

20th December 2019

Dear Abi,

I am delighted to inform you that the Autism Accreditation Award Committee has agreed that Northern Counties School should be given an Advanced award according to our expectations for specialist day schools.

The committee found compelling evidence that autistic young people access high quality personalised programmes of educational and therapeutic support. A model of integrated working has been embedded in practice. Lessons are planned carefully with deployment of staff, suitable resources and the appropriate degree of group and independent working. Information is presented to autistic students in a meaningful way, not only to give instruction but also to enable choice making and requesting. Pupils are supported to establish positive and meaningful relationships with their peers.

Key to the success of the school is a strong investment in training and support for staff which results in a high level of consistency and quality in how individuals are supported.

The Ofsted inspectorate confirm the school as a good educational provider and the assessment team found that the communication and relationships between parents/carers and staff is excellent. Over 90% of those who completed our confidential on-line survey rated the support their child received as always good.

The school shares its expertise in the field of autism within the North-East. As well as the links it has established with a local in-patient assessment unit and the support offered to local schools, Northern Counties has provided training and support to a range of bodies including Newcastle Football Ground, Northumbria Police, Newcastle Theatre Royal and the Metro Shopping Centre.

The assessment report identifies some areas for the school to work on, but these are mainly about building on existing good practice and do not diminish or bring into question the school's current achievements and strengths. Overall though the assessment team consider the school to have a transformative effect in terms of empowering pupils to become more confident, socially engaged and better skilled at self-regulating their emotions. The positive impact the school has on the quality of life of students both during their time at the school but also as they progress into adult life is considerable.

Your feedback on the process is of great value to us, and if you have not done so already, and are able, please complete our brief feedback survey on the following link:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AccreditationEvaluation19-20/>

Congratulations again on this achievement, the committee look forward to your continued success.

Yours Sincerely

Stephen Dedridge

Stephen Dedridge

Head of Autism Accreditation (South)