The Grove

Autism Handbook

Contents   **Section**

SECTION 1.

INTRODUCTION.

Welcome to The Grove. We cater for students between the ages of 5-19 who have a primary diagnosis of autism. Many of our students have additional needs which often include a cognitive impairment, speech and language difficulties, sensory difficulties and difficulties associated with social communication. Some students have other additional diagnoses identified on their EHCP such as, for example, ADHD.

Our vision to *"Inspire Excellence, Champion Potential and Empower Learning"* is simple and founded on a desire to make a difference. We aim to enable every child to flourish by encouraging and building on their unique strengths and interests, and we work with students to develop and deploy strategies to overcome and cope with their difficulties. We recognise that every child is different, and every individual child is always our starting point.

In addition to academic achievement, the focus is on developing every child's social, emotional and personal development. This is supported by ensuring every child strengthens their independence and living skills which are key to building their confidence and self-esteem.

Students at our school have access to a team of skilled teachers, visiting therapists, and professionals who work together to ensure each child has a learning programme tailored to their specific needs. Families are offered the support and advice they need to feel confident and informed about their child's needs and future prospects.

We are committed to working closely with our mainstream colleagues to share good practice across our provision and the mainstream school. Central to this partnership is our commitment to working alongside our parents and carers to support the progress and well-being of our students.

With warm wishes
Lucia Santi
Headteacher

SECTION 2

AUTISM - AN OVERVIEW
What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects social communication and interaction. People on the autism spectrum may find it difficult to understand how the world around them operates and how to relate and interact with others. In particular they may have trouble learning, understanding and interpreting the unwritten rules of social interaction and relationships that most people take for granted.

The dyad of impairments

In 2013 the new diagnostic criteria known as the DSM-5 for autism was introduced. This replaced the traditional reference to the triad of impairments and instead introduced a Dyad.

Key changes highlighted within the DSM-5 are:

- Social Communication deficits are now placed together as they are seen as intrinsically linked.
- Sensory difficulties have been recognized as fixated interests and repetitive behaviours.
- Previous separate diagnoses of Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and PDD-NOS have been replaced by a single diagnosis of Autism Spectrum.
- For the first time the specific diagnostic needs of girls and women are recognized.

Social communication

People with autism can experience difficulties in communication. This can often be difficulties in communicating with others and also engaging in reciprocal communication. People with autism cannot always accurately interpret the actions and intentions of others, making social interaction very difficult. For example, a person with autism may:

- Use overly formal and stilted language
- Be unable to initiate or sustain two-way communication appearing aloof and uninterested
- Be unable to understand social rules, (e.g. standing too close to others, inappropriate touching, inappropriate greetings or choice of conversation or make abrupt or insensitive comments
- Find it difficult to understand sarcasm, irony or metaphors
- Interpret instructions literally (e.g. "go and wash your hands in the toilet")
- Have difficulty reading other people's facial expressions and avoid or overuse eye contact
- Have little or no verbal language and may use signing or gesture appropriately or inappropriately
- Find it difficult to understand turn-taking and group work
- Not understand the concept of relationships and friendship in the same way as other people.

Social imagination and repetitive interests, activities and behaviours

People with autism may have highly developed imaginations, but have difficulty with flexibility of thought. They tend to be rigid thinkers and struggle to empathise with another's point of view or think hypothetically.

They may experience difficulties with:

- Adapting to changes of routine
- Dealing with changes of topic or following multiple concurrent subjects.
- Being able to multi-task or to shift attention readily between subjects and tasks.

- Develop rule-bound behaviour and inflexible routines, which can inhibit social development.

Where a **special interest** is compatible with the student's subject choice, it can be a positive aid to learning but special interests can also be a barrier to learning when compulsory subjects of study fall outside that narrow frame of interest.

They may experience difficulties with:

- Adapting to changes of routine

- Dealing with changes of topic or following multiple concurrent subjects.

- Being able to multi-task or to shift attention readily between subjects and tasks.

Sensory sensitivities (sensory integration difficulties)

In many students with autism the processing of sensory experiences may be disordered or delayed. The slightest change or difficulty with processing such information can influence how we manage daily living skills, academic progress and social interactions.

Many people on the autistic spectrum often have difficulty processing everyday sensory Information.

We provide opportunities and programmes to meet the variety of sensory integration needs or difficulties that some of our students present with. Common sensory integration difficulties can be under-sensitivity, over-sensitivity or processing with interference ("white noise"). These can be to one or a combination of senses such as sight, hearing, touch, balance, smell, taste, and reaction to pain. Any of the senses may be over- or under-sensitive, or both, at different times. These sensory differences can affect behaviour; can cause stress, anxiety, and possibly physical pain and have a profound effect on a person's life. The staff work closely with the Occupational Therapist to address all the individual needs of the students and ensure that each individual has a programme designed to meet their specific needs. This is an integral part of the students' learning and daily timetable. Facilities in school support much of the vestibular and proprioceptive difficulties that some of our children have.

Type of Senses	**Hypo-sensitive.** Low sensitivity, often sensory seekers	**Hyper-sensitive.** High sensitivity. Often high sensory seekers
Vision - Sight	Objects appear quite dark, or lose some of their features; central vision may be blurred but peripheral vision quite sharp or vice versa. Poor depth perception resulting in clumsiness.	Distorted vision - objects and bright lights can appear to jump around. Easier and more pleasurable to focus on a detail rather than the whole object.

Audition - Hearing	May not acknowledge particular sounds. Might enjoy crowded, noisy places or bang doors and objects.	Noise can be magnified and sounds become distorted and muddled. Inability to cut out background noise, leading to difficulties concentrating.
Olfaction - Smell	Some people have no sense of smell and fail to notice extreme odours (this can include their own body odour).	Smells can be intense and overpowering. This can cause toileting problems. Avoids people with distinctive perfumes, shampoos, etc.
Gustation - Taste	May like very spicy foods. Eats or mouths non-edible items such as stones, dirt, soil, grass, metal, faeces (known as pica	Finds some flavours and foods too strong and overpowering. May lead to a restricted diet. Certain textures cause discomfort - may only eat smooth foods.
Somatosensation - Touch	Has a high pain threshold. May be unable to feel food in the mouth. May self-harm. Enjoys heavy objects (e.g. weighted blankets) on top of them. Chews on everything, including clothing and inedible objects.	Touch can be painful and uncomfortable - people may not like to be touched and this can affect their relationships with others. Dislikes having anything on hands or feet. Difficulties brushing and washing hair because the head is sensitive. May find many food textures uncomfortable. Only tolerates certain types of clothing or textures.
Vestibular - Balance	A need to rock, swing or spin to get some sensory input.	Difficulties with activities like sport, where we need to control movements. Difficulties stopping quickly or during an activity.
Proprioception - Body awareness	Stands too close to others, because they cannot measure their proximity to other people and judge personal space. Finds it hard to navigate rooms and avoid obstructions. May bump into people.	Difficulties with fine motor skills, e.g. manipulating small objects like buttons or shoe laces. Moves the whole body to look at something.

SECTION 3.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM
Central coherence

People with autism can often notice and recall small details that others may miss, but may have difficulty putting these small details together to view the "bigger picture". Central coherence is the ability to bring lots of small details together to form the 'whole picture'. It could also be described as the ability to 'read between the lines' of a situation. People with autism often struggle with central coherence and teachers should be mindful that there are many situations where students with autism may need support to understand the wider aspects of a situation.

Executive functioning

People with autism often have the ability to fully focus on a matter of special interest to them, whilst having difficulty in processing a series of thoughts and actions. Executive functioning is the ability to organise and plan actions, routines, thoughts and behaviour in a logical and rational way. People with autism may experience significant difficulties with executive functioning and therefore find it difficult to decide which actions to carry out, and in what order, to complete tasks. At The Grove, we aim to support our students with this through considering carefully how we give instructions and through the use of visual structure and schedules. We also help students to evaluate actions and experiences so they are able to draw information from their past experiences to make decisions and choices about new experiences. This can be through a wide range of strategies such as social stories, comic strips, mind maps, reflection sheets, social skills groups and so on.

Theory of mind (or Social thinking)

People with autism are often said to have limited 'theory of mind'. This is the ability to recognise other people's thoughts, feelings and agendas and understand that these differ from their own. They may be less able to empathise with others and can struggle to understand other people's emotions. It may also be difficult for people with autism to recognise and judge other people's intentions. This can make them vulnerable to bullying and exploitation. At The Grove, we are fully mindful of this risk, and topics such as understanding feelings and emotions and analysing the intentions of others (e.g. stranger danger) are an integral part of the school's PSHE and life skills curriculum.

Double empathy

More recent studies in this area have begun to focus on the concept of 'double empathy'. Whilst this continues to recognise the difficulties people with autism may have in empathising with non-autistic people, it also places the onus on the non-autistic person to consider the thoughts and actions of the person with autism and try to empathise with them.

This ability to not make blanket assumptions about a situation but to 'tune into' each autistic person as an individual can be termed the ability to develop an **'autism lens'**. The table 'Autism lens': understanding the actions of pupils on the autism spectrum' (AET) (See Appendix 1) outlines a number of scenarios and suggests how these may be viewed from the

aspect of a person with autism.

SECTION 4.

BEHAVIOURS ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM
Self-stimulatory behaviour
Many people with autism show self-stimulatory behaviour such as flapping, twiddling, or rocking. This can absorb them completely and impact on their readiness for learning.

Self-stimulatory behaviour can be a response to anxiety, environmental stresses; it can also be quite pleasurable.
Often a sensory programme incorporated into the day can help to reduce self-stimulatory behaviours.
Strategies that may help students to manage their self -stimulatory behaviour may include:
- Rocking or spinning (which can be part of movement, exercise or music activities)
- Vestibular activities such as bouncing
- Intensive Interaction programmes
- Deep Pressure massage
- Using a schedule or first/then or now/next system whereby a student is encouraged to engage in a classroom activity because they understand when their time for their preferred activity is
- Will have time to carry out their preferred activity.
- Rewards charts
- Break cards
- Emotional Key Rings that help the student identify how they are feeling
- Communication wall / board to help the student express themselves and decrease stress

Challenging behaviours
Challenging behaviours can be passive or active. We recognise challenging behaviours as serving a purpose for the students and also communicating a need. Challenging behaviours may also be related to environmental stress or anxiety. More than often students are responding or seeking to communicate what they are thinking or feeling through their behaviour.
Challenging behaviours may for into the following categories:
- Aggression
- Inappropriate noises
- Misuse of property
- Socially inappropriate behaviour
- Self-injury and self-stimulation
- Distractibility
- Regurgitation
- Non-compliance
- Attention seeking

This can often manifest in behaviours that we perceive as challenging and may be the result of environmental stresses such as:
- Difficulties with expressive and receptive language and communication
- Difficulties with social communication and understanding the social expectations and "rules"
- Rigidity to set routines and fear of change
- Sensory experiences
- Difficulties with theory of mind, in particular, an inability to predict consequences of actions

These are just a few examples; please refer to the 'behaviour and physical intervention policy' for more information.

The most important strategy in supporting students is to be able to identify triggers and pre-empt behaviours to help reduce their frequency. Often this will be staff lead in the first instance but we would always be striving to enable students to self regulate their behaviours.

Strategies that may help to de-escalate potential challenging behaviours could include:
- Distraction or de-escalation such as walking, singing, breaks, or whatever has a calming effect on the individual student.
- Clear, predictable and consistent daily routines communicated at an appropriate level using Visual cues *(timetables, schedules, now and next boards, choice boards, tasks boards)*
- Identifying antecedents and consequences to behaviours and viewing behaviours with an autism lens i.e. how may the autistic person perceives this situation in order to result in such behaviour *(class rules, I am working towards charts, consequences charts, now and next boards, social stories)*
- Consultation with others to avoid events and situations that may cause stress *(pen portraits, social stories)*
- De-escalate situations wherever possible *(in school this will be following the Team Teach approach)*
- Emphasis on reinforcing social skills, social communication through direct and indirect teaching *(social skills groups, PHSCE, life skills, teaching responses within context, role play)*
- Clear communication, staff should always be mindful of how we communicate to students *(simple language, repetition, visual supports, communication wall, symbols, PECS boards)*
- Consideration of the sensory environment *(sensory box, twiddles, low arousal environment, calm rooms, movement breaks, TEACCH style classroom)*
- Acknowledgement and labeling of emotions to help students regulate *(Zones of Regulation, emotions key rings, 5 point scale, anger management)*
- Helping the student to regulate themselves (*this might be using the Zones of Regulation, SCERTS targets and transactional supports*)

After an episode of challenging behaviour, some strategies to wind down will include:
- Creating a safe, calm space for the student to recover
- Finding calming activities that will help to regulate the student
- A de-brief / reflection with the student (if this is appropriate to their level of need)
- Seeking support from colleagues
- Discussing strategies with staff and parents and use joint problem-solving strategies
- Staying positive and acknowledge your own achievements and the student's.
- Reviewing the PLP especially the positive behaviour support plan and/or their pen portrait.
- Logging the incident onto Behaviour Watch and ensuring staff members are okay

Eating difficulties

Due to sensory difficulties and restricted repetitive behaviours, some students with autism may have limited ranges of food they will consider eating and may insist on particular arrangements of food, such as:
- Separate plates for different foods
- Gravy not touching other foods
- Particular brands of food
- Particular textures / tastes

In these instances, there should be a collaborative approach of all parties (including the SALT) and a gradual approach to help to reduce students' anxieties with food. The process should not be rushed and emphasis should be on a relaxed approach to ensure there is a consistent eating routine with clear boundaries. Aspects to consider include:
- Setting – are there too many distractions / noise?
- Is queuing / waiting a problem?
- Is it the quantity of food?
- Is it the person who is serving the food?
- Does the student understand what they can and can't eat? (Religious observance / specific diet)
- Is there a lack of tolerance, sensitivity, fear of new things?
- Is there clear communication so that the student understands the routine?
- Is there enough time to eat the meal?

When the central issue is clearly identified then a process of planning strategies to overcome these problems can be agreed. Occasionally liaison with the school nurse is appropriate e.g. weight gain/loss or severely restricted diet this may prompt a referral to a dietician.

SECTION 5.

COMMUNICATION
Functional communication.

Functional communication is about learning to communicate needs in a more socially acceptable way. In other words, instead of becoming frustrated at not getting their needs met we teach children with autism how to express their needs through communicating in a socially acceptable manner. We help our students develop these skills through a variety of strategies involving; the use of words, alternative communications systems, such as the Subject, Verb Noun (SVN) symbols strips, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), symbols, signing or gestures, such as pointing. For our more able students it is often supporting them to understand the appropriateness of communication and how to adapt this depending on context.

These strategies are also supported by our school wide approach to SCERTS, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Team Teach

Visual cues and supports, in whatever form [relevant to the student's need] and the use of gestures help students with autism make sense of the world around them. This is because they tend to be strong visual learners, even if their language and cognitive functioning is of a high level. There are many different approaches to teaching communication but we must ensure that the most relevant aspects are taught consistently so that the student gains meaning.

In consultation with the speech and language therapist (SaLT), class teachers write a pen portrait for each student in their class which includes a communication profile briefly outlining their preferred method of communication and how best to communicate with them. Staff should be mindful of not overloading students with language. The use of Makaton signing is promoted to increase students' access to learning, as is the use of keywords with clear minimal language reinforced with visual supports. These approaches will help the student to understand or take meaning from what is being said to them and allow them to process the information at their level. Please refer to the 'Communication Policy' for further information.

SECTION 6.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is person-centred and offers pathways for students to learn from personalised and comprehensive programmes that address their academic learning whilst also supporting those difficulties that arise from their autistic spectrum diagnosis.

At KS3 and KS4, the day starts with form time where a range of activities throughout the week takes place. All classes spend time at the beginning and end of the day reviewing and reflecting on their daily timetables.

At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, students follow a life skills program which lends itself to a cross-curricular approach. Independent life skills are taught through various channels such as shopping trips, cooking, travel training, social skills amongst others. The focus is always on developing core skills in order that students can operate confidently and successfully in school, work and life. The independent life skills programme also promotes organisational skills, responsibility, self-esteem and independence.

The PHSE curriculum has been tailored to the learning needs of our students and delivered as both a separate lesson and as part of the curriculum. The RSE curriculum also supports students to learn about valuable life skills as they move towards adulthood; the school wide careers programme supports students to understand the world of work.

Our SEARCH ethos and values are embedded through the curriculum and learning is celebrated at the end of each half term.

Primary

The aim of the primary curriculum is to develop early skills, with particular focus on communication, play and problem solving. The curriculum is delivered within 3 year cycles that are repeated to ensure depth of learning. The curriculum is person centred and planned around each of the child's needs. Life skills is fully integrated and focuses on developing functional skills for life, supported by the OT. The curriculum follows a number of pathways depending on the ability of the child and is delivered through a class based model. In addition, pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum that has been designed to specifically meet their needs and build on the skills for the next stage of their learning and development.

KS3 Westside

The aim of the KS3 curriculum is to build on the experiences from the primary phase and to support our students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. At KS3, students are based in classes and have one teacher who delivers the full curriculum. Students study a rich, developmentally appropriate curriculum at KS3 which encompasses a broad range of subjects including: Literacy, Numeracy, Humanities, Science, PSHE, The Arts, Technology, Music and PE through a topic based approach. The curriculum is delivered on a three-year rolling programme based on a thematic scheme.

KS3 Eastside

The aim of the KS3 curriculum is to build on the experiences from the primary phase and to support our students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. At KS3, students are based in forms but have access to subjects taught by specialist teachers. The curriculum is modelled on the National Curriculum and aims to provide broad and balanced learning for our pupils. Life skills, PHSC, RSe and PE are integrated into the offer and taught on a weekly basis. Some pupils access social skills clubs.

KS4 Westside

Students in KS4 have access to accredited courses designed to support and generalise previous learning at KS3. Key components provide opportunities for students to become literate and numerate for life and to practise skills within real-life contexts. The content of these courses is in line with our principles of developing skills for independent living, development of literacy and numeracy in everyday life as well as access to work experience and further education, employment and training.

Students combine their academic learning with opportunities for work experience. We try to build the correct learning programmes for students matched to their interests, skills, ability and aspirations. Students are able to take Pre entry or Entry Level courses which include English, Maths, PSHE, Art and Design, and the BTEC Home Cooking course. For those able to, a GCSE pathway may be offered.

Students can also achieve a range of AQA Award units which we offer; these are often tailored around the student, for example, they may complete a module on horticulture or travel training.

At KS4 PHSE, RSE and PE continue to be offered and underpin the main curriculum content.

KS4 Eastside

Students in KS4 have access to the National Curriculum and follow either entry level or GCSE pathways. Subject specific lessons are offered to pupils.

PHSE, RSE and PE continue to be offered and underpin the main curriculum content. Life skills and social skills are integrated and continue to be offered as part of the weekly learning.

Post 16

The post 16 curriculum focuses mainly on developing the skills towards adulthood which are broadly delivered within the four areas of;
- Employment
- Independent Living
- Friends, relationships & community
- Health and wellbeing

There is still an emphasis on developing the core skills so that students are literate and numerate for life. The curriculum is delivered through work based in the community and also draws on facilities within the school community and beyond. Students also attend a local college. There is a heavy emphasis on careers and the world of work.

As throughout school, students in post 16 continue to work on valuable skills for life such as cooking and travel training; they also continue to access PE, RSe and PHSE as part of this learning process.

Independence and life skills

The development of independence and life skills is encouraged at all times and underpins much of the work we do to help students prepare for a successful transition to adult life.

Opportunities for the development of independence skills include:
- Carrying out occasional or regular tasks/jobs at school (e.g. collecting the register)
- Independent/guided choices of clubs
- Travel training
- Social skills groups
- Community learning which is embedded within the weekly timetable
- Inclusive opportunities and learning within our Trust school Heartlands High School.

- Lunchtime and breaktime
- Residential school journey.
- A wide range of educational visits including sporting events and competitions, theatre trips and visits to a range of locations to widen the experience for our students of life outside of school.
- Off-site or internal work experience (for year 11's)
- Preparation for transfer to post-16 provision (for year 11's)
- Students' voice at student council and Haringey SEN school's council
- Higher-functioning students' advocacy for the less able
- Participation in after-school clubs
- Enterprise activities

We have our own Life skills passport framework that provides a framework for teaching each student life skills. This is not linear and may be developed alongside the student's individual learning style and progression. This passport is a useful profiling tool to ascertain next steps for the students progress.

Play and leisure skills

Play and leisure skills are skills that a person has to help them engage in activities they enjoy and that occupy them. These may be solitary or be part of collaborative enjoyment.
Students with autism may not naturally engage in leisure activities and often need help to choose a preferred activity; they tend to favour solitary activities.
The play and leisure curriculum allows for the development of these skills such as learning to use games, play collaborative games and use all types of leisure equipment. Lunchtime clubs support this learning. Staff run daily lunchtime clubs. (See our Play and Leisure Curriculum)

Problem solving and thinking

Thinking and problem solving can be a challenge for our students because when teaching memory skills we often get enticed by the need to provide routine, order, certainty and structure for which our learners are usually excellent at, and respond positively. However, we may well be restricting opportunities for learning, because we are not expecting our pupils to think and to problem solve. When faced with problems and difficulties, as inevitably they will be, pupils who have learned to rely on routine, order, certainty and structure will have no skills or strategies to fall back on. In these circumstances it may well be that their distress will be even greater. In preparing our learners for life beyond school and greater opportunities for independence it is important that they are able to function in a range of situations and contexts. In order to be able to do this they will need to be able to apply knowledge, skills and understanding to circumstances that may be unusual, unexpected and unpredictable. (See our Thinking and Problem Solving Curriculum)

Lunchtime

All students eat lunch in the main hall. We encourage our students to develop their functional life skills and motor skills; so, developing their eating skills and habits. Social skills are a key area of learning; during this time we aim to encourage social relationships and

foster a sense of enjoyment at sitting together with friends. For some students, focus may be on developing fine motor skills or managing the anxieties around food, in these circumstances a more tailored approach to mealtimes will be supported.

Some students will require visuals to help them make independent choices and be able to communicate these choices. The class teams are expected to provide these resources for their students as appropriate. If teams need further guidance, please contact the SALT for support.
Some students may have fine motor skills difficulties which make using cutlery a challenge. Please seek advice from the OT.
All students should have their communication aids during any lunchtime activity to enable them to have as much independence as possible.

Equal Opportunities
We take care to ensure that all students have the same opportunities for activities and experiences appropriate to their needs; this is reflected through our curriculum. Balance and breadth is always considered and we ensure that our students have equal access and support to all aspects of the curriculum and learning opportunities. Where adaptations need to be made, we ensure careful consideration is given at all times to ensure the best outcome for the individual child and that we are constantly mindful of the individual challenges for each student around their autism when designing these.

SECTION 7.

TRANSITIONS
We recognise that transitions can be a time of extreme anxiety for our students; they present a time of change and uncertainty. For this reason we ensure that transitions are supported consistently so to minimise stress and anxiety and they should be considered as part of the curriculum planning. There are many forms of transitions and we aim to minimise these across the school day. However, transitions cannot be avoided so we aim to support our students to understand and predict outcomes and experiences related to transitions.

Micro
All students are involved in a range of transitions across the typical school day. Such transitions can be considered micro transitions and include:
- Moving from one task to another
- From class-time to break-time and vice versa
- From one area to another
- From inside to outside
- From home to school/school to home
- Movement between staff

As the concept of time is often difficult for pupils on the autistic spectrum, they can benefit from explicit visual cues or prompts to help them gauge the progress of the day and as they get older to manage their time.

All students are supported within and around their classroom setting. PLPs should highlight any difficulties students may have with understanding, communication, routine and structure. Classes must ensure staff are consistent in their use of practice, symbols and visual cues to help students develop their independence and interact within their environment.

Macro

Macro transitions can be supported in many different ways. We often help our students prepare for larger transitions, such as an off-site visit, work experience, change of setting or school phase/class through the use of schedules, countdowns, social stories, comic strip conversations, repetition, reminders and so on. Some work to support families may take place if there is an up and coming transition such as a family holiday to plan for.

Starting a new school or college can be overwhelming and daunting for both the child and their family/carers. We ensure the transition process into The Grove is as smooth as possible. There is a format to the transition process which we follow; however, in each individual case, the process is modified around the needs of the student.

- **Summer Term 1**
  Parents/carers are invited to the school to meet the team and look around; they complete an information form and tour the provision. We aim to answer as many questions at this point to reassure our new families.
  Contact is made with the child's current educational setting for an initial visit; a member of the school team visits to gather relevant information.
  The Grove and the current setting work together to create a transition plan.
- **Summer term 2**
  The class teacher visits the child in their current setting.
  Parents or carers have a named contact at school who can answer any questions.
  The new student visits The Grove for 'taster' sessions (this is bespoke to each child and may be as little as one visit or weekly visits for the rest of the term).

Phased transitions may be appropriate for some individual students at the start of the school year – this will be identified within the transition plan.

An information booklet is sent home for the student to read over the summer holiday which has pictures and information about the provision.

For our older students who are moving to college, we aim to follow the same framework in reverse. We work closely with the local colleges and providers to support the students in their move. We organise visits to the child's college of choice so they become familiar with the new environment and staff. We aim to work alongside the college during the start of the autumn term to provide information and support whilst the student familiarises themselves

with their new setting.

Beyond School.

We work with students, families, parents and carers to support them in their choices for the future. We start transition preparations in Year 9 with a transition towards adulthood plan.

Some of our students will remain at The Grove and move into our Post 16 department. For some students, they may move to another college setting after year 11. For students who are moving to another setting, there will be a transition meeting in the summer of year 10 for all students. During this meeting, we talk through the The Grove Post 16 provision, local colleges and further education providers, we signpost parents and students to services outside of school that offer support.

At the start of Year 11, we plan visits for our students to our Post 16 or local colleges so they are able to participate in discussions about their next steps. Parents and carers are advised to complete the application process in the first half term of the autumn term.

This is always a worrying time for students and their families as they plan to move onto the next step of their education. We work closely with all families and students to ensure they feel supported and confident about their choices.

SECTION 8.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Structured learning

Structure provides stability, predictability and security. For many of our students these are crucial elements to ensure they are ready and able to learn. The way in which a student's day is structured and organised depends on their individual needs. This can be done through areas such as timetabling, rewards, exercise, schedules, reflection, curriculum support and intervention.

Students must have individual structured timetables that can be presented in different formats. This enables each student to identify what to expect during the day, so reducing anxiety, and to help them become more organised.

Movement and sensory breaks should happen throughout the school day. We believe that exercise is a key factor in increased attention and concentration and also contributes to an individual's health and well-being.

Students take part in circle times. This gives them an opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about the day, greet each other and prepare them for the day ahead. It provides an opportunity to play some interactive games and teach social skills.

Planned transition times are an important part of our teaching. We explicitly teach our students how to manage these times and how to prepare for change, including planned and unplanned changes.

Environment

Our students have access to a highly specialised learning environment specifically designed

to meet the needs of students whose autism impacts considerably on their communication and learning needs. We promote a low arousal environment that facilitates a total communication approach to enable our students to predict and manage their day. As a result, our students are able to predict what is happening, communicate their needs and interact with others, so developing and building on independent learning and problem-solving strategies.

Personalised approach to learning.

Students have a personal pen portrait that highlights individual strengths and areas of need, this forms part of the personal learning plan (PLP). The pen portraits provide information on teaching and learning styles, strategies and responses. They are shared between all staff so there is continuity and consistency.

Strong emphasis is placed on working with parents, carers and families. Targets and strategies are encouraged to be worked on outside of school. Parents and carers are supported to do this via home visits and training.

Every student has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). This is a one stop document which outlines;

- My Pen portrait
- My Targets
- My Individual Learning Plan
- Transition Plan towards Adulthood (From year 9)
- Behaviour and Wellbeing plan
- Physical Intervention Plan (if required)
- Risk Assessment (if required)

The targets are reviewed and set by our teachers, multidisciplinary team and professionals in collaboration with families and where possible, students. Targets reflect small steps; they are measurable, achievable, and realistic and identify a timescale (known as SMART targets). The PLP and student progress is reviewed each term and families are invited to a discussion following this. It is important that this is a shared process and targets that are being worked on in school can also be addressed in the home environment

The annual review meeting is a statutory obligation for all children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). We run the annual review meeting in the style of a person-centred plan. Focus is child-centred and takes into account the views of the child and those involved with the child with focus on recognising areas of strength, difficulty, and importance.

Teaching and learning methods.

At The Grove, we apply a variety of teaching methods to suit the different learning styles. Some of our students benefit from multi-sensory approaches to accommodate their kinaesthetic and visual learning styles. Tasks and activities are broken down into manageable chunks to help students with organisation and sequencing skills.

Specific approaches

The support we give to our students will be tailored to meet their individual needs and should be outlined on the PLP.

As the primary diagnosis for all our students is autism, there are numerous school wide approaches we expect to see within daily practice across the school that supports student learning, these include, where appropriate, the following systems:

- Attention Autism
- SVN (Use of subject, verb, noun) Symbols
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and other Communication Handicapped Children)
- Sensory Integration (SI)
- SCERTS (Social Communication, Educational Regulation, Transactional Support)
- Makaton signing
- Symbols, Visuals and Photographic Support
- Schedules, choice boards, now and then boards, reward charts, "I am working for" charts, break cards
- Minimal Language (see communication policy)
- Intensive Interaction
- Team Teach (See physical intervention policy)
- Differentiation of the National Curriculum and its assessment
- Mentoring
- Social Stories
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) methods
- Intensive Interaction
- Zones of Regulation
- Positive Behaviour Support

Emphasis is always on ensuring an understanding of needs and identifying strategies for appropriate methods of teaching and learning within the classroom and beyond.

Structure provides stability, predictability and security. For many of our students, these are crucial elements to ensure they are ready and able to learn. Timetables should be structured and organised depending on student individual needs and achieved through; timetabling, rewards, exercise, schedules, reflection, teaching support and intervention, and consistent approaches outlined in their personalised learning plans.

"Movement and learning breaks" must be available throughout the school day as we recognise our learners learn best when they have access to this. We promote exercise as a key feature in enhancing attention and concentration, and its benefits in contributing to health and well-being.

Learning environment

Due to the complex learning barriers our students experience due to their autism, we recognise the learning environment needs to be consistent throughout so students are able to navigate and predict their surroundings, be as independent as possible and feel confident and safe. To ensure these happen, we expect the environment to reflect our approach and ethos and for every member of staff to ensure they take responsibility for adapting and maintaining it to suit the needs of the students.

Classroom expectations
- Schedules for each student visibly displayed or where they can access it quickly.
- Now and Next boards to help students break down tasks.
- Task schedules for students who may need further differentiation.
- Communication wall with visuals that reflect the use of colourful semantics.
- Communication systems are actively being used in a two-way approach and with consistency
- A quiet area with sensory activities available.
- SVN Board
- Choice boards.
- Job boards.
- Merit charts.
- Key Symbols: Look, Listen, Hands Up, No Talking.
- TEACCH style arrangement for classroom layout adapted to each class but including areas for individual and group work.
- NO cluttered desks or work areas.
- Area around the IWW is completely clear to limit distraction.
- All areas clearly designated and labelled using Communication in Print (where required) to facilitate independence.
- Access to sensory box, timers, whiteboards and student's individual sorry materials such as "I am working for charts."
- Visual timetables (*in appropriate format)*
- Zones of Regulation are clear and differentiated
- Clutter Free *(Store cupboards and coat cupboards to be fully utilised)*
- Minimal distraction on walls
- Quiet and calming
- Minimal Language used by staff
- Communication aids in use throughout the day to support expressive and receptive communication
- Tidy kitchen areas with resources put away in cupboards

Shared areas
- NO cluttered table areas or surfaces.
- NO resources left out after a session (tidy away should be part of the lesson).
- Symbols and writing clearly marking areas and equipment using communication in print.

- Displays should be tidy and not "busy". Photos, pictures, work should be double mounted as should any titles or key information.
- Classroom doors to have names of the class and names and pictures of students and staff.
- Classrooms to have an overview of class on front entrance
- Communication boards in place at lunch and breaktimes
- Conversation memes and prompts for lunchtimes

Staff information
- Staff should carry emotions keyrings or ZoR keyrings at all times so that students have access to this information at all times.
- Staff should have access at all times to any communication aids or supports that a student requires to aid their receptive language.
- Students should have access at all times to their bespoke communication system so they have access to communicate at all times.

Attention Autism

Attention Autism is an intervention model designed by Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, which we adopt as part of our specialised teaching and learning. It aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually-based and highly motivating activities. The aims of Attention Autism are to foster student engagement and develop their capacity to share and extend their attention.

The Attention Autism programme progresses through a series of stages, building on each skill level.
Stage 1 Aims: To Focus Joint Attention.
Focus attention on the adult-led agenda for 4–5 minutes
Engage attention and enthusiasm
Relax and enjoy this time to anticipate shared good time
Stage 2 Aims: The Attention Builder
Sustain focus throughout an activity led by an adult, from the start to the end in a group, for 5–8 minutes
Develop communication through non-verbal means and body language
Develop understanding in contexts.
Build expressive opportunities in social contexts.
Stage 3 Aims: Shift Attention.
Shift attention to your own participation and then back to the group
Engage focused attention for at least 10 minutes
Stage 4 Aims: Shifting & Re-engaging Attention.
Attend and sustain focus, experience a transition in focus and then re-sustain focus again, for 20 minutes.

TEACCH

Professor Eric Schopler and many of his colleagues at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill developed structured teaching via the TEACCH method. The TEACCH method provides the child with structure and organisation which supports the difficulties many of our learners have with receptive and expressive language, sequential memory, and coping with changes in their environment. This approach is based on five basic principles which we adopt primarily to assist understanding the environment. The techniques are not faded out over time; they are consistently used across a variety of environments and settings.

SCERTS

The SCERTS Model is a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with autism.

People with autism spectrum disorder generally have difficulties in the areas of communication.

The acronym "SCERTS" refers to the focus on:

- "SC" - Social Communication – the development of spontaneous, functional communication, emotional expression and secure and trusting relationships with children and adults.
- "ER" - Emotional Regulation – the development of the ability to maintain a well-regulated emotional state to cope with everyday stress, and to be most available for learning and interacting.
- "TS" – Transactional Support – the development and implementation of supports to help partners respond to the person's needs and interests, modify the environment, and provide tools to enhance learning.

The SCERTS model uses a multi-faceted approach to improving social communication and recommends that a variety of settings be used. These include one-to-one interaction, small groups, and larger groups.

Language comprehension, (an overarching term used to describe a student's ability to derive meaning from written and oral language), is part of social communication and the SCERTS model aims at moving communication from gestures to pictures and from pictures to words.

Physical structure.

Physical boundaries are clearly defined supporting students to predict and access the environment. We make the environment predictable through clearly demarcated areas and structure, this supports students to be more independent and develop a sense of calm and predictability. Classes can be arranged differently depending on the needs of the students, all classes have independent work stations where a student can work in a calm and predictable place if they require. At all opportunities, students are encouraged to experience a range of learning skills such as working independently and as part of a group.

Scheduling.
Our students have access to schedules and planners that help them predict what is happening in the present time and what will be happening in the future. These can be unique to a student and maybe through symbols, pictures, words or any method unique to them.

Work systems
A work system supports a student through enabling them to understand what is expected during an activity, how much is supposed to be accomplished, and what happens after the activity is completed. This enables the student to work independently and feel a sense of accomplishment.

Routine.
Students have very predictable routines which are guided by the schedules, planners and work systems. These are implemented and can be used and generalised across the students' day and within multiple environments. Many of our students can become anxious if their routines are changed for any reason or something new is introduced to their routine. We actively teach "surprise" within routines to help students develop their flexibility.

Visual structure.
Visual structure refers to visually-based cues regarding organisation, clarification, and instructions to assist the child in understanding what is expected. These involve clearly labelled classrooms, visual supports and access to communication walls. Additional supports are implemented for individual students depending on their level of needs.

Communication walls
This allows every student to have access to visual cues and language within each classroom and the environment. We adopt the colourful semantics guide to developing symbols so they are consistent throughout. We expect students to engage with people when using the communication wall so we are actively encouraging social communication and social engagement.
- **Verb –** *Yellow border*
- **Person –** *Orange border*
- **Location –** *Blue border*
- **Noun –** *Green border*

Emotion key rings and 5 point scale

Students often find it difficult to identify and express their emotions. We use the 5-point scale to help them identify their emotions and also access to emotion key rings. Staff should have these on them at all times to ensure students are able to express themselves.

The 5 point scale chart is used in each class to help students recognise their emotions at different points across the school day.

Zones of Regulation

Students often find it difficult to recognise their own regulation. The ZoR provides a visual guide to enable the students to know which zone they are in and identify what they need to do to regulate.

- Blue Zone - Under Regulated *(E.g Tired, bored, unwell)*
- Green - Regulated *(E.g Happy, ready to learn, calm)*
- Yellow Zone - Feeling Dysregulated (*E.g Excited, cross, unwell, frustrated, anxious)*
- Red Zone - Very Dysregulated *(E.g very angry, scared, highly aroused, over excited)*

The Subject Verb Noun (SVN) approach

The use of SVN symbol strips are for students to communicate, much like the PECS system. The difference in this approach is that the child is taught to engage with people in order to meet their needs. Based on extensive research, many people with autism, during early development interact or show interest in inanimate objects, which, as we know, give no feedback or provide no social communication. Therefore, it is not uncommon for youngsters with complex autism to learn from these interactions rather than early social interactions with the caregiver. By introducing the "subject" or the person within the communication request, we are aiming to teach the person that communication and interaction with other people is not "scary" or "unpredictable" but can be a positive experience and help the person to firstly have their needs met and secondly make the experience pleasurable.

When using the SVN boards and symbol strips, we use the same colours as identified within the colourful semantics to keep consistency in learning.

Once the student has mastered the SVN approach, the communication system can be used extensively to access teaching and learning for example, reading and commenting on a text and answering questions.

The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

PECS is a functional communication system that develops important communication and social skills.

It is appropriate for people of all ages with a wide range of learning difficulties. PECS can be used anywhere and at any time when someone communicates.

Phase I – How to Communicate: Students learn to exchange single pictures for items or activities they really want.

Phase II – Distance and Persistence: Still using single pictures, students learn to generalise this new skill by using it in different places, with different people and across distances. They are also taught to be more persistent communicators.

Phase III – Picture Discrimination: Students learn to select from two or more pictures to ask for their favourite things. These are placed in a communication book – a ring binder with Velcro® strips allowing pictures to be stored and easily removed for communication.

Phase IV – Sentence Structure: Students learn to construct simple sentences on a detachable sentence strip using an 'I want' picture followed by a picture of the item being requested.

Phase V – Answering Questions: Students learn to use PECS to answer the question, 'What do you want'

Phase VI – Commenting: Students are taught to comment in response to questions like 'What do you see?', 'What do you hear?', 'What is it?', etc. They learn to make up sentences starting with 'I see', 'I hear', 'I feel', 'It is a', etc.

Attributes and Language Expansion: Students learn to expand their sentences by adding adjectives, verbs, prepositions, etc.

Social stories.

Carol Gray created social stories in 1991 to help teach social skills to people on the autistic spectrum. They are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information to the reader on what to expect in a given situation, enabling the person to have a greater understanding of what to expect or how to adapt their response.

Social stories have a huge range of applications, which include:
- Developing personal skills
- Helping to understand how others might behave or respond in a particular situation and so how they might be expected to behave in response
- Supporting changes to routines and unexpected or distressing events
- Providing positive feedback to a person about an areas of strength or achievement in order to develop self-esteem
- Supporting the understanding of how to manage emotions or behaviours

Planning and assessment

Every student has a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) which contains a detailed profile and information around that student. This will include:
- My Pen portrait
- My Targets
- My Individual Learning Plan
- Transition Plan towards Adulthood (From year 9)
- Behaviour and Wellbeing plan
- Physical Intervention Plan (if required)
- Risk Assessment (if required)
- Additional therapy information (if required)

The PLP is a working document and should be reviewed weekly by the class team. Targets remain focused on developing academic and personal progress for our students. Targets are personalized and aimed at supporting each individual student to progress within those areas that present the most challenges to them as a result of their autism.

SECTION 9.

INCLUSION

The Grove is able to draw on the rich resources and opportunities of its mainstream partner schools and we aim to provide as many inclusive experiences that are suitable for each of our learners. This may be a bespoke opportunity such as accessing lessons in the mainstream school, representation on the Haringey school council or it can be working alongside peers from the mainstream school during activities and events. Class teachers are responsible for organising inclusive learning with their mainstream colleagues. This can be organised via internal email.

Inclusion also extends to outreach to the mainstream school and the many students on the spectrum that require support. We provide training to the staff across the Trust in order to ensure staff are well equipped to cater for all of our autistic population. We also provide outreach support to other schools working directly with students and offering training to staff.

We have our own school council with a representative from each class. Each class is expected to discuss topics and gather views for the half termly meetings. Students have a strong voice and have been instrumental in designing their clubs within the provision. In addition, students are part of the wider Haringey SEN Schools council which meets regularly to discuss borough-wide issues for young people with SEN.

SECTION 10.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

We believe that to provide high quality education, care and provision for our students with Autism we must provide high quality staffing and resources. We believe strongly that to maintain this quality of provision we must ensure that there is continuous professional development for all.

All staff new to the school have some initial autism awareness training as part of the school's induction package. Staff complete the an in-house school based training which has been adapted from the National Autistic Society (NAS) online training modules. Following this all staff are offered training of various types throughout the school year according to recommendation/requests arising from their appraisals. We use the AET competency framework as a self audit for all members of staff and this helps to identify areas they wish to develop. In addition, regular training is delivered for the whole staff on a training cycle linked to the school improvement plan.

Staff are invited to request additional professional development through further study such as masters degrees.

Teaching staff are required to take part in our Teaching Shapes programme which is based on the internations lesson study programme. This forms part of the professional development for teaching and learning.

We always aim to ensure that:
- Teachers are recruited with specific knowledge and understanding of teaching students with autism
- Our staff receive outside training in all the appropriate areas of education, care and provision for students with autism.
- Staff give regular feedback to each other and share their professional development and experiences with each other. This enables good practice to be shared throughout the resource base and extend through the school.
- Staff receive twilight training each term in areas and aspects specific to Autism.
- Staff share good practice and have experience of working within the Primary and secondary classes to ensure consistency.
- All our permanent members of staff are trained in the TEAM TEACH approach to positive behaviour. We currently have a qualified trainer in each of the classes.
- Multidisciplinary professionals have opportunities to share practice, advice and information with staff teams at regular class team meetings.

SECTION 11.

THERAPY SUPPORT
Multidisciplinary support available for students to support work in school consist of:
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Emotional well-being

The deputy Head line manages the MDT and meetings are held regularly to ensure consistency across each discipline.

The roles of the SALT and OT are offered at a tiered level of support:
- **Universal Service:** This is the foundation of understanding, knowledge and skills in communication and sensory support across our provision. The role of the therapist at this level is to support, advise, assess and provide basic training.
- **Targeted Service:** This level of support is focused on individuals and may require training or specific planning to meet an individual's needs so reducing the barriers to learning.
- **Specialist Support:** This level of support is focused on direct and indirect input from a therapist when needed, such as in-depth assessments or interventions.

The therapists assess students on entry. This assessment is carried out over a few weeks across a range of activities. For most, this is done by observations, direct interaction and discussions with school staff, parents and carers. Following this, targets and programmes are derived that are outlined within the student's PLP and monitored by class teams with support from the therapist.

Our therapists are also available to attend individual meetings and reviews, liaise with professionals, write policies, reports and programmes, and provide training, support and mentoring for staff.

Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)

The Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) works to promote the speech, language and communication development of our students, to ensure each achieves their full communicative potential. The ability to use language and communicate with others differs from individual to individual, and SALT works in partnership with the staff team to ensure that everyone here has an effective communication system. It is essential that students with speech, language and communication difficulties are not left to struggle. Helping students communicate more effectively, in turn, helps them to progress, not only at school, but also to participate in the wider world. A student's communication profile will be highlighted within their pen portrait which makes up part of their PLP. Targets to develop speech, language and communication will also form part of the PLP and will be set and monitored jointly by the class team and therapists.

The following aspects of communication are considered when developing a programme:
- Body language
- Facial expressions
- Eye contact
- Gestures and pointing
- Signing (Makaton)
- Vocalisations
- Use of objects, photographs and symbols
- Use of High-Tech Voice Output Communication Aids, (VOCAs) and other AAC devices
- Speech
- Writing
- Social communication skills

We adopt a 'Total Communication Approach'. This means that all methods of communication are recognised and valued equally as forms of interaction. Communication underpins all areas of the curriculum and allows students to access learning and develop social relationships. We use a range of communication methods and approaches to develop
communication which include:
- Attention Autism
- Intensive Interaction
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

- SVN
- Specific measurable intervention in Live English (smiLE)
- VERVE
- SCERTS
- Makaton

Please refer to the communication policy for more information.

We do not follow one approach since the needs of the students vary. We believe it is everybody's responsibility to have an understanding of the different methods of communication and use these in daily practice. We promote the view that to be an effective communicator we must be effective listeners and observers. It is therefore essential that communication approaches are consistent to ensure maximum communicative function is achieved. This means that whatever form of communication is the most effective for an individual student they must always have access to it.

Occupational Therapy (OT)
Occupational Therapy programmes consist of a combination of approaches depending on the specific needs of individuals. Programmes are delivered by staff on a 1:1 basis, in small groups or in larger groups and address difficulties such as motor coordination, sensory difficulties, self-regulation skills, executive functioning, fine motor skills, visual motor skills and functional daily living skills. The life skills curriculum supports the development of motor skills planning and the development of sequencing skills and functional skills. Targets will form part of the student's PLP and the OT will liaise to ensure planning is suitable for the target skill development.

Each student who has sensory processing difficulty has a sensory profile which is highlighted within their pen portrait. Those with more profound needs may have a more detailed sensory profile written by the class teacher in consultation with the OT and OT assistant. Intervention may include:
- A sensory profile which will outline any specific activities such as heavy workouts, gross motor exercises and calming activities
- A school and home (daily) sensory programme
- Advice on specific equipment or changes to the environment that supports self regulation such as; ear defenders, vibrating pillow, move-n-sit cushions, chewy tubes, sensory toys/activities

Emotional well-being
The school benefits from visiting therapists who work alongside class staff, parents and carers and individual students to support their well-being. These include music therapy and art therapy. In addition, the provision works with the Haringey Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to support the wellbeing of individuals who have been referred or need additional support.
The Educational Psychology Service is employed by the Local Authority to offer a service

working with staff, students and families.

Multi-Agency Working (MAG)
The therapy team works with other professionals as a multi-disciplinary team around families as required. These teams may include professionals from:
- Education: Teaching Staff, named contact professionals
- Health: Therapists, CAMHS, School Nurse, Educational Psychologist (EP)
- Social care: Social Worker, Family Support Worker, Advocacy

We seek to ensure there are regular MAG teams held on site to ensure a strong partnership working. Staff members who wish to raise any concerns regarding a student within a MAG context should contact our pastoral manager.

SECTION 12.

POSITIVE WELLBEING, BEHAVIOUR AND REWARDS

We believe that positive wellbeing and behaviour is important for effective learning to take place. Emphasis is placed on teaching students how to regulate their behavioural responses.

Challenging behaviours can be passive or active, they must be recognised by staff as serving a purpose for the student and communicating a need.

Challenging behaviours may present as;
- aggression
- inappropriate noises
- misuse of property
- socially inappropriate behaviour
- self injury and self stimulation
- distractibility
- regurgitation
- non-compliance
- attention seeking

We believe that it is important to meet the challenges posed by passive manifestations of these behaviours as it is to deal with the active ones.

We apply a variety of strategies and always teach in the context of positive behaviour support and wellbeing.

- Using the SCERTS framework to ensure appropriate targets are set
- Using the PBS approach

- We ensure that the environment is safe, structured and supports our students' individual needs through the principles of TEACCH.
- The learning environment is motivating and functional for the students.
- Teaching and learning is in line with student's positive behaviour and wellbeing plans
- The curriculum is matched to student needs and relevant to their emotional and developmental stage.
- There is a consistent approach to total communication.
- Use of reward merit systems to keep children motivated and help them take responsibility and ownership for their learning. (ensure rewards are individual, meaningful and are matched to student's interests).
- Praise for positive behaviours, attitudes and efforts.
- Students' achievements are recognised through praise, merits, house team merits and the weekly achievement assembly where they are presented with certificates and awards.
- Clear boundaries for students so they know what is expected of them.
- Use of "I am working for charts"
- Use of reflections and de-briefs for students to help them identify how to modify and understand their behaviours.
- Partnership with parents and carers to enable a consistent approach.
- Implementing the school wide approach to Zones of Regulation
- Implementation and a commitment to the principles that drive the Team Teach approach

Our approach and philosophy is reflected in our behaviour and wellbeing policy which is consistently applied by all staff and visiting professionals who work in school.

The provision has a pastoral manager who offers support to staff teams in their work to support student behaviour and well-being. This is facilitated through detailed behaviour support and wellbeing plans. The role extends to the care and welfare of the students through her role as safeguarding lead.

Supporting wellbeing and behaviour

The school follows the TEAM TEACH approach to positive behaviour support and its guidelines and practice.

We adopt the Positive Behaviour Support approach and we have 6 trained PBS staff and one supervisor in school to help deliver this across each department. Positive behaviour is encouraged at all times and rewards form an integral part of the student's schedule.

Students have a wellbeing support plan within their PLP, the pastoral team, SLT and the Team Teach trainer support the development of these. The plans outline the positive behaviour strategies and preventative measures to be used to support the student.

If a positive handling plan (PHP) or a personal risk assessment (RA) is required the pastoral team and Team Teach trainers will support with the monitoring of this. Class teachers are responsible, in the first instance for writing the wellbeing plan, the PHP and the RA. (Risk

assessments (RA) will accompany a plan automatically where there is a risk of injury, danger or damage to an individual or others).

The Team Teach trainers are on hand to ensure that the approach is carefully followed at all times. Training throughout the school occurs regularly to ensure staff practice, knowledge and skills are kept up to date.

The school uses Sleuth software to log and monitor any incidents within the school. This is analysed on a regular basis by the lead for behaviour and fed back to SLT and class teachers to enable adjustments and modifications to support for students where necessary.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they record incidents. In the case of a physical intervention, the incident should be logged within 24 hours.

The school uses The Zones of Regulation

SECTION 13.

HEALTH AND SAFETY
The safety and welfare of students and staff takes the highest priority. All staff are expected to have read the Health and Safety policy and to adhere to it. It is the duty of all staff to ensure they implement and follow the guidelines set out in the policy. We have a number of risk assessments, which are bespoke, to our practice and the needs of our student population. We have three Child Protection leads, Nadine Huseyin, Lucia Santi and Helen Georgiades who are responsible for the welfare and safeguarding of the students.

The school uses *MyConcern* to record ALL concerns.
All staff are held accountable and are expected to log any concerns they have about the welfare of a child.

The school follows safe recruitment procedures at all times to scrutinise all those working within the school with children.
We ensure that all students' personal care, welfare and development are considered at all times via our close links with multi-agency professionals and promotion of PHSE and RSE via our comprehensive curriculum and guidance.
In addition to the school procedures for child protection and safety we ensure that when handling any crisis management with our students that the child's specific needs are taken into consideration and that communication and support is handled appropriately and with sensitivity. Following any crisis our main focus is to ensure that all parties concerned are safe and any actions recorded.

SECTION 14.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS.

We have a strong focus on maintaining and developing relationships between parents and carers and the staff. We welcome parents and carers into school, as we believe that to achieve the best outcomes we must work in partnership.

We have a pastoral team in school that works closely alongside class teams and parents to support the needs of the pupils, staff and parents. Our pastoral manager is also our lead DSL and family support worker so the links with families and services is strong.

There are many opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in aspects of the school and parent groups offer opportunities for parents and carers to meet each other and share experiences. These include:
- Parent and carer training
- Pastoral manager and home liaison services
- Parent and carers social groups
- Termly PLP meetings
- Annual review meetings
- Open door policy
- Weekly newsletters
- Daily home/school communication via the class team
- Annual reports
- Termly questionnaires and parent/carer feedback
- Annual survey to help shape the parent training programme
- Training offered to parents across the borough
- Cygnet training in house in collaboration with the CAMHS service

Families are expected to keep the school informed of relevant information that may impact on the teaching and learning of their child. We encourage this information sharing as part of our strong belief that a two-way flow of communication ensures a child gets the best from their time at school. This fosters trust and transparency within the working partnership and this commitment is consolidated through the home–school agreement.

Home visits
Where necessary, staff conduct home visits. For some young people, it is important that we do this before entry to the school as part of the planned transition. Additional home visits for existing students and their families may also take place. These are commonly organised and attended by our pastoral team. From time to time, other members of staff, including our therapists, may want to visit a family at home to support the implementation of strategies and to support continuity.
In some extreme cases a Home Education Programme (HEP) may be designed and supported by the school. Our therapists offer home visits and training for parents and carers during the holiday periods.

Parent Training

Training sessions are held each half term in school for parents, carers, other professionals and friends on aspects of Autism. These workshops are run on an informal basis and provide information, practical ideas and strategies for parents, carers and such to support their child at home. The workshops also provide opportunities to become part of a network group for parents, carers and those who work closely with children with autism. A copy of the schedule is sent home to all parents and carers and is also available to others who are interested in learning more about autism.