



**Autism Accreditation
National Autistic Society**

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Dear Colleague

Re: Hedgewood School

It is with great delight that I am able to confirm that the Autism Accreditation Award Committee has awarded the above registration an Advanced Accredited Award according to our expectations for specialist schools.

Please find attached a report from the Committee which identifies how the school met each of the criteria in order to achieve the award. Congratulations on demonstrating the highest standards of good practice in supporting autistic children and young people.

Yours Sincerely

Stephen Dedridge
Autism Accreditation Quality Manager

CRITERIA	NOTES
<p>A high-quality programme of continuous Professional Development is in place. It ensures that staff have a robust specialist knowledge of autism specific best practice methods and approaches. It also provides staff with insight into the personal experiences of autistic people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgewood has a full-time training manager that drives high quality professional development across the school. In collaboration with senior leaders, development priorities are identified through a range of measures such as classroom observation, evaluation of progress, evaluations from staff on training and implementation of approaches and methods effective in teaching young people with autistic spectrum condition. • The knowledge and understanding of staff at all levels throughout the school is exceptional; they were able to speak eloquently about the pupils they support with a clear knowledge of their needs and ways to them support effectively. • The collaborative working of the discrete teams in the school is exceptional. All teams are working in conjunction, pulling on the expertise of each team member for the benefit of the pupils and their families. • There is a considered approach to the support provided for pupils, which allows their teaching to their needs, strong development of skills through scaffolding before generalising their skills and learning.
<p>Practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how each autistic person communicates and socially interacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils will have a range of communication targets on their personal curriculum plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff consistently adapt their language when talking to pupils taking into consideration their communicative abilities and amount of information that pupils are able to process. • Pupils use a range of communication tools across the school with varying levels of complexity in amount and presentation of symbols. • Communication devices are seen to travel with pupils to other areas of the school to ensure that they have their communication device wherever it was needed.
<p>Practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people to become more independent,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills of independence are integral to the curriculum at Hedgewood. Each of the curriculum pathways has been developed to ensure that pupils have the skills necessary to achieve independence. • Case studies show staff understanding the need to rapidly remove prompt dependence. enabling pupils to carry out activities independently. • All classes were seen to have whole class timetables. These were further adapted into individual timetables and now and next boards for pupils. • During observations, staff were seen to provide in task schedules to enable pupils to understand the process when completing activities. This was seen to be initially modelled by staff and then with prompts fading.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a considered approach to the support which promotes, strong development of skills through scaffolding before generalising their skills and learning. • The introduction of the EfL programme is regarded as a success within Hedgewood in providing a clear framework for the teaching of functional development skills. <i>The school should continue to evaluate the long-term impact of the programme on pupil social-emotional development, communication skills and behaviour.</i>
<p>Practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their sensory regulation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils have a sensory passport which outlines both activities that the pupil enjoys as well as the challenges that they face within the school environment. • Classroom layouts and content match the abilities of pupils across the school, pathway classrooms are distinctly showing the tolerance levels of pupils in each of the curriculum pathways. • Case studies show the sensory supports which have been put in place for pupils and that a range of strategies are used to support pupils' sensory needs. • Pupils were all seen to participate in sensory experiences they enjoyed. • Pupils were seen to tolerate sensory experiences in a safe and secure context. • There were a range of sensory supports made available for pupils. It was observed during the assessment that pupils

	<p>were able to make a choice about whether they needed/wanted to use them.</p>
<p>Practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their emotional well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgewood has the emotional well-being needs of pupils at the core of everything they do. There is a clear understanding of the abilities of pupils and when it is appropriate to enable positive risk-taking with pupils consistently appropriately praised and rewarded for achievements. • All pupils presented as feeling safe and calm throughout the school. Where pupils were seen to have increased anxiety, staff were quick to support this and took time to de-escalate pupils before continuing with activities. • The innovation of the new curriculum pathways and the incorporation of the Essential for Living Pathway and Foundation for life Pathway, focuses on the essential skills to enable autistic young people to lead fulfilling and meaningful quality of life. • Zones of Regulation is used throughout the school and pupils were seen to be supported in understanding their emotions. • The introduction of Hedgewood Prevent team and Hedgewood ABC has had a significant impact on practice within the school, staff were seen to be empowered to manage situations consistently across the school. <i>As this is a new intervention, the school should continue to monitor and support staff to ensure that the intervention remains an effective tool for supporting behaviour.</i>

<p>The provision can demonstrate how it empowers autistic people to inform decisions about how they are supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing pupils with a functional and meaningful communication system is key at Hedgewood. • Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have a voice which is used not only at school but also in the home environment.
<p>Feedback from families and/or autistic people shows that an overwhelming majority are happy with the support their relative receives and staff understanding of their relative's autism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 families completed the questionnaire of which over 78 % of respondents rated the support their child receives as consistently good.
<p>Validation from other bodies or professionals confirms the quality of practice within the provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Overall good – Behaviour and safety of pupils outstanding Full report 2012 Short inspection 2017
<p>The provision shares its specialist expertise in order to impact on how well autistic people are supported within its community and to activity contribute to knowledge and understanding of autism.</p>	<p>The report and information provided by the school offers examples of a number of ways in which this criterion is addressed. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgewood provides what is described as high-quality training and bespoke Outreach interventions professionals working with young autistic people and delivers a range of tiered courses within the Autism Education Trust(AET) Hub for Hillingdon • Hedgewood are also part of a local collaboration of QUEST schools, working together to support leadership, innovation and outstanding practice. • Hedgewood is working with Warwick University, exploring the correlation between development of key skills that reduces later challenging behaviours, and improves well-being, day to day safety, independence and quality of life for autistic people with the most limited repertoire of skills and levels of engagement.



There are many considerable areas of strength within the provision and examples of outstanding and/or innovative practice. Outcomes achieved by autistic people are outstanding and directly impact on their quality of life.

- A number of strengths are highlighted in the report and no significant improvements in practice were identified from observation of practice.
- The school has developed a curriculum model which seeks to directly impact on quality of life measures.
- The evidence of positive outcomes achieved by pupils is clear and the school is clearly operating at an Advanced Level.