

AUTISM ACCREDITATION REVIEW REPORT



Wargrave House School
Review Date: 26/03/2015

Review Team

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Amend as appropriate

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INTRODUCTION

The review report is designed to provide a concise and focused insight into the organisation's performance against accreditation teaching/learning standards. The Review Report focuses to the criteria for Autism Accreditation.

1. The service has a specialised knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders.
2. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the organisation, resources and management of the service.
3. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the individual assessment and planning for all people with autism.
4. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently results in positive outcomes for all people with autism.

The Review Report will be submitted to the Autism Accreditation Panel and forms part of the decision making process.

PEN PICTURE

SERVICE PROVIDER

Name of Organisation	Wargrave House School Wargrave House Lakeside Early Adulthood Provision (LEAP)
Address	449 Wargrave Road Newton-le-Willows Merseyside WA12 8RS
Telephone Number	01925 224899
Mission Statement	<p>Wargrave House School</p> <p>Commitment Achievement Respect Enrichment Safeguarding</p> <p>Aims</p> <p>Commitment We are committed to building a safe, caring and understanding environment, creating an atmosphere where everyone can develop to their highest potential. We are an inclusive learning community, working in partnership with families, Government agencies, local authorities and other service providers.</p> <p>Achievement and Success We are proud of the field in which we are involved and value the talents and contributions of all our students and staff. Our goal is to make a difference to quality of life, by promoting independence and ensuring that each individual's uniqueness is celebrated.</p> <p>Respect We listen to and respect each other and value all people's opinions and contributions. Self-advocacy and empowerment underpin our philosophy.</p> <p>Enrichment We believe in building bridges to learning, breaking down barriers and enabling our students to access opportunities both in school and the wider community through partnership working.</p> <p>Safeguarding At Wargrave House School we take pride in ensuring that we provide a safe, secure and happy environment, promoting the healthy, emotional wellbeing and development of all.</p> <p>Wargrave House LEAP College</p>

	<p>The LEAP curriculum is designed to enable young adults to become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Successful Learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve; ◆ Confident Individuals who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling and rewarding lives; ◆ Responsible Citizens who make a positive contribution to society; ◆ Independent Individuals who are enabled to function to their maximum potential.
<p>Organisations Governance</p> <p>(E.g. Online Links to Statutory Reviews, Annual Reports)</p>	<p>Wargrave House School was established in 1971 by a voluntary committee to meet the urgent need for specialised education for children who conform to the concept of Autistic Spectrum Disorder.</p> <p>Until November 2004 the school was an Independent School registered under the Friendly and Provident Societies Act 1965. However, in December 2004, Wargrave House received recognition by the DfES as a Non-Maintained Special School. The school is also a registered charity (charity number 1104715).</p> <p>The school is operated and managed by Wargrave House Limited, a Company Limited by Guarantee and has a Board of Trustees which meets approximately once per half term. There is also a Governing Body which reports to the Trustees on a regular basis.</p> <p>The school is inspected regularly by its 16 feeder Local Authorities in the north west.</p> <p>Wargrave House is a residential special school and as such is inspected according to legislation relating to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant national Minimum Standards set out under the Care Standards Act 2000.</p> <p>Wargrave House School is accredited as an 'Investor in People' (October 2012) and has also received accreditation by the National Autistic Society's Autism Quality Programmes since 1994.</p> <p>The school and specialist college are inspected by HMI OFSTED under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005. (Recent school Ofsted 4 November 2014 - Outstanding).</p> <p>Wargrave House is a non-profit making limited company whose audited accounts are prepared annually and are presented to the Annual General Meeting.</p>
<p>Details of any other services</p>	<p>Wargrave House LEAP is a residential specialist college on the same site as the school and was opened in September 2012 following approval by the Department for Education. The college again specialises in the education of young adults aged 19-25 who are diagnosed with ASD.</p>

Name of Provision being reviewed	Wargrave House School Wargrave House LEAP College
Contact Person	Sheila Jaeger, Director of Services
Details of provision(s) (Please list separately all provisions being Reviewed and add/delete bullets as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address(es); • - Number of Placements; • - Type of Service/School; and • - Specialist Standard used <p>Address 449 Wargrave Road Newton-le-Willows Merseyside WA12 8RS</p> <p>Placements School up to 75 (male and female) Currently 51 College up to 12 (male and female) Currently 11</p> <p>Type of Service Non-maintained residential special school Independent specialist college</p> <p>Specialist Standard Used Residential Schools Colleges and Continuing Education Services</p>
Telephone	01925 224899
Fax	01925 291368
Email address	enquiries@wargravehouse.com
Autism Specific Aims for Care / Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an environment in which each child/adult is given opportunities and teaching to develop his/her ability to become a happy, participating member of the family, school/college and community/society. • To promote a disciplined, happy and friendly atmosphere whilst simultaneously providing situations which encourage independence and autonomy. • To encourage students as far as possible not only to have a positive self regard but also to treat others with courtesy, respect and tolerance. • To develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. • To compensate for the disadvantage society may place upon children/adults with autistic spectrum disorder. • To develop the self-advocacy skills of the students so that society is influenced in the thinking and actions by the individual and not only by others speaking on their behalf. • To respect students' rights and needs as individuals, as students, and as members of a wider community with particular reference to issues of culture, religion and gender. • To provide the highest quality education and care for the students



	in our school/college. Please see Statements of Purpose
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<p>Management and Staff Structure</p>	<p>See diagram In September 2014 there was a reorganisation of senior management roles and responsibilities to reflect the government's education and funding reforms. A new position, Head of Business Administration was designated by the Board of Trustees and is currently being recruited. From January 2015 the Education structure includes a Head of Education responsible for the school and the college with two Assistant Heads (16-19 and 19-25) and a Deputy Head of Education (5-16) accountable to the Head of Education. This structure reflects the regulatory requirements of each phase of education. There are two Care Managers, one responsible for adult services and one responsible for the school.</p>
<p>Description of service/school days and one evening per week</p>	<p>Wargrave House School and LEAP College aim to ensure that its students whose lives are affected by autism receive a service most appropriate to their needs and resultantly enjoy the highest possible quality of life.</p> <p>The school offers day, weekly and part weekly residential/short term break provision and currently has students from 14 Local Authorities in and around the north west of England and North Wales. Residential facilities are to be found on site both in the school building and in our Post-16 department known as 'Lakeside'. The school offers a '24 hour' curriculum where the goals and strategies are the same for both residential and day staff. High levels of consistency of management and expectations of students between day and residential staff are an important feature of the school and channels of effective communication are essential. There is a minimum of one teacher and two teaching support assistants in each class, however in some classes there are three or four teaching support assistants. Two 'Transition classes' have been created at KS4 in order to address the 14-19 curriculum more effectively.</p> <p>Additional staff to support student progress include a non class based Deputy Head of Education and an Assistant Head of Education who teach throughout the school, 3.2 full time equivalent speech and language therapists, a speech and language therapy assistant, an Occupational Therapist qualified in Sensory Integration techniques, an OT Assistant, and a Computing teacher. In July 2011 a new post was created for a registered Nurse and a part time Learning Disability Nurse was appointed to support the medical and health needs of young people.</p> <p>The school admits students with a range of ability and at present caters for students who have Asperger's Syndrome through to students who have severe learning difficulties and autism. The nature of these disabilities clearly has implications for each student's teaching and learning and as a highly specialised school it is essential that we ensure recognition of these implications and address them effectively. A whole school approach therefore is essential in that we provide an environment where the goals, teaching approaches and remediation strategies are the same for all staff in the school including residential and extended services. Subsequently, many of our training days involve all staff including domestic and ancillary staff so that they begin to understand and make sense of autism.</p> <p>LEAP specialist college is a self-contained building on the same site as the school. There are two classrooms and the environment has been designed to reflect both the needs of people with autism within a</p>

	<p>college setting. There is a self-contained residential area above the college registered with the Care Quality Commission and providing six residential beds. The residential department is open seven nights per week. As with school, continuity and consistency are achieved through a whole establishment approach and whilst the curriculum aims are distinctly FE and adult skills focused, the successful autism specific approaches used by the school are replicated in the college.</p>
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<p>Philosophy of service/school</p>	<p>Since Autistic Spectrum Disorder is present from early life through into adulthood and affects aspects of the development process, the aims and objectives in the education of children and adults with autism must centre round their unique behaviour.</p> <p>At Wargrave House we are conscious of the necessity to encompass autism specific educational techniques but go beyond these to incorporate a functional and pragmatic approach, which is concerned with both the process and the product in education.</p> <p>Each child/adult therefore is regarded as an individual with his/her own singular and special needs. This ensures that their own personality, ability and interests are catered for so as to promote and enhance the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of the students at the school and in society.</p> <p>The philosophy, planning, teaching and organisation of the school/college is therefore designed not only to support children/people with autism and their families, but also to facilitate competence in the skills required for everyday living, self-advocacy and independence.</p> <p>Wargrave House believes in a strong partnership with parents and carers and shared aims and practical co-operation draws on this breadth of intimate knowledge and specialist expertise.</p> <p>A high priority is placed on communication, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship to include the acquisition of independent living skills. Resultantly, opportunities for self-confidence, personal autonomy, self-empowerment, and self-advocacy are maximised leading to the enhancement of life changes and experiences.</p> <p>The right of all students with special needs to a broad balanced relevant and differentiated curriculum is established in law. Wargrave House aims to ensure equal opportunity of access to all aspects of learning regardless of the nature and degree of disability of the person with autism.</p>
<p>Are there any safeguarding issues which you feel would have an impact on the Accreditation Review?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Description of Physical Environment / Buildings</p>	<p>Wargrave House School occupies premises consisting a large 19th Century house to which extensions have been added. The school is situated in extensive grounds which incorporate two enclosed safe play areas.</p> <p>The school also operates a Further Education provision (Lakeside House) for 16-19 year old students.</p> <p>LEAP College is based in a separate building at the rear of the school. One of the service aims is to provide a warm, safe healthy environment for children and people in our care.</p> <p>Subsequently we ensure appropriate physical standards of material surroundings which not only engender high self esteem but also safety, cleanliness and security. The organisation of these facilities takes cognisance of the individual student's need for privacy, for play and leisure and for community experiences. Bedrooms are comfortable and attractive with space for personal belongings and photographs. Rooms for relaxation and play/leisure are available for all students during the evening. A fully equipped gym is provided for PE and recreational activities and a multi-sensory room is available for relaxation and aromatherapy. At the rear of the college there is</p>

an age appropriate outdoor gym and swings. The school dining room is homely and a fully equipped soft play room contributes to a stimulating environment.

The eight classrooms are airy, bright and have various levels of display according to the needs of students. There are well-resourced and structured 'therapy' rooms, including a sensory 'light' room (the Rainbow Room) and two therapy rooms (a speech and language therapy room and a specialist occupational therapy room).

Lakeside, 16-19

There are three buildings on site which comprise Lakeside provision. Some students live in a purpose built six bedroom house which is situated within the school grounds but far enough away to facilitate enhanced independence.

LEAP College, 19-25

The college is based in a single building located to the rear of the premises. It comprises two classrooms, a common area equipped with eight computers, a dining area and a café which is run by the students. Meals are provided by a small kitchen within the college. There is a small quiet area located between the two classrooms which students may use as required.

In each accommodation, students have their own garden, teaching laundry and kitchen, work/leisure room and areas for dining and relaxation. We also utilise the rich community resources which ensure skills are practiced and learning takes place within real life settings.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS As identified by the Panel

Recommendation 1

Specialist Standard 4: Teaching and Learning – Methods

To develop further their effective therapy team, the service may wish to consider the provision of Arts Psychotherapy to support students across the whole range of need, especially those with particularly complex needs.

The provision of a range of different and complementary therapeutic interventions has been considered and implemented by the school since the last Accreditation review.

Several Nordoff Robbins music therapy students were placed at Wargrave House School in 2010 and 2013. Successful fundraising ensured that a qualified music therapist was secured for one year from February 2014. An evaluation study and subsequent report demonstrated whole heartedly that music therapy has made a positive contribution to pupil's learning and well being at Wargrave House School.

There has been a placement for one day per week of a dance movement psychotherapy student and this is also proving successful and extremely popular with the students concerned.

In addition, the Head of Therapy, who is a qualified and registered Clinical Hypnotherapist, is also now a Hypnotherapy in Schools Practitioner (HISP). This additional therapy is proving to be a highly motivating and effective means for raising students' self-esteem and empowering them to manage their anxiety and stress

The review team feel that this recommendation has therefore been met.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Efficacy Study
Evaluation of Music Therapy Intervention

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Therapy

<p>POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT As identified in the IDR</p>

Potential Area 1

Specialist Standard 2: Teaching and Learning – Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content.

The school developed work experience opportunities for students since the last review. The aim to ensure that every student in year 14 has a block of meaningful work experience was achieved. As a result of this initiative, a new partnership with employers has been established providing a greater range of opportunities. Accredited learning at Key Stage 4 now includes the ASDAN Employability qualification. Investment has been made in staffing so that each student has at least ½ term of work experience, where possible this is accessed externally e.g. in a local hotel.

Work related learning at Wargrave House School develops the students' employability skills and builds enterprise and economic capability. The curriculum is designed to connect learning with the world of work and as students mature they are encouraged to look forward, identify and plan for potential employment opportunities.

For Key Stages 2-4 Work Related Learning and Work Experience are now well established. Students in Key Stage 4 build on their learning from Key Stages 2 and 3 where, as part of their PSHCE programme, they make visits out into the local community and have in-school talks from external services such as police, fire and health workers.

In KS4 students follow the ASDAN Employability Modules that are externally accredited at entry levels 1-3. They have focused timetabled sessions and make their first links with the Connexions Adviser for the school. Work experience placements for 1-2 weeks are available for those students who are able to manage them.

For their work related learning Post 16 students are placed into three cohorts according to ability and each cohort follows a different learning pathway.

Cohort A work towards Young Enterprise and Mini Enterprise projects and undertake external work experience opportunities. The school has set up good links with national businesses, based locally, such as O2 and the Thistle Hotel. Students have access to short or longer term placements and get the opportunity to work in admin, postal or catering positions.

Cohort B follow the work related modules for ASDAN as part of their PSD qualification. They also undertake a mini enterprise and go offsite for work experience. A range of opportunities are in place at local businesses such as the Co-op, DIY store, Community Centre and the like. The school is appreciative of the good will and enthusiasm that is shown to their students by local businesses.

Cohort C follow a more functional programme and work experience is usually undertaken in school. Students work alongside the Site Manager, in the office or canteen. They also run the School's Lakeside Café as an enterprise, with post 19 students, or work in the horticulture area making and selling hanging baskets and pots.

For students in the 19-22 age range the school have introduced the ASDAN Workright programme. This is where students are placed in different work placements according to their interests and begin to plan for employment from the age of 22years. One student who is particularly interested in dogs has had the chance to work in a pet shop and an animal grooming centre and this has now led to him taking on a course in animal care. Other students have worked with the local Park Rangers and in shops, hotels and businesses.

All of these experiences in work enable the students to develop their communication and social interaction skills. The need to learn that the world of work requires different routines, expectations, rules, clothing or uniforms gives them the opportunity to develop their flexibility of thought and ability to cope with change. It also presents many opportunities to generalise learning and practice skills in a wider social context.

All students on work experience placements are supported by TSAs who help them consolidate any learning when they are back in school. All students keep a file recording their experiences with photographs, personal reflections and staff evaluations of their performance. The work in these files is personalised and students are supported with high quality prompt sheet that include visuals and photographs. Where appropriate students take these visual prompts to their place of work to help them with tasks and daily routines.



Progress for some of the work related learning is monitored through accreditation and for the rest through B squared assessments. All students have autism specific work related targets and these give another progress measure.

The school has plans to further expand the accreditation offer and look to BTEC and BSC to meet the needs of some of their more able students. They are also planning Enterprise Days to give the students an opportunity to sell goods that they have made in school.

The range of work related learning opportunities and work experience is impressive. The school have worked hard to increase the opportunities for the students and to develop further links with local and national employers.

The Review Team felt that work related learning and work experience has shown significant growth since the last review and that this area of development, as identified in the IDR, can now be viewed as a potential area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Work Related Learning Student Files
W/Ex Student Files
Curriculum Statement

Interviews & Discussions with:

Assistant Head Teacher

Observations:

Lesson Observations
Independent Life Skills Sessions

Areas of Strength

The range of work related learning opportunities and work experience is impressive. The school have worked hard to increase the opportunities for the students and to develop further links with local and national employers.

The Review Team felt that work related learning and work experience has shown significant growth since the last review and that this area of development, as identified in the IDR, can now be viewed as a potential area of strength.

Potential Area 2

Specialist Standard 4: Teaching and Learning - Methods

The Occupational Therapist has introduced the Alert programme a cross-service initiative. Aimed at improving students' awareness of their alertness and therefore ability to self-regulate, students are ready to learn. This initiative follows on from developing and understanding of emotions and arousal, and the self-regulation of anxieties. Whole school training has taken place and personalised Alert Visuals are now in place for all students.

The Alert programme is in place across the school, college and residential setting to help students recognise and regulate sensory differences in themselves. All staff have had specific training in the Alert programme and the 'calm-alert' visual support is in each classroom. Every student has an individual sensory programme with a sensory diet that includes scheduled activities throughout the day to ensure a calm-alert state. Sensory techniques and approaches are successfully used to promote 'readiness for learning' (including modifications to the environment such as the provision of safe areas and relaxation spaces).

Students are asked at the beginning of the day or lesson to identify where they are on the Alert Scale in terms of their mood and their readiness to work. If they identify their alertness to be too high then additional support is put in to try and bring their level down to a more acceptable calm state. This can be in the form of additional TSA support or the offer of extra movement, quiet breaks or time out or an opportunity to undertake activities that they have identified as calming and self-regulating.

To help students visualise where they are in terms of their readiness to work they place their photos onto an Alert Scale that is displayed on the noticeboard in the classroom. They are then encouraged to move their photos up or down the scale as the lesson and day unfolds.

An example of a self-regulating activity that an older student employs is vacuuming or sweeping. He finds this a particularly calming strategy. Another older student explained how he was able to transfer the principles of Alert to other situations and environments. He said that if he is a bit high then he will sit and read and if he is a bit low then he will have a cup of tea or go for a walk in the fresh air. In one of the younger classes pupils identified their levels at the beginning of the lesson and regularly revisited them throughout the session after each activity. They were also able to discuss why it was acceptable to be at a high level in soft play but not in class.

Residential students have sensory regulating activities built into their timetable. These are very person centred and form part of their Personal Learning Plan. The transition from school to residence is supported with sensory regulating activities that are prepared by their key workers.

Students throughout their time in school or in the residential setting are encouraged to reflect on how they are feeling and what strategies they could use to reduce arousal levels. This programme gives them a structure in which to address this and develops their self-awareness.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Visuals around school
Training PowerPoint
Behaviour Support Plans
Student Files

Interviews & Discussions with:

Speech and Language Therapist
Occupational Therapist
Students
Parents

Observations:

Lesson Observations
Observations during Breaks and Transitions

POTENTIAL AREAS OF STRENGTH As identified in the IDR
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Potential Area 1

Core Standard 6: Assessments, Reporting, Recording and Evaluation

All students at Wargrave House School are assessed annually using a range of formal and informal assessments. These, together with observations and discussions with staff and caregivers provide data which culminates in the Functional Communication Rating Scale™ (FCRS)™ and Profile. This tool was first developed by the Speech and Language Therapy team at Wargrave House School in 1999. It was designed for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in mind, to illustrate progress (where other assessments failed), across a wide range of communication areas i.e. 'Attention and Listening; Understanding, Expressive Language (verbal), Social Communication.

The Functional Communication Rating Scale™ (FCRS)™ has been modified over the years to cover the broad spectrum of communication abilities that students present with ranging from those who are non-verbal through to people who have high level communication ability. The FCRS™ therefore now includes AAC (Assisted & Augmentative Communication), e.g. PECS, and items relevant to more able students involving higher executive functioning skills , e.g. problem solving, prediction, decision-making etc. It has also been developed to improve ease and consistency of use and it has a more finely graded scoring system. This allows the user to devise SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed) more efficiently and effectively.

Over recent years the FCRS™ it has been used effectively towards measuring improvement in outcomes for students at WHS via the whole school/college target-setting process. The tool has been further developed into an electronic version linking individual targets with speech and language advice and a Therapy Planner that allows for notes to be made regarding current therapy and when intervention takes place. In addition, it allows the monitoring of both individual as well as whole school progress in communication areas. The latest version also allows us to generate data for analysis and use graphical representations of this, that reflects year on year comparisons, showing progress across the main 5 areas of communication.

This graph is now being included in each child's SaLT Annual Review Report. The FCRS™ is currently being 'finely tuned' in anticipation of it being published in the near future.

The assessment as described above in the IDR using the Functional Communication Rating Scale™ is now consistently used for students from baseline assessment on school entry and then yearly in line with annual reviews. This forms part of each student's records and validates additional professional reports at annual review.

The assessment although qualitative has provided a system for demonstrating progress, informing planning and measuring outcomes. Innovative and autism specific this software is a must for all therapists working with students with ASD whose language and communication skills are difficult to track progress in over time.

This should be published when fine tuning is completed by the Speech and Language Therapy team as it is such a valuable resource to Wargrave House School. Standard assessment is not always appropriate, relevant or meaningful in identifying strengths and challenges with regards language and functional social communication skills. This development of this assessment tool is agreed by the team to be a potential area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Functional Communication Rating Scale™ and Profile
Student Files

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Therapy

Areas of Strength

The Functional Communication Rating Scale™ and Profile assessment tool, although qualitative has provided a system for demonstrating progress, informing planning and measuring outcomes. Innovative and autism specific this software is a must for all therapists working with students with ASD whose language and communication skills are difficult to track progress in over time. The review team see this valuable work as a potential area of strength.

Potential Area 2

Specialist Standard 3: Teaching and Learning - Activity Organisation and Resources

The school has received referrals for more complex individuals and in particular students who have not accessed learning for a significant period of time, as a result they have recognised the need to develop their provision in terms of catering for individuals in a more personalised way. This involves providing highly personalised timetables and learning environments, whilst remaining focused on introducing social interaction and developing tolerance of the presence of other learners. The personalised curriculum within specific learning environments such as the Personalised Learning Centre, has been established to enable these particularly complex individuals to learn, and is considered to be an area of strength. Further information is available on specific individuals.

Practice at Wargrave House School is based on the individualised needs of students, the population is quite diverse and these differences are well understood by staff. Individual assessment of communication difficulties, sensory differences and learning styles influence the teaching programmes for all students. This recognition of the differing needs of students is one of the strengths of the school. Against this background of extensive experience of meeting the needs of students with autism the school has been able to develop provision for a yet more complex and often challenging group of young people. In some cases these are students who are new to the school and may have been out of education for some time following the breakdown of a previous placement, these students may require a very individualised approach in order to settle, in others there are students whose behaviour changes for a variety of reasons, possibly puberty has played a role or some other change has happened in their lives.

The school uses a range of approaches and strategies with the aim of eventually integrating the student into the full life of the school. This is often a long process which might be carried out over a few years. Sometimes a student will be taught and supported individually away from the class group in a room allocated for this purpose that is seen by the student as a safe place to be and in which to learn.

The curriculum is adjusted and motivating activities are balanced with more challenging tasks, for instance completing a project based on a student's special interest. Often there is an increased input of Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Music Therapy. Currently one student is having some individual dance therapy which is clearly of benefit for her. This therapeutic approach supports the school in developing a more detailed understanding of the student as well as meeting some of their needs. Work might be centred on developing social skills, awareness of autism and what it means for the individual student, relaxation techniques or rebound therapy. Where the school judge it to be a concern it may refer to an expert in mental health and ask for their guidance.

The school currently has several students who have in the past not been able to join in with group activities due to the level of aggression they were presenting or the extreme nature of their inappropriate behaviour. In all cases these students' are now managing much larger amounts of time learning in a group setting. For example one student who refused to participate in any learning activity for 45% of the time during his first half term, showed a reduction in this to 20% during his second half term and a further reduction to 10% following this. This progress has been achieved through a very flexible and positive approach to the student being in place and reflected in the actions of all staff. In some areas of study alternative activities have been negotiated. This student was very anxious about unfamiliar staff and interaction with peers, however over time this has shown a marked improvement and continues to do so. In discussion staff were very clear about the need to continually review the targets set for this student so that high expectations of his future achievements remain the aim and that the student themselves is aware of this. Review of all students following a Personalised Learning Programme is a collaborative one involving the class team, therapy staff, senior staff, the student themselves and their family.

Where felt necessary the school is willing to bring in expertise from outside the school in order to deepen their understanding of a student's difficulties and how they might be supported.

Part of the work always involves the young person themselves. A considerable emphasis is placed on developing their understanding of their behaviour, the impact it has on others and the consequences it has, or is likely to have on their lives. This work is also shared with the young person's family so that they are fully aware of the strategies or changes that are put in place for their child.

The review team judge the highly individualised and very specialised practice the school carries out in order to understand and support its most complex and challenging students to be a potential area of strength.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Individual Plans

Student Assessments

Interviews & Discussions with:

Deputy Head Teacher

Class Team

Observations

Lesson Observations

Observations during Breaks and Transitions

Areas of Strength

The review team judge the highly individualised and very specialised practice the school carries out in order to understand and support its most complex and challenging students to be a potential area of strength.

REVIEW STANDARDS

SPECIALIST STANDARD 1
Environment

The physical environment is fit for purpose/suits its stated purpose and meets/is responsive to the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the needs of people with autism in relation to their environment.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

There are a range of generic policies and procedures relating to all aspects of security and health and safety procedures across the range of environments at Wargrave House School.

There are specific policies regarding best autism specific practice such as TEACCH, which describe the importance and rationale of providing an appropriate environment for children and young people with autism. This pertains to the classroom/college/residential environment being appropriate in providing a structured and low arousal setting.

The Wargrave House Statement of Purpose states that they “Ensure we provide a safe, secure and happy environment promoting the health, emotional wellbeing and development for all”.

“In order that the environment be supportive to all, it is necessary that the ethos of the school be agreed by everyone.”

Wargrave House upholds high standards and is proud of this. Within the literature, the description of the school reads: “The school environment is both homely and educational and is of high quality”.

2. The physical environment reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and meets the needs of the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

Wargrave House School comprises the Main School, Lakeside College and LEAP (Lakeside Early Adulthood Provision) college, each with residential facilities.

In all classrooms there is evidence of careful design and planning including strategic organisation of furniture and screens. This ensures there are clear designated areas for individual and group activities for formal educational learning and work tasks.

Furniture is of high quality and attractive and this is evidenced throughout the school and residential setting. There is comfortable and homely furniture in the residential setting. The individual bedrooms are beautifully decorated and personalised according to the young person's preferences. The lounges, dining and kitchen areas are all beautifully appointed and inviting. All attention to detail has been carefully considered within each area relating to lighting, colour and carpeting and consideration of possible sensory differences prevalent in children and young people with autism.

The dining area in the FE provision replicates a restaurant with different seating and table configuration, comfortable chairs and carpeted floor. There is a feeling of space throughout the school and residences with ordered and uncluttered inviting spaces.

There are identified designated quiet areas throughout the school and residences. This is made explicit such as the use of the Rainbow room and at other times it is more subtle, and may comprise soft seating, cushions, throws and rugs. Some classrooms are very low arousal and have blacked out display boards to minimise distraction.

In the corridors around the school there are very effective structured transition areas which assist children and young people to move from one area to another in a calm and structured manner.

An interactive activity related to key times of the day with associated clock faces to signal dinner time and home time was present in one area of a corridor. In another area, there was a book corner and designated chair which stated "Leave me alone until I am calm". There was a Science corner which could be a

welcome distraction for pupils as they completed activities whilst waiting to go to another lesson or wait in line.

All areas around the school were ordered and carefully thought out. The use of visual supports to remind pupils of behavioural expectations were evident throughout the environment. Lining up, using foot prints as a reminder and signage describing expectations were consistently evidenced by the team.

Wargrave House School has a policy with relation to display and presentation of work. There were some impressive displays seen around the school and residences of art work and presentations of work related to the curriculum reflecting high standards of teaching and learning. A selection of different papier mache giraffes were displayed throughout the school as a result of a themed week. The happy hearts tree, thought for the day board, ECO display were all evidence that show casing talent and encouraging children to look, discuss and interact with what is presented is held in high esteem. The presentation of work throughout the school and residences was "bright and stimulating" and followed policy relating to labelling, mounting and backing. The overall result created an environment of respect, celebration and pride and thus reflected the ethos of the school.

Reference to the Alert programme was evident in therapy rooms by the use of displays and this aided references to students' self-regulating. Some pupils were accurately able to describe how they were feeling and how their engines were running. More importantly they had also learned how to change their engine speed by employing learned strategies. The use of displays relating to emotional regulation and feelings were also evident throughout both school and residences.

The care of the environment and the attention to detail which reflects excellent autism practice throughout the school and residences is considered to be a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.



3. The physical environment is used effectively to promote well-being and progress for the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

Wargrave House School's mission statement states: "we are committed to building a safe caring and understanding environment where "everyone can develop to their highest potential". The environment throughout the school and residences are indeed testimony to this as observed by the Accreditation team.

The many specialist rooms and classrooms which are bespoke to the population they serve provide a positive learning environment for all pupils at Wargrave House School. There are also designated purpose built environments which specifically promote physical well-being as evidenced in soft play area, adventure and play areas, safe enclosed gardens and the inside and outside gym.

Each area within the school and residences are consistently labelled and meticulously displayed. This pertains to cupboards, kitchen furniture and white goods. Furniture within each room is reflective of student cohorts and this may include specialist furniture relating to meeting the sensory needs of the school population.

The use of visual supports is evidenced consistently throughout the school and residential settings. This ensures that the pupils are informed of behavioural and work expectations at all times. The use of narrative therapy throughout all environments has been embraced as a whole school approach. This relates to colour coding which makes explicit key concepts of language such as Who? Where? When? What? This highly structured visual approach has proved extremely effective and is considered as a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.

There was clear evidence of a consistency of approach in both the residences and school environments. Efficient communication systems are in place via team meetings, joint planning, individual log sheets and home school books. Established protocol and practice are embedded across the twenty four hour curriculum ensuring a seamless delivery of ASD practice across both the residential and school settings.



Notice boards in the personalised bedrooms are used consistently well with clear visual supports including: What's for tea? Who's with me at bedtime? In addition there are individual timetables, calendars and schedules relating to supporting independent living skills.

4. People with autism are able to function effectively within the physical environment and their well-being is enhanced.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

Wargrave House School has a policy on emotional and behavioural development which describes the importance of partnerships between both parents and professionals. It recognises the importance of the environment in which students work and live, acknowledging their right to privacy, dignity and respect. This was very much evidenced by the Accreditation team where the whole atmosphere of the school was calm and warm. The children were happy and engaged and there were positive relationships observed between students and all staff.

The policy also describes "emotional warmth" where pupils have opportunities to make informed choices and decisions. The environment at Wargrave House School is described as one where students feel "safe, secure, respected and empowered".

The excellent use of visual supports, structured environment, low arousal and calm atmosphere evidenced at Wargrave House School has resulted in students being able to function as independently as possible in a range of different social situations. In addition the importance of teaching appropriate social interaction and communication skills across the school day was very much evidenced by the team including snack, meal and play times which were skilfully structured.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Statement of Purpose
- TEACCH Policy
- Speech and Language Therapy Policy
- Occupational Therapy Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Student Files

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Education
Head of Therapy
Specialist Occupational Therapist
Class Teams

Observations:

Lesson observations
Residential observations
Transition
Play time
Meal times

Areas of Strength

The care of the environment and the attention to detail which reflects excellent autism practice throughout the school and residences is considered to be a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.

The use of visual supports is evidenced consistently throughout the school and residential settings. This ensures that the pupils are informed of behavioural and work expectations at all times. The use of narrative therapy throughout all environments has been embraced as a whole school approach. This relates to colour coding which makes explicit key concepts of language such as Who? Where? When? What? This highly structured visual approach has proved extremely effective and is considered as a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 2

Teaching/Learning - Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

The programme/curriculum and the content of activities are informed by an understanding of autism/takes into account the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. Within policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines there is a clear written description of the needs of people with autism in relation to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

Wargrave House School's Curriculum Policy includes statements on the school's approach to Display and Presentation and Marking and Presentation. The policy describes the special curricular needs of students with autism as well as the main theories in autism which are considered to be helpful in explaining the features and deficits commonly seen:

- Theory of Mind
- Central Executive Dysfunction
- Central Coherence Theory

The policy goes on to explain the differences that are often seen in the way that students with autism learn and how these need to be accommodated.

The curriculum at Wargrave House School is a 24 hour one as students in the residential settings are learning important functional skills and it is felt to be important that approaches, priorities and strategies are shared between education and care settings. This 'Whole School Approach' was strongly evidenced during the review.

The policy explains how it may be essential to address fundamental skills for learning and progression, such as 'learning to learn' or for older students Life Skills which will support them towards becoming successful and independent adults. The curriculum is therefore much broader than would normally be offered to students whose development is more regular.

There are policies for each curriculum area which give guidance for subject delivery.

The Post 16 – 19 Policy and Curriculum Framework describes the main emphasis of the curriculum as:

the acquisition and development of key skills specifically related to the triad of impairment

The curriculum at this age through the LEAP programme and described in the LEAP prospectus, involves the development of key skills, including skills for independence and participation in the community as successful young people.

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum Policy states as an aim that all students at Wargrave House School will become:

- *Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve*
- *Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives*
- *Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society*

The school applies many aspects of the TEACCH approach throughout both education and care settings. Structure and clarity of approach are very strong. The underlying principles and practice of this approach are set out in the TEACCH Policy.

2. The programme/curriculum and the content of sessions reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and are informed by the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

The recent (November 2014) Ofsted Inspection concluded that:

- *The curriculum is broad and balanced but also very specific to the needs of these pupils*

and

- *Personal and social development needs are included and recognised in all lessons*

The school employs a number of approaches which support students to overcome their 'barriers to learning' and be more ready to learn:

The use of TEACCH methodology is evident across the school, all lessons observed followed a clear structure and all environments are well planned with the needs of students with autism in mind. Distinct areas are highly ordered with very clear signage and visual supports, the purpose of each area is clear and specific areas are allocated for calming (please see the Environment section of this report for further detail).

An understanding of the sensory needs and differences of students with autism is evident. The Alert Programme is used to teach students to gain an understanding of their own energy and arousal levels and how to manage these so that they are feeling calm, alert and ready for learning and positive interaction with others. This approach was seen to be used effectively in both education and care settings and is completely integrated into whichever activity is taking place. This integration is an example of a strong staff training programme.

The school has a strong and very experienced therapy team which includes Speech and Language Therapists an Occupational Therapist and a Music Therapist. The approaches that these therapists undertake and the understanding they gain about the young people they work with is routinely shared with both education and care staff. This helps to ensure that the consistency of effective approaches employed by staff is very high in all settings and that staff knowledge of individuals is very thorough. This approach reflects the school's belief that gaining an holistic understanding of each student is essential when devising strategies which best meet their needs.

An understanding of autism and effective autism practice is very well embedded across the school as was displayed by staff at all levels. This knowledge results in lesson planning and delivery that includes opportunities to:

- interact and communicate with staff and peers
- practice choice and decision making
- develop independence skills

These aspects of lessons were skilfully integrated into the main learning tasks and supported by staff that showed a good knowledge of the individual learning needs of their students.

In order to support the development of flexibility of thought the school runs 'themed weeks'. In these weeks special activities are planned along a theme that the whole school follows, e.g. Book Week or Sport and Leisure week.

All classes throughout the school, college and early adult provision use the community as a valuable resource for learning. The school has five minibuses and these are very regularly used for visits. Sometimes these are events such as visiting the swimming pool and then a café and the class will be out for a whole morning but another occasion might involve students in the college using a menu to choose their lunch, budgeting the meal and a few students going along to the local café to collect this. Groups are also encouraged to use public transport or to walk to local venues.

Targets are set for all students and these cover learning in the school or college as well as in the residential provisions. Students are encouraged and supported to monitor their own progress, for example to meet a communication target. Targets are set to address autism specific difficulties as well as in areas such as self-help.

Where helpful students have a Behaviour Plan (Positive Planning for Supporting Student Behaviour). These plans include a record of the student's performance so that progress can easily be tracked. Plans are signed by all staff involved with the student and this supports consistency of response as well as prompting discussions about how strategies are delivered. Plans include background details concerning behaviours, proactive and reactive strategies as well as short term targets which are evaluated and a new target set.

3. The programme/curriculum and the content of activities promote the independence, well-being and progress of the individuals with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

Planning and monitoring of the 24 hour curriculum for all students is very thorough at Wargrave House School, during the review the team scrutinised extensive documentation which supports this view. The school currently uses the B Squared programme to track small steps of progress in all curriculum areas. This data is monitored by the Senior Management Team.

The school offers a residential experience to all students in the Post 16 provision. They attend an activity centre and stay away from home for three nights. This is reported to be a positive experience for those who attend. Where students are very reluctant to stay away from home they are able to attend for the day time activities alone. A residential experience is not currently offered to students in Key Stages 3 or 4 and the review team suggest that the school considers introducing an opportunity to stay away from home and experience different and sometimes new activities with peers to students in this age range.

The school offers a range of clubs for students to attend during the lunch break, one for each age range is offered each day. Choices include:

- Computer Club
- Film Club
- Art and Craft
- Model Club

Lunch time clubs offer students the chance to mix with a different group of students and to work with different staff, there is the opportunity to generalise social and communication skills and to try new activities.

The school works well to promote the development of independence in all students. Many examples of this were evidenced during the review: students organising their own work, including filing this at the end of a session. The school has as few locked doors as possible and students are able to move between areas in order to promote their independence.

Independence is also the focus of travel training programmes that exist in the school. Most students live a long way from the school and need to arrive via a minibus or taxi. As a consequence travel training is focused on routes the students use regularly, e.g. to the local leisure centre or other community facility near the school.

A Saturday and Holiday Club is run at the school. Students can access the Saturday Club on a fortnightly basis. Activities are based in the local community and the school facilities. During the school holidays a three day holiday scheme is offered. Fees are payable for these activities.

Students at Wargrave House School are able to follow a number of programmes of study which lead to accreditation. Students in the 16 – 19 provision follow various ASDAN courses according to their ability, for example:

- Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- Personal and Social Development Qualification
- Personal Progress Qualification

The curriculum at 16 – 19 includes college links and students have the opportunity to investigate courses that they may choose to follow in the future beyond Wargrave House School.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 involves study towards the following accreditations:

- ASDAN Personal Progress Entry Level award
- Entry Level:
 - English
 - Maths
 - ICT
 - Science
 - Art
- ITQ ICT level 1-3

The school has recently reviewed the setting of homework and following discussions with parents it now identifies those students that are able to undertake and would benefit from a programme of 'Home Learning'. The programme is based on personal and social education targets, e.g. self-help skills, helping to plan or make a meal at home, looking after your possessions. Staff have received training concerning this new programme.



4. The people with autism respond positively to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities and maintain skills or make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

The Ofsted report in November 2014 commented on the benefits of the college curriculum stating:

Students in the sixth form college grow in maturity, enjoying a curriculum which helps them to develop excellent independence skills for their future lives.

During the review a member of the team met with a number of parents and some questionnaires were also received. Families are very enthusiastic about the broad and relevant learning experiences their children were being offered at Wargrave House School. They were able to comment on the good levels of progress their children had made and how happy they were at the school.

When talking to a student in residence she commented:

'This is a good school, it's done a lot for me.'
'The trouble with staying in residence is that you don't want to go home.'

In conclusion the review team were very impressed by the extremely high level of consistency and effective practice delivered by staff in all education and care settings and see this as a potential strength of the school.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Curriculum Policy
Key Stage 4 Curriculum Policy
Post 16 – 19 Policy and Curriculum Framework
LEAP Prospectus
TEACCH Policy
Curriculum Subject Policies
Student Files
Ofsted Report
Self Audit

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Education
Class Teams
Residential Care Manager
Assistant Residential Care Manager
Students
Parents

Observations:

Lesson Observations
Observations in Residential Settings
Observations during Breaks and Transitions

Areas of Strength

The review team were very impressed by the extremely high level of consistency and effective practice delivered by staff in all education and care settings and see this as a potential strength of the school.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 3

Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation & Resources

There is a planned approach to the organisation of activities and resources that takes into account the needs of people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the organisation of activities and resources in relation to the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

Please see references to Policies in the previous section of this report. All of these policies inform practice regarding the organisation of activities and resources across the whole school.

The school produces a large range of leaflets and other documents for parents and outside professionals which explain their approach and what is offered for young people, examples of these include:

- Further Education Provision
- Positive Planning for Supporting the Behaviour of Children and Young People with ASD
- Family Support
- Complaint of Compliment Procedures
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Short Breaks
- Safeguarding Procedures
- Saturday/Holiday Club

Planning for individual sessions showed a clear understanding of personalised learning and the importance of a structured approach. All planning documents seen during the review also showed an understanding of the needs of students due to their autism.

2. The organisation of activities and resources reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and takes into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

Wargrave House School builds opportunities for students to mix in different social groups into the organisation of the school. In all three educational settings students are grouped together into tutor groups for registration and some activities but are then grouped differently according to learning abilities. For the younger classes, Key Stages 1 – 3, ability groups are only identified in English and Maths.

The school has developed a valuable link with a local secondary school. On a weekly basis three students attend the school for a social skills group which is also attended by students from the mainstream school. Sessions are run by a Speech and Language Therapist and a Speech and Language Therapy Assistant from Wargrave House School both of whom the students with autism are familiar with.

Lakeside, Post 16 provision has links with local colleges. Students may attend a course that interests them for one day per week or for a few taster sessions prior to deciding whether this may be a future option for them. A further group of students attend for a short session and then use the college canteen as preparation towards further independence and possibly attending themselves in the future. The school puts effective transition plans in place in order to support students to move successfully to new placements.

In a PE lesson students were seen to be well prepared for the activity. The lesson began with reminders of what had happened in the previous lesson; the teacher asked questions and prompted this recall. All students had their own learning sheet and were able to read out their learning outcome for the lesson, this helped the students to think about what they needed to do and to be ready for the activity, it was also a calm activity which helped their transition into the gym. During the review the team observed all lessons to be well planned and carefully structured with the student’s needs which result from their autism at the centre of this planning.

As has been referred to elsewhere in this report the attention to structure that underpins practice is very strong. Staff use schedules well, these may be group timetables or individual ones, some span the day others inform students of what will be happening in an individual session. The timetable of activities might be written up by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson whilst discussing this with students. Staff were very vigilant at referring to these so that students were aware of their progress during the lesson. Schedules were also seen to be well used in the residential settings and students showed these to the review team when visiting.

The school is well staffed and this supports individual responses for students and the personalised approach which was noted in all settings across the school. Many staff have worked in the school for a considerable period of time and jointly the team is enormously experienced in meeting the needs of students with autism. The review team judge the staff team to be the most valuable resource the school has. This team is knowledgeable and well trained, in particular there is a shared understanding of approach which ensures extremely consistent practice is routine.

Resources are well managed at Wargrave House; a low arousal environment which is very well ordered supports students to be able to access the activities on offer.

Staff are skilled at producing individual resources for students; these might be differentiated worksheets to support learning or individual visual supports to support students to regulate their own behaviour and level of arousal.

Resources within the residential settings were seen to be of a high quality. Some students invited the team to see their own room and spoke proudly about this. All rooms are individual and personalised according to the student's interests and choices. Furniture within the residences is homely and appropriate making the distinction between school and residence clear for students. Where areas are shared, e.g. the school dining area, there has been a refurbishment programme and this area is now similar to that often seen in a high quality café.

Resources were very well planned and used in a Speech and Language Therapy session. PECS and electronic aids (ProLoquo2go) were very effective in supporting students to request resources, expressing their particular choice. At the end of the session students moved to a colourful and comfortable gazebo which was set up in the room. In this area a range of relaxing and calming resources were available and students could request these according to their individual preferences, e.g. bubbles, a foot spa, lavender rice, music, massage. This range of resources and differentiation for individual needs had a real impact on the students concerned.

3. The organisation of activities and resources promotes the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

The quality of resources throughout the school is very high. Thought has been given to where visual supports will assist students in accessing their learning and managing the changes which happen throughout the day, in school as well as in residences. These support systems are not only appropriate but they are well produced, colour coded, referred to when necessary and show a detailed understanding of student's needs. For example a chair is placed outside of one of the therapy rooms so that a student can use it for a short break to calm themselves before returning to the session. Above this chair there is a visual on the wall which asks people not to talk to the student as they are trying to calm. There are many small but effective similar strategies in place in the school and together they help to maintain the calm and purposeful working atmosphere that exists in the school.

During the review only a few quite minor behavioural issues were observed and all of these were responded to by staff in a calm and confident manner, sometimes with a short verbal or gestural prompt or reminder of the expectation.

Wargrave House School displays strong practice in supporting students to develop their thinking skills and to encourage them to think more flexibly about themselves and what is happening around them. The review team suggest that as a potential area of development the school audits its practice of peer review and considers how this aspect of social thinking can be developed within the school.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the activity and the resources used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

Each week the school has a Proud Assembly in which student achievement is recognised. One student is chosen from Key Stages 1- 3, one from Key Stage 4 and one from the residential provision. This is one example of the joint approaches used by both the school and the residential provision.

Parents commented that they regularly receive photographs of their child taking part in activities in the community and the school and were very appreciative of this. These help to ensure that families are aware of what the student has been doing and provide a useful resource to prompt communication at home.

There is no doubt that students at Wargrave House School make excellent progress across a wide range of areas of development, in particular in their social and communication skills and ability to manage their own behaviour. The review team met many students who were developing a good understanding of themselves, their preferences and their difficulties and that this was important in helping them on their way to becoming happy and successful adults. This progress is a result of the highly specific and informed work delivered by the experienced and well led team at Wargrave House School.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Student Files
- Planning
- Information Leaflets
- Parent Questionnaires
- Self Audit

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Education
Class Teams
Residential Care Manager
Assistant Residential Care Manager
Students
Parents

Observations:

Lesson Observations
Observations in Residential Settings
Observations during Breaks and Transitions

Area for Development

Wargrave House School displays strong practice in supporting students to develop their thinking skills and to encourage them to think more flexibly about themselves and what is happening around them. The review team suggest that as a potential area of development the school audits its practice of peer review and considers how this aspect of social thinking can be developed within the school.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 4

Teaching/Learning – Methods

There is a range of methods and approaches used with people with autism that respond to their needs and are informed by a knowledge and understanding of autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the approaches and methods used with the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

All documentation relevant to methodology at Wargrave House, including policies, is highly detailed, extremely comprehensive and autism specific. Approaches used across the school, college and residential provision are based on a solid understanding of autism and a belief in the inherent value of individuals with autism.

The School's policy and practice towards self-advocacy enables the students to learn how to make choices that affect their lives. As an example of this a member of the review team observed a group of Post 16 students discussing how their choices and decisions might impact on their parent and how she might feel. Students participated well in discussion, were confident to express ideas and willing to take part in role play. The school's framework on advocacy sets out guidelines to help staff develop programmes of self-advocacy for those in their care. The school promote a Bill of Rights for all students at Wargrave House School and this forms part of the philosophy of the school, college and residential provision. Students' right to their own dignity can be seen in the LEAP (19 – 22 provision) personalised plans where students decide who can or cannot see their own plans. Residential students can make choices about the design of their own space and who enters or not. The students' right to be heard is evidenced throughout the school with active listening from adults and sensitive handling of students' issues and expressed anxieties.

Alongside the Self Advocacy Policy are Policies and Practice Documents such as Flexibility of Thought, Communication, Sensory, Curriculum, Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying that form a strong foundation to support the weight of knowledge, skills and expertise held amongst all staff who work with the young people at Wargrave House School.

The joint working between teachers, TSAs and therapists enables students to benefit from a holistic approach to their learning and these approaches and methodology are well documented and available for all staff, including site and catering staff, to access.

2. The approaches and methods used reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and take into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			✓

The extensive use of structure and organisation across the school, college and residential provision strongly contributes to the calm and well organised learning experience for the students.

The Review Team feel that this structure goes a long way to enabling students to manage their autism, develop greater independence and take personal control over their learning. This is seen as a potential area of strength.

A whole school approach to personalisation means that extensive differentiation can be seen across all areas of the curriculum and in therapeutic sessions. Supporting this approach are a range of tools to support communication such as PECS, visual systems, modified and minimal language, augmentative communication aids and technology.

All lessons observed were set in low arousal classrooms with clearly defined areas. The quality of visuals, whether as communication or behavioural prompts, worksheets and learning materials, timetables, information, roles and responsibilities, behaviour reminders, choosing activities and the like were all of an exceptionally high quality in design, layout and clarity. Learning visuals were colourful and motivating, immediately drawing the students into the task.

Examples include younger pupils each being given a schedule of activities that were colour coded to the workstation where the activity would take place. This enabled them to move independently and confidently between tasks. Younger pupils were also supported with lining-up by standing on coloured spots. Older students had visuals to help them prepare for a shopping trip that included sorting the amount of money that was needed. Visuals also supported some older students on their work experience placements. Residential students used visuals on the interactive whiteboard to make choices about their evening activities and in their bedrooms they had individual whiteboards with visuals and reminders for the following day. Visuals were used in 100% of all observations of lessons and other activities.

All lessons observed were tightly structured in line with age appropriate visual timetables or 'to do' lists. These were used at the start of each lesson or activity and in some cases remained with the students throughout the lesson. Where appropriate, students had individual workboxes in workstations and completed tasks independently and methodically using matched and numbered schedules and activities. Transitions were smooth because teachers understood the need to give warning of the completion of an activity, clearly announce its finish and explain the next part of the lesson. In the plenary sessions students were encouraged to share their achievements and demonstrate their knowledge either verbally or by using augmentative strategies.

Therapy plays a significant role in the students' life in school, college and residential settings. Evidence can be seen throughout the day of input from SALT and OT in differentiated approaches to communication, calming and learning activities. These play a significant role in reducing stress and anxiety enabling students to manage their behaviours independently in some cases. This holistic team approach ensures that barriers to learning are identified and that relevant therapeutic approaches ensure progress.

The school sets up a broad range of opportunities for students to develop their flexibility of thought and imagination. Video evidence shows students on residential trips, work experience, enjoying a whole school 'Fun day' and taking part in performances including a music concert and pantomime. In lessons students are encouraged to tackle situations and problems as they arise independently in the first instance. Adults can be heard asking students throughout the day how, why, what, where and when questions.

Time for processing answers is always given and the respect shown to students during thinking time, both from adults and peers, means that students have gained the confidence to participate and contribute to discussions.

There is a strong investment at Wargrave House School in lifelong learning through a culture of commitment to continuous improvement through a comprehensive CPD programme (CPD Policy). All adults working with the young people are included in this programme including educational, health, catering, escort, maintenance, admin and taxi personnel.

The consistency of approach and methodology in working with young people with autism is to be applauded. Adults tread a fine line between stepping into support a student and allowing them to find their own way. All adults in the school, college and residential demonstrate a clear understanding of autism.

3. The approaches and strategies promote the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

A significant strength at Wargrave House School is its approach to personalising all learning and welfare and care plans, curriculum paths, therapies, well-being strategies, behaviour support, work related learning and communication and social interaction strategies. Individual Student Profiles are consistent in their design and so comprehensively written that they can easily be understood by all personnel involved with the students and as a consequence consistency in terms of strategies for learning and behaviour are seen across the board.

All staff know the students extremely well and pay exceptional attention to the fine detail in all documentation that pertains to the young people. Hand over meetings are held morning and evening every day, between the day and residential staff, to exchange crucial autism specific information about individual students experiences during their care so that there is consistency of approach and the students wellbeing is paramount. The consequence of this can be seen in the students' relaxed manner during the transitions and improvements in behaviour and readiness to learn.

Students are given responsibility to analyse their own welfare and learning needs in consultation with key workers. Students are

encouraged to use mind maps to help them identify how adults can help them with their needs and how they can help themselves. These are very powerful tools in enabling students to voice their concerns and needs in a non-threatening and proactive way.

All staff across the school, college and residential settings are very skilled at documenting salient points about the young people in their care. Consistency in assessment and record keeping is strong and student progress in learning, wellbeing and behaviour can be tracked throughout their time at the school in a wide range of documentation including IEPs, IAPs, PLPs, BSPs, Communication and Occupational Therapy profiles, Autism Personality Profiles and Sensory Functioning. There is clear differentiation in terms of the approach used with more mature students with more emphasis on self-reflection, evaluation and independent skills.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the approaches and methods used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		✓	

The clear and consistent structure across the school, college and residential provision coupled with positive, caring and calm approaches provide a learning and living environment in which the young people at Wargrave House School feel safe, cared for, appropriately educated and able to enjoy their learning and residential experiences. Students make significant progress, especially in their personal, social and communication development and this was recognised by Ofsted as outstanding in November 2014.

Students behave appropriately and are polite, friendly and approachable. Many were happy to interact with the Review Team and spoke enthusiastically about their school and what a difference it had made to them. Where minor incidents were observed staff managed them effectively and situations were diffused quickly. All students have positive behaviour handling plans with targets and strategies clearly documented. The Alert Programme can be seen in action making a difference in supporting the young people to self-regulate and behaviour has improved as a result.

Students were observed as happy in a range of situations and opportunities are created throughout the day to encourage communication and social interaction. The design of the cafeteria for the Post 16 provision and the newly refurbished dining area for Key stages 1-4 replicate similar eating areas in the community and

enable students to sit in different seating arrangements to communicate with their peers and key adults.

Parents reported that they were extremely happy with the education and care that their children receive at Wargrave House School. They were impressed by the knowledge and ability shown by staff in finding creative ways to support their children to be successful learners. They felt that staff are responsive to their needs, willing to undertake home visits especially when difficulties arise and see this as part of the school's holistic understanding of the family.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Policies:-

- Flexibility of Thought
- Communication
- Sensory
- Curriculum
- Speech and Language
- Occupational Therapy
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- CPD

IEPs

IAPs

PLPs

BSP

Communication profiles

Occupational Therapy profiles

Autism Personality Profiles

Sensory Functioning.

Interviews & Discussions with:

Head of Education

Class Teams

Head of Therapy

Occupational Therapist

Residential Care Manager

Assistant Residential Care Manager

Observations:

Lesson Observations

Observations in Residential Settings

Observations during Breaks and Transitions

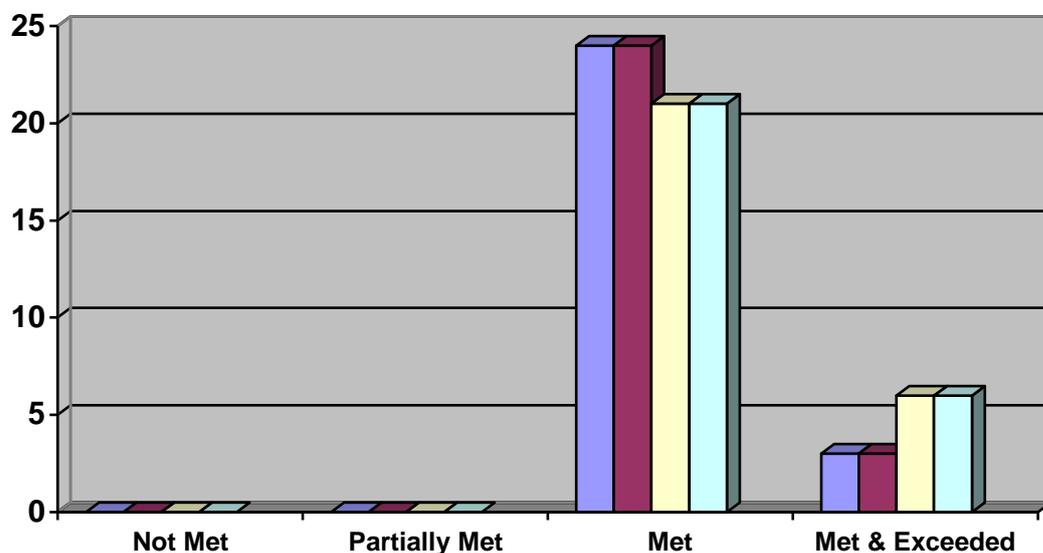
Areas of Strength

The extensive use of structure and organisation across the school, college and residential provision strongly contributes to the calm and well organised learning experience for the students. The Review Team feel that this structure goes a long way to enabling students to manage their autism, develop greater independence and take personal control over their learning. This is seen as a potential area of strength.

SUMMARY

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION SCORES				
Number of observations completed:				27
	NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET	MET	MET & EXCEEDED
Environment	0	0	24	3
Activity Content	0	0	24	3
Activity Organisation and Resources	0	0	21	6
Methods	0	0	21	6
TOTALS	0	0	90	18
PERCENTAGES	0%	0%	83%	17%



Comments:

During the review the team observed 27 sessions and graded all of these as met or met and exceeded. In general the quality of planning, resources and practice seen was very high.

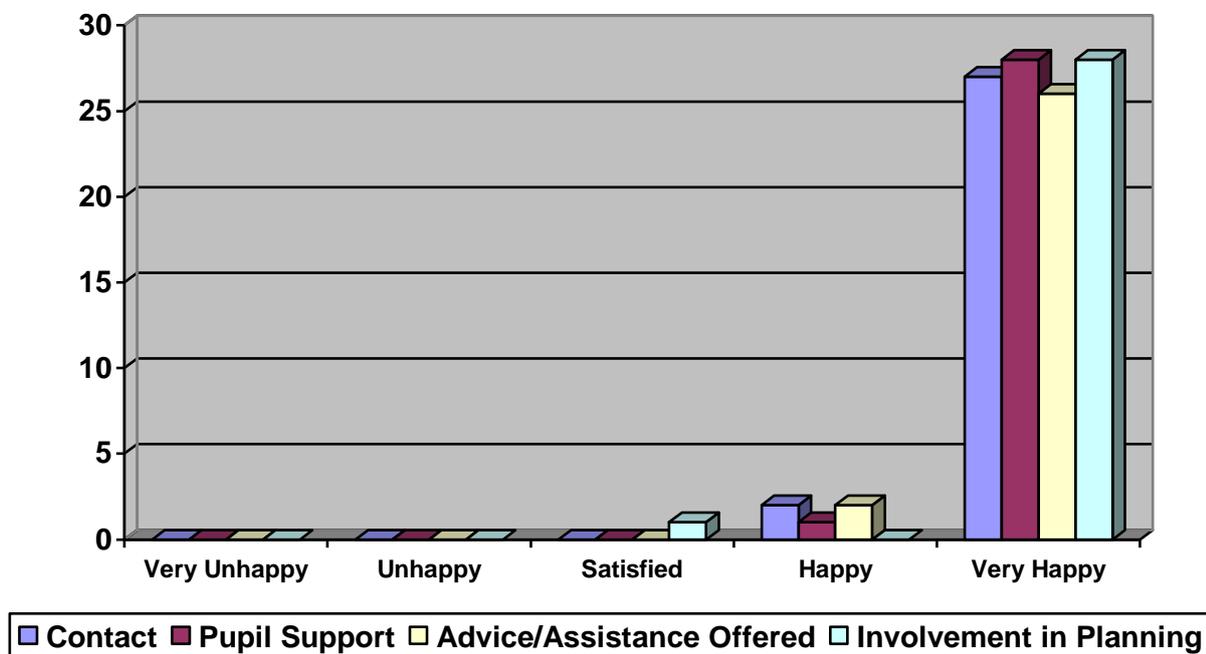
Statements:

Where a grade of 'Met and Exceeded' was given this was due to:

- A high level of structure in the delivery of the lesson which was shared with students through the use of group or individual timetables and verbal prompting for students.
- In a social skills session the Speech and Language Therapist had planned motivating activities which were well supported by a range of visual supports and included opportunities for interaction, problem solving and decision making.
- An extremely effective literacy lesson was felt to be met and exceeded due to the excellent differentiation of content and support. The lesson also supported students to allowed students to develop their independence.

QUESTIONNAIRES

SCORES					
Number of Questionnaires sent out (information provided by the service):					65
Number of Questionnaires returned:					29
Number of sections not scored (figures only reflect sections scored):					1
	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	SATISFIED	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
Contact	0	0	0	2	27
Support	0	0	0	1	28
Advice	0	0	0	2	26
Involvement	0	0	1	0	28
TOTALS	0	0	1	5	109
PERCENTAGES	0%	0%	0.86%	4.34%	94.7%



Comments:

The responses received graded over 99% of the scores on the questionnaires as 'happy' or 'very happy'; this is an exceptional outcome and reflects the school's very positive relationship with its families. Many responses referred to the experience and commitment of the school's staff which is highly valued by families. A selection of comments is given below.

Statements included:**Contact:**

- Daily communication on all aspects of my son's day. Family liaison is always available too, quick response to concerns or requests.
- Excellent contact maintained.
- Fantastic at keeping me informed at all times.
- We are telephoned by the school if a pressing matter arises.
- ...flexible enough to adapt if required to meet our concerns.
- Communication with WHS is one of its strengths.
- Very flexible approach to communicating in a way that helps families.
- Parents are very much included as 'part of the team'.

Support:

- Excellent support in all aspects of his education and development.
- The care and teaching is exceptional.
- Vast improvement in our daughter, because of support given by school.
- Excellent
- We have total peace of mind.

- Wargrave, without doubt saved our daughter from being very unhappy, self-harming and giving up on education.
- Outstandingly well, which is evidenced by our son, who after twelve years in this school still loves going.
- It's home from home for him.
- The staff work hard at understanding his needs including his 'trigger' points.
- My child is so happy to attend school knowing the staff care about him and he's safe.

Advice:

- Fully advised regarding strategies, which enables us to work in similar ways at home.
- Advice always available when needed.
- School has a good relationship with parents.

Involvement:

- Our input is always sought.
- This provision is fabulous on every level.
- I have asked the school to focus on issues that provide difficulties at home ... they are always willing and even provide us with ideas and materials that can help.
- Everyone seems committed to xxxxx, I'm pleased.
- She is well cared for in school and residentially. I feel she is in excellent safe hands.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Specialist Standard q: Teaching and Learning – Environment

The care of the environment and the attention to detail which reflects excellent autism practice throughout the school and residences is considered to be a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.

The use of visual supports is evidenced consistently throughout the school and residential settings. This ensures that the pupils are informed of behavioural and work expectations at all times. The use of narrative therapy throughout all environments has been embraced as a whole school approach. This relates to colour coding which makes explicit key concepts of language such as Who? Where? When? What? This highly structured visual approach has proved extremely effective and is considered as a potential area of strength by the Accreditation team.

Specialist Standard 4: Teaching and Learning – Methods

The extensive use of structure and organisation across the school, college and residential provision strongly contributes to the calm and well organised learning experience for the students. The Review Team feel that this structure goes a long way to enabling students to manage their autism, develop greater independence and take personal control over their learning. This is seen as a potential area of strength.

Specialist Standard 4: Teaching and Learning – Methods

The review team judge the highly individualised and very specialised practice the school carries out in order to understand and support its most complex and challenging students to be a potential area of strength.

Specialist Standard 2: Teaching and Learning – Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content.

The range of work related learning opportunities and work experience is impressive. The school have worked hard to increase the opportunities for the students and to develop further links with local and national employers.

The Review Team felt that work related learning and work experience has shown significant growth since the last review and that this area of development, as identified in the IDR, can now be viewed as a potential area of strength.

Specialist Standard 2: Teaching and Learning – Programme / Curriculum and Activity Content

The review team were very impressed by the extremely high level of consistency and effective practice delivered by staff in all education and care settings and see this as a potential strength of the school.

Core Standard 6: Assessments, Reporting, Recording and Evaluation

The Functional Communication Rating Scale™ and Profile assessment tool, although qualitative has provided a system for demonstrating progress, informing planning and measuring outcomes. Innovative and autism specific this software is a must for all therapists working with students with ASD whose language and communication skills are difficult to track progress in over time. The review team see this valuable work as a potential area of strength.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Specialist Standard 3: **Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation & Resources**

Wargrave House School displays strong practice in supporting students to develop their thinking skills and to encourage them to think more flexibly about themselves and what is happening around them. The review team suggest that as a potential area of development the school audits its practice of peer review and considers how this aspect of social thinking can be developed within the school.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL COMMENTS

Please note that comments must only pertain to the report and not to the performance of the review team. Any feedback on the performance of the review team must be sent separately to the Accreditation office on the Review Team Evaluation form at the end of your review.



PANEL REPORT

TERMINOLOGY

The Audit Programme may be applied to services for people with autism spectrum disorders. In this folder the word 'autism' is used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome, so that unwieldy phrasing is avoided. Similarly, to avoid repetition of alternative titles, generic terms have been used throughout the text.

To be consistent with the Care Standards ACT 2000 UK, this document refers the term Autism Spectrum Disorders, whilst recognising that some may refer to this as Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

Accredited: When a service/school has successfully completed their self audit, IDR and review and is awarded accredited status by the Accreditation Panel.

Advanced Documentation: Self-evaluation documents that include the pen picture describing the establishment, the Core Standards and the Specialist Standards. It is to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted in preparation for an Autism Accreditation review. It includes recommendations from the previous panel report (recorded under **Development Need**), the Core Standards, and the Specialist Standards (recorded under **Self Audit**).

Areas for Development: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR-summarised under further action to be taken) and Review Team (within review report) describing areas for improvement. To be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Recommendations.

Areas of Strength: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR) and Review Team (within review report) describing aspects of strong practice within the service/school locally to be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Good Practice or Commendation.

Autism: Term used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome.

Carer(s): Term used to refer to parents, guardians and other family members that are responsible and care for a person with autism.

Commendation: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength that reflects outstanding practice within the service/school.

Deferred: Status of service/school determined by the Panel. Neither not Accredited nor Accredited for a maximum of 6 months until recommendations from the panel have been addressed. A re-visit will be arranged in which a second report will be produced on these recommendations, no IDR required. This report will then be presented to the Panel to determine whether Accredited status can be granted or not.

Good Practice: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength within the service/school that reflects good practice within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Interim Development Report (IDR): Report completed by the Accreditation Advisor and service/school at the 18 month visit and includes further actions, key documents and areas of potential strength.

Key Documents: Is a binder/file that remains at the service/school as a reference tool. It includes proof of evidence that supports the self-audit and advanced documentation and includes items such as policies, procedures, local protocols, guidelines, brochures, handbooks, and manuals. The key documents file is maintained on a regularly basis at the service/school to be available if required by the Accreditation Advisor or the review team.

Not Accredited: Accredited status not granted or removed by the Panel after the service/school review. No IDR required, but there will be a minimum of 12 months before the next review.

Panel: Makes the judgement on whether there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate whether the service/school meets the criteria for accredited status. The Panel consists of a representative from the Accreditation department and a minimum of two individuals from a pool of professionals selected based on their expertise and qualification in the field of autism. Panel members are selected based on their area of expertise as it relates to the type of service/school being reviewed and any potential conflicts of interest with the specific service/school presented at the Panel meeting.

Pen Picture: A factual description/overview of the service/school(s) being reviewed that forms section B of the Advanced Documentation (see page 18). Accreditation Advisor agrees and completes at initial visit with the service/school and updated as necessary. This document is required as part of the final self audit submission.

Person with Autism: Any individual who is using a service/school, including pupil, student, client, customer, resident, or service user.

Policies, Procedures, Local Protocols and Guidelines: Documents which establish the groundwork for good practice and which refer to or evidence methodologies developed to successfully support the needs of people with autism e.g. Individual Plans, or Transition Policy.

Procedures Manual: Autism Accreditation programme's review process manual, describing mission statement, overview of the Department, Accreditation Advisor role and specifics of the review process.

Recommendations: Determined by the Panel from areas for development within the service/school that reflect areas of concern within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Registered: When a service/school registers with Autism Accreditation and begins the process of completing the self audit in preparation for the IDR and review with the prospect of being awarded accredited status.

Self-Audit: Is the self-evaluation documents of Core Standards and Specialist Standards. They are to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted for every IDR and review. As described in the Advanced Documentation above.

Service/School: Includes all types of organisations and schools that provide education, care or support for people with autism.

Service/School Manager: Any person who has the direct management responsibility for a service/school, including Principal, Head Teacher, Manager, General Manager and Home Manager.

Service/School Provider: Any organisation or individual that owns a service/school, including local/education authorities, health authorities, trusts, national charities, local charities and private organisations.

Specialist Standards: Separate Standards for areas of service/school provided, including:

- Playscheme
- Children's Home
- Day Schools
- Residential Schools
- Colleges and Continuing Education Services
- Adult Day Services
- Adult Residential Services
- Secure Residential
- NHS and Independent Hospitals
- Educational Outreach Support Services
- Community Outreach
- Fostering Agencies
- Employment
- Short Break and Shared Care
- Supported Living

Standards: A set of Core and Specialist requirements set by the Accreditation Standards Body. The Standards are the basis that:

- The service/school uses for their self-evaluation for the self-audit document;
- The IDR is compiled through the self audit and other key documents
- The review team makes their observations to compile their review report.

Standards Body: Establish and review the Standards annually. The Standards Body consists of individuals recognised for their high achievement, expertise and qualification in the field of autism research and practice. Their names are listed on our website www.autism.org.uk.

Statutory Requirements: These include all statutory and legislative bodies' requirements that must be met in order for care provision to be allowed in the United Kingdom. They include CQC, OFSTED, HMie, Health & Safety Executive Council etc.

The use of these terms avoids duplication of documents and also ensures consistency of terminology throughout the text.