with the pupils from Woodhouse. | |
| Outcomes | |
| <p>Communication skills, social skills: Relationships:</p> <p>P was a little wary of speaking to some of the children from a different school at first but then began making friends with them. She made one friend she particularly like to play with.</p> | |
| <p>Confidence, self-reliance, independent problem solving and functioning:</p> <p>As P spent more time with her new peers from Woodhouse the more she enjoyed taking part. P was engaged with games and sports that allowed P to use her communication and social skills to problem solve, compromise, turn take and discuss tactics. Over the weeks she learnt to use skills that involved having to use power and accuracy such as New Age Curling, archery, Polly bat and bowling. P was able to share some strategies and receive helpful hints/ constructive criticism from her peers such as "try moving your hand like this to hold your stick properly."</p> | |
| <p>Emotional self-regulation and well-being:</p> <p>P became more resilient over time and would come to me before playing a match saying she wasn't going to get upset if she wasn't winning. Her breakdowns went from happening almost every week to every once in a while. P was independently able to self-regulate herself by the end of the sessions.</p> | |
| <p>Achievements, success and quality life outcomes:</p> <p>P achieved a lot over the 3 months and has not only has she improved some of her sporting skills but she has made new friends and become more resilient. This will help her in the future for her own mental wellbeing, particularly as she will be transitioning to high school next year as she will have the confidence to speak to new people and she can do this through sport without becoming to overwhelmed.</p> | |
| <p>Next Steps:</p> <p>P needs to keep showing her positive attitude to sport and being the fantastic character that she is. P needs to also transfer these skills to competitions outside of school where she may need to play more competitively.</p> | |



Case Study 2

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of Provision: Delamere School | Period of time covered: Two school terms. |
| Name of individual (First name or initial): N | |
| Pen picture of individual before support was introduced, including challenges, difficulties etc. N Struggled with transitions to different areas around the school and to different activities throughout the day, he especially struggled with an activity which was out of his routine. | |
| What support was introduced? What approaches/ strategies/methods were used? N was given support through the use of a visual timetable and first and then strips. Photographs of places to support N if he was going a place he hadn't been to before for example a Christmas trip to a soft play area. | |
| Outcomes | |
| Communication skills, social skills: Relationships: N was initially reluctant and would say No to going to certain places around the school or would become upset if he didn't know where he was going when going on educational visits. As a result of using the visuals N over time became more accepting of going to different places and changes in his routine. | |
| Confidence, self-reliance, independent problem solving and functioning: N has become more confident when going on educational visits and will ask to hold a member of staff hand or will move to a familiar adult. Due to his increased confidence N now only requires a walk symbol and verbal conformation of where he is going. | |
| Emotional self-regulation and well-being: N is happy when transitioning to different areas of the school and is a lot happier when going out on educational visits. | |
| Achievements, success and quality life outcomes: Parents have reported that N is now able to go to different places in the community and this will lead to him having more wider experiences in the future. | |
| Next Steps: For N to accept a change in the transitional plan. I.E not being able to go to the shops because it is closed so going to the park instead. | |

Case Study 3

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of Provision: Outdoor Learning | Period of time covered: September 2022 – March 2023 |
| Name of individual (First name or initial): J | |
| <p>Pen picture of individual before support was introduced, including challenges, difficulties etc.</p> <p>J experienced a range of dysregulated behaviours including periods of anxiety and frustration. J presented as being very sensitive to the noises from her peers in the class and any boisterous behaviour they exhibited.</p> <p>J would still find the outdoor area outside the classroom too close to the peers that antagonised her and it was difficult to support her dysregulation when within eye sight of the peers. She resisted choosing from the visuals offered to access the engine room, look at the fish tank or walk around school.</p> | |
| <p>What support was introduced? What approaches/ strategies/methods were used?</p> <p>The opportunity to access the Outdoor Learning Field was introduced on visuals; Choose card with a photo of the entrance to the area on it. A timetable change to facilitate a half class group of pupils going onto the field at lunchtime to ensure the team could support the session. A range of visuals to support J and her peers choosing equipment and activities on the OL field</p> | |
| Outcomes | |
| <p>Communication skills, social skills: Relationships:</p> <p>Initially J required some modelling of the process of walking towards the field but quickly with repetition she comprehended the options on the card and frequently chose to access the field. A by-product of this process was seen when J seemingly became less dismissive of the choose card and the PODD mats and recognised the function of the card etc.</p> <p>J showed a marked increase in her willingness to share space with peers though the greater area of the field ensured she could remove herself from trigger behaviours exhibited by peers. She extended the range of activities she would tolerate though some of these would be by observing an activity brought to her</p> | |
| <p>Confidence, self-reliance, independent problem solving and functioning:</p> <p>J has embraced her favourite activity which is to request from an adult a specific toy animal that is located in a section of the OL cabin ceiling.</p> <p>After redirecting her to use a PODD mat to choose she will request an animal and pass a broom handle for an adult to knock it the floor for her to use. This is a significant development and rewards her appropriate requests with consistency from J.</p> | |
| <p>Emotional self-regulation and well-being:</p> <p>J continues to struggle to regulate herself but we have seen definite upturns in her mood when accessing the OL field and the willingness to use the choose card as she becomes dysregulated.</p> | |
| <p>Achievements, success and quality life outcomes:</p> <p>J has embraced some aspects of the strategy and is continuing to develop her willingness to choose the OL field and other areas before she becomes dysregulated.</p> | |
| <p>Next Steps:</p> <p>For J to develop and increase the consistency of her choices and then when on the field use of the PODD mats in a functional way. Also to transfer the choice strategy to other situations throughout her day.</p> | |



Case Study 4

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Name of Provision: Delamere School | Period of time covered: |
| Name of individual (First name or initial): Harry | |
| <p>Pen picture of individual before support was introduced, including challenges, difficulties etc.</p> <p>Harry accesses his education in the independent learners' department, meaning he is able to cope with a less structured environment despite his diagnosis of Autism. He is verbal and able to express his wants and needs clearly without the need for any alternative communication strategies or resources.</p> <p>Harry has experienced difficulties in regulating his emotions which can result in him shouting loudly, crying and running out of the classroom. Once dysregulated, it could take Harry up to 20-30 minutes to be able to calmly return to class.</p> | |
| <p>What support was introduced? What approaches/ strategies/methods were used? Work around Zones of Regulation.</p> <p>Harry has been supported to recognise when he needs to take a break when he is starting to feel dysregulated. A 'safe corner' was created in a room adjacent to Harry's class room where Harry is able to go to when he feels he needs time away from a situation. Harry was encouraged to design this area himself and added fairy lights, a comfy chair and a basket of sensory toys and books. Visuals were made for Harry to use to request a break in the safe corner to reduce any additional cognitive load when becoming dysregulated. Harry would effectively use these cards to give to an adult to let them know he needed a break and where he was going without having to ask verbally. An additional visual was put into the same corner along with ZOR resources which allowed Harry to tell an adult that he was calm and ready to return to class.</p> | |
| Outcomes | |
| Communication skills, social skills: Relationships: | |
| <p>Confidence, self-reliance, independent problem solving and functioning:</p> <p>Harry was able to independently use these visuals as an effective strategy and took ownership of his safe corner and visuals. Harry enjoyed showing his friends and explaining what it was for and that if they needed to use it they could do so.</p> <p>Using visuals enabled Harry to independently take ownership of his emotional regulation and need for regulation strategies which subsequently had an impact on his problem-solving skills. Harry is able to identify that there is a problem and employ an effective strategy to</p> | |
| <p>Emotional self-regulation and well-being:</p> <p>Zones of Regulation has helped Harry to label and recognise emotions and to identify strategies that can be used in each zone. Harry is now able to use the 'zones' vocabulary confidently and has created a personalised 'zones passport', detailing what he finds helpful when he is in each zone. Harry now rarely accesses the safe corner or identifies the need for a break, suggesting that his ability to self-regulate has improved considerably.</p> <p>Incidences of Harry being upset or angry are significantly reduced and Harry appears more tolerant during disagreements with peers.</p> | |
| <p>Achievements, success and quality life outcomes:</p> <p>As a result of Harry's progress in this area, he is spending the vast majority of time in class without the need for his 'safe corner'. Harry is accessing every lesson in class and more time with his peers has resulted in his relationships with them becoming more positive. This has carried over into break/social time with peers where Harry is having considerably less disagreements/incidences of dysregulation.</p> | |
| Next Steps: | |
| <p>Harry is in year 6 and will be supported to use ZOR to prepare him for his transition. Harry is receiving 1:1 intervention around changes during puberty and will continue to develop his understanding of this and how it can impact on his emotions and behaviour.</p> | |



Case Study 5

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Provision: Family Support | Period of time covered: 2020-2023 |
| Description (What was the initiative?): Review and adaptation of our family support offer | |
| Content (What was the reason for introducing the initiative?) The FLO was spending majority of her time completing home visits to offer support to families who were having difficulties and we had an increasing school population with high numbers of children who are multi-lingual, pupil premium, CIN or just struggling with their child's needs. | |
| Purpose (What was it hoped would be achieved?) The aim of the initiative was to improve relationships with families, ensure robust systems of support are in place so that families have access to wider opportunities in the community and create a community in which families feel able to support each other. The ultimate aim was to improve outcomes and quality of life for children and their families. | |
| Method (What did you do and how did you measure outcomes?) We began by increasing the FLO's working days from 2 to 3, with time allocated to early help interventions. Specific groups / families were identified, based on our school cohort as well as needs identified through the FLO's conversations with families. Developments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mums supporting mums / dads supporting dads (multi-lingual families) - "Autism: After Diagnosis" (families of children with a recent diagnosis of autism) - Delamere: Let's Get Started - Regular meetings As work on family support and engagement developed, a range of colleagues became involved to widen our offer. This has included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SALT workshops - Developing reading skills / reading for pleasure - Eating & drinking - Maths & literacy - Independence skills - E-safety - Moving on / transition Parental engagement is monitored through surveys at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents evening - Annual review - Workshops / parent groups - Performances - End of the year - Following transition The FLO's time was then increased again during COVID to have dedicated time to contact families to address support as a result of the pandemic. The school remained open to all pupils throughout the lockdown and this additional time allocated to the FLO was integral in keeping in touch families who had chosen to keep their child at home, support emotional wellbeing and home learning, and encourage them gradually to build confidence in returning their child to school, particularly families who were experiencing significant challenges. Following the pandemic, this additional time has further been utilised to carry out research into improving family engagement in learning; the initial focus of this is communication & reading. | |
| Outcomes (What progress did participants make in communication, social skills, autonomy, sensory regulation, emotional well-being etc.?) Better relationships between school and families Less families in crisis due to early intervention & education on supporting their child Better peer support for families. Quotes from parent feedback: "Knowing there is a point of contact in school made me feel so un alone" | |

“Hearing range of stories and situations, reassurance you are doing your best is ok, not everything is perfect”

Lessons learnt:

- Building relationships early with families is key for future joint work to support the child.
- Parents engage in groups / workshops they feel are directly related to their child’s needs
- Parents want to meet other parents who understand what it is like to have a child with additional needs.
- Early intervention with families and building those relationships where early wider support can be offered helps reduce the need for social care support.

Next steps:

Continue to run, review and adapt parents’ groups; as the cohort of families change so must our support.

Continue to reach out to families who don’t engage in the groups, find alternative ways to build those relationships.

Continue to work in partnership with other agencies such as the Learning disability nursing team to provide the best support for families.

Case Study 6

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Name of Provision: Delamere School | Period of time covered: |
| Name of individual (First name or initial): IP | |
| Pen picture of individual before support was introduced, including challenges, difficulties etc. | |
| <p>IP is pre-verbal and, when she started at Delamere, was working at B-11 months in all areas of learning except Physical Development.</p> <p>IP had limited understanding of language, limited joint attention with adults and did not respond to her peers.</p> <p>IP was at an exploratory level of play, preferring to play on her own, not engaging peers or adults. IP presented with some challenging behaviours including lying on the floor, kicking and shouting. IP was often refusing to join the group during sessions and would take herself away or lie on the floor in protest.</p> | |
| What support was introduced? What approaches/ strategies/methods were used? | |
| <p>IP responded well to intensive interaction with familiar adults and was exposed to symbols which increased her understanding of key words.</p> <p>IP showed an interest in copying adult’s signing of key words and would use some core words with verbal prompting- signing was- and is still- used to support understanding.</p> <p>IP accessed PECS up to level 4 where she was able to use simple sentence structure to request. PODD mats were then introduced in a wider variety of settings and IP begun to communicate for a wider range of functions including commenting.</p> <p>After showing competence using PODD mats, electronic AAC was introduced- ‘TD Snap’ on class communication iPad. IP was exposed to this communication device throughout the school day, and she begun to navigate pages and topics independently and in a variety of contexts.</p> <p>Visual behaviour supports, including now and next and micro schedules, were also implemented using the device.</p> <p>Evidence was gathered on the impact of Snap Core on IP’s communication and she was allocated her own personal communication device which she would then use at home and in school. Parents attended training sessions on how to use the device to support IP’s communication.</p> | |
| Outcomes | |



Communication skills, social skills: Relationships:

IP is now able to independently navigate through her communication device and has further widened her range of communicative functions. She is now able to request, comment, negate, use social phrases and answer questions using a mix of key words phrases and simple sentences.

IP is now able to indicate which peer or adult she is communicating with by navigating to their name and photograph before forming her sentence.

IP is now taking part in sessions with significantly reduced incidences of refusal. She is beginning to say why she doesn't want to do something eg after a peer became dysregulated, she used her device to say 'scared (peer's name) hurt'

IP is now inviting adults into her interactions- she will name the member of staff she wants to interact with and can form sentences such as "Anna, want more bubbles" "Charlie, I want 2 toast please"

Confidence, self-reliance, independent problem solving and functioning:

IP has become much more confident in her communication- she carries her communication device with pride and will actively search for it if she moves from an activity. She is able to independently navigate through pages which has broadened the range of contexts in which she is able to communicate.

When an adult models a function using her communication device, IP is often able to retain this and will begin to use the function independently after a short amount of time which is increasing her ability to problem solve.

Emotional self-regulation and well-being:

IP has experienced a significant reduction in periods of dysregulation and is much calmer. Due to this, she is now accessing more group sessions and activities.

IP is beginning to identify emotions and reasons for why she feels a certain way which has enabled staff to respond more appropriately to her needs.

IP will use her device to request a sensory break and will do so throughout the day which has reduced the number of incidences of her becoming distressed.

Achievements, success and quality life outcomes:

IP has increased her ability to communicate with independence both in school and at home. She is more active within sessions in school and parents have commented on how much it means to them for their daughter to 'finally have a voice'.

Next Steps:

IP will continue to develop her communicative functions in a range of contexts. She will begin to work on broadening her interaction to include peers, starting with motivating turn taking activities.