

Autism Accreditation Assessment

The Grove School

Reference No.	458
Assessment dates	13-15 October 2020
Lead Assessor	Hannelore Bout
External Moderator	Nicolas Kennedy
Status prior to the assessment	Accredited
Advanced status applied for	yes

Section 1: Context

About the Provision

Brief description of the provision made for autistic people:

The Grove School is part of Heartlands Community Trust and used to be the Autism Provision in Heartlands High School. The Grove School became independent from Heartlands High School in September 2018, and after a period of educating pupils in temporary accommodation, the school moved into its permanent premises in September 2019. The school has grown significantly in this period from 28 secondary pupils in 2018 to 93 pupils across the year groups.

There are four primary classes, five Secondary West, for pupils with additional and complex learning support needs, three Secondary East, for the academically more able pupils, and two Post-16 classes.

According to information provided by the school, "all pupils at the Grove have a primary diagnosis of autism. The school represents the diverse nature of the local authority. All pupils have personalised learning plans and targets driven by their Education, Health and care plans.

Pupils have access to a team of skilled teachers, 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.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils will work towards appropriate qualifications across our KS4 and Post 16 provision".

Number of autistic people supported by the provision: 93

Range of autistic people supported by the provision:

The school states in the Assessment Introduction Form that they teach pupils "aged 5-19 and have a primary diagnosis of autism. Many of the pupils may have additional needs, including cognitive impairment, speech and language difficulties or difficulties associated with social communication and emotional and mental health. Our pupils

communicate through a range of ways, and it differs in every class. We use a total communication approach and use PECS, symbols and Communicate in Print as well as written and verbal instruction through the school.

A number of our pupils also have a comorbid diagnosis of ADHD and medical needs. This information is covered in the pupils Personalised Learning Plan which you will have access to.”

Outcome of last statutory assessment :

The Grove School opened in September 2018 and has not been inspected by Ofsted yet. The Grove Schools’ membership was transferred from Heartlands High School Autism Provision, which was accredited in Autumn 2018. Heartlands High School was Inspected in March 2016 by Ofsted and found Good.

The school is a member of the Challenged Partners, their review was postponed in March 2020 due to COVID 19.

They have been audited by the DfE, the School improvement team, and Haringey Education Partnership (HEP).

About the Assessment

- The assessment took place over three days, with COVID 19 adaptations.
- The schools’ adviser acted as lead- assessor with support from a moderator.
- A presentation was given on how provision is made for autistic pupils.
- Sixteen lessons were observed for fifteen minutes each by the assessment team. These included a range of classroom-based activities; playtime and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with both teaching staff, therapeutic staff, and some parents.
- Case studies and PLPs were sampled across each key stage.
- The school shared a wide range of data and information.
- Key policy documents were shared, and the Autism Handbook and The Secondary East Handbook 2020-2021, in particular, were insightful and comprehensive.
- The results of surveys carried out with autistic people, and their families were also considered.
- Eighteen paper surveys were submitted.

Professional Development and Support for Staff

Main approaches or methods employed by the provision in supporting autistic people:

The school highlights its main approaches as:

- "PECS
- Zone of Regulation
- Attention Autism
- TEACCH
- Social stories
- Symbols (communicate in print)
- SCERTS
- Sensory modulation equipment and activities."

The approaches are adapted to the bespoke needs of each pupil.

Training and professional development staff receive in these approaches and in their understanding of autism

Staff receive a comprehensive Autism Handbook and induction training consisting of 5 modules; an Introduction day, followed by sessions on Communication, Sensory Issues, Anxiety & Stress and working with families. All staff complete the NAS. Induction to autism. Staff complete an induction portfolio where completed tasks are signed-off with a line manager.

Makaton, SCERTS and TEACCH and TeamTeach training are scheduled in for staff to attend as soon as possible, rotated throughout the year to aid familiarity and refresh knowledge.

The school only uses evidence-based approaches and utilises their connections to expert reference groups PLASN-R and CRAE in their planning, practice and approach. Members of staff have completed MeDs, and there is a broad bank of essays and research often related to relevant practice within the school.

The school organises six INSETs a year, mostly identified by the Senior Leadership Team. There is also a strong culture of training needs analysis and encouraging staff to attend needs or interest-based training, outside the school.

The school has a schedule of twilight INSETs and training sessions run by SLT, OT and SALT. The therapists and leadership team uses information gathered from observations, learning walks, surveys and data to develop workshops, training sessions, modelling and incremental coaching. One of the areas the school has recently identified is to have more training and support for a new cohort of academically more able pupils with high social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

The school use the AET competency framework for appraisals, target setting and support.

Ongoing support available to staff in working with autistic individuals

The school runs two briefings a week, currently run via Zoom bubbles. The school has an annual schedule of all departmental meetings, based on six meetings per topic a year.

The school supports a strong culture of well-being for both pupils, their families and staff, using regular surveys to get a measure of the issues, adding them to the action plans.

The school uses appreciative enquiry, which according to a case study had positive outcomes for both staff confidence and pupils learning.

The head teacher is co-chair of the PLASN-R group. The school is actively involved and participates in several research projects such as SCERTS, PBS, LGBT and inclusion curriculum, a next research project is focussing on meaningful Zones of regulation for younger and pre-verbal pupils. The school pushes for all practice to be evidence-based.

The school is actively involved and leading on regional and national initiatives to promote autism research. The school has representatives at a variety of working parties. The school is a member of and delivered training to the Haringey Education partnership, other schools and services and is looking to develop its outreach capacity further.

The school takes part in Challenge Partners, peer-reviewing each other's SEN schools.

The school keeps a database of all courses attended by staff and use observations, modelling, specialist teachers have dedicated mentors, and incremental coaching to ensure theory is applied to practice effectively and consistently.

Staff interviewed during the assessment said they value the regular training and support opportunities with SLT who also lead on pastoral and PBS support. There are regular meetings with therapists to define needs and specialist support programmes. The weekly staff surveys and staff bulletins also have a section for special mentions, which makes staff reportedly feel appreciated. There is a lot of time for reflection, and they reported that the school is good at collaboration, updating the teams and making sure the teams feel safe and supported

A high-quality programme of continuous professional development is in place at the Grove School. This ensures that staff across the school have a robust specialist knowledge of autism-specific best-practice methods and approaches. Systems are in place to ensure that practice is highly personalised and maintained at a consistently high level throughout the provision. The assessment team were impressed with the high quality of teaching across the school, including specialist and new teachers and

LSA's, and the way the school presented this level of consistency this early into the academic year under challenging circumstances.

Section 2: Findings from Assessment

Personal Centred Planning

Brief description of how individual support is planned, implemented and evaluated:

The Senior Leadership Team are forward-thinking, ambitious, and meticulous planners and actively seeking to develop the school alongside staff, pupils and family members, which is evident in the design of the building, the training programmes for staff, the curriculum, data collection and resources (including specialist staff).

Transitions are differentiated based on the needs and background of the pupils. Usually, pupils will have an opportunity to visit during open days and three planned visits. All pupils on EHCPs have a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) which contains a profile and information around that pupil. "These include:

- Pupil information
- Pupil photo
- Pen portrait
- Academic flight path
- Targets – EHCP, English, maths, PHSCE, Life Skills and SCERTS/Autism Progress
- Positive behaviour support plan: these have recently been replaced by well-being plans following the ZOR colour coding)
- Risk assessment (if required)
- Additional therapy information (if required) "

(From Autism Handbook)

The Transition towards Adulthood Plan starts from Year 9.

These are reviewed and updated regularly at different meetings and discussed with parents at termly consultations.

The sample of the reviewed PLPs varied in detail of support needs and consequent support strategies and in some cases came across as generic, and could be more specific to reflect the specific practice which was clearly observed. For example, one

PLP states “needs support with eating”, where there were clear strategies in place such as using particular visuals, support around waiting, hand-over-hand cutting and exploring a wider variety of food. The school could specify the visual strategies in the PLP in line with the AAC system spreadsheet. The latter outlines detailed communication levels and progressions from PECS levels, to Colourful Semantics to Language Board Books for each child. More specific sensory support needs could be stipulated in the PLP to reflect the, in some cases, highly specialised sensory equipment and strategies seen in use and are documented in the sensory programmes.

From year 9, onwards pupils start planning for adulthood and with an even greater focus on functional and independence skills as well as preparing for employability skills and work practice placements.

Assessment data is collected on targets and progress on EHCP. Academic progress is often good to outstanding; life skills and SCERTS show pupils progression; the AAC system tracker is designed to indicate the clear progression in communication stages; self-regulation is tracked and analysed on Sleuth; Earwig Learning journals demonstrate the pupils' journey through narrative and photo evidence; Annual Reviews summarise progress during the year; and attendance indicates pupils attendance is good, also for those pupils who have been out of the education system for periods.

The schools' assessment analysis system is detailed and comprehensive informing practice and action plans. The school has grown exponentially over the last three years, and its roll has gradually increased from 23 to 93 pupils. The assessment is taking place early in the academic year, and the Grove has 2 years of data and has been in operation for one academic year. With COVID 19 disruptions, it is challenging to demonstrate recent impact and progress.

The school has been able to show a considerable range of data before lockdown. The school has carried out baseline assessments at the beginning of term, to establish the Loss of Learning over lockdown and what skills have been retained or need generalising again. The school aims to be back on track by December 2020 with the help of the recovery curriculum.

The school is using engagement and attention trackers in the cohort for academically able SEMH pupils (Secondary East) to help shape and organise the best way to engage these pupils with their learning. This department opened in September 2019 with nine pupils, and a further six pupils started this year. There is not a full set of data yet, as a result of lockdown disruptions. The school has used detailed analysis and concluded to look at reorganising the classrooms, deliver more training and support in regards to SEMH and works closely with Multiagency for those pupils who are most unsettled—embedding understanding and differentiating strategies for HF SEMH pupils further.

The curriculum is tailored around the pupils' strengths and abilities. This ranges from formal to a semi-formal model. Within this, there are classes that follow structured teaching but also pupils who follow a child-led, engagement curriculum. The curriculum is a strength of the school and its' design built around the understanding and needs of autistic learners. It is ambitious, focus on functionality and forward-looking in preparing for adulthood. Parents are invited to termly consultations to review and update goals.

The school has strong links with Haringey Education Partnership, CAMHS and learning disability teams. This multi-agency working with external partners ensures high outcomes for pupils.

Differences in Social Communication

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The Autism Handbook sets out clear expectations on how the school plans and supports speech, language and communication.

The school has appointed the equivalent of one full time in house SALT since February 2020, with 2 SALTs working part-time. The school has recently appointed special SLTA's to assist the therapy team. The team has completed a baseline assessment and action plan on how to distribute SALT resources: Universal- targeted and specialist, and has updated an AAC systems tracker on what communication system each pupil is currently using and what they are working towards. Some pupils have made some progress over lockdown moving from PECS 6 to core boards, and some pupils are supported to re-secure levels they had mastered prior lockdown.

Targets to develop communication, including SCERTS, are set and monitored in the PLP by the class team and therapists. The school participated in the SCERTS Champion research project with CRAE at UCL, which in turn informed practice.

Pupils' communication needs, preferences and targets are recorded in their PLP where interventions and preferences are summarised in "My pen profile on a page". These could be more specific, reflecting the bespoke communication supports observed and listed on the AAC systems.

The SLT and SALTs deliver a range of workshops on communication. The SALTs delivers interventions, observations and modelling based on pupils' identified needs.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

During all observations, staff could make themselves understood through the use of simplified verbal communication, signs/ Makaton, and visuals. Throughout almost all observations, staff were seen to be clear in their communication and consistent in their approach.

Staff are highly skilled communicators and were observed to differentiate their communication to match the communication preferences of each pupil. This included verbal pupils, where staff were seen to minimise their communication, keeping sentences structured and giving simple directions to support pupils in following instructions effectively.

Staff used visuals to reinforce prompts or instructions, which were observed to be consistent across all classrooms.

There is a good mixture of structured and non-structured activities available in the playground for both primary and secondary pupils. This is supported by communication boards that are available throughout the playground. Pupils understood the expectations of the lessons because of the use of instructions supported by visual supports.

Where best practice was observed, staff created opportunities to interact with peers, work in groups, take turns and to understand different points of view. Pupils appeared confident and happy to approach adults and pupils to engage in a spontaneous interaction.

We observed strong examples of intensive interaction used in the playground to engage pupils.

Attention autism was seen to be used consistently across the school in all age phases, and there is a strong ethos that being able to share attention is essential to communication and learning.

Problem Solving and Self-reliance

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The Autism Handbook provides comprehensive details on supporting transitions and the use of transactional supports. These help school staff to be consistent in their approach to supporting transitions. The Autism Handbook states that "The development of independence and life skills is encouraged at all times and underpins

much of the work we do to helping pupils prepare for a successful transition to adult life." This includes a long list of opportunities to facilitate this learning.

Within classrooms, pupils are supported by class timetables, individual timetables, lesson schedules, and highly differentiated communication tools, demonstrating a clear pathway in progression to become confident communicators.

The school uses a Thinking and problem-solving Framework to support planning and understanding and a Play and Leisure framework to develop early skills.

It was evident that pupils are encouraged to use communication and planning tools independently.

Pupils have Life skills Passports to track progress with independence, and SCERTS also tracks progress on social-emotional growth.

The school's curriculum has been developed along with the SCERTS ethos, so that it includes opportunities for pupils to build on their strengths, interests, and develop skills in independence and problem-solving. The school maintains a focus on preparing for adulthood. The pupils start a "My Transition Plan Towards Adulthood" in year 9, which is incorporated in the PLP.

As pupils progress, there is an increased focus on functional life skills through the Functional Skills curriculum for Post 16. The pupils have work skills and experience opportunities through the World of Work. The school offers a variety of community-based learning and activities to transfer and generalise skills.

Travel training is offered from an early age (KS1), as the school acknowledges that this is a complicated life-skill, which requires frequent practice. The programmes and expectations are tailored to each pupil.

Parents reported being delighted with the progress their child has made, as they are more aware of traffic rules and able to stop before crossing the road, which has made a big difference for the family.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Almost all pupils can work out what they must do now and what they are expected to do next, using their highly differentiated transactional supports, such as timetables, task-lists, now-next, written instructions, demonstration and modelling. It was evident by the pupils' confidence that this is embedded practice.

Pupils are supported to do things by themselves rather than needing to be directed by a member of staff. It was clear that pupils were comfortable to organise themselves during snack times, complete math tasks independently, and requesting snacks through PECS. Staff were giving pupils time to use PECS independently.

In almost all observations, pupils were confident sharing their thoughts and opinions, making requests and choices, such as, requesting a toilet break, or play equipment in the playground. Pupils' contributions and choices were valued and respected by the staff who gave positive feedback after all contributions, such as, using abbreviations rather than drawings to understand positional language. Teachers were supportive of pupils pointing out their mistakes, celebrating pupils ability to spot a deliberate mistake.

Functional skills lessons provide opportunities for autistic people to consolidate and develop functional Maths and English skills through Attention Autism and in real-life contexts. Pupils found the ingredients of a recipe, calculated the sum of items needed for the recipe accessing an online grocery shop, and had to calculate items to stay within a budget. This was supported by differentiated worksheets.

At lunchtime, practice could have been improved by using the pupils' bespoke communication tools, or make the existing widget tools more accessible, facilitating choice and interaction with catering staff. The symbols provided at lunch were developed by post 16 pupils but were complex, with all the words carrying Widget Symbols and the full lunch menu available on each symbol. Pupils were not using these symbols to make choices; they were given for information, and staff were mostly seen to negotiate choices on behalf of the pupils.

On one occasion, the lack of timetable made the transition between TEACCH trays and workstations confusing, resulting in needing support to navigate the steps.

Sensory Experiences

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The Autism Handbook states that "Each pupil, 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. "

The assessment team were impressed with the crisp, low arousal and well-structured environments. Inside and outside learning spaces are used effectively by staff to provide structured and engaging lessons. The Victorian school building was purposefully refurbished to become low arousal, spacious environment meeting the

wide variety of needs of the pupils. These include specialist rooms such as water play, soft play and sensory rooms. The playgrounds have been designed around the play and physical activity needs of primary and secondary children, offering a wide range of flexible and engaging activities.

The school uses SCERTS and Winnie Dunn to develop sensory programmes for each pupil.

The school has appointed its own internal full-time OT who started in February 2020 just before lockdown. The school has recently appointed a specialist TA to assist the OT, who will be starting in November. The OT offers a range of supports, Universal, Targeted and Specialist. The OT has delivered training to the staff team during the lockdown on handwriting, is scheduled for ongoing staff training and the Induction programme. The OT has so far prioritised working with more unsettled children, on an internal referral basis, identifying if the cause is emotional or sensory-based. She is working with the specific teams on using the correct length and use and of the equipment.

The OT attends weekly MDT meetings.

It was clear from observations that pupils in primary and secondary have a variety of bespoke sensory equipment to assist sensory regulation. Due to the lockdown contact time has been limited, and not all pupils and cohorts (predominantly Post 16) have not yet had OT input. The school fed back that most post 16 pupils have gradually moved on from using self-regulation equipment as they have developed more subtle sensory strategies. It would be good to see the impact on how specialist support and interventions will further inform PLP's, practice and outcomes over time.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Pupils had access to a wide variety of sensory tools and sensory or happy boxes, such as ear defenders, twiddles, head or hand massage, vests, body socks, seating, work stations etc., which support pupils to regulate and remain engaged in lessons. As pupils progress through the school, sensory equipment were available more discreetly for Post 16 pupils as the priority shifts to more functional skills.

The bespoke Zones of Regulation, are helping pupils to identify sensory regulation activities - visuals were used to identify and acknowledge sadness in a pupil who chose a hand massage, enabling him to feel better and continue with the activity. Pupils were supported to begin to tolerate a range of sensory experiences within a safe and secure environment, such as exploring different smells during bucket time, food, fidget toys, increased and highly individualised attention autism programmes, and sensory activities in the playground.

In one lesson, pupils who showed signs of restlessness after sitting and observing Attention Autism, taking and waiting for turns, were then supported with individualised sensory equipment.

Where best practice was observed, the curriculum was delivered in a sensory engaging and motivating manner. Attention Autism was seen to be used consistently across the school in all age phases.

Most lessons incorporated a high level of sensory engaging and motivating activities, capturing pupils' attention and interests to support the curriculum.

Emotional Well-being

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

The Grove school has been involved in the development of PBS across the borough. The Pastoral lead, who is PBS trained and training to be a PBS Supervisor, is leading a team of staff and two Parent PBS mentors who will work across the borough.

The school has 1 PBS Supervisor and 6 PBS practitioners in-house.
The school has an in-house art and music therapist who link in with the MDT.
The school works closely with external agencies and CAMHS.

Recent PBS training has resulted in PBS staff being able to analyse and hypothesise bespoke plans for pupils. The majority of a spike in incidents were attributed to 2 pupils their behaviour data was analysed and actions were put in place to support them. PBS practitioners completed PBS projects over the summer term. LSA's received further Sleuth training and carried out projects over lockdown giving detailed data analysis and narrative on pupils' triggers, locations and the actions which could be taken.

The school has a well-being committee for pupils and staff, and carries out regular surveys to help identify and address issues.

Pupils have a well-being support plan and risk assessment within their PLP. Individual SCERTS targets are linked to emotional regulation and Zones Of Regulation and progress is tracked half termly.

The school has planned a research project with City University (The Autism Research Group) on meaningful Zones of Regulations for pupils with limited communication.

The school is using engagement and attention trackers in Secondary East to help shape and organise the best way to engage these pupils with their learning. This cohort started in September 2019, with another class started this year. This cohort of HF SEMH pupils has struggled to settle in, and detailed Sleuth analysis is used to understand and plan to help address well-being further, through further staff training and support on SEMH, pupils have individual mentors for regular support.

The Pastoral team was increased in summer term 2020, to a team of three. The team leads on well-being and training but also links with families. Next to PBS and delivering borough-wide Cygnet training, this team also leads in-house training on RSE, LGBTQ, Homophobic language and the Pastoral Lead has recently been trained to implement the So-Safe programme.

Families speak very highly of the pastoral team and the personal support, home visits, workshops and coffee mornings they facilitate. The newly expanded team goes “above and beyond”, according to the parents, and is at the centre of the well-being of pupils, their families and staff.

The Pastoral team has recently won kite marks for Anti-bullying and the NAPCE Award for the Pastoral School of the Year.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

There is a predominantly low arousal, and calm atmosphere within the school and pupils appeared mostly happy, engaged and confident.

The proactive and preventative strategies, such as clear transactional supports, ZOR, sensory regulation supports, are in place and, mostly, effective in avoiding anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring or escalating.

Two situations were observed, where pupils were dysregulated and needed support. Staff worked efficiently, using strategies to de-escalate and protect pupils, clearing the area from pupils and furniture to prevent injury and further escalation. ZOR was used, and staff were acknowledging and helping name emotions such as sensory overload and feeling frustrated. Other pupils coped well with the situation and could reflect on how they felt about the disruption without further escalation. The staff teams dealt with the crisis’ effectively and sensitively.

All pupils are treated with dignity, status and respect and are provided with meaningful positive feedback to boost confidence and self- esteem. In some classes, pupils seemed pleased with the merits they received and were keen to update their merit trackers.

Although outdoor space is limited, the play areas are well- designed and offer a range of engaging and engaging activities for all age groups, including flexible sensory circuits, trampolines, outdoor gym facilities and a multi-sports court. Core boards are present in all play areas and were seen to be used.

Where best practice was observed pupils were able to understand and regulate their emotions using zones of regulations and identified their current feelings. In some cases acknowledging was enough in other cases, pupils choose sensory strategies, such as a break or a hand squeeze to help them feel better and ready to go back to the task.

The school has developed differentiated use of ZOR, which is embedded across the curriculum and supports independence and emotional-regulation. They were present and updated in all classes.

Pupils were taught to measure their heart rate and reflected on their feelings after doing exercise. Outdoor learning was differentiated and demonstrated a clear understanding of all pupils.

The assessment team like the way the school integrates ex mainstream pupils and those with learning disabilities within the school, particularly bearing in mind that some pupils in Secondary East don't always feel comfortable to be associated with pupils with learning disabilities.

Consultation with Autistic People

- The Grove School has its "own pupil council with a representative from each class. Each class is expected to discuss topics and gather views for the half-termly meetings. Pupils have a strong voice and have been instrumental in designing their clubs within the provision."
- Minutes of school council highlight topics as, keeping the school tidy, requesting basketball hoops in the sports areas, and response from the head teacher on what the school will do.
- Pupils from the Grove school are also attending the Haringey Special (secondary) Schools Joint Council meetings, where different schools discuss playground facilities, school dinners and raising the profile of reading.
- Pupils have been consulted and helped shape the outdoor learning areas as well as choosing names for secondary classrooms, and the schools' uniforms. Post 16 pupils researched and developed lunchtime visual supports.
- There is a pupil well-being committee, and the school has carried out well-being surveys with a focus on bullying, which fed into anti-bullying plans.
- Annual pupil surveys are carried out, analysed and actioned.
- Surveys for pupils are adapted and made accessible.

- Pupils contribute to their annual reviews by either completing a questionnaire or creating PowerPoints of "Annual Review and My EHCP plan".

Nineteen pupils views were obtained through a completed questionnaire some completed by a family member or friend who represented their views.

Fourteen pupils (73.68%) said that the support is good.

Fourteen pupils said that staff understand their needs.

Fifteen pupils (78.95%) said that the staff listen.

Two pupils left feedback and stated:

"I love the grove school because it has all my friends and teachers with me.

I like doing subjects like English, Maths, PE and ICT."

"I happy at the grove"

Consultation with families of Autistic People

- The school encourages and invites families to work collaboratively with families and carers.
- The school has a pastoral team of 3 staff. The Pastoral lead is also the lead for PBS and Cygnet and has facilitated for families and carers to become PBS champions in Haringey.
- The school has recently won the National Award for Pastoral Care in Education 2020.
- Due to COVID19, the new pupils and their families/carers have had an adjusted transition into the school. Usually, pupils would have at least three opportunities to visit the school and families would have opportunities to meet in school as part of transitions planning and assessments. This was done via zoom or phone this academic year.
- Coffee mornings are currently not taking place, and a survey has been carried out amongst parents on what training they would like to receive this year,

some parents suggested having Zoom coffee mornings in the interim, which will be trialled.

- Weekly newsletters are shared, and the school has a communication app to keep families updated.
- Feedback from families was very positive. The parents appreciate the highly personal support, home visits, weekly coffee morning, training and sharing of resources. Families describe their impressions of the school as “full of warmth”, “all staff are helpful and understanding”. One parent reported that she just got a “good vibe” when she attended the open day. Although the school was open during lockdown, the school continued to offer frequent bespoke support, resources and visits for those opting for home learning to help families stick to some routine. “the support and communication during Lockdown was excellent”.
- One of the parents had attended Cygnet training, and another went to the sexual health training, which was “very informative” and has helped to understand and prepare for the future.
- Parents were pleased with the functional skills they were taught, such as road safety, the pupil is now able to stop at the crossings, which puts the parent at ease. Parents were pleasantly surprised by the skills of their children, such as performing in a play and cooking skills.

The Autism Handbook states that “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/carers feedback”

Parents were informed about the Autism Accreditation survey via newsletters and the school website. Some family members, who had limited access to the internet, completed paper copies of the questionnaire which were scanned and emailed (18). Twenty-eight family members (30.1%) provided feedback to the assessment team by returning completed questionnaires. The full results are shown as an appendix to this report.

Twenty-six family members (92%) stated that the support their relative is given is always or mostly good.

Twenty-six family members (92%) stated that staffs understanding is mostly or always good and
Twenty-three family members (82.14%) stated that advice given by the school was good or always good.
Twenty-three family members (82.14%) stated that the way that they are kept informed was good or always good.
Six family members chose to leave a comment on the questionnaire, a selection of which are found below:

"Credit to the school and staff. It is a lovely school, lots of things in place to support children. Staff are very welcoming and always finding the best way to support my son."

Involvement with the wider community

- The Grove school is part of a Heartlands Community Trust.
- The schools' head teacher is a member of the Pan Autism London schools Network (PLASN) and co-chairs PLASN Research with Dr Laura Crane from CRAE and IOE.
- The school was involved in several research projects, one being a SCERTS project with UCL (CRAE) and the department for education and is planning research on ZOR and social partners. Through PLASN R and various staff completing Masters degrees, the service has collated a wide variety of research papers which underpin practice.
- The Grove School is a member of the Challenge Partners, peer-reviewing SEN schools.
- The head teacher sits on the Haringey autism Strategy group and works closely with the Haringey autism team.
- The pastoral lead is the lead for the PBS Parent ambassadors for the borough and sits on the PBS link network. They also provide borough-wide Cygnet training in partnership with educational psychologists.
- The school provides training to external services and is planning to expand its outreach offer.

Section 3: Summary of assessment

What the provision does particularly well

What stood out as particular strengths:

- The head teacher and Senior Leadership Team are forward-thinking, ambitious, and meticulous planners and actively seeking to develop the school alongside staff, pupils and family members.
- Strong examples of intensive interaction were observed in the playground to engage pupils.
- Attention autism was seen to be used consistently across the school in all age phases.
- Pastoral care: winning kite marks for Anti-bullying and Pastoral care: the newly expanded team goes above and beyond and is at the centre of the well-being of pupils, their families and staff.
- Outdoor learning was differentiated and demonstrated a clear understanding of all pupils.
- The comprehensive training and CPD programme ensures staff (established and new) are demonstrating fluency in specialist and bespoke practice. The Assessment team were impressed with the consistent and effective delivery of personalised support across the school.
- Feedback from families was overall very positive, and the parents appreciated personal support, home visits, and weekly coffee mornings training and sharing of resources. Although the school was open during lockdown, the school continued to offer frequent bespoke support, resources and visits. Families fed back its reputation of being a flagship school.
- The school is actively involved and leading on regional and national initiatives to promote autism research. The school has representatives at a variety of working parties. The school has supported and delivered training to the Haringey Education Partnership, other schools and services and is looking to develop its outreach capacity further.
- The assessment team were impressed with the high quality of teaching across the school, including specialist, new teachers and LSAs and the way the school presented this early into the academic year under challenging circumstances.
- Meaningful, creative ways of consultation and inclusion: the school has a culture of reaching out, listening and making changes. The school showed many different ways to engage and consult with pupils, families and staff. The feedback from these surveys are considered and actioned. Successes and appreciation are celebrated, making staff feel valued and appreciated.

What else the provision does well:

- Crisp and well-structured environments. Inside and outside learning spaces are used effectively by staff to provide structured and engaging lessons.
- Consistent use of communication and transactional supports throughout the school. Staff were seen to adapt their communication to meet the needs of the pupils in front of them, including those who were verbal, where staff were seen

to minimise their communication keeping structured sentences and simple directions to support pupils in following instructions effectively.

- There is a good mixture of structured and non-structured activities available in the playground for both primary and secondary pupils. Communication boards are available and used throughout the playground.
- The schools' assessment analysis system is detailed and comprehensive informing practice and action plans. The school has grown exponentially over the last three years, and its roll has gradually increased from 23 to 93 pupils. The assessment is taking place early in the academic year, and the Grove location has only been in operation for one academic year with COVID 19 disruption it is challenging to demonstrate impact and progress. The school has been collating baseline assessments and a recovery curriculum to get the pupils back on track. The school has been able to show a considerable range of data before lockdown, where pupils were often making outstanding progress on academic, SCERTS and Life Skills targets. Pupils' attendance improved for those pupils who had been home-schooled for some years, and Sleuth data demonstrates that pupils are making progress in self-regulation. The school is using engagement and attention trackers in the cohort for academically able pupils with high levels of anxieties (Secondary East) to help shape and organise the best way to engage these pupils with their learning. This department opened September 2019 with nine pupils, and a further six pupils started this year. There is not a full set of data yet, as a result of lockdown disruptions. The school has used detailed analysis and concluded to look at reorganising the classrooms, deliver more training and support in regards to SEMH and works closely with Multiagency for those pupils who are most unsettled—embedding understanding and differentiating strategies for HF SEMH pupils further.
- Professional training and a research-based approach underpins the ethos of the school and sets high expectations to develop and improve practice
- The school integrates ex-mainstream pupils and those with learning disabilities within the school, which is an achievement as some pupils in Secondary East don't always feel comfortable with being associated with pupils with learning disabilities.

The assessment team agree with the school:

- Multi-agency working with external partners to ensure high outcomes for pupils is working well and new and increased therapy and pastoral teams will improve this further.
- Pupil well-being is a strength in most parts of the school. This is a focus of the school, with emotional regulation and well-being at the heart of practice. The school is using an MDT and PBS approach, engagement trackers, sleuth and observations to analyse and alter strategies, structures and practice for the

SEMH pupils in secondary East. During lockdown teachers, therapists and the pastoral team had frequent contact with families to continue to ensure well-being.

- The curriculum is a strength of the school and its design built around the understanding and needs of autistic learners. The school is ambitious, focussed on functionality and forward-looking in preparing for adulthood. Parents are invited to workshops so that learning can be generalised and supported at home.

What the provision could develop further

Priorities for the provision:

Other areas to consider:

- The sample of PLPs viewed varied in detail of support needs and consequent support strategies and at times, came across as generic and could be more specific in reflecting on the observed autism-specific practice.
- The specialist therapists have been in post for a relatively short time (Feb 2020) and the SLTA's have recently been appointed. Contact time has been limited, and not all pupils and cohorts have had input (post 16). It would be good to see the impact on how specialist interventions will inform PLPs, practice and outcomes over time.
- Communication systems provided at lunch are complex, with all the words carrying Widget Symbols and the full lunch menu represented on each picture. Pupils were not to use these symbols to make choices rather they were given for information, and staff were mostly seen to make choices for the pupils. Lunchtime communication tools could be made to be more accessible, or pupils should carry their bespoke AAC systems with them, facilitating choice and interaction with catering staff.




As highlighted by the school:


- The Secondary East department for academically able pupils has been open since September 2019 and doubled in size this academic year. The school identified to embed understanding and differentiating strategies further for HF SEMH pupils to ensure consistent implementation addressing their well-being and creating positive outcomes.


APPENDIX 1: SURVEYS

Autistic Person




Feedback questionnaire on The Grove School to be completed before
09/10/2020

The support I am given is good?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		73.68%	14
2	No		5.26%	1
3	Sometimes		21.05%	4
			answered	19
			skipped	0

Staff understand me and my needs				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		73.68%	14
2	No		0.00%	0

3	Sometimes		26.32%	5
			answered	19
			skipped	0

The staff listen to me on how I want to be helped



			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		78.95%	15
2	No		5.26%	1
3	Sometimes		15.79%	3
			answered	19
			skipped	0

Comments accompanying survey returns are shared with the provision but removed from the final report.

Who just completed the questions above?

			Response Percent	Response Total
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1	The autistic person by themselves		81.25%	13
2	The autistic person with support		0.00%	0
3	A staff member who represented their views		18.75%	3
4	A family member or friend who represented their views		0.00%	0
			answered	16
			skipped	3

Family and carers Surveys:

Online

Families

Feedback questionnaire on The Grove School to be completed before 09/10/2020

The support my relative is given is...				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor		0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better		10.00%	1
3	mostly good		10.00%	1
4	always good		80.00%	8
			answered	10
			skipped	0

The understanding that staff have for my relative's autistic needs is...				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor		0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better		0.00%	0
3	mostly good		30.00%	3
4	always good		70.00%	7
			answered	10

	skipped	0
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The way I am kept informed and asked my views about how my relative is supported is...

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	20.00%	2
3	mostly good	0.00%	0
4	always good	80.00%	8
		answered	10
		skipped	0

The advice I get from the service on how to help my relative is...

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	10.00%	1
3	mostly good	50.00%	5
4	always good	40.00%	4



			answered	10
			skipped	0
Comments accompanying survey returns are shared with the provision but removed from the final report.				

Total summaries:

The support my relative is given is...			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	7.14%	2
3	mostly good	28.57%	8
4	always good	64.28%	18
		answered	28
		skipped	0

The understanding that staff have for my relative's autistic needs is...



		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	7.14%	2
3	mostly good	32.14%	9
4	always good	60.71%	17
		answered	28
		skipped	0

The way I am kept informed and asked my views about how my relative is supported is...

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	17.85%	5
3	mostly good	17.85%	5
4	always good	64.28%	18
		answered	28
		skipped	0

The advice I get from the service on how to help my relative is...

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	3.57%	1
2	ok, but could be better	14.28%	4
3	mostly good	28.57%	8
4	always good	53.57%	15
		answered	28
		skipped	0

Comments accompanying survey returns are shared with the provision but removed from the final report.

APPENDIX 2: COMMENTS FROM THE PROVISION

APPENDIX 3: ADVANCED APPLICATION FORM

AUTISM ACCREDITATION: APPLICATION FORM FOR ADVANCED STATUS

In order to achieve an Advanced Award you must show that you are an outstanding and innovative provision that goes well beyond similar provisions. Please complete this form to give examples of initiatives that make you stand out and most important of all the impact they have had for autistic people. Copy and paste where you may have more than one example. However the entire application including case-studies should not exceed a 1000 words.

Please note you are also required to include case-studies (please refer to additional guidance) as part of your application. It is also important to recognise that the application form and case-studies are only part of a bigger picture, with considerable emphasis being given within the award process to observation of practice, personal centred support plans and surveys.

Part 1: Professional Development
Initiatives or innovations that ensure that specialist approaches or techniques are fully understood, consistently implemented and regularly reviewed.
<p>Description:</p> <p>Our focus was to adapt and so create a whole school, researched based approach to SCERTS to make it accessible for a school. SCERTS is an evidence based, multi disciplinary framework, which seeks to increase pupils' active engagement, participation, well-being, independence, relationships and outcomes.</p> <p>A second focus was to understand the Intent, Implementation and Impact of using the SCERTS framework. This was to promote the understanding of the 'Why' and 'What' and build the staff's knowledge base to become more research focused where they could evaluate and question their own practice. What we wanted to achieve was an <u>active</u> understanding and approach that would have longevity and be embedded as school wide, common practice.</p>

This initiative was led and developed through University College London and in collaboration with a lead SCERTS practitioner based in Kent.

Due to the success of this initiative, further collaboration with UCL is still planned and we are implementing a joint initiative to work with Learning Support Assistants and Families over the coming year to collect data and research material to publish.

Implementing the initiative involved setting research projects for all learning support staff over the year. Teachers were all set similar projects but these were linked to their appraisal targets. These were facilitated through access to training and mentoring for the staff. The outcome of the project, which has been held up due to COVID, is to publish the research findings and disseminate to schools within the autism community and beyond.

Impact

The impact of this initiative is the school wide adaptation and integration of the SCERTS approach and the confidence and knowledge base of the staff to ensure its success, particularly with reference to clarity in articulating “what, how and why (3is)”.

As a result we have seen a sharp rise in progress for all pupils and this is documented in a now well developed recording system. Furthermore we have seen;

- Improved levels of pupil engagement
- Improved positive engagement from pupils
- Improved positive relationships with peers
- Increased levels of independence
- Over 90% of pupils at school made at least good academic progress as a result of this initiative.

Part 2: Outcomes for individuals

Initiatives or innovations that empower autistic people as experts in their own lives e.g. examples of co-production; working in partnership; developing effective consultation tools and processes to ensure that autistic people have a voice etc

Description

This initiative was led and developed through The University of Birmingham as part of a MEd in autism and education.

The focus of this initiative was to understand the gaps around preparation for adulthood within the school. Our main driver was to challenge the poor statistics of autistic adults in meaningful and sustained employment. We wanted to further improve on the success of our Transition to Adulthood plans, designed in 2018 using the preparing for adulthood framework. We wanted to create an even better person centred target setting process to provide a clear road map for success for all learners into either post compulsory education, careers, and the wider world.

The implementation of this project took place over one year and included questionnaires, online surveys and focus group sessions to elicit the opinions of parents, teachers and other practitioners. During this time, our P16 lead attended national BASE training and has used this to extend the wider professional network working with the school to support our learners. The data generated from this research was key to discovering the gaps in understanding around this subject.

Our research highlighted that more needed to be done in helping families, teachers, and practitioners in setting achievable yet aspirational targets on transition to adulthood plans.

It identified the lack of information for parents, families and schools, both nationally and locally around autism and adulthood; highlighting the need for more information to be produced and more time given to preparation in the skills needed for adulthood.

Impact

The impact of this study has enabled the people who work closely with our learners to be better informed to make recommendations and set targets which will help to improve the outcomes of the individual learners.

As a result we have implemented the following changes:

- Transition to Adulthood plans are developed without trained careers lead and fully reviewed through a PCP format three times a year.
- Vocational profiles developed and used alongside EHCPs and transition plans for individual pupils to create a bespoke profile of strengths, interests and skills with regards to future employment.
- Comprehensive training and support programme for teachers and families.
- Fully integrated careers progression curriculum that now focuses on supporting skills towards adulthood from KS1.
- Roadmap directory of local services is now being collated which we hope once complete could be disseminated to all SEND parents in the Borough.

Part 3: Sharing of Expertise and development of knowledge and understanding

Initiatives or innovations that have significantly increased knowledge and understanding of best practice in supporting autistic people e.g. involvement in action research; development of resources; partnership work; publications etc.

Description

A borough wide implementation of PBS in special schools, The Grove Pastoral Lead is part of the steering group and lead for the Haringey parent ambassadors.

Collaboration with

- Educational Psychology
- CAMHS
- Haringey special schools
- Commissioner for vulnerable children

The aim of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is to improve the quality of a person's life and that of the people around them. This includes children, young people and adults.

PBS provides the right support for a person, their family and friends to help people lead a meaningful life and learn new skills without unnecessary restrictions. It is not simply about getting rid of problematic behaviour.

- PBS seeks to understand the reasons for behaviour so that unmet needs can be met
- Explores life history, physical health & emotional needs
- proactive and preventative, focusing on teaching new skills to replace behaviours that challenge
- combines perspective of different professionals

Grove Pastoral Lead is a member of the steering group and also leads the Haringey parent ambassador representatives. Six members of staff are trained as practitioners and the Pastoral Lead is trained as a Supervisor (training completes in November).

The evidence gathered in the beginning stages is gained from the family and the staff working with the young person completing forms such as Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS) or the Functional Assessment Screening Tool (FAST).

Impact

There are six staff members who are about to complete their final session of training in November. The training implemented has given staff the tools and strategies to support pupils and work alongside families to hypothesise reasons behind behaviour. Each practitioner has completed a research project in school.

Staff knowledge and understanding of behaviours has extended beyond the PBS team as LSA's were all able to create and implement projects exploring behaviours of concern. Staff are able to unpick why and where behaviours might happen exploring antecedents, using this to share with class teams and the pastoral team.

- 5 x Positive Behaviour Support reports

- Qualitative and quantitative data reports used to analysis behaviour so supporting a decline in negative incidents and dysregulation
- Quicker analysis as staff expertise is developed; staff can support and plan using SCERTS to support behaviours

Criteria for Autism Accreditation Advanced Award

CRITERIA	NOTES
<p>Statutory Inspectors consider service to have outstanding features. Nothing is scored as less than good.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider ratings from the last statutory report and quality of life outcomes for the autistic individuals attending the provision.</p>
<p>There are many considerable areas of strength with no or minor actions for development. Highlighted areas of development are likely to address issues that the service is already working on or fine-tuning practice which is already of a very good standard.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence of what the provision does well and what it needs to work on from the latest Autism Accreditation assessment.</p>
<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. Overall support is clearly based on methods and approaches that produce positive outcomes for autistic people.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the latest Autism Accreditation report of what training and professional development staff receive and how this is evident in observed practice. It will also refer to Section 1 of the Application form.</p>
<p>Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how each autistic person communicates and socially interacts</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.</p>
<p>Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people to become more independent,</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.</p>

<p>Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their sensory regulation</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.</p>
<p>Although there may be a few minor areas for improvement, the overwhelming majority of practice is informed by an excellent understanding of how to support autistic people in their emotional well-being</p>	<p>The Committee will consider evidence from the relevant section of the latest Autism Accreditation report, Section 2 of the Application form and relevant case-studies.</p>
<p>Feedback from families and/or autistic people shows that an overwhelming majority are happy with the service e.g. over half very happy and the rest happy/ Only a tiny minority are unhappy e.g. one or two respondents.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider surveys carried out by Autism Accreditation. An overwhelming majority would normally be defined as 75 % or more respondents.</p>
<p>The service shares expertise through quality consultation and training as well as actively contributing to research into autism and innovations in practice.</p>	<p>The Committee will consider part 3 of the Application form and relevant case studies.</p>