



The Queensmill Trust

Policy for Curriculum, Teaching and Learning.

All children and young people at The Queensmill Trust have a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASDs) and everything that we do in trust takes account of these needs. All staff are trained in ASDs and understand why pupils behave in the way that they do. Additionally, all teams take note of how each pupil responds to their autism so that we can take a personalised approach that will lead to the highest possible learning outcomes for each of our pupils. We know that each of our children feel a great deal of stress, and we recognise that in order for them to learn we need to bring them to a calm-alert state in which they are able to learn. We are led in this area of work by our Occupational Therapists (OTs) who train and support the whole staff in Sensory Integrations Approaches (SIA).

What we must additionally respond to is the following variables that we need to apply to the design, delivery and assessment of our curriculum:

1. Cognitive abilities: our pupils vary from achievements at very low P levels to those able to access 'mainstream', age-related curriculums and gain nationally accredited qualifications.
2. Functional abilities: our pupils' functioning varies largely due to their functional language, which will impact upon the way they are able to interact with the curriculum and particularly on how they will be able to demonstrate their understanding to us.
3. Background: we always take into account our pupils' culture, and therefore their need to see things in our curriculum that they recognise and enjoy, as well as being able to learn about other cultures.

4. Personality: our pupils' only commonality is their diagnosis of autism. Other than that they are different in terms of their interests, their sense of humour and their upbringing, and we need to take these things into account.

Diagnostical Statistical Manual (DSM) V

The child or young person must meet criteria in all sections.

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across contexts, (NB, this de-emphasises language skills not used socially) not accounted for by general development delays, and manifested by all three of the following:

1. social-emotional reciprocity; ranging from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation through reduced sharing of interests, emotions and affect and response to total lack of initiation of social interaction.
2. Non-verbal communicative behaviours used for social interaction; ranging from poorly integrated verbal and non-verbal communication through to abnormalities in eye-contact and body-language, or deficits in understanding and use of non-verbal communication, to total lack of facial expression or gestures.
3. Developing and maintaining relationships appropriate to developmental level (beyond those with care-givers); ranging from difficulties adjusting behaviour to suit different social contexts through to difficulties in sharing imaginative play and in making friends to an apparent absence of interest in people.

B. Restricted, repetitive patters of behaviours, interests or activities as manifested by at least two of the following:

1. Stereotyped or repetitive speech, motor movements or use of objects (such as simple motor stereotypies, echolalia, repetitive use of objects or idiosyncratic phrases).
2. Excessive adherence to routines, ritualized patterns of verbal or non-verbal behaviour or excessive resistance to change (such as motoric rituals, insistence on same route or food, repetitive questioning or extreme distress at small changes) NB rigidity of thinking may also be included here.
3. Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus (such as strong attachment to or preoccupation with unusual objects, excessively circumscribed or perseverative interests).
4. Hyper or hypo reactivity to sensory input or unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment (such as apparent indifference to pain/heat/cold, adverse response to specific sounds or textures, excessive smelling or touching of objects, fascination with lights or spinning objects).

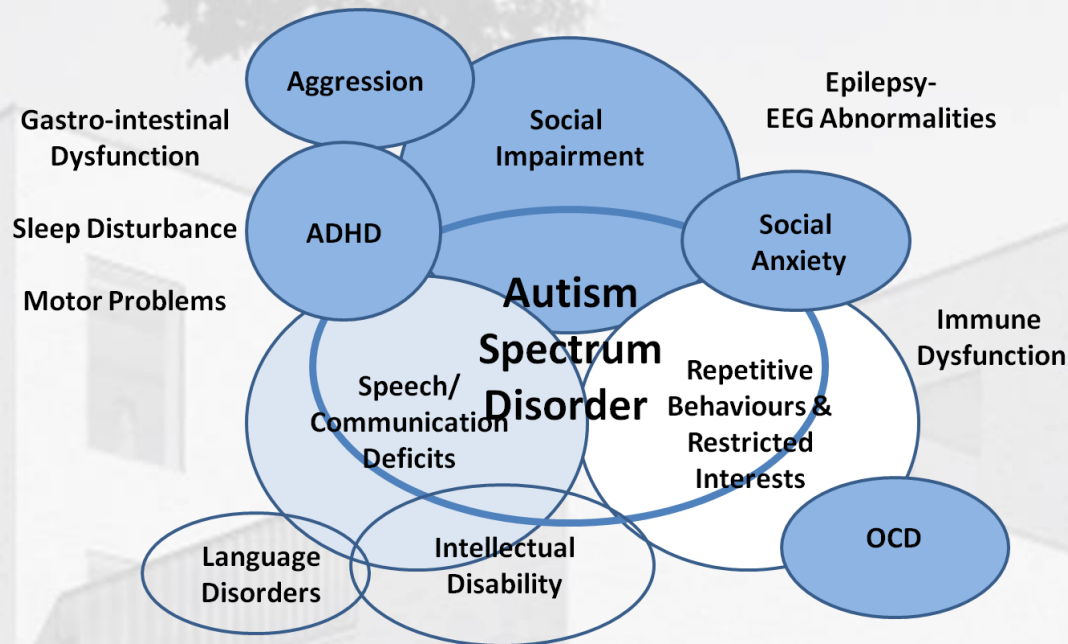
NB the symptoms in this section can be in the past.

C. Symptoms must be present in early childhood, but may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities, eg during middle trust years, later adolescence or young adulthood.

D. Symptoms together limit and impair everyday functioning.



DSM-5: Conceptual Framework



As demonstrated by this table taken from DSMV, there is now clear international recognition that a child with autism may at times demonstrate aggression, hyperactivity and social anxiety due to their social impairments.

They may have some elements of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) associated with their imperative for repetitive behaviours and restricted interests.

They are likely to have both intellectual disabilities and language disorders associated with their deficits in speech and communication skills.

Additionally it is now recognized that they may suffer from gastro-intestinal dysfunction, sleep disturbance, motor problems and epilepsy. All of these will naturally impact on a child's behaviour.



Our curriculum – designed to meet the needs of pupils with autism

Firstly, we recognise that we must overcome the impairments described in DSM V (see previous pages). We know that because our children suffer persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction that we must do the following:

- A. Working with our Speech Language Therapists (SaLTs), find ways in which they can communicate by using enticing activities so that they can see the purpose of asking for something.
- B. Build up that communication mode, whilst also encouraging and developing all verbal communication.
- C. Involve our pupils in social situations, in which they can learn the purpose of communicating with others.
- D. Encourage and respond to all communication immediately, whether verbal or non-verbal, and always support with language.
- E. Understand that our children will fail to see or fail to understand much of the subliminal communication that neurotypical children will benefit from, such as body language, facial expression and gesture, and ensure that they can nevertheless understand what we are saying to them .
- F. Help our pupils to generalise between contexts.
- G. Offer them a rich commentary whilst they play.

Having done that, we then need to address their restrictive, repetitive behaviours whether verbal or behaviour. In order to do this we:

- A. Respect their differences and always treat them with dignity and showing them how much we enjoy their company.
- B. Reduce their repetitive and perseverative behaviours where they get in the way of learning. In order to do this, we work slowly and carefully, recognising that our children will have adopted these behaviours as a way of coping with a stressful and sometimes frightening world, and that we can only reduce this coping mechanism with caution, and always teach alongside it another, more acceptable coping mechanism.
- C. We are committed to using each child's "special interest" as a motivator to entice them into the curriculum, and to bring them from their own self-led agenda more on to our agenda in a way least likely to cause them stress.
- D. Sensory Integration Activities (SIA) are at the very heart of our work. DSM says that our children are likely to be hyper or hypo reactive to sensory input (eg apparent indifference to pain/heat/cold, or unusually adverse responses to specific sounds or textures) or have unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment (eg excessive smelling or touching of objects, fascination with lights or spinning objects). We rely on our Occupational Therapists to assess the detail of each of our pupils' sensory needs, and from that write a sensory diet for them that staff can use throughout each day. Additionally, some children will need individual sessions with the OTs.



The National Curriculum

Having ensured that :

1. Staff know all they can about autism
2. Staff work in stable teams so that they know how autism affects each child in their class
3. The OT led SIAs are used as and when throughout the day so that each child can remain at an optimum calm-alert state as much as possible, and staff keep to the agreed principles of a low-arousal environment
4. Work of the SaLTs, which always takes place in class, is continued throughout each trust day so that each child is using his communication mode amongst staff who know, understand and value each attempt at communication, and always work to build that communication mode up as much as possible, including the modelling of language
5. Class staff know what motivates each child, and constantly refresh that information to ensure that they are offering the most motivating activities possible.

We can then push the child to make as much academic and social progress as they possibly can. We differentiate each subject of the NC as described in our Teaching and Learning Policy. We also:

1. Teach new skills in isolation, where there are no distractions.
2. When practiced, we then test the child's understanding of that new skill in a different context.
3. Skills are then generalised in different areas of the class, then of the trust, then of the local area, and both with the child individually with an adult, with a small group of children, with the whole class, and in bigger social settings, such as playtimes, lunchtimes, clubs and assemblies.
4. Break all new skills into small steps.
5. Use backward chaining.
6. Use motivating equipment, including ICT, to entice the child into an activity which rehearses and practices the new skill.
7. Assess all small steps of progress.
8. Celebrate all steps of progress, including external accreditation.
9. Plan for opportunities to encourage children's social awareness and aptitude.



“English is a vital way of communicating in trust, in public life and internationally. Literature in English is rich and influential, reflecting the experience of people from many countries and times. In studying English pupils develop skills in speaking listening, reading and writing. It enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. Pupils learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts.” (NC)

Whilst we recognise that, because of their autism our pupils have difficulties with speaking and listening in particular, we also recognise that to teach them to communicate as effectively as possible is one of the single most important goals we can have for them. We are led in this area of work by our Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs). Our use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) for those pupils who need it, is an integral part of our teaching of communication. We use iPads and other Information Communication Technology to increase our pupils motivation to communicate.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils show high levels of achievement in the different areas of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and exhibit very positive attitudes towards the subject. They express their ideas fluently and imaginatively in both writing and speaking. They are very keen readers and show a mature understanding of a wide range of challenging texts, both traditional and contemporary. Their writing shows a high degree of technical accuracy and they write effectively across a range of genres, frequently showing creativity in their ideas and choice of language. Pupils have a mature understanding of the differences between written and spoken language. They speak confidently and with maturity, using Standard English very effectively when required. They have learnt to be effective independent learners, able to think for themselves and to provide leadership, while also being sensitive to the needs of others.

Mathematics

“Mathematics equips pupils with a uniquely powerful set of tools to understand and change the world. These tools include logical reasoning, problem-solving skills, and the ability to think in abstract ways. Mathematics is important in everyday life, many forms of employment, science and technology, medicine, the economy, the environment and development, and in public decision making. Different cultures have contributed to the development and application of mathematics. Today, the subject transcends cultural boundaries and its importance is universally recognised. Mathematics is a creative discipline. It can stimulate moments of pleasure and wonder when a pupil solves a problem for the first time, discovers a more elegant solution to that problem or suddenly sees hidden connections.” (NC)

We believe that our pupils can progress well in mathematics to help them in all aspects of their development and future life. We know that computation can be relaxing and fulfilling for them, but we also support them to tackle the



more abstract and language-based areas of mathematics which are more complex for them. We incorporate mathematics activities into real-life situations (measuring ingredients in cooking, using money in shopping, etc.).

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils understand important concepts and are able to make connections within mathematics. They develop a broad range of skills in using and applying mathematics. They show exceptional independence and take the initiative in solving problems in a wide range of contexts, including the new or unusual. They think for themselves, and are prepared to persevere when faced with challenges, showing a confidence that they will succeed. They embrace the value of learning from mistakes and false starts. When investigating mathematically, they reason, generalise and make sense of solutions. Pupils show high levels of fluency in performing written and mental calculations and mathematical techniques. They use mathematical language and symbols accurately in their work and in discussing their ideas with others. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject.

Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship

“PSHE helps to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contribute fully to the life of their trust and communities. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. They also find out about the main political and social institutions that affect their lives and about their responsibilities, rights and duties as individuals and members of communities. They learn to understand and respect our common humanity, diversity and differences so that they can go on to form the effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.”(NC)

We recognise what a challenge this area can be for our pupils, given their difficulties understanding social relationships and using social language, but we also recognise it as a vital part of their development and as a core subject in our trust. We incorporate pupils' knowledge about their own autism and management of their own autism into this subject, making this a part of their Individual Education Plan (IEP) to demonstrate its importance in their progress and development. We aim to help pupils communicate as well as they possibly can, so they can tell us how they are feeling and what they want. We want them to have as much awareness as possible about themselves and others around them, and to build their confidence in themselves as learners. Into this subject we also incorporate Sensory Integration Approaches (SIA), led by our Occupational Therapist, as achieving a calm-alert state is a pre-requisite for learning in all of our pupils.



NC PSHE: achievement is likely to be outstanding in this subject when:

Pupils demonstrate exceptional independence; they think critically, articulate their learning and their views with great confidence and work constructively with others. They consistently evaluate, discern and challenge their own and others' views using appropriate evidence from a range of sources. Pupils show outstanding understanding of, and commitment to, their own and others' health and well-being. Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an excellent understanding of relationships, sexual development, sexual consent and respect. They have a strong understanding of the principles which underpin positive parenting. They understand extremely well how to keep themselves and others healthy and safe and are very well aware, for example, of the dangers of substance misuse. Pupils have a very strong understanding of how to recognise and deal with mental health problems such as stress or eating disorders; how to develop resilience and resist peer pressure; and where to go to seek further help and advice. All understand very well the impact of bullying on others and actively challenge all forms of bullying including racist, disablist, homophobic and transphobic language. Pupils make outstanding progress in developing understanding and skills in relation to business, enterprise, money management, the world of work and employability.

NC Citizenship: Achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

The majority of pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, formulating questions, articulating their own views and in working constructively with others in exploring citizenship issues. They understand the principles of political engagement, have learned how to take action about issues that affect them and to use the subject's processes of critical thinking, representation and participation and responsible action to demonstrate sophisticated and detailed understanding of the key concepts of citizenship. Pupils demonstrate excellent ability to reflect on, discuss and evaluate a wide range of citizenship issues at a local, national and global level. They recognise and value differing opinions and views. The personal development of the majority of pupils through participation in active citizenship is exceptional. Pupils find citizenship learning challenging, interesting and they engage enthusiastically in activities, in trust and beyond. They are confident in exploring how the actions of individuals and groups can make a difference in society.

Information and Communication Technology

“Information and communication technology (ICT) prepares pupils to participate in a rapidly changing world in which work and other activities are increasingly transformed by access to varied and developing technology. Pupils use ICT tools to find, explore, analyse, exchange and present information responsibly, creatively and with discrimination. They learn how to employ ICT to enable rapid access to ideas and experiences from a wide range of people, communities and cultures. Increased capability in the use of ICT promotes initiative and independent learning, with pupils being able to make informed judgements about when and where to use ICT to best effect, and to consider its implications for home and work both now and in the future.” (NC)



We know how much our pupils enjoy and are motivated by ICT. However, we aim to utilise this enjoyment and motivation by using ICT in a way that also encourages sociable interaction and joint use of ICT equipment with other people in the trust, thereby also increasing social and interpersonal skills. Our pupils' interest in ICT in general is used as a way to motivate them to join in with the trust curriculum through sessions on the interactive whiteboard, or with the interactive moving floors for instance. We incorporate the use of iPads and iPods into our practice, both as communication tools, access to other curricula areas and as a motivators.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils show exceptional independence and discernment in their use of ICT across all strands of the subject. They understand important concepts and are able to make connections within the subject because they have highly developed transferable knowledge, skills and understanding. They are able to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out their own investigations and working constructively with others. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within the subject. Appropriate to their age and ability, they make highly effective use of a wide range of equipment and software. They are highly enthusiastic about using ICT.

Science

“Science stimulates and excites pupils’ curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. It also satisfies this curiosity with knowledge. Because science links direct practical experience with ideas, it can engage learners at many levels. Scientific method is about developing and evaluating explanations through experimental evidence and modelling. This is a spur to critical and creative thought. Pupils learn to question and discuss science-based issues that may affect their own lives, the direction of society and the future of the world.” (NC)

As with mathematics, whilst we recognise that some areas of complex and abstract science are difficult for our pupils, we also see their aptitude and excitement for science, particularly its tactile and sensory nature, and its ability to help them to some extent to improve their understanding of the world around them. We know that they enjoy science and that they experience awe and wonder when engaged in science projects. We want to develop their ability to question, to initiate and to plan ahead, and their ability to work collaboratively with others.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and raise their own questions about science knowledge and understanding and of scientific enquiry. They show high attainment in a full range of practical work and take the initiative in, for example, planning and carrying out their own scientific investigations. They use their scientific knowledge and understanding very effectively to give clear written and verbal explanations, solve problems and report



findings formally. They work constructively with others, demonstrating common understanding, in discrete well-focused roles, but with all playing a part in successful investigations. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within the subject. Practical work is not confined to following instructions but uses a variety of contexts, including fieldwork, in which pupils are making decisions about investigations and ways of researching contemporary issues. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to science showing strong application and enthusiasm to learn more through scientific endeavour. The proportion of students choosing to study or work in science-related areas at the next phase is well above the national average.


Music

“Music is a powerful, unique form of communication that can change the way pupils think, feel and act. It brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. As an integral part of culture, past and present, it helps pupils to understand themselves and relate to others, forging important links between the home, trust and the wider world. The teaching of music develops pupils’ ability to listen and appreciate a wide variety of music and to make judgements about musical quality. It encourages active involvement in different forms of amateur music making, both individual and communal, developing a sense of group identity and togetherness. It also increases self-discipline and creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.”(NC)

We see how well our pupils respond to music, and aim to encourage this in any way we can, through music teaching, music therapy, music and dance and by singing and music making in assemblies and all areas of the curriculum. For those children who enjoy it we engage them in performances for their parents and other visitors. We want our pupils to hear music from their own culture, that they are likely to hear at home, as well as from others. We see music as an additional way in which our children can communicate their feelings non-verbally and verbally. We want them to be able to use music to relax themselves and to occupy their leisure time where possible. We can use music across all areas of the curriculum, for instance using French songs during French week. The trust keeps a cross curricular play list on a bookmarked YouTube page.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils of all abilities and interests make independent, informed and deeply musical choices by using a diverse and rapidly widening cultural repertoire to create original, imaginative and distinctive composing and performing work. Musical understanding is underpinned by high levels of aural perception and knowledge of music including high or rapidly developing levels of technical expertise, and a very good awareness and appreciation of different musical traditions, genres and styles. A significantly high proportion of pupils from all groups across the trust (including the most vulnerable) benefits musically, personally and socially from regular and active involvement, as shown by their high levels of commitment to a diverse range of



additional activities. The proportions of students following curriculum music examination courses in Key Stages 4 and 5 are likely to be above national averages.

Physical Education (PE)

“Physical education develops pupils’ physical competence and confidence, and their ability to use these to perform in a range of activities. It promotes physical skilfulness, physical development and a knowledge of the body in action. Physical education provides opportunities for pupils to be creative, competitive and to face up to different challenges as individuals and in groups and teams. It promotes positive attitudes towards active and healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn how to think in different ways to suit a wide variety of creative, competitive and challenging activities. They learn how to plan, perform and evaluate actions, ideas and performances to improve their quality and effectiveness. Through this process, pupils discover their aptitudes, abilities and preferences, and make choices about how to get involved in lifelong physical activity.” (NC)

Whilst we know that understanding their own bodies is a difficulty for our pupils we also know how important it is to improve this function, and to help them to achieve a calm-alert state in which they can learn. We know that our sensory integration programme can work alongside the PE curriculum to help to achieve this. Aerobic activities calm many of our children, and are therefore used throughout the trust day. We find that many of our pupils respond well to showing off their physical talents and performing for others as well as developing their understanding of team effort. PE is taught in QS by a full time specialist Teaching Assistant overseen by a PE Specialist Teacher who works in the trust one day per week. Whilst many of our pupils’ favourite physical activities are repetitive and rhythmical, such as trampolining or horse-riding, many also enjoy other activities, ball skills, throwing, balancing, climbing, etc., and some enjoy team games and engage in inter-trust competitions.

NC: Achievement is likely to be outstanding in this subject when: Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the initiative by, for example, asking pertinent questions, actively ensuring their own and others’ safety and in working constructively with others. Pupils acquire new subject knowledge and skills and gain an in-depth understanding of a range of different activities exceptionally well. They learn, practise and apply skills in a range of different contexts so that progress is at least good in each key stage. Pupils independently explore and experiment with techniques, tactics and compositional ideas in different types of physical activity to produce outstanding outcomes. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within the subject. Pupils demonstrate highly effective leadership skills and are highly competent in a broad range of roles. They have exceptionally well developed understanding of making healthy lifestyle choices. They demonstrate high levels of physical fitness and work hard for sustained periods of time. They develop their mental determination and physical strength, stamina, speed and flexibility to cope with the demands of different activities. Almost all pupils can swim



at least 25 metres and perform basic water skills (KS2 and above). Pupils are confident and highly competent at evaluating, adjusting and adapting performances in different contexts. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject. They eagerly participate in lessons, display very positive attitudes and engage in a wide range of physical enrichment activities. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Their keenness and commitment to succeed in PE, trust sport and/or dance and their ability to grasp opportunities to extend and improve their performances are exceptional.

Art, Craft and Design

“Art and design stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world. Pupils use colour, form, texture, pattern and different materials and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think. Through art and design activities, they learn to make informed value judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions, becoming actively involved in shaping environments. They explore ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople and designers. They learn about the diverse roles and functions of art, craft and design in contemporary life, and in different times and cultures. Understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts have the power to enrich our personal and public lives.” (NC)

We recognise and encourage our pupils' very idiosyncratic and unique forms of art work, and use their enjoyment of art to encourage their communication, their observation of the world around them, their increasing interest in others around them, and their involvement in areas that can become enjoyable leisure activities.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils use visual language skilfully and convincingly (for example, line, shape, pattern, colour, texture, form) to express emotions, interpret observations, convey insights and accentuate their individuality. Use visual and tactile communication fluently and they:

- draw confidently and adventurously from observation, memory and imagination. Explore and invent marks, develop and deconstruct ideas, communicate perceptively and powerfully through purposeful drawing in 2D, 3D or digital media
- demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of other artists, craftworkers and designers. Think and act like creative practitioners by using their knowledge and understanding to inform, inspire and interpret ideas, observations and feelings
- show independence, initiative and originality to develop their creativity. In relation to their ages, all groups of pupils select and use materials, processes and techniques skilfully and inventively to realise intentions and capitalise on the unexpected
- reflect on, analyse and critically evaluate their own work and that of other pupils and creative practitioners to instigate, pursue and develop work in art, craft and design that is uniquely meaningful to them. SMSC development is strong
- participate actively in lessons, are committed to optional activities in and out of trust. Pupils are productive, sustain intense interest, develop resilience and

understand that creative practice is often challenging, purposeful and collaborative.



Design Technology

Design and technology (D&T) provides practical learning experiences which make is accessible to all pupils. Pupils use knowledge and understanding from across the curriculum and apply and consolidate them in practical activities. Designing and making real products that can be used can give pupils a sense of achievement and improve their self-esteem. They benefit from seeing their own progress and taking greater responsibilities for their own learning as they begin to evaluate the quality of their work. Pupils' personal involvement with tasks often improves their attention span, patience, persistence and commitment. (NC)

We know that our children will learn more and more about their environment and be able to communicate to us their preferred and non-preferred activities. As part of their communication programme they will increasingly be able to discriminate between objects and make firm choices. They enjoy mechanical and construction activities and can learn many of their basic skills through playing with and exploring these. They can follow suitably modified instructions to make things, recipes for instance, and very much enjoy musical instruments. For some of our children, taking apart components of a whole and trying to put them together again, puzzles for instance, is a highly motivating and preferred activity. Learning to plan is a vital life skill for our children, whose deficits in Executive Functioning can make this a problem for them.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and working independently. They carry out their own research and investigations and are able to think for themselves. They take the initiative in, for example, asking questions and developing an exceptionally detailed knowledge of user's needs and the context for their work. They use time efficiently and make good use of computer aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM). They manage risks exceptionally well to safely manufacture products and consider suitability for users. They work constructively with others. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of modern material use and keep pace with technological advances. They apply scientific, mathematical and engineering knowledge to create products which are functional. They exploit this well when making choices and taking decisions about all aspects of their work. Pupils show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills. They respond to ambitious challenges, and produce ideas and manufacture prototypes that are varied and innovative. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject.

Modern Languages (ML)

"Through the study of a foreign language, pupils understand and appreciate different countries, cultures, people and communities – and as they do so, begin to



think of themselves as citizens of the world as well as of the United Kingdom. Pupils also learn about the basic structures of language. They explore the similarities and differences between the foreign language they are learning and English or another language, and learn how language can be manipulated and applied in different ways. Their listening, reading and memory skills improve, and their speaking and writing become more accurate.”(NC)

We know that many of our children will not be able to learn another language, but we do know that they are able to learn about other cultures and to enter into new experiences when well prepared for. We have chosen French as our foreign language and organise short curriculum periods given over to the experience of French culture and language.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when: As appropriate to their stage of development, all groups of learners are confident speakers with good intonation and pronunciation. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject and can use language creatively and spontaneously to express what they want to say, including when talking to each other informally and writing imaginatively. The four skills are developing equally well and pupils use them creatively to increase their knowledge and understanding and to deal with the unexpected. Pupils have a strong awareness of the culture of the countries where the language is spoken. Pupils show exceptional independence in their studies and can use a range of resources including ICT to develop their language skills and investigate aspects that interest them. The majority work hard, develop resilience and understand that language learning is often challenging, purposeful and collaborative. An above average proportion continues to study languages in the next stage of their education.

Humanities : History, Geography and Religious Education

History

“History fires pupils’ curiosity about the past in Britain and the wider world. Pupils consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, how these societies organised their politics, and what beliefs and cultures influenced people’s actions. As they do this, pupils develop a chronological framework for their knowledge of significant events and people. They see the diversity of human experience, and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. What they learn can influence their decisions about personal choices, attitudes and values.” (NC)

We know that many of our pupils have a limited ability to think in this way because of their autism. If they are able to, then we teach them in this way. If they are not, then we ensure that they experience stories related to history in a visual and sensory way that can help them in other learning outcomes, for instance working with others, or having and tolerating wider sensory experiences such as tasting different foods.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:



Pupils have excellent knowledge and understanding both of people, events, and contexts from a range of historical periods, and of historical concepts and processes. They are able to think critically about history and communicate ideas very confidently in styles appropriate to a range of audiences. They consistently support, evaluate and challenge their own and others' views using detailed, appropriate and accurate historical evidence derived from a range of sources. Pupils are able to think, reflect, debate, discuss and evaluate the past formulating and refining their own questions and lines of enquiry. Pupils are passionate about history and engage enthusiastically in their learning, developing a sense of curiosity about the past and their understanding of how and why people interpret the past in different ways. They are respectful of historical evidence and make robust and critical use of it to support their explanations and judgements. They readily embrace challenging activities, including opportunities to undertake high quality research across a range of history topics.

Geography

“Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human world using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps, and a range of investigative and problem-solving skills both inside and outside the classroom. As such, it prepares pupils for adult life and employment. Geography is a focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development. It is also an important link between the natural and social sciences. As pupils study geography, they encounter different societies and cultures. This helps them realise how nations rely on each other. It can inspire them to think about their own place in the world, their values, and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment.” (NC)

We use geography, and the use of plans, diagrams and maps, to help our pupils to understand more about their trust and the wider environment and their place in it. Pupils will learn to be as independent as possible within the rooms they know and are taught in, as well as the hall and playgrounds, and will increasingly learn the layout of the trust and be able to navigate this independently. Although not inherently important to them, they increasingly learn to appreciate and care for their environment.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils have a very good knowledge of where places are and what they are like. They also have a very good understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected and how human and physical environments are interrelated. Pupils have an extensive base of core geographical knowledge and vocabulary. They are able to carry out increasingly complex geographical enquiry, apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques in a wide range of environments, scales and contexts. They reach clear conclusions and are able to develop reasoned argument to explain their findings. Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the



initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out their own investigations and working constructively with others. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within the subject. Fieldwork and other geographical skills and techniques are highly developed and frequently utilised. Pupils develop a sense of passion and commitment to the subject and exhibit a real sense of curiosity in finding out about the world around them and the people who live there. They are able to express well balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment.

Religious Education

“Religion is the experience and expression of faith. Learning about religion and learning from religion are important for all pupils, as religious education (RE) helps pupils develop an understanding of themselves and others. RE promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of individuals and of groups and communities.” (NC)

We aim to offer our pupils the opportunity to experience the celebrations, stories, symbols, sights, sounds, smells and tastes associated with the main religions. We encourage them as far as possible to develop their own personal values through a developing sense of self and others and where possible be sensitive to the feelings, views and needs of others. We try to help pupils gain an appreciation of the differences between right and wrong. RE is taught largely through the celebration of the festivals of all major world religions in week long blocks as and when they occur in the calendar. There are close links between this subject and our SMSC curriculum.

NC: achievement in this subject is likely to be outstanding when:

Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out their own investigations and in working constructively with others. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within RE. They apply a wide range of higher level skills to their studies including analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection as appropriate to their age and ability. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to RE. Pupils show impressive achievement in linking their study of religion and belief to their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Their progress is outstanding or good across an appropriate breadth of religions, beliefs and investigations.

Cross curricular life-skills

Developing Skills: We see the following skills as vital and to be promoted throughout and across our curriculum and age groups:

Key functional skills:

Communication, Application of mathematical and number skills, Using information and communication technology



Skills for learning

Working with others in a team, Reflecting on learning, Problem-solving and independent enquiry

Thinking skills

Sensory awareness and perception, Early thinking skills

Personal skills and other priorities

Physical, orientation and mobility skills, Organisation and study skills, Personal and social skills, Daily living skills, Leisure and recreational skills.

Differentiation and personalisation to meet the needs of learners with ASDs

In order to make the National Curriculum (NC) accessible to our pupils, we use the following strategies:

1. Staff differentiate the NC in order to meet the individual needs of each child. Our pupils are working at levels below age-related norms. We follow the curriculum map which shows the topic to be covered. The topic is presented in a visual way. Subjects and topics are taught through individual direct teaching, small group work and whole class teaching. Skills are generalised in different contexts. Staff plan opportunities for pupils to learn to cope with change, to make choices and to problem solve.
2. Personal Learning Plans which specify targets and teaching strategies for the four areas of autism: joint attention and symbol use (social communication) and self and mutual regulation (emotional regulation) alongside core curriculum areas according to the appropriate developmental and key stage for an individual.
3. Incorporating the advice and support from our therapists: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Music Therapy.
4. Use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System).
5. Use of TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and other Communication Handicapped Children).
6. Use of Intensive Interaction.
7. Use of signing.
8. Use of SPELL (Structure, Positive Approaches, Empathy, Low Arousal, Links with Parents, NAS).

Assessment

In order to set our pupils challenging yet achievable targets we keep data on their progress in the following areas so that we can set next steps of learning:

1. Each subject of the National Curriculum, + RE and PSHE



2. PECS phases
3. PLP (Personal Learning Plan) targets – autism and curriculum related
4. Behaviour Plans
5. Occupational Therapy assessments and reports
6. Speech and Language Therapy assessments and reports
7. Music Therapy assessment and reports.

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Reviewed by *F. Adu*

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