

## Autism Accreditation Assessment

### Oliver House School

Reference No.	388
Assessment dates	10-14 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Lead Assessor	Jonny Knowles
External Moderator	N/A
Status prior to the assessment	Advanced
Advanced status applied for	Yes

## Section 1: Context

### About the Provision

**Brief description of the provision made for autistic people:**

"Oliver House School offers a unique Educational service for young people aged 6-19 who have severe learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and associated challenging behaviours. "

"Our aim is to bring about the best in every young person to enable them to achieve positive experiences and progress according to their own individual abilities. The desired outcome is for young people to achieve success in accredited qualifications and to gain increased levels of independence to enable them to maximise their strengths, abilities and ambitions. Individual plans and programmes are tailored to individual needs to ensure that every young person is challenged at a pace that is appropriate for them."

The school's layout and environment allow the curriculum to be delivered flexibly based on the needs of each individual, whether that be in a 1:1 classroom or in the phase classroom with their peers. 1:1 classrooms are truly personalised environments and contain a wide variety of self-regulation activities and individual supports.

**Number of autistic people supported by the provision:**

The school currently supports 40 pupils, all of whom have a diagnosis of autism.

**Range of autistic people supported by the provision:**

The school supports young people from the age of 6-19 with a range of different needs, from SLD and non-verbal to more academically able pupils who will be able to sit GCSEs.

**Outcome of last statutory assessment:**

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in July 2019 and was found to be Outstanding in all areas.

## About the Assessment

The assessment took place over 3 days.

The service's adviser assumed the role of lead assessor and attended the service on two days to conduct observations of practice.

A presentation was developed and shared with the assessor by the school's Headteacher on how provision is made for autistic pupils.

9 sessions were observed by the assessment team over a total of 5 hours. Sessions observed included science, group snack, individual snack, sensory, geography, literacy and English.

The service also shared recorded sessions of snack, intensive interaction and a SALT session.

Discussions were held with a number of staff members, autistic pupils and the families of autistic pupils during the assessment. Staff interviewed included the Operations Manager, Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Staff Liaison Manager (SLM), Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), Occupational Therapist (OT) and the Behaviour Analyst.

1 family member spoke with the assessment team via a phone call during the assessment. The service also shared a number of videos/recordings which had been collected to evidence pupil voice.

Policy and procedure documents relevant to the provision for autistic people were reviewed, in particular;

- Communication Policy
- Behaviour Support Policy
- SCERTS Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Staff induction training
- School Development Plan
- A range of training sessions developed by the MDT to support whole staff and individual staff teams

Personal files were sampled from across the service, these included;

- All About Me Profiles
- Personal Development and Support Plans
- Independence Programmes
- My Travel Passports
- Sensory Diets, Sensory Profiles, Occupational Therapy Reports
- PBS Profiles, PBS reviews, Behaviour Support Plans
- Communication Passports, SALT reports

The results of surveys carried out with autistic people and the families of autistic people were also considered and are found in the appendix to this report.

## **Professional Development and Support for Staff**

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

The service highlighted their key methods and approaches as;

- **Communication and Interaction** – PECS, social stories, objects of reference, attention autism, TOBIs, SCERTS, Talking Mats, Comic Strips.
- **Cognition and Learning** – TEACCH activities, assessment for learning, Lego Therapy, ASDAN, DoFE and 5 differentiated curriculums.
- **Physical and Sensory** – Individualised environments, Low arousal approach, Alert programme, self-regulation and sensory diets.
- **Therapeutic Approaches** – Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), Social Use of Language Programme (SULP), Alert programme, Team Teach

### **Training staff receive in these approaches and in understanding autism as part of their induction**

There is a comprehensive induction process in place at Oliver House which supports staff to develop a sound and detailed understanding of autism and the key methods and approaches in place across school. Due to the uniqueness of the service it is difficult to share with prospective staff what the role entails. When recruiting new staff, the school offer a trial to prospective candidates which includes spending time in a classroom and meeting with the Staff Liaison Manager (SLM) for a discussion so that they have a greater understanding of the school.

The SLM leads all staff through their probation which ensures the consistency and quality of the probation period. There is a 6-day induction, delivered by the MDT, each month throughout the year which includes Understanding Autism, Communication, Team Teach, Positive behaviour and Safeguarding.

To further support new staff through their induction they are given a 'staff handbook' with an 'Induction checklist' which is used to track their progress.

Within Phase two of their induction staff are given an overview of the key methods and approaches which are part of the school's programme of CPD. The process is adapted to each new staff member's need, based on their previous knowledge and experiences.

Within the first month staff meet with the SLM who gives a detailed breakdown of each of the key pupil documents. This ensures that new staff understand how to interpret the information. Information is also given on key assessment tools used at school including SCERTS, TEACCH, Daily Record and B-Squared.

Phase 3 of staffs induction includes an overview of the key methods and approaches used at Oliver House as stated above.

### **On-going support and professional development available to staff in working with autistic individuals**

The school's Staff Liaison Manager (SLM) tracks the professional development of all staff across school. To further support the school to assess the needs of the staff the SLM has developed an observational training assessment tool. The tool supports the SLM and SLT to reflect on the skills of the staff by reflecting on practice, the Environment, Behaviour, Communication, Socialisation and Instructions. The outcome of the assessment is graded and reviews whether staff have insufficient, emerging or exemplary practice. This supports the school to identify the additional training needs of staff and develop the CPD programme.

Ongoing training, which is delivered every Wednesday, can be Pupil specific, Phase specific or Whole school. This allows training to be bespoke to the needs of the pupils or staff's own professional development. Throughout the assessment the school shared detailed examples of individual training which has been delivered to staff teams by the MDT.

Staff are supported to reflect on their continuous professional development and have access to a wide variety of courses and qualifications so that they can further develop as practitioners. Staff can identify this through their phase lead or during meetings with the SLM.

## Section 2: Findings from Assessment

### Personal Centred Planning

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

"Each young person will pursue tailor-made programmes of education through the personalised learning curriculum which combines curriculum elements with targets set around the Triad of Impairments (Communication, Social Understanding and Flexibility of Thought) and sensory needs. Pupils also access 1-1 teaching, group teaching, IEP's, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and the Schools Behaviour Analyst and CAMHS Nurse."

The bespoke transitions into the school are supported by a range of therapeutic methods and approaches. When a young person enters the school, the multi-disciplinary team conducts an in-depth analysis of the pupil's needs to enable staff to fully understand the young person. The members of MDT then deliver person specific training sessions to staff to enable them to deliver support.

"All staff are highly trained in autism and Oliver House employs a diverse Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which brings together specialists from different disciplines with the knowledge, skills and experience in supporting young people with autism and challenging behaviours." The team provides direct support to individuals as well as working directly with phase teams to ensure that each young person benefits from staff having a comprehensive understanding of their needs.

The multi-disciplinary team at Priory Oliver House consists of specialists representing, Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), Occupational Therapist (OT), Learning Disability Nurse, Behaviour Analyst and Team Teach Coordinator.

Services provided by the Multidisciplinary Team include;

- multidisciplinary case management
- assessment of needs, observation and consultation
- development and implementation of therapeutic programs / specialist protocols
- supporting school and residential staff team
- problem-solving – discussions; person centred workshops
- demonstration and modelling of various strategies in pupils' actual learning / living environment
- in service training to school and residential staff
- liaising with and directly supporting families/outside agencies

Within school pupils are not taught in age groups, but according to the phase of development they are at, and the support they need. This high level of personalisation is evident throughout the curriculum and the school day. All pupils have an individual curriculum which has been streamlined into a single document incorporating planning, teaching and learning, assessment and accredited courses.

At the centre of the curriculum map is a SCERTS-based assessment focusing on social communication, sensory issues and emotional regulation. This starts with a detailed assessment before a pupil joins the school, in which particular attention is paid to causes of anxiety and co-morbid conditions. The school have further adapted the data collection within SCERTS to enable them to track small levels of progress.

'Pen Portraits of Progress' are used to track the progress of each pupil in attendance, communication, interaction and engagement, behaviour, EHCP targets, SCERTS and Academic progress. Progress is RAG rated to enable staff to identify areas where progress is outstanding, good or requires improvement. Progress is tracked across all 6 areas to allow staff to review progress across all elements of a young person's development. The school use the annual review of the EHCP to reflect, in detail, on the progress made each year using information from a wide range of sources including MDT reports.

Each pupil has a 'Personal Development and Support Plan'. The detailed plans highlight each pupil's identified needs, as well as key supports and interventions. The plans are reviewed annually and contain individual personal aims and objectives to further support staff in their planning and delivery of the individualised curriculum.

All pupils have a range of documentation, developed by the MDT in collaboration with the phase teams, which enables staff to understand need and deliver consistent and appropriate support. A list of the documents reviewed is found in section one of this report.

Each individual's curriculum is bespoke and designed with a focus on one of the 5 pathways, which is tracked using Pen Portrait progress documents.

Pupils' progress is also tracked and assessed daily in learning logs with a specific focus around targets or behaviour. The logs are regularly reviewed alongside the MDT to ensure that strategies and approaches are appropriate.

## **Differences in Social Communication**

The school aim 'to provide an environment which is rich in opportunities to interact with other children and adults. Through this environment staff aim to support pupils to become active communicators.'

The school employs 2 SALTs who each work with a caseload of young people to whom they provide both universal and targeted support. Through advice and consultation, the SALTs aim to empower and upskill staff to deliver the programmes and be "resilient problem solvers".

Through observations and assessments by the SALT the school aim to identify key features of each individual's communication. This information is shared with staff, families, residential staff and other key professionals to enable the approach to be consistently delivered throughout the individual's life. The SALTs also work collaboratively with the OTs to support the development of self-regulation and emotional understanding. This joint approach ensures that the young people develop skills in both understanding and expressing their needs.

The school employs a range of interventions which are in place to support a total communication approach. The school highlights its main approaches as PECS, TOBIs, Objects of reference, Makaton, Intensive Interaction, Talking Mats, Proximal Communication, TEACCH, and Social Use of Language Programme (SULP).

The school's Operations Manager has recently completed a PhD with research in Intensive Interaction. As part of the research all staff received training in Intensive Interaction to ensure that they had a good understanding of the approach. The initially observed outcomes of the study and intervention included more interaction, increased eye contact, increased levels of joint attention, and increased social proximity.

Communication Passports are developed by the SALT alongside the staff team which identify the key needs in both receptive and expressive communication. The Personal Development Plans also highlight key communication interventions/strategies as well as signposting staff to any key documentation e.g. SALT assessment, SCERTS targets.

### **Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:**

Throughout observations it is clear that staff have a good understanding of the communication needs of each pupil. This was clear in the ability of staff to differentiate and adapt their communication when working with different pupils.

Within all observations pupils had access to a range of tools which enabled them to communicate with staff and their peers. Pupils were observed using PECS, TOBIs, visuals, and Makaton to communicate directly with staff. Staff were also observed using talking mats to promote pupil voice and empower pupils to communicate their wants, needs and opinions.

Where best practice was observed, during an observation of snack, the young person was able to communicate her wants using TOBIs. Staff effectively used intensive interaction throughout the observation as well as sabotage to create additional opportunities for the young person to interact with staff.

Throughout all observations staff were seen to be highly skilled at providing pupils with opportunity and purpose to practice their communication. This was observed within snack, formal lessons, trips into the community and break times.

## Problem Solving and Self-reliance

### **Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:**

The school aims to 'increase levels of independence to enable pupils to maximise their strengths, abilities and ambitions'

To support the development of independence across school the OT and Behaviour Analyst deliver training to all staff on 'Promoting Independence', which was reviewed during the assessment. The training aims to equip staff with the skills to further promote independence by balancing support and prompts with positive risk taking and sequencing.

Independence programmes are developed for some young people to support them to develop identified independence skills. The programmes, which are developed by the OT, analyse tasks and then share strategies with staff to support them to facilitate opportunities for the development of independence within their education and personal care.

Post-16 pupils are supported to work towards external accreditation whilst maintaining a focus on developing preparation skills for adult life. The flexibility of the Duke of Edinburgh programme and the ASDAN transition challenge, which are a focus of the curriculum in post 16, enable the staff to deliver a range of community-based learning opportunities which contribute to their preparation for adult life, future placements and aspirations.

Strategies and supports to enable staff to promote independence were reviewed in Personal Development plans, Independence programmes, Pupil Profiles and EHC plans. These documents also include individual targets, goals and aspirations which are reviewed as part of the daily logs and annual reviews.

### **Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:**

The low arousal and structured rooms facilitate the development of independence and a clear visual structure within classrooms supports pupils to independently collect equipment and navigate the classroom.

Within all observations staff used a variety of individualised supports to enable pupils to be independent. These included daily timetables, visual schedules, written schedules, now and next, work systems, TEACCH and activity schedules. These strategies were differentiated across school based on the needs of the individual pupils. Where best practice was observed, during a group snack session, staff used a range of strategies to support different pupils to transition between activities. These included simplified instructions, visuals, Makaton, auditory cues and visual schedules.

Throughout all observations staff were seen to be highly skill practitioners who aim to be consistent in their approach. Staff were seen to promote independence throughout observations by scaffolding activities and by using a wide variety of visual supports and systems to support individuals to understand what is happening now and next, transition and make choices.

Within all observation's pupils appeared confident in expressing opinion, asking questions and making decisions. During the assessment staff shared examples of how they empower pupils and support them to make decisions using a range of supports/approaches.

## Sensory Experiences

**Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:**

The school employs an OT and a SALT who are both Sensory Integration trained. Through observations and assessments by the OT the school aim to identify key features of each individual's sensory needs. The OT completes a full Occupational Therapy report for every young person who joins the service. The report breaks down the young person's needs and includes a wide range of individualised strategies which can be incorporated into the young person's daily routine. The report is reviewed and updated every year as part of the annual review process.

The OT develops sensory profiles for each pupil based on the 'Sensory processing measure'. The profiles clearly show whether an individual is over or under responsive to a particular sense and provides an explanation of what this looks like for each individual.

A sensory diet is created for each individual based on the information within their sensory profile. The sensory diet includes both meals and snacks and is based on principles from the Alert (How is your engine running) programme. Each sensory diet contains a detailed instruction of how to implement calming or alerting sensory activities, as well as clinical reasoning behind the activities which have been prescribed.

The service delivers both 1:1 and group sensory sessions based on the needs of the young people. During the assessment the OT shared a variety of adapted sensory sessions which had been developed around an individual's likes/interest to engage them with the session. The OT has developed resources for the staff to empower them to deliver the sessions, which include Sensory Journals, PowerPoints of sessions and messy play ideas.

The school have a well-resourced Sensory Integration room and dark room which are used by both the OT and staff to deliver sensory sessions. The school also have an on-site spa and ball pool which further allows pupils to explore alternative sensory experiences within an environment in which they feel safe.

To enable the staff to deliver sensory activities consistently staff receive additional resources, modelling sessions and training sessions with the OT based on the needs of the young people in their class. During the assessment the service shared a range of training materials, guidance and supports which are shared with staff to enable them to understand and deliver consistent sensory input and support.

**Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:**

In all observations it was clear that staff have a good understanding of each individual's sensory preferences. Individual and phase classrooms are truly personalised environments based on the sensory preferences of each individual. Some rooms had lights, ball pools, soft play and trampolines whilst others in phase 4 looked more like an office.

Sensory activities are planned into each pupil's day. During the assessment the assessment team observed an OT session, staff led session and a pupil led sensory session. Through the OT led sensory sessions the OT aims to facilitate the exploration of a range of sensory experiences whilst staff observe so that they can further understand the individual's needs and develop their practice.

During all observations pupils had access to a wide range of sensory tools and strategies. Staff were seen to offer sensory input to some pupils based on information prescribed by the OT in the sensory diet, whilst others were able to access the activities independently as part of their daily schedule.

## Emotional Well-being

### **Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:**

The school employs a Behaviour Analysts who supports staff in the implementation of PBS across school through training, observations, consultation and analysis. The Behaviour Analyst is also the school's Team Teach trainer. Through the training there is a focus on de-escalation strategies and understanding PBS.

Behaviour support plans are developed by the Behaviour Analyst alongside the young person's staff team. The Behaviour Analyst also conducts direct observations with new pupils to assess need and then delivers person specific training sessions to staff to enable them to deliver support. Behaviours are tracked through charts which are personalised to the individual need of the young people. The Behaviour Analyst's supports staff to reflect on any behaviours and works closely with the MDT to reflect on the all-around support.

The SLT are constantly reflecting on the schools offer to ensure that it meets the needs of all the individuals that they support. The school's Nurture phase was developed due to an increased number of referrals for complex needs around anxiety and PDA. The nurture phase was originally led by an OT and based on a therapeutic curriculum with a focus on SCERTS. The Nurture curriculum puts an emphasis on reducing demands, self-regulation, and building relationships.

My travel passports have been developed by the service to enable transport staff to reduce anxiety and best support the pupils in their journey to the school. The Passport contains easy to read information to support the driver and the support staff.

SALT and the OT work collaboratively to devise individualised programmes which support young people to develop self-regulation skills. These can be delivered by the SALT or members of the young person's staff team.

During the assessment the service shared examples of how they use talking mats to empower pupils to make choices about their likes and interests. This enable staff to create an environment in which the young person feels as comfortable as possible when in school. The truly person-centred nature of the school is evident in a classroom which has been prepared for a young person who is transitioning into the service. The classroom has been developed around a special interest of the young person to ensure that he feels comfortable in his new environment on his first day.

PBS profiles are developed by the service to support staff to understand support strategies and understand the different signs of anxiety. During the assessment the service shared a number of profiles and reports with the assessment team which evidenced how the service reviews cases and uses this information to inform practice and develop future plans.

### **Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:**

During all observations staff and pupils clearly have developed positive and trusting relationships. Best practice was observed within an OT, Literacy and Geography session where an emphasis was placed, and time was given, to building and maintaining a positive relationship.

The school has a calm, positive and supportive atmosphere and staff were observed using lots of praise and positive language to model, encourage and reinforce appropriate behaviour and celebrate success.

Within all observations staff worked proactively at the first signs of dysregulation to provide timely support to the pupils whom they were supporting. Staff are clearly aware of the triggers and challenges for the young people and were observed differentiating their approach with each young person.

Within each 1:1 and phase classroom pupils had access to differentiated 'how is your engine running' displays. These displays enabled pupils to identify how they are feeling at different stages of the day and linked to sensory tools identified within the sensory diet.

## **Consultation with Autistic People**

There are a range of supports and systems in place at Oliver House School to ensure pupil voice is accessible to the wide range of pupils.

The service shared a range of individualised supports and resources with the assessment team to illustrate how they promote and gather pupil voice across the school day, whether the pupils are social or conversational Partners. For social partners supports include resources to promote choice in snack, choice boards for activities, drawing activities and talking mats to express likes or emotions.

For conversational partners the school encourage pupils to add comments or suggestions to 'Pupil Voice Boxes' which are located across school. Suggestions from which are reviewed by staff and the school council. Previously pupil voice has led to the school changing the name of nurture phase to "Phase 5".

Emphasis is put on gathering purposeful pupil voice on an individual basis rather than a generalised whole school approach. The school have a school council which is aimed at pupils who would benefit from the meeting, currently this is made up of 3 pupils. The school council meet to discuss certain projects throughout the school year. The school shared some adapted visual resources which they use to empower pupils to be involved in whole school decisions.

The school hosts 'Oliver House has Talent' each Christmas to provide students with the opportunity to share and celebrate their talents. The school video pupils individually and produce a video which is accessible for pupils to watch in their classroom or with others in the hall.

During the assessment staff shared individualised programmes of support which had been developed around an individual's interests or likes to increase motivation and engagement. Each individuals room is also personalised to meet their needs, likes and interests and support them to feel safe and secure.

The school recorded an interview with one pupil and shared it with the assessment team. The pupil highlighted his "personalised room" as well as the school being a "friendly environment". When asked about staff the pupil stated that they are "fun, respectful and I can trust them".

The views of 19 autistic people were gathered through an online questionnaire. The full results are shown as an appendix to this report.

## **Consultation with families of Autistic People**

The school supports and encourages parents to engage and develop a positive relationship with the school and their child's staff team.

"Parents said that this is an exceptional school. Parents are always included in discussions about their children and kept informed about their progress and well-being. They commented on the exceptional progress that their children have made. Parents have been given opportunities that would have seemed impossible in the past. Parents praised the high-quality staff and said that their children now enjoy school. Parents feel that this school has succeeded where all previous schools have failed their children." (Ofsted 2019)

Due to the large catchment area of the school, 17 authorities, the school find it difficult to deliver a universal approach to parent coffee mornings or training. Instead parents are supported on an individual basis based on any identified needs.

Contact with families varies to meet their individual needs. This may include home school books, telephone calls or emails.

The assessment team spoke to one parent by phone during the assessment. The parent stated that staff were "always available to offer support via phone". The parent also highlighted the home school diary as important in enabling them to have a "good understanding of the activities that their child had done that day".

When asked how the school could further develop the parent said that "they are perfect and have gone far beyond our expectations in the support that they have provided and the progress which has been made" by their child.

32 (80%) of family members provided feedback to the assessment team by returning completed questionnaires. The full results are shown as an appendix to this report. 31 family members (97%) stated that the support their relative is given is always or mostly good. 31 family members (97%) stated that staffs understanding is mostly or always good. 32 family members (100%) stated that the way they are kept informed was good or always good with 30 family members (94%) stated that the advice I get from the service on how to help my relative is good or always good. 15 family members chose to leave a comment on the questionnaire, a selection of which are found below:

"We are really grateful for the high level of individual support our son receives, without this one to one support he would not have made the progress he has. Thank you"

"The staff at Oliver house are extremely competent and outstanding support is always given to the pupils however complex their disabilities are and also excellent support to the parents and families of their pupils"

"This provision provides an outstanding standard of care and education for my son."

"Oliver House has been an excellent education setting for our Son. It is amazing to see the difference and the progress he has made since joining the school."

## **Involvement with the wider community**

The intensive interaction research, conducted in the school by the Operations Manager, has been presented at a variety of national conferences and shared with provisions and professionals around the country.

The school is devoted to raising awareness of autism across all areas of the community. A few examples of this include working collaboratively with the AET to develop bespoke training to better support autistic individuals, launching bespoke Autism training sessions held in Lancashire, speaking at National Conferences such as the Autism Show and supporting local autism charities with training, advice and support.

The school highlighted the local overwhelming need for additional training and support for parents and mainstream staff and so offered training for free in autism, behaviour, sensory, flexibility of thought and PDA. To further support other parents of autistic people within the community the service has delivered free training to the Lancashire TAAG parent group.

The school are truly integrated and valued members of the community. The school work closely with a number of local churches and community groups. These positive relationships with local facilities and shops enables the school to take positive risks whilst in the community knowing that there is an understanding of the young people's needs.

The post 16 curriculum includes opportunities for autistic people to access the community in a number of different ways. Staff provide guidance to placements/ community centres to further develop their knowledge of the young person who is visiting. One young person won gardener of the year at a local community-based project.

As part of the post 16 curriculum the young people spend a large period of time participating in community projects/work experience. One young person completes a weekly shop for an elderly person who has difficulties leaving the house.

## Section 3: Summary of assessment

### What the provision does particularly well

**What stood out as particular strengths:**

The staff team are supported by an experienced and enthusiastic MDT who aim to upskill them to be resilient problem solvers and reflective practitioners. Through interviews with staff and observations of practice it is clear that the school's staff team have a wealth of knowledge in a wide range of evidence-based approaches which allows their support to be truly person centred.

There is a high-quality programme of CPD at Oliver House which ensures that staff have a robust understanding of autism specific best practice methods and approaches.

Personal documentation and individual curriculums reviewed during the assessment highlights the truly person-centred support being delivered by the service to enable each individual to access a level of education which is appropriate for them.

The curriculum is rich and varied in all phases of the school and is adapted to suit the needs of each pupil. Post-16 pupils are provided with in school and community-based learning opportunities which contribute strongly to their preparation for adult life.

**What else the provision does well:**

Pupils are not taught in key stages or age groups, but according to the phase of development they are at, and the support they need. This enables them to make progress in their own curriculum with a focus on social communication and emotional regulation.

The school's curriculum map emphasises the importance of supporting pupils to be ready to learn. The MDT ensure that each individuals communication, social understanding, behaviour and sensory needs are met before they consider the curriculum.

The service has national expertise in meeting the needs of some of the most complex young people in the country. The school liaise closely with 17 authorities and regularly invite commissioners into school so that they can further support them to developed their knowledge and understanding of autism, PBS and person-centred support.

Leaders, managers and governors are ambitious about the school's development. Their vision drives continuous improvement and reflection on the service.

The school have a positive relationship with the residential homes, with the MDT working across both settings. This ensures that there is a consistent level of support throughout the evenings, weekends and holidays.

The knowledge developed through the practical research into intensive interaction has had real life positive outcomes for pupils. The research has been shared nationally through specialist provisions and conferences including the National Autism show.

Pupils progress is effectively tracked throughout their time at the school. Progress summaries track progress in all areas of a pupil's school life which enables the school to reflect on overall progress.

Transitions, both in and out of the service, are truly personalised based each young person's specific needs.

The MDT and staff team work collaboratively to develop and deliver support which is appropriate for each individual. The leadership team encourage the MDT and staff team to challenge themselves and each other to continue to raise standards across school.

Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's achievements and planned future developments. They have the necessary expertise to ensure that the independent school standards are met.

Feedback from families in the survey is overwhelmingly positive with a high percentage of responses, 80% of parents responded. Parents regularly referenced the "outstanding support" delivered by the "knowledgeable and caring staff".

The school have a positive reputation within the local community which enables pupils to access a variety of work placement/community activities.

Support during the COVID pandemic was invaluable to many family members and was highlighted as a "lifeline" at a time of great uncertainty.

### **What the provision could develop further**

**Areas to consider:**

The school should continue to explore ways in which they can share their knowledge and expertise within the local and wider community so that they can improve the lives of autistic people and their families who they are not directly supporting.

Continue to develop and reflect on the school's staffing structure by developing lead practitioners who can further support the MDT in their role across school.

## APPENDIX 1: SURVEYS

### Families

Feedback questionnaire on Oliver House School to be completed before 07/09/2020

The support my relative is given is...				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor		0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better		3.13%	1
3	mostly good		15.63%	5
4	always good		81.25%	26
			answered	32
			skipped	0

The understanding that staff have for my relative's autistic needs is...				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor		0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better		3.13%	1
3	mostly good		9.38%	3
4	always good		87.50%	28
			answered	32
			skipped	0



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

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	0.00%	0
2	ok, but could be better	0.00%	0
3	mostly good	25.00%	8
4	always good	75.00%	24
		answered	32
		skipped	0

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

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	poor	3.13%	1
2	ok, but could be better	3.13%	1
3	mostly good	21.88%	7
4	always good	71.88%	23
		answered	32
		skipped	0

Comments: Please note you are not required to comment below, if you do so they will be included in the final report. Autism Accreditation cannot be held responsible for comments which identify any individual. (15)

1	23/03/2020 13:39 PM ID: 137975622	Oliver House School is led an by an efficient and effective management team, the teachers and key support team are all strive to progressing the YP to their full potential, the work they do can be very challenging but their professionalism is outstanding.
2	15/06/2020 13:09 PM ID: 143208337	The school really try and understand my young man very well. The lack of support from health and social is the reasons behind him not making any progress.

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

			<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
3	15/06/2020 16:02 PM ID: 143223415	We are really grateful for the high level of individual support our son receives, without this one to one support he would not have made the progress he has. Thank you		
4	15/06/2020 17:34 PM ID: 143230750	Oliver house school is an outstanding school. Our son has attended for the past eleven years and he will soon be leaving. We can't thank the excellent teaching staff and multi disciplinary team enough. Lots of hard work and time has gone into the wonderful young man our son has become .		
5	15/06/2020 20:09 PM ID: 143238400	Oliver house school is a wonderful provision that excels in the education, care and support of my son on a daily basis. The highly skilled staff make concerted efforts to understand and meet his needs		
6	17/06/2020 22:40 PM ID: 143392369	The staff at oliver house are extremely competent and outstanding support is always given to the pupils however complex their disabilities are and also excellent support to the parents and families of their pupils and I for one would struggle without their outstanding support and understanding of my child's special needs my son loves attending oliver house also and has come on farther than I expected due to the abilities from all the staff and t a ,s thank you all		
7	02/09/2020 15:01 PM ID: 147462171	This provision provides an outstanding standard of care and education for my son. Their knowledge and expertise is second to none, and they continuously strive to support the children and their families. There aren't any areas for improvement as I am constantly astounded by the high standard already being provided.		
8	02/09/2020 17:43 PM ID: 147473866	A fantastic provision which has enabled my son to grow, develop and achieve in ways that we never envisioned to be possible prior to him starting at Oliver House.		
9	02/09/2020 20:31 PM ID: 147480889	The Oliver House School has always very good understanding of Autistic children and young people. The staffs have excellent understanding of their needs. The school environments are suitably designed to meet their needs. I am sure this is the best Autism specialised school in Lancashire and one of the best ones across the nation.		
10	03/09/2020 07:34 AM ID: 147488669	Oliver House School is an excellent facility, and the support for my child is exceptional.		
11	03/09/2020 21:29 PM ID: 147544491	We answered mostly good to the final question only because our son now lives in residential care so there is not a lot of situations where Oliver House would advise on how to help him.		
12	04/09/2020 13:48 PM ID: 147579243	Oliver House is exceptional school in the UK and it is unique in terms of admitting as well autistic individuals with average, or above average IQ,with extreme anxiety, social anxiety, cooccurring conditions,PDA and they are truly expert by experience.They are in my opinion the only place in our case,who were able to bridge the gaps in the current educational, health and mental health system.. Oliver House was lifesaver for our family. Our son is 4th year happily attending this school after history of homeschooling, school refusal and not beeing able to attend primary and secondary setting. Staff understand what person centred planning mean in practice and they have highly specialised occupational therapist in autism.		

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

			Response Percent	Response Total
		Our son, who have significant sensory processing issue with very high level of anxiety, who was not able to attend mainstream primary and secondary setting, after history of school refusal, homeschooling- he is attending this school for 4th year very happily and he was able to function there and progress steadily educationally and emotionally. The biggest advantage of this school is that individuals have their own space, where they can self-regulate or learn if they wish to..Staff understand and are keen to learn about autism, co-occurring conditions, they understand demand avoidant symptoms and strategies. They are taking parents as equal partners and principal has got natural understanding of autism. She is able to communicate, understand parents, individuals with ease, because she has got personal experience with autism. Oliver House represents for me golden standard for practice in autism and any staff, hand on support, who comes into contact with autistic individuals should undergo extensive training in the place such as Oliver House is. We are very grateful and privileged to be able to be part of Oliver House and more places need to be available in order to be able to keep continuity after leaving Oliver House and in adulthood.		
13	06/09/2020 15:28 PM ID: 147661706	Oliver House has been an excellent education setting for our Son. It is amazing to see the difference and the progress he has made since joining the school.		
14	07/09/2020 10:04 AM ID: 147685136	They are very understanding of our sons Joe's condition and he is growing in confidence and wants to go to school. We are very grateful		
15	07/09/2020 12:36 PM ID: 147699935	My son loves School! This is a sentence I never thought I would be able to write! Thanks to Oliver House I can now say it. It means so much to be able to send my son to a school that truly understands him...like I do. They care about him and they care about his family life too, they go above and beyond to help us all and it doesn't stop when school closes. I have not come across a single member of staff that isn't totally committed to the children they care for.		

## Autistic Person

Feedback questionnaire on Oliver House School to be completed before 07/09/2020

The support I am given is good?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		100.00%	19
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Sometimes		0.00%	0
			answered	19
			skipped	0
Staff understand me and my needs				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		100.00%	19
2	No		0.00%	0
3	Sometimes		0.00%	0
			answered	19
			skipped	0
The staff listen to me on how I want to be helped				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		100.00%	19
2	No		0.00%	0



### The support I am given is good?

			Response Percent	Response Total
3	Sometimes		0.00%	0
			answered	19
			skipped	0

Comments: Please note you are not required to comment below, if you do so they will be included in the final report, which the provision may choose to publish electronically. Autism Accreditation cannot be held responsible for comments which identify any individual. (4)

1	15/06/2020 13:12 PM ID: 143208576	I have respect for who I am for the first time in my life since coming here just before I turned 16. I have always been misunderstood by school and services that don't understand how my complex autism effects how I relate to the world.
2	15/06/2020 16:09 PM ID: 143223983	I like playing darts I would like to play pool in school I like all the staff 😊
3	15/06/2020 20:06 PM ID: 143238294	I have a really good TA who knows me and gets me !
4	02/09/2020 20:51 PM ID: 147481611	I like going to the Subway for lunch takeaway.

### Who just completed the questions above?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	The autistic person by themselves		5.26%	1
2	The autistic person with support		26.32%	5
3	A staff member who represented their views		0.00%	0
4	A family member or friend who represented their views		68.42%	13
			answered	19
			skipped	0



**APPENDIX 2: COMMENTS FROM THE PROVISION**

**APPENDIX 3: ADVANCED APPLICATION FORM  
APPLICATION FORM FOR ADVANCED STATUS**

Name of registration:	Oliver House School
Date when provision was last accredited;	July 2017
Contact person:	Lisa Sharrock
Adviser:	Jonny Knowles

Comments made by the provision should be factual and if necessary can be evidenced.

**Criteria 1:** Does assessment of the provision confirm that there are many considerable areas of strength within the service in relationship to the Autism Accreditation Standards with no or minor actions for development? *This will be addressed within the assessment report and does not require further comment.*

Overall conclusion from previous inspection and areas of strength for Accredited Status;

Oliver House School applies extremely high standards for the staff and pupils, and these are reflected in outcomes for its young people which parents, and Ofsted, regard as remarkable

A high level of personalisation, including strategies such as individual teaching rooms and strong relationships between pupils and staff (who are well-trained, understanding and committed) allow the school to achieve its aim of bringing out the best in everyone.

This is underpinned by levels of resourcing which allow in practice extraordinary levels of individualised provision – which in turn produces consistently good results for young people at the school, some of whom have extremely challenging conditions alongside their autism.

Good visual support underpins communication which minimizes anxiety. Personalised support programmes and effectively differentiated teaching and learning also contribute to the sense of well-being enjoyed by pupils whose conditions include high levels of OCD and anxiety as well as autism.

The whole school environment is low-arousal and meets individuals' sensory needs. Lessons are delivered in individual or small-group rooms, and a range of other spaces, including multisensory rooms, are available.

The review team observed several instances where an integral part of a session was allowing pupils to decide how they would complete the task. And at lunchtime for example, pupils are able to choose whether to eat in the canteen, in their individual learning space or in a communal area.

Training is an important part of ensuring the effectiveness of communication.

A huge strength of the school is the excellent rapport and communication between staff and young people.

For example, a session in a commercial gym would have appeared to an outsider as a group of friends working out together rather than a formal teaching/learning activity. Staff later explained that such relationships build a foundation of highly personalised support to young people over time. In another session the staff member acknowledged that the pupil was leading work on a project designed to create virtual reality images of a local college in order to help pupils planning to move there on leaving Oliver House.

Actions and Recommendations from previous assessment (July 2017)



How aspects of development have been addressed Action for Development

Standard P25: ...evaluate the effectiveness of support and curriculum activities in enabling each autistic pupil to understand choices related to maintaining their physical health and well-being. The school is planning to further develop its work in developing systems to maintain the health and well-being of young people.

Standard P25: Since the previous inspection OHS has added the following onto the school curriculum;

- Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)
- Junior Award Scheme for School (Jass)
- Zones of Regulation (phase 4)
- OT reports on all individuals
  - New curriculum pathways

This is monitored and evaluated through data collection, collation of evidence and pupil feedback.

OHS staff also debrief at the end of the day, each child's achievements, progress and well-being are discussed daily, and the pupil timetables are then changed to reflect new information gathered.

Recommendation

Standard C18: ...staff are aware of how to recognise and support other conditions that research shows can frequently coexist with autism. Oliver House School intends to further its support for young people by ensuring staff have a deeper knowledge and understanding of the co-morbid conditions presented alongside autism.

Standard E9: ...each autistic pupil supported in developing problem solving skills and coping strategies relevant to independent functioning outside or after school. The school intends to focus further on supporting pupils to develop specific skills that will be required once they leave Oliver House.

Standard C18: The whole staff CDP calendar was amended to adhere to this recommendation, the additions were;

- Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Attachment difficulties
- Foetal alcohol syndrome
- OCD
- ADHD

Standard E9:

- Adaptations on the pupil timetables are now made before transitions to new settings.
- The curriculum has now been mapped through different pathways to meet specific requirements of the pupils. The pathways available are; engagement pathway, Progression pathway, Steps for life pathway and GCSE pathway. The curriculum has been completely redesigned and now includes additional ASDAN schemes of work; Transition Challenge, Introduction and progress and Personal Progress.

Please see report from July 2017 for further information

**Criteria 2:** Is the service considered to have outstanding features in meeting statutory requirements related to outcomes for autistic people?

Please provide a website link to the relevant reports and any additional comments that might be helpful in interpreting the reports. If the service is not accessed by a statutory body please write n/a

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/131575>

**OFSTED – Outstanding in all areas**

Examples of outstanding features related to outcomes – taken directly from this latest OFSTED report include:

“Leaders clearly know their school exceptionally well. They are experts in the field of autism spectrum disorder.” Ofsted 2019

“Every pupil follows an individual curriculum tailored precisely to their needs. This offers work and activities that are interesting and enjoyable. Academic work is combined with different therapies. This is so that pupils develop communication, social and emotional skills as well as academic qualifications.” Ofsted 2019

“Parents praised the high-quality staff and said that their children now enjoy school. Parents feel that this school has succeeded where all previous schools have failed their children.” Ofsted 2019

“Many pupils have their own individual classroom. They are encouraged to decorate these as they wish, according to their interests. This enables pupils to overcome previous anxieties. All pupils enter the school after at least one, and sometimes several, unsuccessful placement.” Ofsted 2019

“The staff work hard to ensure that the right package of support is provided for all pupils to help them to manage behaviour incidents caused by their medical conditions. The data shows a decline in incidents in each academic year.” Ofsted 2019

“Teaching is outstanding, because of teachers’ determination and expertise in addressing the aspects of learning that pupils need to acquire at each stage of their development. The curriculum is rich and varied. It is adapted to suit the needs of each pupil. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their awareness of British values are outstanding. Pupils are not taught in key stages or age groups, but according to the phase of development they are at, and the support they need. This enables them to make excellent progress.” Ofsted 2019

“Challenging behaviour is exceptionally well managed by staff. Pupils’ behaviour improves rapidly as a result. The staff work hard to ensure the right package of support is provided for all pupils to help them to manage behaviour incidents caused by their medical conditions. The data shows a decline in incidents in each academic year. School records shows that the school is very successful in improving the behaviour of individuals.” Ofsted 2019

“Parents said that this is an exceptional school. Parents are always included in discussions about their children and kept informed about their progress and well-being. They commented on the exceptional progress that their children have made. Parents have been given opportunities that would have seemed impossible in the past. Parents praised the high-quality staff and said that their children now enjoy school. Parents feel that this school has succeeded where all previous schools have failed their children.” Ofsted 2019

“When pupils enter the school, the multi-disciplinary team conducts an in-depth analysis of the pupils’ needs. The team develops learning plans with the teachers. This is always done in close partnership with parents. Once this assessment is done, a whole range of activities is provided, which will help to educate pupils and give them skills for life.” OFSTED 2019

**Criteria 3:** Is a high-quality programme of continuous Professional Development in place. Does it ensure that staff have a robust specialist knowledge of autism specific best practice methods and approaches?

All staff receive weekly training, this is in specific relation to Autism and related Neuro diverse conditions, whole-school training to develop understanding and skill sets is usually driven by needs of pupil, this includes;

Comprehensive induction programme includes an online training re. Autism, sensory profiles/sensory programmes and practical experience with a range of learners with ASC. Oliver House school has an organisational offer to deliver Autism Educational Trust (AET) accredited training within the school and organisation, this now forms part of the induction process for all new staff and maintained throughout the academic year.

Annual CPD and targeted training 2019-2020;

- An introduction to Social Stories
- Communication Induction training
- Individual pupil training (Pupil pen portraits)
- Intensive interaction training 1 & 2
- PECs & PECs refresh
- Supporting Understanding of TEACCH
- Anxiety and Autism
- SCERTS refresh
- Supporting sensory regulation

This specific training allows staff to deliver effectively autism-specific tools such as the Alert programme, SCERTS, Intensive Interaction, ABA, TEACCH, and PECS, to ensure knowledge and practice are up to date and challenge stereotypes and myths about autism.

The specialist staff model good practice, supported by the volunteer role of Communication Champions from the staff team. Sensory Champions are appointed.

Proposed CPD and targeted training for 2020-2021 (additional due to COVID);

- Autism and behaviour support plans
- Autism and using the Risk Matrix to manage/risk assess new situations
- Sensory processing and implementing sensory profiles
- Sensory Diet and sensory bags
- Alert programme and self-regulation
- Communication passports
- SCERTS
- Communication- Talking Mats and PECs
- Lego therapy
- Mental Health and ADHD

All staff develop a sound and detailed understanding of autism, and working in a consistent way. This approach allows delivery of differentiated lessons and other sessions, tailored for the individual pupil. That understanding of autism is underpinned by a comprehensive training programme (mainly in-house, although some is delivered by the Priory Group Autism Lead) and the school's commitment to CPD. As previously highlighted all new appointees complete an online training course for autism before a seven-day induction period that includes first aid, safeguarding, physical handling, communication and autism. All are expected to pass the autism section and to progress to higher-level autism-specific training.

**Criteria 4:** Is feedback from autistic people and their circle of support excellent showing that the service is held in very high esteem and its work is greatly valued? *This will be primarily based on surveys carried out by Autism Accreditation as part of the assessment process.*

Please provide any further evidence of feedback from autistic people or their families e.g. results of surveys etc. (max 250 words)

**Pupils**

Pupil voice is valued e.g. 'restorative check in/out circles' these take place in the group classrooms, this enables ASD pupils to discuss issues, anxieties and celebrate daily successes. Staff also discuss 'wow moments' at the end of the day in briefing.

Careful consideration is taken when pupils join the school to ensure they're interests are included within their timetables and also their individual classrooms are personalised for them e.g. recently a pupil's classroom was decorated with various donkey themed wallpapers and the donkey sanctuary was added to his timetable. Each individual has a bespoke timetable, their own personalised classroom and also staffing is arranged to suit the pupils' preferences. The school is child centred and this reflects around the whole school.

School voice is also maintained through school council, pupils have ownership of this, particularly pupils in Phase 4.

Members of SLT and MTD spend time in the phases each day, this is a good opportunity to keep in contact with pupils to listen to their views, when e.g.

'I like it at school, my room is a nice space which helps me to focus' Phase 4 pupil, ' I always have a daily chat with Cath, it calms me, then I can do my work' phase 4 pupil. A pupil was recently asked how his first 2 days at school have been, his reply ' different, it's good, I can work with classical music on and it's peaceful here', Phase 1 pupil.

**Families**

A recent parental survey was undertaken directly with parents, comments from parents in July 2020 included;

'I could never wish for staff to know my son the way they do, this is so refreshing after years in mainstream.'

'Oliver House is an outstanding school which has turned my son's life around. When he started, all he wanted to do was hide away in his room (at school and home) and not engage in anything, as he felt that everything was a threat to him.'

'The great team of staff brought him out of himself, built his confidence up, gave him his self-worth back and he has achieved so much more than I ever thought was possible emotionally and academically.'

'He is leaving this year, aged 18, as a confident young person, ready to move on with the next chapter of his life. While there, he achieved 5 GCSE's and they supported him in attending a mainstream sixth form, part time, where he gained 2 AS levels. He now also enjoys golf and going to the gym, which is down to school finding activities that he would engage in and come to enjoy.'

'I will never be able to thank them enough for what they have done for my son. They are such a dedicated bunch of staff and are so passionate, which helps them to bring out the best in their pupils.'

'This is an exceptional school environment, as a parent we are not stressed knowing that our son is under the hands of right people who are looking after him very well every day.'

'Amazing progress, in communication and some other activities.'

'The staff are all very welcoming and caring. I do feel like they genuinely care about Shay. He seems to do lots of fun activities.'

'Nathan clearly enjoys his time in School and benefits from the individualised timetable he has. The routine and structured setting is very important for Nathan as it enables him to feel safe and creates an environment where he can access learning. His class teacher is excellent, she understands what works best for Nathan, and will adapt strategies to best meet his needs. Oliver House is an outstanding School, who values all their young people.'

'We are very grateful for all the care and attention that staff give to Tyler and to know that Tyler feels safe and valued for the first time in his school life.'

In the previous inspection from NAS, there was also overwhelming positive comments from parents and carers, OHS school sent out 35 questionnaires, of which 12 were returned. Of these, nine contained extra comments. Many of these included praise for Oliver House School's knowledge and understanding of ASD (see previous report).

**Criteria 5:** Is the service established as a centre of excellence in the field of autism, sharing its expertise through quality consultation and training as well as actively contributing to research into autism and innovations in practice?

At Oliver House School the ethos around communication is highly individualised and tailored around each pupil's specific interaction needs. Intensive Interaction has been identified as central to a cohort of pupils and this is embedded within their bespoke educational curriculums. As a specialist educational provision, the site has expertise in the field on intensive interaction. This has included an innovative contribution to the research base, at a doctorate level of study. This research was focused on the implementation of intensive interaction as an approach and how practise can be shape and refined through a range of training opportunities. The study involved extensive videoing using pioneering head camera technology and video analysis tools.

Oliver House School have brought in experts recognised within the intensive interaction literature including a formal training session led by Graham Firth and intensive modelling and direct input by Phoebe Caldwell. The knowledge developed through this practical research has had real life positive pupil outcomes. This has been shared nationally through specialist provisions and conferences including the National Autism show.

As recommended by OFSTED 2019 Oliver House School are committed to empowering other provisions and organisations by sharing their insights and highly specialist practice across the UK. The school is dedicated to offer training, to drive understanding in autism with the aim to better develop autism practice. Through the school's devotion to raise awareness of autism that involves multi-disciplinary insights including speech and language therapy, positive behaviour support and occupational therapy, then holistic and therapeutic knowledge is able to be shared. A few examples of this include working collaboratively with the AET to develop bespoke training to better support autistic individuals, launching bespoke Autism training sessions held in Lancashire, speaking at National Conferences such as the Autism Show and supporting local autism charities with training, advice and support.

Oliver house also work closely with 17 authorities and regularly invite commissioners in so that they can develop a greater understanding of autism and the individualised support which enables young people to make progress.

Oliver House held in high regard, it is viewed as the centre of excellence in Autism nationally. Recently OHS have held regular Autism specific 'talks', these are regularly attended by 120 or more parents/carers/professionals from the local community. OHS also support local parents and pupils through the local charity TAAG

Parent views are also heard, this is recorded on annual review documentation, comments from parents between September 2019-June 2020;

'As a school, you couldn't possibly do any more than you do. I feel privileged that Jack was given a place at your school and will always be very grateful for how it changed his life around. You built his self-worth back up from a very low place, enabling him to not only feel better about himself but also achieve four GCSE's.'

'Oliver House's unique and personalised approach offers Sid the opportunity to really move forward with his challenges and use his underlying abilities and skills to help him achieve his potential.'

**Criteria 6:** Are assessments informed by specialist expertise and grounded in a robust understanding of the nature of autism?

Is assessment data collated and presented in a range of formats so that it is accessible and of practical value to staff who have different levels of contact with the autistic person, as well as the autistic person and their circle of support?

The high level of personalisation is evident throughout the curriculum and the school day. All pupils have an individual curriculum of all pupils which has been streamlined into a single document incorporating planning, teaching and learning, assessment and accredited courses.

At the heart of this curriculum map is a SCERTS-based assessment regime focusing on social communication, sensory issues and emotional regulation. This starts with a detailed assessment before a pupil joins the roll, in which particular attention is paid to causes of anxiety and co-morbid conditions. From there the curriculum is designed to incorporate functional skills and, as appropriate life skills, vocational skills and option subjects, based on pupils' strengths and needs, and to which they can contribute. The assessment is also the basis for individual care and therapy programmes.

All staff are highly trained in autism and Priory Oliver House employs a diverse Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which brings together specialists from different disciplines with the knowledge, skills and experience in supporting young people with autism and challenging behaviours. The team provides direct support to individuals and work with staff teams to ensure that each young person benefits from a comprehensive understanding of their needs and is consistently provided with holistic person-centred support.

The multidisciplinary team at Priory Oliver House consists of specialists representing the following disciplines:

- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Learning Disability Nurse
- Behaviour Analyst
- Team Teach Coordinator

Services provided by the Multidisciplinary Team are as follows:

- multidisciplinary case management
- assessment of needs
- observation and consultation
- development and implementation of therapeutic programs / specialist protocols and guidelines
- supporting school and residential staff team:
- problem-solving – discussions; person centred workshops
- demonstration and modelling of various strategies in pupils' actual learning / living environment
- in service training to school and residential staff
- liaising with / supporting families
- linkage with outside agencies

Assessment at Oliver House includes;

- B Squared Data and Tracking sheets –Engagement, progression, step for life and secondary steps
- Duke of Edinburgh award and Jass award
- AQA entry level 1,2 and 3
- Functional Maths and English GCSE
- ASDAN
- Sp&L assessment and communication
- SCERTS data and targets
- BSPs, risk assessments and behaviour data and assessments
- EHCP targets and annual reviews

**Criteria 7:** Does the service provide highly creative and very personalised support based on a thorough and up-to-date understanding of how each autistic person communicates and socially interacts; their independent living skills and the impact of external factors including sensory input on their emotions and well-being? *This will be primarily based on observations of practice carried out by Autism Accreditation as part of the assessment process.*

Please provide any further evidence (max 250 words)

Oliver House School enjoys universally high levels of resourcing, including:

- highly personalised provision, producing excellent benefits and outcomes
- high levels of staffing (some pupils routinely have at least 2:1 support)
- good investment in training and CPD
- Curriculum resources (including funds for extra-mural activities the physical environment.

The SLT and MDT work across school and residential services, with parents and also with the 17 placing local authorities across the UK- this includes local community health and clinical teams who remain the responsible professionals as well as social care and education. In these situations the MDT will work in partnership with the other services and offer, if required, their professional expertise in autism. Autism knowledge is also shared locally to autism community groups, local authority schools, the police, health teams and the wider community.

Oliver House SLT, teachers and MDT have developed additional scales on SCERTS, the intention of this was to create a more personalised approach for each individual, see below;

Old Scale Value/Description	New Scale Value	Description
0 Criterion not met based on observed or reported information or would not be expected	0	The skill is <b>not reported</b> or observed in any environments and may not be expected at this stage of the individual's development.
	1	The skill is only evident in <b>one activity</b> and its use is <b>heavily dependent on assistance /prompting</b> by staff. <b>Prompts</b> may be verbal, gestural, physical, situational, facial expression, gaze or tone. There may be a combination of prompts but they are all very overt such as hand over hand.
1 The criterion is met inconsistently in one activity or with assistance	2	The skill is evident across <b>1 or 2 different activities or contexts</b> with <b>minimal prompting</b> needed from staff. <b>Staff give small prompts</b> and then stand back for the child to complete the action independently. The individual will largely show the skill with one key person.
	3	The skill is evident in <b>3 different activities or contexts</b> . The individual can show the skill being used with at least <b>2 different people</b> . The individual shows the skill with <b>minimal prompting</b> .
2 The skill is met consistently with at least 3 partners in at least 3 contexts.	4	The skill is evident in at least <b>4 different activities or contexts</b> . The individual can show the skill being used with at least <b>3 different people</b> . The individual uses the skill independently. <b>The individual is now rarely prompted to use the skill</b> .
	5	<b>The skill is firmly established.</b> The individual can use it spontaneously across <b>a range of environments (5 or more)</b> including school, home and within the community. The individual needs <b>no prompting</b> to use the skill. The individual will show the skill <b>with a range of adults (at least 5)</b> – both familiar and unfamiliar. Whilst you may continue to work on this skill in order to consolidate and generalise – it will no longer be a named target area unless the individual begins to show regression in an area.

These newly developed SCERTS scales have been crucial in creating a very person centred curriculum and assessments system, which has led to the development of Pupil Pen Portraits of Progress which are now produced annually. Below is an example of how the SCERTS now inform an individual progress.



**Criteria 8:** Has the service collated an impressive range of qualitative and quantitative data which provides compelling evidence of the considerable positive impact it has had (both in the short-term and in the long-term) on the lives of autistic people? Can it demonstrate that it is truly inspirational in what it is able to achieve?

- Individual pupil documents, including one-page pupil profile; pen portrait of progress summary sheet; pre-transition personal development support plan; SCERTS assessments, targets (for each phase and for individuals) and WOW Moment records; curriculum provision map; sensory one-page profile and sensory diet; learning pathway development; communication support plan; sensory equipment guidelines; health action plan; risk assessments
- OT: provision planning and reports
- SaLT: individual assessments and reports
- Positive Behaviour Support: individual assessments, support plans and data
- Policies: SCERTS; transition; sensory
- Lesson plans, weekly plans and long-term planning
- ASDAN Transition Challenge Portfolio
- Examples of staff training, such as communication ethos, mental health awareness, healthy eating and personalised training (for staff about an individual)
- Social Stories examples and training resource, Comic Strips resources
- ALERT emotional regulation programme working document
- Evidence of school-parent collaboration
- Oliver House prospectus and mission statement
- Oliver House OFSTED report 2019
  - Pen Portraits of progress measure overall progress and include the following data-
    - a) Attendance
    - b) Communication and Interaction- measured on a scale by the amount of staff the pupil will interact with leading to percentage of the timetable spent with others
    - c) Behaviour Data – RPI and Serious Incident
    - d) IEP/EHC – Amount of targets achieved over the year in relation to learning outcomes achieved.
    - e) SCERTS Data – measures progress in Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and sets transactional support targets for staff to aid professional development.
    - f) academic performance - UQ targets set

<b>Overall progress</b>	<b>A+B+C+D+E+F =</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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**overall progress for -**

<b>RI</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
0%	15%	85%

**EVIDENCE**

- Learner tracking documents;
- GCSE Outcomes;
- 2017-20 progress reports;
- Subject interventions;



## Case study on the development of a nurture phase

<b>Name of school:</b>	Oliver House School
<b>Date initiative started:</b>	September 2017
<b>Time period:</b>	3 years
<b>Description:</b> A nurture phase for pupils with a PDA profile of autism was developed within OHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PDA - Pathological Demand Avoidance - Autism profile with an '<i>Anxiety driven need to be in control and avoiding other people's demands and expectations</i>'. Children with PDA don't respond well to the intervention approaches typically known to work well in ASD.</li> </ul>	
<b>Context for the initiative:</b> One pupil has commenced OHS in September 2016, after a year at OHS although his presentation has changed from selective mutism and he became interactive he presented with challenging behaviours which was affecting the sustainability of his educational placement at OHS. There was a need to shift the approach from structured ASD systems to a more flexible, child led approach. Another pupil was joining in September but had a failed specialist education placement, he presented with extreme challenging behaviour and aggression. Two pupils were then identified with as appropriate for a new phase, with a specialist therapeutic focus.	
<b>Aims and objectives of initiative:</b> To a nurture phase, utilising autism supports but employing a specific PDA, flexible and pupil led approach to enable their access within education. The nurture phase has specific aims to focus on social communication and emotional regulation as a foundation for engagement and access to learning.	
<b>How was the initiative implemented:</b> Intensive therapeutic involvement to develop a phase which was led by the therapy team, this included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct work from OT to enable a curriculum driven by pupil's sensory needs to implement the regulating input each pupil required.</li> <li>- A range of monitoring, training, modelling and reflective opportunities were implemented within the setting</li> <li>- Direct training from MDT</li> <li>- Ongoing/individualised training workshops</li> <li>- Sensory boxes</li> <li>- Environmental adaptation/therapy approach</li> <li>- Flexible ASD systems in place</li> </ul>	
<b>CASE OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>Communication skills; social skills; relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-pupils have access to visual schedules used flexibly</li> <li>-range of choice opportunities structured using choice boards to support their need to be in control whilst following a daily routine</li> <li>-PDA specific interaction style adopted, non-direct language</li> <li>-creative use of approaching and offering 'demands'</li> <li>-Pupils made outstanding communication progress both pupils would present as select mute at times of high anxiety this decreased in time and frequency</li> <li>-social communication opportunities and peer relationship between both pupils was established</li> <li>-pupils made excellent progress widening the core staff team that supported them, as attachment and relationships with staff was a key factor in their emotional regulation</li> <li>-pupils became more assertive, expressing their choices as the phase followed their led, with a focus on their regulation and need for control.</li> <li>- The phase has now developed and become much wider to include 7 pupils with a similar profile.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Confidence; self-reliance; independent problem-solving</b></p>	<p>-Pupils developed their independence and ability to cope with demands. Including accessing sessions such as food technology which they had previously been unable to cope with.</p> <p>-Pupils became more resilient and able to complete tasks independently such as collecting their own lunches from the dining room.</p> <p>-Pupils were confident to express themselves and discuss their worries or problems with their core staff team, whereas this in the past may have caused extreme dysregulation pupils began writing down or telling staff a concern to problem solve situations.</p> <p>-Pupils grew in confidence, appropriately greeting and engaging in sustained interactions with staff outside of their core staff team.</p>
<p><b>Ability to cope with sensory input</b></p>	<p>-tolerance for sensory input increased and pupils were able to access a wider curriculum e.g. going on community activities such as parks, SPACE centre, bowling, and soft play areas appropriately.</p> <p>- One pupil reduced all self-injurious episodes related to tactile defensive e.g. he previously would hit his face at the feeling of the wind against his skin when outside and this behaviour stopped.</p> <p>-Pupils required less movement breaks and were able to focus and attend for longer periods of time. At the point now where pupils are accessing entry level learning and will access group learning within another phase. Pupils emotional regulation and sensory modulation profile is much calmer.</p>
<p><b>Emotional self-regulation and well-being</b></p>	<p>-pupils appear visibly happier e.g. not wearing hoodie over their head, spending long periods of time out of the safety of their individual classrooms and preferring to spend time in social areas such as the hall and time as a group.</p> <p>-Pupils are more assertive and able to use wider emotions vocabulary after benefitting from intensive support using the alert programme approach</p> <p>-All pupils have a positive perception of school, which is a significant achievement as all pupils have previously experienced negative school situations and all pupils want to come into school</p>
<p><b>Achievements, successes and quality of life outcomes</b></p>	<p>Pupils have made outstanding progress in accessing bespoke and personalised curriculum. The nurture phase, now 'Phase 5' has grown and expanded. There is a wider staff team requiring ongoing training in PDA support and interaction style. Staff have benefitted from continuous therapeutic input, reviewing sensory and communication programmes. One key success was staff having individual pupil training workshops to support their generalisation within practise alongside the therapy team providing direct work and modelling. Pupils are at different stages of their success and achievements. The two pupils who have had 3 years within the phase are now engaging in structured learning, they have become much more flexible and receptive to ideas and activities they have less control of. Other pupils are at earlier stages of their journey where their emotional regulation needs are central and the main focus of their curriculum.</p>
<p><b>NEXT STEPS</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing training and individualised workshops</li> <li>- Introduction of new pupils</li> <li>- Continuous support from the therapy team with educational staff and working with external professionals</li> <li>- Increased access to learning</li> </ul>	

## Case study to demonstrate the impact of an implementing Intensive



## Interaction approach

<b>Name of school:</b>	Oliver House School
<b>Name of individual case example:</b>	K
<b>Time period:</b>	7 years
<p><b>Pen picture of individual before support was introduced including challenges, difficulties etc.</b> K commenced her educational placement on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2013. K's previous specialist autism school were unable to meet her needs and complex challenging behaviours. Therefore, K had spent prolonged periods of time in a safe space, she was extremely self-injurious and withdrawn. K was unable to access a curriculum and due to the severity and frequency of intense self-injurious episodes impacting her safety.</p>	
<p><b>Context for the initiative:</b> At the time K commenced her educational placement she was identified alongside two others as a cohort of pupils where an innovative approach to enable her to access education was required. In order for K to engage the focus was developing her social communication. At the point K began Oliver House School; she was in a state of high anxiety and had no interest in people. She removed herself from the social world and appeared to have shut down. K had to be taught the skills of shared attention for her focus on connecting with people. Due to her severe learning difficulties, and significant cognitive weaknesses she was unable to visually discriminate and she was at the earliest stage of communication. Therefore other autism approaches were inaccessible to her. Intensive Interaction (II) is a specialist approach that suited K's individualised needs, therefore training and utilising II was considered a key therapeutic approach. This fits with the bespoke and pupil-led ethos within OHS, their education and supports are centred on the pupil's needs.</p>	
<p><b>Aims and objectives of initiative:</b> To develop the fundamentals of communication, including developing K's ability to share her personal space, share joint attention and engage in social communicative sequences.</p>	
<p><b>Pen picture of individual before support was introduced including challenges, difficulties etc.</b> K as an individual was receptive the II techniques, she responded positively to techniques such as initiation. A key barrier with implementing II was K's sensory modulation difficulties, in order to have moments of shared interaction and positive experiences involving her staff then K needed to be in 'calm alert state'. This required skilled staff able to read and respond to K's cues on a moment to moment basis. At times of emotional regulation, when K presented at baseline she was able to engage respond and engage in early stage turn-taking interactions. Another challenge in developing and building relationships was the consistency required within K's staff team. K required a small core staff team to support her.</p>	
<p><b>How was the initiative implemented:</b> A range of monitoring, training, modelling and reflective opportunities were implemented within the setting including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Video recording/head cameras</li> <li>- Video analyse to support reflection</li> <li>- Direct training from II expert (Graham Firth)</li> <li>- Direct modelling and training from expert (Phoebe Caldwell)</li> <li>- Ongoing/individualised training workshops</li> </ul>	

<b>CASE OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>Communication skills; social skills; relationships</b>	K has made outstanding progress in her social communication as reflected in her SCERTS targets, where initially the aim was to engage in II sequences, after time she then began initiating interaction with others as she became motivated and highly interested in people. K has developed her understanding that people are not only helpful but fascinating communication partners. K is now at the stage to embed these skills in II, the approach is generalised in a range of community activities where she will have positive interactions with a wide range of staff in a wide range of activities. K's progress in social communication has also enabled development in expressive communication and she is now able to utilise True Object Based Icons (TOBIS) to request a range of food at structured snack/meal opportunities. K's receptive language has excelled and she now understands a range of transitional objects to support her engagement (objects of references for key school/home areas).
<b>Confidence; self-reliance; independent problem-solving</b>	K's progression when considering her severe learning difficulties has been outstanding. K previously relied on access to a wheelchair to go out and she now walk independently. K has become more resilient and tolerant to wait, to transition and engage in new activities. K has developed life skills through II, now she is able to engage with people she has built skills to use a knife and fork when eating. K will prepare simple snacks e.g. toaster
<b>Ability to cope with sensory input</b>	K has made significant progress in her sensory modulation ability. Previously sensory over-stimulation was a key trigger for high levels of emotional dysregulation e.g. when spinning objects could trigger self-injurious behaviours. Now K is more regulated and becomes less over-stimulated due to her sensory processing dysfunction. K is less reliant on specialist equipment to regulate her senses for example she rarely reduces sensory input by hiding under her blanket. K is available and does rely on weighted equipment e.g. weighted blanket. K is now able to engage in a wide sensory diet as she participates in wider gross motor and vestibular activities. K's implementation of a sensory diet is supported by II, as the positive social communication exchanges supports her volition for movement sessions such as P.E.
<b>Emotional self-regulation and well-being</b>	K is more skilled at self-regulation, given her learning needs she does require mutual regulation support, where the key staff who support K offer appropriate and organising input e.g. offering a new activity, using 'twiddles' to support a transition. K does have skills in self-regulation she may now give her shoes to her staff as a cue to express a walk. K will push objects away and seek motivators as she has become more self-aware. K's wellbeing can be affected by internal needs (digestion, sleep) but overall she is positive, engaging and social able. K's self-injury has significantly reduced, she now will make positive vocalisations (singing noises) at times of emotional regulation.
<b>Achievements, successes and quality of life outcomes</b>	K has made outstanding success through intensive interaction in relation to her communication, regulation, independence and overall quality of life. K has access to a full personalised curriculum, achieving her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award and Gold in the transition challenge.
<b>NEXT STEPS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing to embed and generalise intensive interaction within a range of activities.</li> <li>- Ongoing and review of individualised training in the approach, specific for K including using video analyse as a tool.</li> <li>- Potentially introduce reflection sheets based on II as an approach.</li> </ul>	

