

Autism Accreditation Assessment

Name of Provision: Helen Allison School

Reference No.	183
Assessment dates	Week beginning 21 st of March 2022
Lead Assessor	Hannelore Bout
External Moderator	Jean Mockford
Status prior to the assessment	Working towards accredited status
Advanced status applied for	Yes

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 taken into account in findings.

Findings from the Assessment

Differences in Social Communication

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The school employs a full-time Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) and an assistant SaLT who are supported by the NAS Clinical Lead - Principal Speech & Language Therapist who is also located at Helen Alison School.

The therapy team deliver training as part of the induction programme, offer SPELL training and refreshers, and delivers bespoke communication training and support to particular year groups or classrooms.

The Principal SaLT is a clinical Lead across the NAS schools, providing peer supervision and sharing good practice across the schools. The Clinical Leads have published articles and contributed to the NAS knowledge hub. They most recently produced a resource on "Ukraine: How to positively support staff and pupils". They work closely with other special schools, for example, they worked in partnership with Swalcliffe Park School on the Quality of Life (QOL) framework. The SaLT team is providing guidance and training on how to gather pupil views in more accessible and meaningful

ways. The therapy team provides training to local organisations such as local farms or transport providers.

The school embraces a transdisciplinary approach. An example is SPOT groups (SaLT and OT) where students work in a group with peers on skills such as “Targeting social communication skills e.g. fact and opinion, conversation skills, turn-taking, attention, higher-level language skills, emotional regulation skills, relaxation.”

All students have an Individual Support Plan (ISP) Learning plan and SPELL profile and where possible the school will work closely with students and families to co-produce documentation. These documents identify how each autistic person prefers to communicate and what motivates them to socially interact with others, such as what is motivating and can be used as conversation starters or what interest can be a cause for anxiety or distraction.

The plans indicate if students are verbal communicators or use PECS, Makaton, Choice boards, Proloquo2go or other communication tools or approaches to reinforce appropriate interactions or requests for attention from peers.

The ISPs identify “likes” such as transport, football, using technology and “factors identified as difficult and might increase the likelihood of a difficult incident occurring” such as unfamiliarity, not understanding instructions or loud environments.

Long term EHCP outcomes such as “by the end of KS1, x will be able to respond and act upon instructions containing 3 keywords”, are broken down into yearly targets, for example, “X will show development in his receptive and expressive language skills using a total communication approach” these are broken down in smaller termly targets. Such as “X Communicates request using a sign or visual system (Photo, picture, symbol” or greeting familiar people, using their name, another student was learning to speak “calmly and politely to make ideas and opinions known, with the support of adults.”

Annual reviews show that targets set at the last annual review were achieved, for example, after making “superb progress”, it was suggested that the student would move from using PECS to a more flexible AAC, Proloquo2Go.

A TALC spreadsheet provides clear data of how students are progressing on Blank Level questioning levels 1-4 or where there has been a loss of learning.

The termly targets are tracked on the schools adapted AET framework, for example, “Co-operates within group or ‘team’ activity” were ‘not in use’ at the baseline assessment yet, but became ‘rarely used’ in term 1. Another student had made progress on “Communicates request for help using learned phrase” which was ‘rarely used’ at the baseline assessment, but moved to ‘sometimes used’ by the end of term 1.

In interviews and case studies, staff gave examples of how autistic students have been supported in their communication and social interaction, such as greeting staff more appropriately giving a high five rather than hugs or kisses, increased politeness, "engaging appropriately in conversation and group discussions with his peers".

Students enjoy the opportunity to develop friendships and playing football with the school team has been a particular success. Students also take pride in representing their class in the school council.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Staff routinely make themselves understood by simplifying or structuring verbal language and by providing bespoke visual cues. Staff modified their communication and allowed processing times when required, this was predominantly delivered in a calm and low arousal way.

In a few observations staff could adjust adult talk by reducing language or adjusting the volume to the teaching circumstances.

All students are supported to make themselves understood by access to individualised augmentative or alternative communication systems when appropriate; a wide range of communication tools was seen to be used across the school environments. Where students were verbal, staff used appropriate levels of questions to help students to clarify themselves, but also reflect on learning. Staff encouraged students to expand their answers and modelled responses to encourage students to use different language structures.

In many observations, students are provided with excellent formal and informal opportunities to communicate as part of a group or 1:1 with staff or with each other, this was observed in terms of turn-taking or floor-time work with the nurture stream or discussions, sports or communication groups in the academic streams, initiating spontaneous interaction and informal conversation between them.

The student council provided a lively account of students making points, representing views from other children in their class, agreeing/ disagreeing with each other or the points that were being made, listening and waiting for their turn to speak.

Problem Solving and Self-reliance

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

ISP's and SPELL profiles and Learning plans identify each student's skills and challenges in functioning life skills related to everyday life and education, for example, one document described that "well developed expressive language may mask some comprehension difficulties" other plans may comment on attention span for learning, which "may be longer for activities that motivate/interest him – previously apps for educational activities have been motivating".

The documents identify approaches and tools for supporting students in carrying out activities, transitioning, copying with changes and making choices, such as allowing processing time, Choice Boards, TEACCH, addressing the group instead of the individual or indirectly introducing demands, visual supports such as now- next, or visuals to help sequencing tasks. OT equipment further aids independence such as stylus', bespoke seating or Writing Slopes or Caring Cutlery and quiet workrooms.

Annual review documents provide examples of positive outcomes such as developing life skills around shopping and road safety awareness, increased independence using the toilet or in personal care, increasing engagement in adult-directed activities for prolonged periods or working independently during TEACCH workbox tasks.

The school has adapted the AET framework for the school, which was implemented in the summer of 2021, and the Baseline Assessment for AET indicate that students are making progress in for example asking for help, making a request, or "using available tools as support and attempts a task independently before asking for help" progressing from 'rarely' to 'sometimes'. Although this has not produced a full data set, the new framework is starting to demonstrate the progress students are making.

The School Evaluation and Improvement Plan (SEIP) indicates that last academic year, 3 students achieved a GCSE in Maths, and 4 students achieved Edexcel certificates in maths and English.

In interviews and case studies, the staff gave examples of how they have supported students with better attendance, by introducing a motivating starter activity to the day, such as spending time with the therapy dog or helping with admin tasks on arrival. The school gave more examples of students learning to follow adult direction or routines, becoming ready to learn and enjoying the challenge of being academically challenged, coping with change, making decisions and sharing ideas on how to improve the school day.

The part-time Career Adviser Role was developed last academic year. They hold regular sessions with students in year 9 on a 1 to 1 basis, help produce a Person-Centred Careers Plan to support with future transitions and work with families. They are facilitating students making informed choices by having professionals deliver workshops and by organising motivating and meaningful work placements and inviting guest speakers to talk about work such as an account or police officer.

The support in preparing students for life after Helen Allison is of a high standard working with the school leavers. One ex-student is now a School Teaching Assistant and undertaking a Level 3 Teaching Assistant Course, which is inspiring other students to consider this as a career option.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Students are consistently supported to work out what they must do now and what they are expected to do through the use of timers, visual schedules, and timetables.

As students' progress there is a higher expectation for students to become ready for life after Helen Allison school and become more self-reliant in using strategies to organise themselves.

In the majority of observations, students are supported to do things by themselves or in pairs, by using crib sheets, visual schedules or differentiated worksheets.

In a minority of observations (26%), there were missed opportunities for students to work independently or in pairs and staff were supporting students closely, where they could have provided visuals to help sequence steps or allow for students to problem-solve.

Students are routinely encouraged to share or clarify opinions, make decisions or were confident in expressing when they needed help, this is supported by bespoke visual supports such as Proloquo2go, Choice Boards, PECS, processing time or through asking appropriate levels of questioning.

The curriculum ensures students are provided with plenty of opportunities to consolidate and develop daily functional skills such as communication skills, maths and science, daily living skills such as window cleaning; participation in leisure and recreation and keeping healthy such as art, music or sports.

Sensory Experiences

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

Helen Allison School has an in-house OT and a part-time OT Assistant, who are supported by the NAS Clinical Lead – Principal Occupational Therapist. The team also works along the three-tier service delivery model embracing transdisciplinary ways of working.

The Principal OT is a clinical Lead across the NAS schools, providing peer supervision and sharing good practice across the schools. They have published articles and contributed to the NAS knowledge hub. The principal OT has published a book "Practical ways to help autistic children and young people learn and achieve", produces guidelines and speaks at national conferences.

The ISPs identify sensory experiences which have a positive experience on each student, such as needing a calm environment, preferring soft fluffy clothes, movement breaks when feeling blue, and also specialist writing equipment for sensory and motor differences.

ISPs and Learning Plans identify targets such as "to use visual supports to request a range of sensory regulating strategies when needed throughout the day", and the ability to choose appropriate clothing for the weather.

These Plans identify what approaches or tools should be employed to help students regulate sensory experiences or avoid sensory overload such as needing a quiet space, movement breaks, deep pressure massage or time with the therapy dog. Other plans detail “enhanced proprioceptive input to increase sensory awareness to calm and organise Xs’ sensory system for attending to work”.

It is clear from the documentation that OTs work closely with families, teachers and teaching assistants to ensure consistency in practice to help students engage.

Interviews and case studies highlight how detailed sensory interventions and adaptations have supported autistic people in their sensory regulation or avoiding sensory overload, for example, one student is now much better equipped to self-regulate, take a break or re-engage with learning after taking a movement break. Families reported that the school has worked closely with families to address issues such as sleep, toileting, or eating.

The school environment is designed and organised- demonstrating care and consistency with displays- to encourage students to be ready to learn and provides creative use of learning and therapeutic environments for quieter workspaces and interventions.

The outside space has been designed and developed creatively, which facilitates students to have opportunities to interact, relax, socialise, exercise or decompress.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Students can access sensory activities that they find enjoyable or relaxing, by using their motivations and interests as part of learning. Some students have sensory self-regulation equipment to hand or adults keep this discreetly close to offer when needed.

Where best practice was observed, some lessons were highly sensory engaging such as music, multimedia, food safari, and outdoor learning.

In a few observations, learning had an academic focus and could be enhanced or benefit from incorporating sensory engaging activities or action learning in all curriculum areas. This could build on the successes of the science week, which students reported wanting to do every week.

Students can tolerate a range of sensory challenging experiences within a safe and secure context, such as louder or busier environments, and food smells, staff were responsive to queues and requests.

Students are routinely and sometimes subtly supported to regulate sensory experiences which interfere with what they are trying to do or cause them discomfort, such as access to ear defenders; sensory bags, requests for time out; movement breaks; quieter workspaces; low arousal approaches.

Emotional Well-being

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The school team have adopted a Transdisciplinary approach where the clinical teams and all staff work closely together with the pupils and their families. The clinical team meet weekly and works closely with the safeguarding team and PBS team.

The clinical teams often work together to provide universal, targeted and specialist support and can respond quickly when a students' needs change.

During the lockdown, the school introduced a detailed tracker of a wide range of therapeutic interventions and resources as well as PBS support, for each student and their families.

The quality of admission documentation and assessments carried out by the therapists is outstanding and informs the detailed ISPs', SPELL profiles and learning plans, ensuring staff know students very well.

The school has a clinical psychologist for one day a week, who supervises the full-time assistant psychologist.

The clinical psychologist has, together with TIZZARD, developed the EmBeDEd framework which aims to promote the emotional well-being of autistic children through bespoke Clinical Psychology input in the South East of England. Although this framework is not explicitly used in the school, it did lead to the development and adoption of the Quality of Life Framework, in partnership with Swalcliffe Park School, in conjunction with the AET framework for assessment.

The school introduced the PBS team in April 2020. The PBS team is also part of the Safeguarding team who meets weekly to review and analyse CPOMS data to discuss concerns and plan actions and interventions.

As a result of reviewing the CPOMS data, the school recently reduced the school day, where students leave at 3 PM rather than 3.45 PM, which has reduced the level of incidences and is allowing staff time to prepare and attend training or transdisciplinary meetings.

Comparative data for a sample of students illustrate a significant reduction in the frequency of behaviours. Such as one student had 128 recorded incidences in March 2021 to zero in February 2022. Another example showed a reduction in incidences as a result of moving two students to separate classes, interventions were implemented and further reductions continue.

ISPs clearly lists appreciation of activities which each autistic person finds enjoyable, relaxing or provides them with a sense of achievement and purpose in the "like"

section, such as outdoor learning, building, sorting messy play, digital play or sequencing activities.

The Green section in the ISPs give a detailed range of bespoke supportive strategies to keep a student calm and relaxed and ready to learn as well as amber or red supportive strategies to prevent a student from going into crisis.

In interviews the school gave examples where students have continued or have greater access to and inclusion within community activities, such as playing football against other school teams, the annual residential week, increased further education, careers and workplace opportunities.

The school reports having noticed a real shift towards a proactive culture.

In interviews, and observations it is clear that students have a voice and are actively engaged in determining how they are supported; what activities they take part in and what goals they are working towards according to what is appropriate for their age and capacity.

It is clear from interviews, and documentation how family or carers are supported and involved in designing the support around the child. The school keeps track of what level of support families require and an example was seen where a family was receiving tier 2 support, summarising concerns and resources that were shared to assist the family at home. The Transdisciplinary team works closely with families to ensure they have the right resources and know how to use them, for example "The 10 steps to creating a successful learning environment (during Lockdown), or training on how to use Proloquo2go for specific students.

Twenty-one students provided feedback and show that they are predominantly happy with the support they receive, and staff understanding of their skills and needs, none of the students indicated they were unhappy.

Spending time with the student council, it is evident the students feel they can express their ideas, likes and dislikes and they take pride in the changes they helped effecting. The school displays actions taken as a result of the school councils' suggestions. Such as obtaining quotes to develop a Multi Use Game Area instead of the football field, introducing a feedback folder in the lunch area, and a buddy bench was purchased for the playground.

The school council was very enthusiastic about a recent science week, with a focus on forensic science and wanted more learning weeks like this.

The football pitch and team are a real success for many of the students.

The student council also noted they wanted more interesting play equipment in the primary playgrounds or something to do for those who are not interested in football. This was also observed during playground observations and the school may want to make sure adults give access to and encourage students to play games with equipment from the black box.

Twelve families (15%) returned the surveys. These show that almost all are very happy with the support their relatives receive and commended the staff's understanding of their relative's skills and interests. Three parents were interviewed, who were all extremely impressed and grateful for the work the school does. One family reported that after years of having to explain their children's needs, Helen Allison was "spot on and gets it straight away".

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Almost all students presented as feeling safe and calm. Students were polite and respectful toward each other and adults.

The management of behaviour was outstanding across the school. It is clear from observations that the school has focused on putting proactive and preventative strategies in place to avoid anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring or escalating. This is reflected in the school environments, the detailed paperwork, the attentive teaching and transdisciplinary support. On a few occasions where students' anxiety was heightened, staff responded calmly and effectively de-escalating the situation and students re-engaged with learning.

Restrictive practices were not observed, and although some students have risk assessments for RPIs, these have reduced significantly since the PBS team was introduced.

Autistic students are supported to understand and regulate their emotions, which was observed through effectively updating the zones of regulation to green after a movement break and breakfast or taking notes in a worry book and discussing if the feeling was a worry or feeling cross. Students understood when they needed a break and requested it appropriately. Whilst walking through the school students were overheard discussing how some experiences made them feel and what they did about it.

Staff take time to listen to students, whilst not hurrying them to make decisions. Gentle suggestions were used to encourage students to be respectful in return.

Praise was used freely and adapted reward systems were in use. Staff were sensitive towards students who struggle with overt praise. Students were commended for good work or listening.

Students are engaged in meaningful activities and learning that they find fun or interesting, most of the time.
On a few occasions, students looked less interested but complied with the lesson structure and completed the task.

Students are encouraged to enjoy the challenge of trying out or learning a new activity or skill, through motivating lesson resources or gentle encouragement. In some observations, staff were readily available to step in and intervene, missing some opportunities to problem solve and take on the challenge.

Where best practice was seen, in a few observations, was when students evaluated what they like and didn't like so much by the end of the activity.

Section 3: Summary of assessment

What the provision does particularly well

What stood out as particular strengths in supporting autistic people:

Transdisciplinary work underpins and is embedded in practice.

The therapy team is outward-looking and shares autism expertise across the autism network contributing to research, publishing articles and books, speaking at conferences and engaging in cognitive collaboration with peers and other schools.

The environments across both sites are adapted and developed to a high standard to meet the sensory and learning needs of the students.

The quality of admission documentation and assessments carried out by the therapists, SENCO and teaching staff is outstanding and informs the detailed ISPs, SPELL profiles and learning plans, ensuring staff know students very well.

Pupil voice is routinely encouraged throughout the school day. Students contribute to their documentation. Students have a say on what happens within the school through the school council. You said- we did demonstrate that actions were taken from suggestions by students, such as the buddy bench and currently plans for a multi-games sports area.

In many observations, students are provided with excellent formal and informal opportunities to communicate as part of a group or 1:1 with staff or with each other, this was observed in terms of turn-taking or floor-time work with the nurture stream or discussions, sports or communication groups in the academic streams, initiating spontaneous interaction and informal conversation between them.

The school has invested in developing meaningful and person-centred ways to explore employment opportunities for students to partake in work placements that meet their strengths and interests, one ex-student is now a TA and gaining a level 3 qualification and is an inspiration to others. The support in preparing students for life after Helen Allison is of a high standard working with the school leavers.

The management of behaviour was outstanding across the school. It is clear from observations that the school has focused on putting proactive and preventative strategies in place to avoid anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring or escalating. This is reflected in the school environments, the detailed paperwork, the attentive teaching and transdisciplinary support.

What else the provision does well:

The school environment is designed and organised- demonstrating care and consistency with displays- to encourage students to be ready to learn and provides creative use of learning and therapeutic environments for quieter workspaces and interventions. The outside space has been designed and developed creatively, which facilitates students to have opportunities to interact, relax, socialise and exercise or decompress.

The school has clear systems to support and work collaboratively with families. Almost all families that reported back were overwhelmingly positive and appreciate the knowledge and expertise which helps understand the particular needs of each student.

Appropriate levels of questioning were used well to encourage children to think at a higher level.

Staff routinely make themselves understood by simplifying or structuring verbal language and by providing bespoke visual cues. Staff modified their communication and allowed processing times when required, this was predominantly delivered in a calm and low arousal way.

Students are routinely encouraged to share or clarify opinions, make decisions or were confident in expressing when they needed help, this is supported by bespoke visual support.

The curriculum ensures students are provided with plenty of opportunities to consolidate and develop daily functional skill such. Where best practice was seen was when students evaluated what they like and didn't like so much by the end of the activity.

Students are routinely and sometimes subtly supported to regulate sensory experiences which interfere with what they are trying to do or cause them discomfort. Where best practice was observed, some lessons were highly sensory engaging such as music, multimedia, food safari, and outdoor learning.

What the provision could develop further

In a minority of observations, there were missed opportunities for students to work independently or in pairs and staff were supporting students closely, where they could have provided visuals to help sequence steps or allow for students to problem-solve. There were missed opportunities where adult direction could be reduced, by using crib sheets, checklists or paired work.

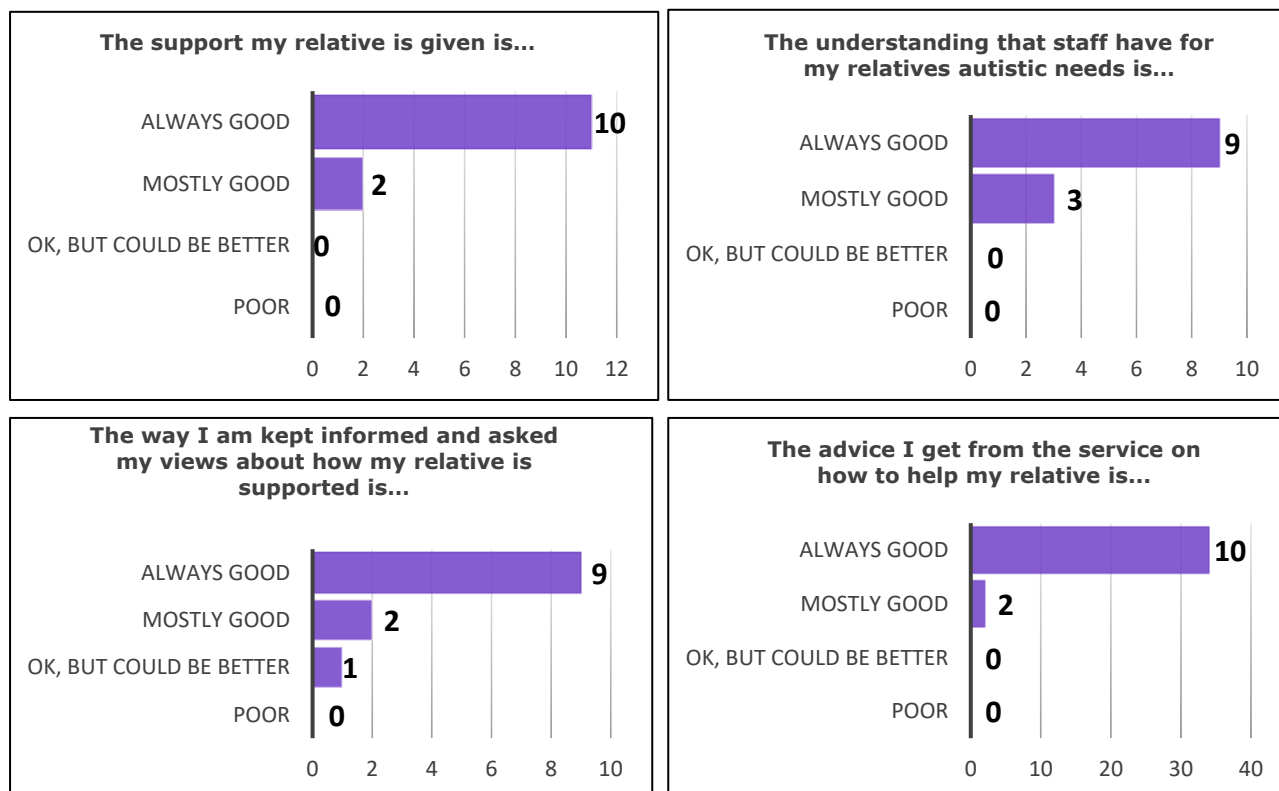
In a few of observations, staff could adjust adult talk by reducing language or adjusting the volume to teaching circumstances.

In a minority of observations, learning had an academic focus and could possibly be enhanced by incorporating sensory engaging or action learning.

The football pitch and team are a real success for many of the students. The student council also noted they wanted more interesting play equipment in the primary playgrounds or something to do for those who are not interested in football. This was also noted during playground observations and the school may want to make sure adults give access to and encourage students to play games with equipment from the black box.

APPENDIX: SURVEYS

Families of Autistic Persons - Questionnaire Responses (12)

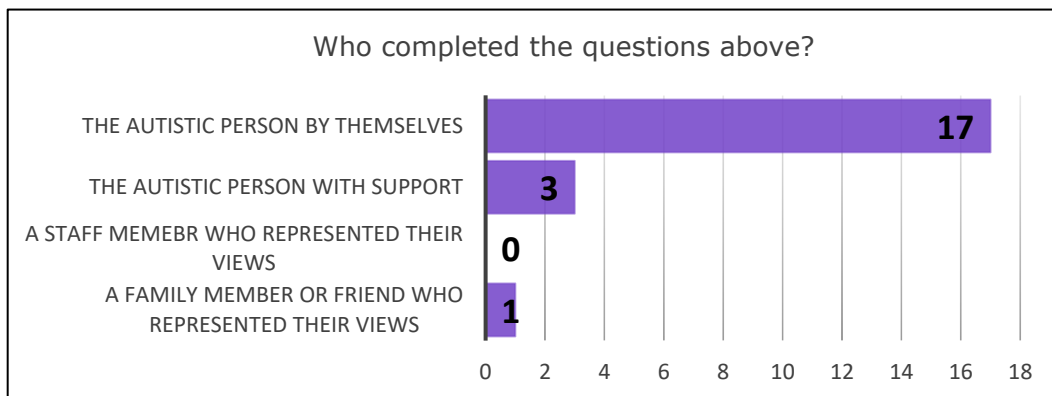
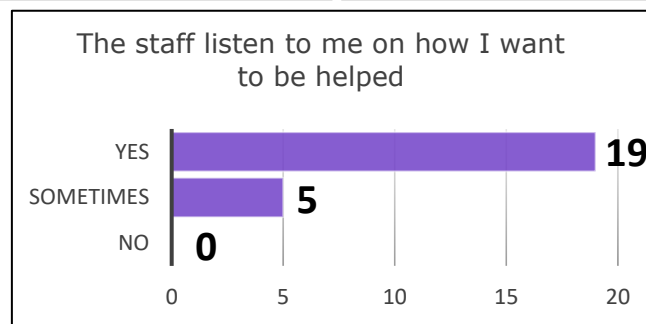
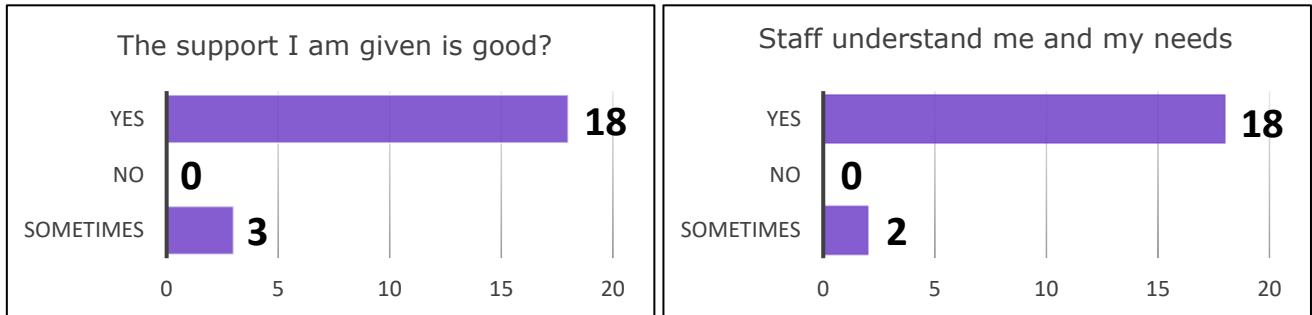


Comments

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	There is always good communication between school and parents. Teacher's raise their concerns without a delay. My son enjoys the school. He is supported well and have his individual learning plan. I'm happy with my son's development. Thank you
2	anonymous	Staff are very friendly, helpful and very nice.
3	anonymous	Happy with all the support we get. Sometimes I think staff could take a step back and consider if trying to persuade a certain behaviour is worth it.

ID	Name	Responses
		Or if the activity they don't want to engage in can just be skipped. This does happen but not all of the time.
4	anonymous	Our son has been at Helen Allison School since November 2021 and since then he has made excellent progress in key areas of his development. Above all he is very happy at the school, which as parents, is extremely comforting.
5	anonymous	A fantastic school, has been life changing for the whole family. To have your child in a placement that REALLY understands and knows how to provide for a child with autism makes all the difference
6	anonymous	My child has complex needs. They have struggled throughout their lives, and previous schools failed my child due to lack of understanding of their conditions, Helen Allison school have provided understanding, total commitment, and strategies to help undo the damage caused and have never given up on my child. They are working so hard with my child, and family work together with the school to provide the best support for my child

Autistic Person - Questionnaire Responses (21)



Comments

1 respondents (5%) answered **Absolute accreditation** for this question.

Name	Responses
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anonymous	Our Son has come on leaps and bounds with the support he gains from Helen Allison. I see first hand at school drop off and pick up how well the staff interact with the children and the support. Absolute accreditation to all the staff.
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APPENDIX: INFORMATION FROM THE PROVISION

This section should be copied and pasted directly from the assessment introduction form

Provide a brief description of the provision made for autistic people.

Special day school

How many people are supported by the provision? 77

How many of this number are autistic? 77

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

Year 1 through to Year 14, both verbal and non-verbal, most are functioning around 2 years below their age

What are the main approaches or methods employed by the provision in supporting autistic people?

Helen Allison is a positive, friendly school that's been bringing out the best in children on the autism spectrum for over 50 years. It provides a stimulating, high quality education that helps each child reach their full potential, keeping them safe with well trained and enthusiastic staff. Children are cared for on two sites, split by stage of development and need rather than age specifically.

The school teaches students in a "through school" model utilising Primary, Middle, Secondary and Post 16, split into classes of students of ability and social/emotional ability rather than age. All students attending the school are funded via their respective local authorities on either a standard or enhanced package. Students often travel long distances to attend the school with the majority utilising local authority arranged transport. Students can be admitted at any point throughout the year and must have an EHCP with a primary diagnosis of ASD.

All classes have a dedicated and qualified teacher who plans their curriculum and is the first point of contact with parents. There are separate specialist teachers for some subjects. All students have access to the on-site psychology, speech and language and occupational therapy departments with therapies being delivered both directly and indirectly. A large family of

support workers are present with a minimum staffing ratio of 1:3 for standard package students and 1:1 for enhanced package students. The maximum class size is 8 students with an average of 5 students.

The Helen Allison School has a well-established and highly specialist on-site therapy team. Our transdisciplinary team deliver an outstanding and highly effective service to support our children and young people.

The transdisciplinary approach ensures that we can provide a bespoke package of intervention to meet the ever-changing needs of our students. Therapeutic approaches and interventions are embedded into the daily lives of our students and form part of their waking day curriculum.

Interventions are evidence based and quality assured to ensure best autism practice. The transdisciplinary team use a wide range of interventions and approaches which positively impacts communication and sensory differences for our pupils these include but are not limited to: PECS, SCERTS, Attention Autism, Zones of Regulation, Therapeutic Listening and Sensory Integration.

What was the outcome of the provision's last statutory inspection

Body	Date	Outcome
Ofsted	June 2021	Good (with Outstanding Features)

What training/ongoing professional development is provided for staff in delivering autism related approaches or methods?

All staff receive training in SPELL, Studio 3 with regular mandatory refreshers. The length of the school day was recently shortened to allow staff to attend training on specific techniques relevant to the young people they are working with. This may include topics but not limited to: recording of incidents, PICA, brushing, swing room, PECS, Sensory differences, colourful semantics and Proloquo 2 go

What processes are in place to ensure that each autistic person has an individual support plan that considers their communication and sensory responses and promotes their independent and well-being?

All incidents are logged on the CPOMS system. This updates a Live ISP document on SharePoint accessible by all staff in the school. Any issues relating to risk are updated on the individual students Risk Assessment. The ISP helps to form the SPELL profile.

All students have a yearly annual review which contains a written report from the teachers, SaLT, OT, psychology and PBS teams. The parents and students also feed into this review and the student is encouraged to contribute at the annual review meeting in person. Where possible accessibility is facilitated using a range of differentiated pupils voice resources.
All learning plans are shared with the pupil and parent at the start of each term

How are autistic people consulted in the support they receive?

Pupils contribute to their annual review through a questionnaire specific to their communication needs and understanding and through the regularly termly reviews. Any issues that are raised are reported through an action task list and tracked through to completion. Examples can be given

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

Through the Annual Review process, families are given the chance to contribute both in writing and in person. All families are able to provide feedback on their child's learning journey through regular evaluation documentation provided by their teacher. There is also a yearly questionnaire from the central NAS team

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

Full Integration of the other subject curriculum such as History and Geography.
Embedding the new nurture classes to better support the transitions of high needs students through the school
Electronic assessment and tracking of the students through the central management information system to link up the EHCP and learning performance of each student

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

Integrated support across all teams in the school e.g. SaLT, OT, Psychology, PBS and education
Individualised plans for all student
Parent/Student Voice and input into their learning

APPENDIX 3: ADVANCED APPLICATION FORM

AUTISM ACCREDITATION: APPLICATION FORM FOR ADVANCED STATUS

In order to achieve an Advanced Award, you must show that you are an outstanding and innovative provision that goes well beyond similar provisions. Please complete this form to give examples of initiatives that make you stand out and most important of all the impact they have had for autistic people. Copy and paste where you may have more than one example. However, the entire application including case-studies should not exceed a 1000 words.

Please note you are also required to include case-studies (please refer to additional guidance) as part of your application. It is also important to recognise that the application form and case-studies are only part of a bigger picture, with considerable emphasis being given within the award process to observation of practice, personal centred support plans and surveys.

Part 1: Professional Development
Initiatives or innovations that impact on staff insight into the personal experience of being autistic e.g. regular involvement of autistic people in professional development activities or review of practice.
Description: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school has implemented clear training routes for all staff, focussed on autism practice. For instance, all staff are SPELL trained by in-house Principal therapists, with the training focussing on the experience of the autistic individual. 2. The school has employed an ex-student on a level 3 apprentice programme, supported by internal staff in order to gain a teaching assistant qualification and as maintenance staff on a voluntary basis. 3. Autism Awareness (Acceptance) week is recognised in the school, with inspirational autistic people celebrated around the school/hub. Speakers come to the school to discuss the perspective of the autistic person, including Ros Blackburn, Dean Beadle and Carly Jones (June 2022) 4. Ex-students involved in the "Too Much Information" videos and these are shared with the staff

Impact:

1. All students have an individual spell profile that has been cocreated by the team around the child. This is then implemented with the child and the trained individuals. This will help all who come into contact with the child. The clinical team receive regular CPD around autism and these are disseminated to all teams.
2. The now ex-student is employed as a member of staff in the school. He is completing a level 3 apprenticeship as a Teaching Assistant, being paid and gaining skills. The other children he supports talk about their own aspirations to do what he is doing.
3. Staff gain insight into autistic perspectives and are mindful of practise when working with own students. Staff are encouraged to maintain positivity around young people with autism, celebrating them for who they are. Regular training helps to maintain consistency of approach.
4. Work through the NAS helps to provide staff with a fuller understanding of what it is like to be autistic, having a positive way in how they work with children with a diagnosis of autism

Initiatives or innovations that ensure that specialist approaches or techniques are fully understood, consistently implemented and regularly reviewed.

Description

1. Onsite clinical team consisting of OT's, SaLTs, SaLT/OT assistants, consultant clinical Psychologist, assistant psychologist and PBS team. The PBS team is a more recent addition to the clinical team and has been set up with qualified practitioners in order to focus on supporting behaviours in the school.
2. Autism Learning Walks ensuring autism best practice underpins curriculum delivery. Autism Environment/sensory questionnaire/communication approaches regularly audited.
3. Reduction in the length of the school day following analysis of incidents and engagement of young people allowing for greater staff preparation and training

Impact

1. The onsite clinical team have weekly meetings to discuss workloads and cases in order that the right support is in place and at the right level. All students regularly receive both individual and group support. The students are tiered for support in PBS and data proves impact.
2. Induction of all staff includes the roles of all clinicians, sensory strategy training and clinician focused training to all staff around sensory differences, social communication differences and PBS. There are

weekly specialist TDT clinics to target causes of concern using formal referral processes and use of CPOMS.

Actions identified and action plan created to improve practice

3. The length of the school day was reduced, resulting in less incidents in the afternoon for young people. All staff now have at least an hour at the end of the school day to either prepare for the next day, attend additional training or be involved in meetings with the entire multidisciplinary team.

Part 2: Outcomes for individuals

Initiatives or innovations that have had a considerable impact on the quality of life and inclusion of autistic people e.g. programmes; projects; therapeutic interventions social enterprises etc.

Description

1. More regular feedback (1-2 times per academic year plus once at annual review) from students/parents/teachers by focussing on learning plans linked to the EHCP
2. Introduced a SENCO who is also in charge of Quality of Life Curriculum who creates consistency in approach to annual reviews and the application of QoL

Impact

1. Rapid termly improvement in delivery of what works for an individual. The learning plans allow more transparency of what a child is learning and what is being worked on from the EHCP. Mini action plans come from this feedback, allowing staff to adapt quickly to changing presentation. Young people are now integrated into the annual review process.
2. Focus on linking QoL to delivery of EHCP targets in conjunction with the Annual Review Process. The Annual Review paperwork has been recreated in conjunction with the therapy teams in order to improve the impact of this document. The AET framework has been integrated into the EHCP framework by moving the AET targets under the 5 headings of the EHCP. This has helped staff to concentrate their yearly targets, focussing on the autistic elements of the AET. Progress is now measured against the AET framework and reported upon in the AR alongside the other curriculum.

Initiatives or innovations that empower autistic people as experts in their own lives e.g. examples of co-production; working in partnership; developing effective consultation tools and processes to ensure that autistic people have a voice etc

Description

1. Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG) now embedded weekly for students in year 9 and above with a resident and consistent member of staff. There is a big emphasis on meaningful work experience for all appropriately aged students
2. Increased emphasis on the pupil's voice, including greater participation annual reviews, student council and involvement in key staff interviews
3. SPELL profiles and ISP's co-produced with pupils where appropriate
4. Qualified Positive Behaviour Support Team embedded in the specialist services of the school, supporting the teachers, students and their families to understand the functions of behaviour

Impact

1. More opportunities to develop aspirations of employment for an autistic young person including access to work experience placements and a regular external IAG person. Students create their own careers journal in order to try and secure employment, where appropriate. This is linked to the Quality of Life curriculum and the Annual Review. The ultimate goal is to improve self-esteem and well being for autistic children in our care.
2. All students are now invited to bring something to the annual review. This may be a presentation via a PowerPoint or in person. The school is very flexible in terms of how this can be delivered to the annual review. All classes have a representative on the student council. There are two student councils in the school and the hub. These councils are given a budget and can spend this via a democratic vote. Pupils interview potential candidates for senior roles.
3. Shorter SPELL profiles feed from the ISP in order that there is a consistent approach to working with a young person by all involved in their care
4. A three tiered system of support for all students in the school, utilising data and evidenced based interventions in order to support the students in our care. Support is shared with the families to help maintain consistency of approach

Part 3: Sharing of Expertise and development of knowledge and understanding

Initiatives or innovations that have had a significant impact on how families, other professionals or members of the public understand and respond to autistic people
e.g. outreach support; training for other professionals, families; sharing best practice at events etc.

Description

1. Training for transport and other providers including the use of visual supports
2. Principal OT training at NAS conference, Autism Learns conference and Autism Southeast reaching wide audience of both professionals and parents.
3. Principal OT author of Sensory and Motor Strategies – Currently in third addition print JKP. Principal SaLT has contributed to publications and training. Principal SaLT long standing member of Accreditation
4. Co creation of plans with the PBS, SaLT and OT teams internally and the teaching/clinical teams work directly with the families to co create strategies that best support the young people.

Impact

1. Transport providers are able to deal with the students in their care more effectively, understanding their behaviours
2. Increasing knowledge and understanding of communication and sensory differences across a wide range of audiences. Families and professionals upskilled in autism practice positively impacting school and family life.
3. Lead clinician's extensive knowledge and expertise shared worldwide via publications. Therefore, positively impacting on the lives of autistic young people and their families.
4. The schools collaborative approach ensures pupil profiles are up to date and accurately describes barriers and successes with regard to learning and development. Transdisciplinary embedded approach ensures best outcomes.
Parents are able to continue strategies at home creating consistency for the young autistic children, improving outcomes. Involvement of all stake holders including pupils allows true coproduction capturing goals and aspirations.

Initiatives or innovations that have significantly increased knowledge and understanding of best practice in supporting autistic people e.g. involvement in action research; development of resources; partnership work; publications etc.

Description

1. Matel research project – providing pupil feedback to ensure sensory differences are taken into account across global clothing range
2. Embedded tool capturing pupil aspirations and tracking opportunities
3. Innovative resources and materials produced using interactive and engaging activities during Covid extended into the school day including an external facing website, interactive classrooms and activities which target self- regulation, communication and sensory strategies.
4. Published article n Autism Practice website on role of SaLT and OT in our schools
5. Sharing of resources and presentation as part of Q of L forum

6. European research project; simplified Language
7. Partnership with other schools in locality and further afield

Impact

1. Pupil views respected resulting in positive changes to clothing – global clothing range. Autistic viewpoint heard.
2. Listening to the voice of the autistic person- co production of aspirations and goals leading to a shared understanding and participation.
3. Reduced anxiety for those children learning remotely and supporting curriculum delivery. This ensured consistency of therapeutic intervention throughout Covid 19.
4. Accessible papers and publications sharing knowledge and expertise positively impacting lives of autistic people.
5. Students were supported by their parents to complete OT programmes at home, utilising the techniques contained on the website. This helped young people to continue to have their interventions, albeit in a slightly different format.

Part 4: Validation

Validation from other bodies or professionals s e.g. awards; summative evaluation data; inspections etc.

Example

1. Safeguarding Initiative Award (During Covid-19)
2. Ofsted report
3. Monitoring and quality assurance visits/inspections

Relevance

1. The award recognised the work we did safeguarding young people during the pandemic. It looked at the way the school maintained regular visibility with young people during this time.
2. The school moved from "Inadequate" to "Good with Outstanding Features". There was a particular focus on the behaviour and support that we give to young people in our care.
3. The school has regular monitoring visits to maintain quality. These focus on Quality of Education and Specialist provision. These reports are always positive.

Criteria for Autism Accreditation Advanced Award

CRITERIA	NOTES
Statutory Inspectors consider service to have outstanding features. Nothing is scored as less than good.	The Committee will consider ratings from the last statutory report and quality of life outcomes for the autistic individuals attending the provision.
There are many considerable areas of strength with no or minor actions for development. Highlighted areas of development are likely to address issues that the service is already working on or fine-tuning practice which is already of a very good standard.	The Committee will consider evidence of what the provision does well and what it needs to work on from the latest Autism Accreditation assessment.
A high-quality programme of continuous Professional Development is in place. It ensures that staff have a robust specialist knowledge of autism specific best practice methods and approaches. Overall support is clearly based on methods and approaches that produce positive outcomes for autistic people.	The Committee will consider evidence from the latest Autism Accreditation report of what training and professional development staff receive and how this is evident in observed practice. It will also refer to Section 1 of the Application form.
Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how each autistic person communicates and socially interacts	The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.
Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people to become more independent,	The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.
Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their sensory regulation	The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.

<p>Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their emotional well-being</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.</p>
<p>Feedback from families and/or autistic people shows that an overwhelming majority are happy with the service e.g. over half very happy and the rest happy/ Only a tiny minority are unhappy e.g. one or two respondents.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider surveys carried out by Autism Accreditation. An overwhelming majority would normally be defined as 75 % or more respondents.</p>
<p>The service shares expertise through quality consultation and training as well as actively contributing to research into autism and innovations in practice.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider part 3 of the Application form and relevant case studies.</p>