

AUTISM ACCREDITATION REVIEW REPORT



Sutherland House
Review Date: 15th – 17th March 2011

Review Team

Team Leader	Name	Occupation
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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

PEN PICTURE

SERVICE PROVIDER

Name of Organisation	NORSACA
Address	Park Hall Autism Resource Centre Park Hall Bestwood Village NG6 8TQ
Telephone Number	0115 9761805
Mission Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advocate, provide and develop high quality services, information and support for all those whose lives are affected by autism, working in partnership with others. • To recognize and respond to the needs of the individual, enabling people with autism to live their lives with dignity, choice and independence
Organisations Governance (E.g. Online Links to Statutory Reviews, Annual Reports)	Section 1 of the School Information Manual gives details of NORSACA together with a flow chart. In brief the following applies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The membership of NORSACA elects the Council of Management. • The Council of Management elects the Management Committees for Adult and Young People Services and Children and Young People's Services. • The Management Committee of Children and Young People's Services delegates the responsibility of the running of the school to the Governing Body. • The Executive Management Group is made up of the Directors, the Principal, Chairs of Management Committees and other elected officers and meets to draft strategic plans for the organization.
Details of any other services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NORSACA Adult and Young People Services provide a range of specialist further education, residential provision and community homes and Outreach Services. • NORSACA Family Services provides a range of family support activities, including counselling, parent workshops, short breaks, telephone advice surgery, leisure activities and siblings group. • NORSACA Central Services provides an information and fund raising service and a management and support function to the services and committees.

PROVISION BEING REVIEWED

Name of Provision being reviewed	Sutherland House School
Contact Person	Maria Allen (Principal)
<p>Details of provision(s)</p> <p>(Please list separately all provisions being Reviewed and add/delete bullets as required)</p> <p>• Address(es); - Number of Placements; - Type of Service/School; and - Specialist Standard used</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutherland House School Ravenshead 272 Longdale Lane Ravenshead NG15 9AH <i>Placements: up to 14</i> <i>Type of service: Foundation Stage, KS1, KS2</i> <i>Specialist Standards: Day School Standards</i> • Sutherland House School Carlton Sutherland Road Nottingham NG3 7AP <i>Placements: up to 30</i> <i>Type of service: KS2, KS3</i> <i>Specialist Standards: Day School standards</i> • Sutherland House School Harby Lodge 13 Pelham Road Nottingham NG5 1AP <i>Placements: up to 24</i> <i>Type of Service: KS3, 4</i> <i>Specialist Standards: Day School Standards</i> • Sutherland House School Falcon House 15 Pelham Road Nottingham NG5 1AP <i>Placements: up to 14</i> <i>Type of Service: KS4, Post 16</i> <i>Specialist Standards: Day School Standards</i> • Sutherland House School Continuing Education Centre 8 Clinton Avenue Nottingham NG5 1AW <i>Placements: up to 14</i> <i>Type of Service: Post 16</i> <i>Specialist Standards: Day School Standards</i>
Telephone	0115 9873375
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Autism Specific Aims for Care / Education	<p>The overall objective of Sutherland House School is ‘to provide the highest quality specialist education which addresses the specific needs of autism as well as the individuality of each pupil and his or her family, so that their potential can be achieved at each stage of their education and on into adult life’.</p> <p>The values and objectives of the school and other services are to be found in more detail in the school prospectus and other supporting documentation.</p>
Management and Staff Structure	<p>Sutherland House School Governing Body has the overall responsibility for overseeing the school, as delegated by the Children and Young People’s Services Management Committee.</p> <p>The Principal has overall responsibility for the running and operation of the school and is supported in this by the Leadership Group which comprises the Head Teacher of Lower School (Ravenshead and Carlton); the Head Teacher of Upper School (Harby Lodge, Falcon House and Continuing Education Centre) and the Curriculum Coordinator. They are further supported and joined at Senior Staff meetings by Assistant Head Teachers and Senior Teachers at Lower and Upper School and the Speech and Language Therapist Team Leader.</p> <p>The Director of Children’s Services is a member of the school Governing Body and in addition to his advisory role to the school manages the Elizabeth Newson Centre.</p>
Description of service/school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutherland House School currently makes provision for up to 94 pupils and students on a daily basis from nine different Local Authorities. • Sutherland House has had specialist designation, under the Communication and Interaction strand of the Specialist SEN Programme, since September 2008. Specialist designation has brought funds which have enabled the school to realize a number of planned developments, including increased O.T. input in relation to sensory issues, designated HLTA time to support direct work with families in the home setting, designated HLTA time to extend work related placements and outreach support to Nottinghamshire LA. Since the Specialist Programme was cut in October it is unclear if/how funds can be accessed next year. • The Elizabeth Newson Centre provides around 25 diagnostic assessments for children referred from all over the UK. In addition, the ENC has a training, information and research function and provides a psychological service to the school, which has included review assessments for pupils with a complex profile and collation and analysis of behaviour monitoring. • The Park Hall Autism Resource Centre is a joint venture with Nottinghamshire LA which opened in

	<p>October 2005. The Centre provides a base for the Early Communication and Autism Partnership (ECAP), Nottinghamshire Inclusion Support Service (Inclusion Team) and NORSACA Central and Family Services as well as a conference and training facility.</p>
<p>Philosophy of service/school</p>	<p>The philosophy of the school should be self evident from the main supporting documentation.</p> <p>The school continues to strive to maintain and develop high quality services. The key priorities over the coming year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue review of structured teaching approaches. • Prepare for Ofsted. • More complex pupil profile – flexible packages of provision, meeting therapeutic needs, support to staff, gradual build up to capacity. • Carefully monitor and manage resources and budget with a view to making efficiency savings whilst maintaining the quality of the provision and the service we provide. <p>The key documentation which should support the Accreditation Team in gathering more in-depth information about the objectives and organisational structure of Children’s Services are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutherland House School Prospectus, Elizabeth Newson Centre Information sheet, Early Communication and Autism Partnership information sheet. • Self-evaluation report 2008-09 • Sutherland House School Development Plan 2009-10 (SDP). • School Information Manual (SIM) • Management Guidelines File (MG) • Information for Parents
<p>Are there any safeguarding issues which you feel would have an impact on the Accreditation Review?</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Description of Physical Environment / Buildings</p>	<p>The school comprises two departments and is based on five sites in and around Nottingham.</p> <p>The Lower School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutherland House School Ravenshead has places for up to 14 pupils across the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. This site also houses the Elizabeth Newson Centre in the wing adjacent to the

	<p>school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sutherland House School Carlton is situated on the outskirts of Nottingham and has places for up to 30 pupils at Key Stages 2 and 3. The building is divided between the main building and a smaller adjacent building (Lynton House). <p>The Upper School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harby Lodge, in Sherwood, opened in February 2009 (relocation from Westward site) and provides for up to 24 students at Key Stage 3 and 4. Harby Lodge comprises classroom accommodation, design and technology workshop, ICT suite, music room and MILE room. Harby Lodge has provided 10 additional places and we are currently gradually building up to capacity. Falcon House, in Sherwood, currently provides for up to 14 students at Key Stage 4 and Post 16. Falcon House comprises classroom accommodation, a studio and PE Hall. The Continuing Education Centre currently provides for up to 14 students at Post 16. It has a large common room in addition to three classroom bases. The top floor of the building is used for meetings and for training. Harby Cottage, a small leased building next to Falcon House, provides office space for the Principal, the Speech and Language Therapist Team Leader, the ICT Specialist and the Assistant Head Teacher (Whole School Developments).
<p>Budgetary systems enabling continued development and viability of the organisation</p>	<p>The financial planning cycle begins in the first part of the summer term with a self audit of each department of the school.</p> <p>This leads to the Senior Management Team preparing a draft School Development Plan which is presented to and agreed by the Governing Body. Following this the Finance Sub Committee works in more detail to cost the proposed developments alongside information about the numbers of pupils for the forthcoming year. The proposed fees are set on this basis and LAs are alerted to the proposed fee rise in October, which is then confirmed at the end of February to inform fee changes in April.</p> <p>The Finance Manager provides monthly reconciliation figures which enables the Senior Management Team to track budgets. This information is made available to the Governing Body and discussed as an agenda item at Governing Body meetings.</p> <p>The Policy on Financial Administration can be found in Management Guidelines Section 3.1.</p>

Outline of the fee structure	The fee per pupil per term is as follows: Key Stages 1 and 2 £13,425 Key Stage 3 £14,345 Key Stage 4 and Post 16 £14,700 Enhanced fee/extended assessment: £4,555 per term Additional fee: £9,235 per term
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PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS As identified by the Panel

Recommendation 1

Core Standard 4:2 **Consistent Understanding of Autism**

The review team recommends that the school review the structured teaching approach in order to identify what common features should be evident within classes and around the school.

The Review Team can confirm that this recommendation has been met. The school has established a Structured Teaching Working Party which has identified the key characteristics of structured teaching that would be expected to be found across the school. These include

- *'Individualised daily timetables using symbols*
- *An organised, uncluttered environment*
- *A clear beginning, middle and end to sessions*
- *Use of the TEACCH approach*
- *Symbol or written instruction sheets'*

The school has also identified the development of structured teaching as one of the key objectives of the School Development Plan (2009-2010 and 2010-2011).

The Review Team found evidence of structured teaching across the school in the form of daily schedules, the use of written lists or visual work systems to identify and demarcate the separate activities that took place in each lesson. However, there were inconsistencies in practice noted by the Review Team. For example in some lessons, schedules were not used effectively and depicted activities which were not occurring at the time that the schedule indicated. Similarly, some teachers were observed creating a sequential list for pupils at the start of a lesson which was not subsequently referred to during the lesson.

Where a structured approach was used, pupils and students were engaged and motivated throughout the lesson and were able to complete tasks independently, developing their sense of self-efficacy. One of the best examples of structured teaching observed was during the ICT lessons in Harby Lodge and Carlton. The structure observed included the use of written and visual lists,

clocks and timers which contributed to the overall clarity of structure and supported pupil engagement throughout the entire lesson. Where structured approaches were less secure, there was an over reliance on verbal instructions and verbal prompts which reduced the opportunities for pupils and students to develop independence.

The review team endorse the good work undertaken so far by the Structured Teaching Working Party which is currently considering ways to develop practice across the school. One example currently being explored is providing all pupils with a personal planner and draft samples of this document were shown to the Review Team.

The working party have identified a number of key characteristics of good practice in the use of structured approaches and the Review Team agree that these characteristics form the basis of good practice in this area. The Review Team believe that the school would benefit from conducting an audit of current practice in this area in order to determine the degree of consistency achieved across the school and to inform strategic decisions about incorporating structured approaches into the learning of an increasingly complex pupil population.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Pupil Personal Planner - draft
- Pupil Profiles
- School Development Plan 2009-2010
- School Development Plan 2010-2011
- Structure Teaching Working Party minutes
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time

Recommendation 2

Core Standard 13:2 **Behaviour Support – Policy and Practice**

The review team recommend that practice regarding Behaviour Support Plans and Physical Intervention Plans is reviewed, in terms of recording parental consultation and consent; in setting dates of reviews and in ensuring that reviews occur and that outcomes are recorded.

The Review Team can confirm that this recommendation has been met. The Team saw consistent evidence of parental consultation on all agreed programmes of positive behaviour support and noted parents as counter-signatories on all agreed plans for restrictive physical intervention.

The school has produced a behaviour support physical intervention plan review checklist which provides details of when programmes are to be reviewed. A comprehensive monitoring, analysis and reporting of behaviour across the whole school is provided by the psychology team at the Elizabeth Newson Centre.

The Review Team concurred that the quality of practice in the area of behaviour support is a considerable strength of the school.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Agreed Programmes of Positive Behaviour Support
- Agreed Programmes of Restrictive Physical Intervention
- Behaviour Monitoring and Support Service – Half-Termly Report
- Behaviour Monitoring and Support Service – Termly Report
- Behaviour Support Physical Intervention Plan Review
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Individual Pupil Risk Profile
- MAPA Team Minutes
- Personal Tutorial Records
- Physical Contact and Intimate Care Policy
- Pupil Profiles
- Pupil Protection Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Whole School MAPA Training Database
- Whole School Training Database

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Director of Children and Young People’s Services

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time
- Visit to the Elizabeth Newson Centre

Recommendation 3

Core Standard 17.3 **Sensory Issues**

The review team recommend that as part of the on-going work that is being carried out within the school, the Sensory Working Party consider ways of ensuring that for those pupils who have not undergone specialist sensory assessments, teachers have the confidence and level of understanding to use sensory profiles to inform day to day teaching and behaviour management.

The Review Team can confirm that this recommendation has been met. Due to Sutherland House School receiving Specialist Designation for Communication and Interaction, the school has been able to increase its OT time and this has resulted in more pupils receiving sensory programmes and increased training and support for staff. Regular staff training in Sensory Integration, particularly in the area of under and over arousal, has focused on 'getting pupils ready to learn' and the staff team have become more skilled and confident in the approach which has been verified through the monitoring of Teaching and Learning.

All pupils have a sensory assessment completed on entry to the school [Winnie Dunn short profile] and for particular pupils for whom sensory issues are more significant, an in depth assessment [Sensory Screening Phase 2] is undertaken to identify the individual programme for the pupil or student; a sensory diet programme is then drawn up.

Staff teams complete the sensory profile liaising with parents. When all the information has been collated the OT works with staff in setting the programme. All pupils, whether they have a sensory diet or not, have a sensory target within their IEP alongside triad and curriculum targets. Examples of these were seen by the review team and one contained targets for a Post 16 student;

'To show he can identify his sensory levels of alertness and be supported to review various strategies to help him feel calmer or to express his anxiety appropriately.'

Sensory strategies were included in a behaviour support programme for another student identifying...

'deep muscle pressure, squeezing toys, use of weighted blanket and deep breathing.'

...as an effective approach.

Within the Annual Review a section has now been included specifically for Sensory Issues and an informative summary of a pupil's needs and progress in this area was noted by the Review Team.

Another benefit of the Specialist Designation to the school has been in the funding the purchase of additional sensory resources for each classroom, such as weighted blankets, cushions and a vestibular swing. The Multi-Sensory Interactive Learning Environment [MILE] at Harby Lodge has been built and a member of staff has been given responsibility for running the area.

A sensory session was observed by a member of the Review Team in which TACPAC was used to encourage 'sensory alignment' particularly with a pupil with sensory defensiveness. It helped pupils to tolerate 'touch' and to explore their awareness of their own bodies. TACPAC is used throughout the school. Another session was observed in which three pupils undertook activities of a sensory-motor nature including slow rotations, bouncing, jumping and crashing as well as water and soft toy play. This resulted in increased social interaction with the staff team and pupils becoming calmer and more relaxed by the end of the session.

One of the main targets that has been identified in all sensory integration work, is for the student, where appropriate, to recognise their own heightened sensory state and take steps to appropriately address and control it. The school is currently rolling out a programme called '*How Does Your Engine Run*'. Within this programme there are sets of activities that can be worked upon and used independently to enable the student to control behaviour related to sensory processing difficulties.

Sutherland House School works in partnership with parents and training for parents in Sensory Issues is provided. It was noted in the minutes of the Sensory Panel Meeting of July 2010 that training had taken place for parents of Upper School Students and since that date training has also been offered to parents across the school. Also within these minutes it was noted that a pupil had benefited greatly from the Therapeutic Listening Programme that is currently being rolled out to staff and parents of the school. For another pupil, improvements in appetite and becoming more open to interaction were recorded.

The school has demonstrated that it has met this recommendation and all pupils now have a sensory assessment and a sensory target

is included within their IEP. With the increase in OT time, a rolling programme of staff training and staff completing assessments for pupils the specialist knowledge and the confidence that goes with that has been greatly enhanced.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Agreed Programmes of Positive Behaviour Support
- Annual Review Reports
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Pupil Profiles
- School Development Plan 2009-2010
- School Development Plan 2010-2011
- Sensory Issues Policy
- Sensory Panel Meeting Notes
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Whole School Training Database

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Curriculum Co-Ordinator
- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Lessons
- Sensory Sessions

Recommendation 4

Specialist Standard 2:1 **Teaching/Learning – Curriculum**

The review team recommend that the development of a proforma for devising half term plans from units of work which require staff to identify how communication and social interaction, together with problem solving and flexibility of thought are addressed. This will help to ensure that the focus on an autistic specific curriculum continues to be consistently sustained.

The Review Team can confirm that this recommendation has been met. A new half termly proforma has been established in which the unit of work and weekly activities and resources are identified by topic and then included in this are opportunities for the development of communication, social interaction and self awareness as well as flexibility of thought and problem solving.

One of the examples seen by the review team for the unit entitled 'Body Changes and Differences' lists under Flexibility of Thought and problem solving,

'Accepts that body changes are a normal part of growing up and that will happen to themselves as well as others.'

Another example of a target within DT, related to Communication,

'...to communicate likes and dislikes in design preference'.

The new proforma was used alongside the daily lesson plan in a number of lessons observed by the review team and served to identify how the Unit of work fitted in with subject long and medium term curriculum plans as well as keeping the focus on the opportunities to meet the targets related to the Triad of Impairment.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Curriculum Development Plan 2010-2012
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Pupil Progress Records
- School Development Plan 2009-2010
- School Development Plan 2010-2011



- Sutherland House – I.D.R.

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Curriculum Co-Ordinator

Observations:

- Lessons

<p style="text-align: center;">POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT As identified in the IDR</p>
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Potential Area 1

Update Pen Picture to most recent version.

The school's pen portrait provided in the Review documentation represents an accurate and informative picture of the school. Consequently, the review team consider that this area of the school's practice has been effectively addressed since the writing of the IDR and represents the standard expected within Autism Accreditation.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- School Pen Portrait

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Principal

Potential Area 2

Action the new School Development Plan preparing for Ofsted and the process of re-designation with specialist status. (Core Standard 6; School/Service Development Plan)

The school has recently undergone a very successful Ofsted inspection indicating that an effective SDP is in place. Consequently, the review team consider that this area of the school's practice has been effectively addressed since the writing of the IDR and represents the standard expected within Autism Accreditation.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- School Development Plan 2009-2010
- School Development Plan 2010-2011

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Principal

POTENTIAL AREAS OF STRENGTH As identified in the IDR

Potential Area 1

Behaviour Monitoring System – the system for monitoring of pupil behaviour, data collection and the interpretation and use of data contributes significantly to the effectiveness of behaviour support for pupils. (Core Standard 13: Behaviour Support – Policy and Practice)

The review team consider the behaviour monitoring system within the school to represent exemplary practice in the field of behaviour support. A comprehensive analysis of data drawn from a number of relevant sources underpins a profound understanding of each pupils' needs and creates a strong foundation for the high quality practice consistently observed throughout the school.

The review team believe that the identification of behaviour support as a key strategic objective in the School Development Plan, namely

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3.3

To provide a high quality programme of MAPA training (physical intervention) linked to an information resource for supporting pupil behaviour.

To extend procedures for collecting data on behaviour incidents to inform the planning of behaviour programmes and to demonstrate and evaluate Whole School Outcomes.

(School Development Plan 2010-2011)

contributes significantly to the excellent practice noted in this area and identify the area of behaviour support as a considerable strength of the school.

Crucially, behaviour support is conceived as a holistic approach towards improving the quality of life of each pupil in the school. Consequently, information is derived from a broad base including individual workers' diary sheets, incident books and detailed discussions with all relevant parties. These diverse sources are synthesised by the Psychology Service based at the Elizabeth Newson Centre into an accessible and informative document which enables the school to produce appropriate strategies to support positive behaviour. Significantly, the team based at the Elizabeth Newson Centre have a regular weekly presence within the school's sites which enables a pragmatic understanding of the issues presented in the data.

This detailed collection, analysis and interpretation of data complements the high quality practice throughout the school which is supported by the MAPA Team led by one of the school's Assistant Head Teachers. An ongoing training programme furnishes members of staff with an understanding of the critical processes required for positive behaviour support and the effectiveness of the programme is manifest in the day to day performance of the staff team who are able to support the learning of many complex and challenging pupils in a positive and effective manner. The review team consistently observed approaches to behaviour support which were sensitive to individual needs, maintained high expectations of pupils and respected pupil dignity at all times.

Families feel strongly supported in this area and there is ample evidence of their involvement in developing supportive strategies for their child. Alongside the evidence drawn from behaviour support programmes, parents' questionnaires clearly indicate how well families feel supported in this area.

The review team agree with the school's view that this area of practice is an area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Agreed Programmes of Positive Behaviour Support
- Agreed Programmes of Restrictive Physical Intervention
- Annual Review Reports
- Behaviour Monitoring and Support Service – Half-Termly Report
- Behaviour Monitoring and Support Service – Termly Report
- Behaviour Support Physical Intervention Plan Review
- Behaviour Support Policy
- CPD Plan 2010-2011
- Individual Education Plans
- Individual Pupil Risk Profile
- MAPA Team Minutes
- Personal Tutorial Records
- Physical Contact and Intimate Care Policy
- Pupil Profiles
- Pupil Protection Policy
- Pupil Voice Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- School Development Plan 2010-2011
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Transition Policy

- Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document
- Whole School MAPA Training Database

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Director of Children and Young People’s Services
- Principal
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time
- Visit to the Elizabeth Newson Centre

Potential Area 2

Person Centred/Pupil Voice work – this is an on-going, long term project that aims to empower pupils and promote independence. (Specialist Standard 10: Well-Being-Promoting Independence)

The use of pupil voice was evident throughout the whole school and was used to great effect. Pupil voice was deemed to be deeply embedded within the ethos of the school, permeating planned and unplanned interactions between staff and pupils and underpinning the highly respectful and positive relationships observed consistently throughout the review. Crucially, pupil voice is listened to and has agency in the Sutherland House School community affecting a broad range of aspects of school life including the development of the learning environment, the content of personal tutorials and choice making during lessons.

Whenever pupils expressed an opinion it was explicitly valued and where the view may have been incongruous it was still respected and the pupil was skilfully re-directed to discuss the matter in hand.

During personal tutorials pupils were given an emotional barometer to facilitate their own understanding of their emotional state. The personal tutorial observed at Ravenshead included written examples of how pupils were able to consider how best to respond to difficult situations by examining possible solutions. A Communication Group based at a local High School used emotional barometers to explore the feelings and thoughts of people caught up in the catastrophe in Japan. This device facilitated a high quality learning experience for pupils in which pupil voice played a crucial role.

The review team was shown examples of Person Centred Planning which allowed older students to make decisions and plans about their future including any experiences that they wished to take part in such as visiting a castle or meeting new people. There was also good quality evidence of the Student Council's contribution to school life including records of minutes detailing pupils' concerns and ideas. Pupils were also able to request items for school recreational areas and taught how to manage a finite budget. Communication passports enabled staff to understand the needs and preferences of pre-verbal pupils whilst older students were able to contribute to the social and academic target setting and reviewing process

Pupil voice and the agency this allows pupils pervades practice at Sutherland House School. The broad range of strategies and approaches and the innovative practice evident in this area ensures

that pupils are able to express themselves meaningfully and with effect. The review team agree with the school's view that this area of practice is an area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Annual Review Reports
- Curriculum Policy Statement – Language and Communication
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Medium Term Planning
- Musical Interaction Document
- Personal Tutorial Records
- Pupil Profiles
- Pupil Voice Policy
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Transition Policy

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Principal
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time

Potential Area 3

Work in the area of emotional well-being – the school is developing its support for pupils and families with high profile emotional needs. This development links with the interactive approaches used by school. (Specialist Standard 6: Care Practice – General, Core Standard 15: Family and Support Links)

There is a strong and enduring legacy of work in the area of emotional well-being within the school which provides a context for the important and innovative practice observed by the Review Team.

At the heart of the school's approach to emotional well-being there is a system for providing each pupil with a 'Personal Tutorial'. The school describes the function of these tutorials as follows...

"Personal Tutorials are therefore part of a continuum of intervention that is about helping a pupil develop self-awareness, self-identity and personal problem solving strategies. As such tutorials are part of a process that needs to be seen as an integral part of the PSHCE curriculum."

(Page 2 Personal Tutorial Policy)

...and recognises their importance in responding to a changing profile of needs amongst their pupil population as well as providing pupils with an essential basis for developing self-expression and self-advocacy skills.

Personal Tutorials are generally held on a weekly basis although flexibility in this arrangement is possible in response to need. Sessions are of 50 minutes duration and are held on a one to one basis between the pupil and their nominated tutor. Whilst the content and structure of the tutorial varies according to the needs of each individual pupil, there is a common emphasis on developing interaction and self-awareness with students engaged in activities ranging from choice-making and intensive interaction through to exploring concepts of adulthood and personal diagnoses.

The programme of Personal Tutorials is overseen by the Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for Whole School Development who works alongside Designated Supervisors on each site who, in turn, oversee the practice of individual personal tutors. Each member of staff who becomes a personal tutor receives specific training in this area and is monitored by the Assistant Head Teacher and Designated Supervisor.

Personal Tutorials are seen as one of a range of complementary approaches to emotional well-being which exemplify the priority which the school gives to this area pupil development. Person Centred Reviews form another dimension to this range of approaches. Active and effective pupil participation in Person Centred Reviews emanates from the development of skills addressed within Personal Tutorials with devices such as 'Talking Mats' enabling pupils to formulate and express their feelings, aspirations and ideas.

Equally, pupil voice which represents an important component of school life and provides opportunities for pupils to directly affect practice and activity in the school is nurtured during Personal Tutorials. Through their School Council and other outlets, pupils are able to influence decisions about a number of aspects of the school and this empowerment is seen as a critical element of pupils' emotional well-being.

Analysis of pupils' Annual Reviews in 2009-2010 indicated that 77% of pupils regarded emotional well-being as an aspect of school life they found positive. This matches the deeply embedded value the school places on emotional well-being and the high quality continuous staff development which underpins this area of practice.

In conjunction with the Psychology Service, the school is currently developing a '*Well-being Questionnaire*' with the intention of providing a baseline of pupil well-being on entry to the school as well as identifying key needs for each pupil. This exciting and innovative project may provide the field of autism with a powerful tool for demonstrating critical progress in the improvement of the quality of life of children and young people with autism.

The review team agree with the school's view that this area of practice is an area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Annual Review Reports
- CPD Plan 2010-2011
- Personal Tutorial Records
- Pupil Voice Policy
- School Development Plan 2010-2011
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Whole School Training Database

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Director of Children and Young People’s Services

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time
- Visit to the Elizabeth Newson Centre

REVIEW STANDARDS

SPECIALIST STANDARD 1 Environment

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

INDICATORS

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

There is written documentation that describes the environment at Sutherland House School such as the school’s prospectus which refers to the provision of structured learning environments that incorporate structure and visual clarity and the Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols document which sets out the types of support that can be found within environments at Sutherland House. The school has a Transition Policy which refers to moving between environments including moving between the school’s various sites in order to support practice in this area.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The review team observed that all of the environments across the whole school were of a consistently good quality and met the needs of the students and pupils attending the school. All of the environments observed were considered to be ‘low arousal’ which reduced the possibility of students and pupils being distracted by excessive sensory stimuli. Additionally the environments were consistently well organised and clutter free. Resources were well stored, labelled and accessible to pupils.

The displays in all of the areas were functional and directly related to the students’ and pupils’ needs displaying individual targets, interactive emotions boards and celebrations of good work. Displays were all clearly labelled and appropriate to the range of pupils at the

school. The pupils' work that was displayed was of a very high standard and clearly celebrated the pupils' contributions and achievements. Additionally all of the displays used a limited range of colours to reduce 'visual overload'.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

Students and pupils have access to a range of purposeful learning environments including well appointed classroom areas, kitchen areas that focus on teaching self-help skills, sensory rooms to facilitate the development of sensory integration and outdoor recreation areas for break times and exercise. ICT suites were well maintained and developed to meet to changing needs of students as they grow older whilst Art and DT areas were well equipped and laid out.

The school also utilises a range of community based environments including dance studios, gymnasiums and rooms in a local High School. This practice enables pupils to develop skills across a range of differing environments and supports the development of generalised skills as well as enabling access to the local community.

Where appropriate students and pupils are involved in planning and designing their environments as discussed earlier. This range of environments enables pupils to access a broad curriculum which addresses the wide variety of needs of the pupils at the school.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The nature of the accommodation which is spread across several sites provides students and pupils with numerous opportunities to develop their ability to transition between environments at key points in their education for example, transferring to the Carlton site from the Ravenshead site during Key Stage Two.

Additionally, the school makes good use of other environments to supplement the school environment such as the Bluecoat High School, Shokk Gym and a range of educational visits including the theatre.

The school's high quality work around behaviour support coupled with excellent work in the area of sensory processing ensures that environments across the school are supportive and enabling in all respects.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Agreed Programmes of Positive Behaviour Support
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Curriculum Development Plan 2010-2012
- Curriculum Policy Statement – Language and Communication
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Individual Pupil Risk Profile
- Pupil Profiles
- Pupil Voice Policy
- Sensory Issues Policy
- Sensory Panel Meeting Notes
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Transition Policy
- Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document
- Whole School Training Database

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Head Teacher – Lower School
- Head Teacher – Upper School

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time
- Visit to the Elizabeth Newson Centre

SPECIALIST STANDARD 2

Teaching/Learning - Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

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

INDICATORS

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

Pupils at Sutherland House School follow a broad and balanced curriculum which includes the National Curriculum and is differentiated in such a way as to be relevant to each individual. Within the Policy '*Educational Approach and the Curriculum*' the following statement sums up the ethos of the school

'At the same time as recognising the special needs and difficulties that are shared by pupils with an ASD it is essential that we keep to the forefront of our minds the individuality of each pupil. If there is one thing that we should strive to see as the hallmark of Sutherland House School it should be the flexibility to devise a highly individualised programme of learning and experience for each pupil. This needs to take account of their particular strengths, interests, needs and, where appropriate, choice.'

'Educational Approach and the Curriculum'

The curriculum for individual pupils is devised by first making an assessment of their strengths and needs in order to identify learning experiences and objectives. This forms the basis of an Individual Education Programme.

The curriculum at Sutherland House School follows two main strands. The core curriculum aims to address the specific difficulties which arise from pupils' autism and has as its centre Language and Communication, Social Interaction and Self Awareness, Flexibility of Thought, Behaviour and Sensory Needs. Objectives in these priority areas are set out in each pupil's IEP which also highlights individual targets in English, Maths and Personal, Social and Health Education.

These objectives are addressed both through specific teaching sessions and across the whole curriculum.

In addition, pupils are offered the full range of National Curriculum subject areas or Foundation learning areas at Post-16 which are delivered in a variety of age appropriate contexts. This provides a cohesive structure of experiences that ensures continuity and progression whilst allowing the flexibility necessary to address individual needs. Within the school there is a diverse range of pupil ability and good planning supports lessons that meet the needs of the most able as well as those pupils working at early P levels.

The curriculum is planned at Foundation Stage and KS1 through the Six Areas of Learning with priority given to the areas of Language and Communication and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship. In addition a curriculum framework has been drawn up for each key stage which provides a two or three year long term plan with coverage of all National Curriculum subjects and RE linked to an identified topic cycle where appropriate. Units of work have been developed for all subjects which ensures progression and continuity of activity and experience across the school offering breadth to the curriculum and age appropriate activities.

Planning for KS4 and Post 16 follows a 5 year cycle following the Foundation Learning subject areas at 14-19 as well as appropriate vocational, college and work related opportunities. Increasing emphasis is placed on gaining independence, self advocacy and the use of the community. A lesson was observed by a member of the Review Team in which students visited a local community centre to take part in a 'SHOKK Gym' session. Each student was encouraged to safely use the equipment and follow an individual exercise programme which included exercise routines such as weight lifting, running, rowing, cycling, stretching and cooling down as independently as possible.

Teachers are required to differentiate the planning, materials and resources for individuals and class groups. The Primary Curriculum incorporates a topic approach with Maths, Art, Design and Technology, PE and Music taught discretely. Literacy is taught during one to one sessions and once a week as a full literacy session. The Secondary Curriculum follows the mainstream model appropriately differentiated with subject specialists in Art, ICT and Music as well as input from a Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The content of lessons reflects both the school’s curriculum plans and the curriculum policy documents. In the majority of lessons observed all sections of lesson ‘content’ where ‘met’ and in some cases ‘met and exceeded’ In these there was a high level of subject and specialist knowledge displayed by the teacher or teaching assistant leading the lesson and there where no shortfalls in practice. Work on self awareness and awareness of others, opportunities for problem solving, skills for life and choice making where all elements of these lessons.

For example, one lesson observed by a review team member focused on students identifying and evaluating the friendship qualities they had and what important qualities they would like in a friend. Students where encouraged through clear instruction, skilful questioning and a range of strategies to articulate what they considered qualities they would expect from a friend. They also identified interests they had in common with others and from that talked about establishing friendships.

The lesson concluded with the students completing a friendship questionnaire, identifying goals and from that setting a personal target and the results were recorded on a mind map. Some excellent ideas were generated by the students and it resulted in the students recognising those they had the most in common with and talking about how friendships could be developed on that basis.

Another lesson that was well informed by the needs of students with autism, was a Design and Technology lesson, in which students explored the concept of a cam mechanism and how it produced movement. Very good use of the Interactive White Board within this lesson gave a clear visual demonstration off how the cam worked. Many opportunities were given to the students to make choices about the use of colour and materials, to problem solve, to generalise independence skills and to express personal interest in their design.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The curriculum of the school is adapted and differentiated for individual need and some pupils access a completely individualised timetable. There was evidence of many opportunities for pupils to generalise their skills across a variety of settings and to extend their learning outside the classroom. Throughout the year residential trips, drama performances at a local gym and numerous educational trips into the community linked to topics are organised. A review team member observed the inclusion of a group of secondary students into a local mainstream secondary school.

Further examples of extra curriculum experiences for pupils include Lego club, Music and Singing Workshops, Den Building and Mad Scientist. The school sites have limited open space although this has been improved by the provision of a PE hall at Falcon House. A wide variety of sporting opportunities are offered and off-site facilities are employed for weekly swimming lessons, gym sessions and, within the community, golf, orienteering and wall climbing.

Within the curriculum, an audit of physical activity showed that pupils were accessing between an hour and an hour and a half of physical activity a week and pupils were given opportunities to

'reduce and release stress, anxieties and behaviours which challenge through physical exercise'.

PE Policy

Sutherland House School uses flexibility and creativity within the curriculum to meet individual pupil needs and a Musical Interaction session observed by a member of the review team did just that. The session promoted 'joint attention', reciprocity, turn-taking and social timing in a sequence of interactional play between a pupil and a member of staff, facilitated and extended by musical accompaniment and singing. The session achieved its objectives and enhanced the early communication of a pre-verbal pupil through the expertise and knowledge of the staff involved. At the end of the session the pupil was initiating and seeking social exchanges, making a wider variety of sounds in a turn-taking sequence and clearly displaying his enjoyment of the activity.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

At Key Stage 4 and Post-16 students have opportunities to gain accreditation through national award-giving bodies, such as ASDAN, OCR (Functional Skills) and WJEC (Entry Level Design and Technology) for their achievement at school. In College, WJEC Entry Level Science Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award as well as City and Guilds and National Open College Network awards are accessed by students. This very good choice of accredited courses ensures that practical skills are developed that support transition to the next stage of education or training.

Transition planning begins in Year 9 and students have a defining role in their Person Centred Reviews and they continue to communicate their aspirations through the KS4 Interview, Progress File Work, Person Centred Plans as well as Transition Passports. Pupils' progress is tracked through National Curriculum assessments and through Durham University's data collection project. Annual reports from class and subject teachers, SaLTs and OTs also contribute to Annual Reviews and Person Centred Plans which closely monitor pupil progress against targets set in relation to their SEN Statement.

The ICT Specialist has produced software to enable the school to track pupil progress in relation to the Progression Guidance and highlight where pupils are making satisfactory, good and outstanding progress. The School Improvement Partner has also been involved in this work. The meeting of targets has been much improved through this new system and it has further enhanced the Leadership Team's ability to scrutinise and interpret data for whole school, cohort and individual target setting.

The IEP format comprises Communication, Social Interaction and Self-awareness, Flexibility of Thought and Behaviour, Sensory Processing as well as curriculum targets for English, Mathematics and PHSE. Whilst targets within the IEP are SMART and are reviewed each term, the review team did not find consistent daily or weekly recording of progress against the IEP. The school would benefit from considering the role sessional recording may play in supporting pupil progress. This would possibly include a 'criteria of success' that when met would inform target setting for those pupils who make faster progress than had been envisaged.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Annual Review Reports
- CPD Plan 2010-2011
- Curriculum Development Plan 2010-2012

- Curriculum Policy Statement – Language and Communication
- Curriculum Policy Statement – Mathematics
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Medium Term Planning
- Musical Interaction Document
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Transition Policy

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Curriculum Co-Ordinator
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time

SPECIALIST STANDARD 3

Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation & Resources

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

INDICATORS

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The school has a comprehensive and high quality suite of policies, protocols and guidelines which delineate and inform practice. Policies are imbued with a deep understanding of autism and reflect the school's position as a well-established provider for children and young people with autism.

Policies and documents such as the school's

1. *Curriculum Policy Statement – Language and Communication*
2. *Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy*
3. *Speech and Language Therapy Policy*
4. *Transition Policy*
5. *Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document*

coupled with the school's well structured and pertinent

1. *Individual Education Plans*
2. *Medium Term Planning*
3. *Pupil Profiles*

provide a secure basis for the development of coherent and sound practice throughout the school.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

In the vast majority of observed sessions practice in the school reflected the policies, protocols and guidelines of the school. In

some cases the organisation of activities and resources represented world class practice and demonstrated both a profound understanding of autism and a secure knowledge of subject content.

For example, during a music therapy session which was observed by the review team, the member of staff blended structure and fluidity with exemplary skill to enable the young person engaged in the session to make meaningful choices about the content and direction of the session whilst remaining secure within a clearly defined and appropriately paced sequence of activities. Similarly, a Communication Group hosted in the local mainstream High School was organised in such a way as to enable students to explore complex emotions in a productive and effective manner.

Other examples of high quality practice included an excellent Design and Technology lesson in which the organisation of resources ensured that pupils had strong visual models of the subject matter and were therefore able to grasp comparatively sophisticated concepts and two outstanding ICT sessions in which students were engaged and motivated throughout by the pace and delivery of the session.

Whilst these sessions represented premium quality practice the majority of other sessions demonstrated strength in this component of practice across the school. Where sessions did not match this high quality practice the review team felt that the duration and pace of learning, the balance between active and passive learning and the use of supportive materials for learning such as visual cuing systems were inconsistent. In these cases pupils were observed to be 'waiting their turn' for periods of up to fifteen minutes or were insufficiently informed of the structure of the lesson at its outset. Similarly, pupils were not fully supported with visual materials to enhance their understanding or focused on their learning objective by the staff team. These instances were few and were contained within lessons in which other elements of practice were good. However, the review team noted these inconsistencies in practice and believes that the school would benefit from exploring in greater detail the issues which underlie these factors. The review team recommend that the school audit practice across the school in order to explore how lessons are structured and organised and from this develop a school wide approach to structured learning.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

A central tenet of practice at Sutherland House School is the attention given to the well-being of all pupils. There is a shared understanding of the ways in which pupil well-being pervades all aspects of school life and clear strategies for organising learning experiences and activities which accommodate pupils' well-being.

The school organises personal tutorials for each pupil and student and the expertise of members of staff in this arena is a primary resource of the school. The attention given to pupil well-being has a doubly virtuous effect in so far as it secures pupil well-being and promotes good academic progress due to the positive attitudes pupils develop towards the school.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

Pupils and students are engaged and enthusiastic about much of their learning. The review team observed a number of excellent examples of the school demonstrating high expectations of pupils with pupils responding positively to these expectations. In one example a Design and Technology lesson for Primary aged pupils focused on 'up' and 'down' movement using 'Hickory Dickory Dock' as a focal point for learning. In a fine example of well organised differentiation, pupils were enabled to work with appropriate degrees of independence by the use of personalised symbol files for Design and Technology or the use of well phrased verbal instructions. Through this approach pupils remained engaged and motivated throughout the lesson.

In another example, the review team observed a music interaction session in which through great skill and sensitivity a member of staff gradually drew the pupil into an increasingly interactive range of activities culminating in the young person 'leading' the session and deriving great fun and great learning from the lesson.

In the few lessons where engagement and enjoyment were less evident, the review team noted the recurrence of issues around pace and duration, the balance between active and passive learning and inconsistency in the use of visual support systems.

The review team observed many examples of high quality pupil engagement, motivation and enjoyment of learning and believe that the school has the capacity to ensure that this excellent element of its practice can be secured across all aspects of school life.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- CPD Plan 2010-2011
- Curriculum Development Plan 2010-2012
- Curriculum Policy Statement – Language and Communication
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Medium Term Planning
- Musical Interaction Document
- Personal Tutorial Records
- Pupil Profiles
- Pupil Progress Records
- Pupil Voice Policy
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Transition Policy
- Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time

Areas for Development

Structured Approaches to Learning: The review team recommend that the school conduct an audit of current practice in relation to structured approaches with the specific intention of identifying current strengths and inconsistencies, articulating a school wide concept of structured learning and enabling all pupils and students to develop life-long portable strategies for learning.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 4 Teaching/Learning – Methods

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

INDICATORS

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The school has a broad range of policies, protocols and guidelines which support practice. Policies are well written, focused on salient issues and embedded within the practice of the school. Protocols and guidelines guide the practical application of the school's ethos and objectives and are accessible and clear.

Several autism specific approaches and methods are described within written documentation. Examples of this include the school prospectus which refers to the use of structured teaching methods, the school's policy on visual clarification and the use of signs and symbols and the transition policy which highlights the need for structure to support pupils and students during transitions between environments. The staff information handbook includes an article about 'Understanding Autism' written by Elizabeth Newson in order to support consistency across the school.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The review team observed examples of autism specific teaching methods used throughout the school day such as visual work systems, written lists, sensory diets and PECS. These methods were used well and clearly reflected the policies described above. The use of autism specific teaching methods contributed to the social and academic achievement of pupils for example when having access to PECS enabled the pupils to choose what to eat for lunch.

Minimal language, emphasising only key words, was used in the majority of the lessons that were observed and proved a particularly effective way to communicate with particular pupils at certain times. A member of staff was observed using visual key fobs to support positive behaviour by showing a symbol to a pre-verbal pupil to reinforce the verbal and signed instruction to sit. However, the review team noted some inconsistencies in these areas of practice. For example members of staff were observed using over-complicated verbal instructions with pupils without supporting visual systems or repeating verbal instructions a number of times without allowing sufficient processing time or presenting supportive materials. It was also noted that some staff wore key fobs consisting of symbols whilst others did not within the same learning environment. The review team suggest that the school address these inconsistencies to ensure that the high quality practice observed becomes universal across the whole school.

The review team observed numerous examples of pupils being able to express an opinion or a preference and pupils were able to make meaningful choices or negotiate effectively. For example, pupils negotiated individual rewards during a communication group or requested the amended use of software during ICT lessons.

The whole school focus on communication was evident during personal tutorials where pupils were encouraged to discuss their thoughts and feelings and also through the extensive use of pupil voice. Clear questioning enabled members of staff to draw out and extend pupils' ideas for example during one Progress File lesson which was observed.

ICT was evident as a support (AAC) for learning e.g. the use of Grid 2 software on a laptop which enabled students/pupils to ask each other questions. Staff also produced photographic evidence of the use of BIG MAC communication software and a Sahara tablet PC which had been set up to facilitate the expression of emotions.

The school adopt a consistent 'positive interaction' approach to behaviour support. Pupils are frequently praised and encouraged to complete activities within the school. Staff at the school were aware of the fragility of learning for pupils with autism and generally took proactive steps to ensure that pupils remained on task and engaged throughout the sessions observed. For example, pupils' interests were often used to support their learning rather than discouraged or seen to have been 'off topic'.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

Pupils made good use of visual support strategies for choosing during sessions such as a lunchtime observation at when pupils had access to symbols to support their choice of food.

Staff used Makaton signing to enhance the verbal language used when making requests for pupils to sit down. Lessons incorporated the use of rewards and motivators for example a SaLT communication group which began with a discussion about the 'rewards' each pupil would gain when all of their activities had been completed.

Alongside these well established autism specific strategies, the school is developing a broad range of innovative and creative strategies to enhance the lives of people with autism which have been explored earlier in this report.

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

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		*	

The majority of pupils were well motivated and engaged in completing the activities presented to them. Naturally, this was most evident in those lessons which were highly structured and where learning was supported through the employment of visual systems.

As discussed previously, the school has explored the response of students to the range of activities and methodologies present in the practice of the school and have therefore obtained a good foundation for determining those aspects of school life which pupils and students feel most positive about.

This survey information may support work the school undertakes in the audit of practice related structured approaches in identifying the nature of the structure evident in the most popular areas of practice identified by the pupils and students.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Agreed Programmes of Positive Behaviour Support
- Annual Review Reports
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Educational Approach and Curriculum Policy
- Individual Education Plans
- Musical Interaction Document
- Pupil Voice Policy
- School Prospectus
- Sensory Issues Policy
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Sutherland House – I.D.R.
- Visual Clarification and the Use of Signs and Symbols Document

Interviews & Discussions with:

- Assistant Head Teacher – Ravenshead
- Assistant Head Teacher – Whole School Development
- Speech and Language Therapy – Team Leader

Observations:

- Break Time
- Lessons
- Lunch Time
- Snack Time
- Visit to the Elizabeth Newson Centre

SUMMARY

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION SCORES				
Number of observations completed:				25
	NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET	MET	MET & EXCEEDED
Environment	0	0	23	2
Activity Content	0	1	18	6
Act. Org. & Res.	0	3	20	2
Methods	0	1	20	4
TOTALS	0	5	81	14
PERCENTAGES	0 %	5%	81%	14%

Comments:

Those elements of observations which were partially met were predominantly located amongst '*Teaching and Learning: Activity Organisation and Resources*'. The review team note that work undertaken by the school to develop the concept of 'structure' will benefit this area of practice.

Those elements of observations that were met and exceeded were found mainly in the area of '*Teaching and Learning: Activity Content*'. The review team believe that this strength reflects high levels of expertise in both subject areas and autism specific practice.

QUESTIONNAIRES

SCORES					
Number of Questionnaires sent out (information provided by the school):					96
Number of Questionnaires returned:					35
Number of sections not scored (figures only reflect sections scored):					0
	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	SATISFIED	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
Contact	0	0	3	4	28
Support	0	0	2	4	29
Advice	0	1	3	4	27
Involvement	0	0	3	5	27
TOTALS	0	1	11	17	111
PERCENTAGES	0%	1%	8%	12%	79%

Comments:

'Excellent communication'.

'Excellent support with help in and out of school'

'The school has enabled my child to move from a very restricted diet to a flexible well-balanced diet.'

' ... they listen to his views and mine and support him accordingly'

'Excellent support above and beyond what is required – fantastic'

'Staff have such a good working knowledge of PDA, that our lives are now liveable'

AREAS OF STRENGTH

(Please note these areas of strength have been drawn verbatim from the school's IDR.)

1. Behaviour Monitoring system – the system for monitoring of pupil behaviour, data collection and the interpretation and use of data contributes significantly to the effectiveness of behaviour support for pupils. (Core Standard 13: Behaviour Support – Policy and Practice.)
2. Person Centred/Pupil Voice work – this is an on-going, long term project that aims to empower pupils and promote independence. (Specialist Standard 10: Well-Being- Promoting Independence.)
3. Work in area of emotional well-being – the school is developing its support for pupils and families with high profile emotional needs. This development links with the interactive approaches used by school. (Specialist Standard 6: Care Practice – General, Core Standard 15: Family and Support Links.)

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

SS3

Structured Approaches to Learning: The review team recommend that the school conduct an audit of current practice in relation to structured approaches with the specific intention of identifying current strengths and inconsistencies, articulating a school wide concept of structured learning and enabling all pupils and students to develop life-long portable strategies for learning.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL COMMENTS

We have now had a chance to read the Accreditation report and have a couple of observations/comments.

Firstly, mention is made to the use of Music Therapy (pg 39 - on other pages the correct term is used). The approach we use is termed Musical Interaction, and uses music to facilitate communication and interaction - it is not music therapy as such.

Secondly, recommendation 3, Sensory Issues. The report outlines that the recommendation has been met. In the verbal feedback it was my understanding that this was also seen as a strength of the school/ area of good practice but this is not stated as such in the report.

Thirdly, areas for development - Structured Approaches to Learning. We agree with the recommendation but feel it should be worded in such a way as to reflect the fact that we had already begun to do this work as part of the remit of the structured approaches working party.

Page 15, reference to the use of Tacpac. This is one of a number of approaches used in the area of intensive interaction and to address sensory defensiveness. However it is not true to say that it is used throughout the school, as approaches are used as appropriate to individual pupils.

I hope this is helpful, and makes sense - if you have any queries please do get back to me.

Maria Allen
Principal

Sutherland House Children and Young People's Services
Sutherland House School
Tel: 0115 924 5057
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PANEL REPORT

ACCREDITATION PANEL REPORT

SERVICE REVIEWED: Sutherland House School

REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Presented on: 24 May 2011

REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Presented by: Martin Hanbury

Is there sufficient evidence of achievement to award Accreditation?	Yes
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PANEL DECISION: Accredited

PANEL REPORT:

The panel congratulate Sutherland House School on achieving the standards required to maintain accredited status.

The panel endorse the areas of development and the areas of strength cited in the review report and have identified the following areas to be addressed as recommendations, or recognised as areas of good practice in light of the discussions on the review report.

Recommendations:

SS3 - Structured Approaches to Learning: The review team recommend that the school conduct an audit of current practice in relation to structured approaches with the specific intention of identifying current strengths and inconsistencies, articulating a school wide concept of structured learning and enabling all pupils and students to develop life-long portable strategies for learning.

The panel are aware that a working party has been set up to address this and work is ongoing.

Good Practice:

1. Behaviour Monitoring system – the system for monitoring of pupil behaviour, data collection and the interpretation and use of data contributes significantly to the effectiveness of behaviour support for pupils. (Core Standard 13: Behaviour Support – Policy and Practice.)
2. Person Centred/Pupil Voice work – this is an on-going, long term project that aims to empower pupils and promote independence. (Specialist Standard 10: Well-Being- Promoting Independence.)

3. The panel agree that the work the school has done on addressing Sensory issues is an area of good practice.

The panel have decided to commend the following areas of work:

1. Specialist Standard 6: Care Practice – General, Core Standard 15: Family and Support Links.

Work in area of emotional well-being – the school is developing its support for pupils and families with high profile emotional needs. This development links with the interactive approaches used by school.

2. The manner in which the school has maintained an outstanding standard of practice consistently since enrolling in autism accreditation at its inception in 1994. The school has not only consistently provided high quality but also sought ways in which to develop innovative and cutting edge practice. The leadership of the school are commended on this.

Evidence to support the review team’s assessment of the standards being reviewed is obtained from practice observations and parent/carer questionnaires. Data from these provides evidence of sound autism specific practice with 5% observations being rated as partially met and 81% as met. With ‘met’ being the standard one would expect to see in an accredited service, this is evidence of sound autism specific practice. 14% of observations were rated as met and exceeded and the staff should be congratulated on this.

The standard of care evident at Sutherland House School is appreciated and acknowledged by parents with 79% stating that they are very happy with the service, 12% are happy and 8% are satisfied. This is a significant achievement and a credit to a very competent and committed staff.

The panel congratulate Sutherland House School on this outstanding achievement and look forward to watching the further development of the school over the coming years.

SIGNED

Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith
(Lead Panel Member)

TERMINOLOGY

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

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

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

Areas for Development: Term used describing areas for improvement. To be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Recommendations.

Areas of Strength: Term used describing aspects of strong practice within the service/school to be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Good Practice or Commendation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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