

Free Schools in 2014

Application form

Special Free Schools

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Completing your application

Before completing your application, please ensure that you have read the 'How to Apply' guidance carefully (which can be found [here](#)) and can provide all the information and documentation we have asked for – failure to do so may mean that we are unable to consider your application.

The Free School application is made up of nine sections as follows:

- **Section A:** Applicant details and declaration
- **Section B:** Outline of the school
- **Section C:** Education vision
- **Section D:** Education plan
- **Section E:** Evidence of demand
- **Section F:** Capacity and capability
- **Section G:** Initial costs and financial viability
- **Section H:** Premises
- **Section I:** Due diligence and other checks

In **Sections A-H** we are asking you to tell us about you and the school you want to establish and this template has been designed for this purpose. The boxes provided in each section will expand as you type.

Section G requires you to provide two financial plans. To achieve this you must fill out and submit the templates provided [here](#).

Section I is about your suitability to run a Free School. There is a separate downloadable form for this information. This is available [here](#)

You need to submit all the information requested in order for your application to be assessed.

Sections A-H and the **financial plans** need to be submitted to the Department for Education by the application deadline. You need to submit one copy (of each) by email to: special.fsapplications2014@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Your application should be: no more than 150 pages long; a Word document formatted for printing on A4 paper; completed in Arial 12 point font; and include page numbers. Annexes should be included within the page limit and restricted to documents relating to evidence of demand (e.g. questionnaires and maps) and relevant CVs. The financial templates are excluded from the page limit and should be submitted separately in Excel. Please include the name of your school in the file name for both your Word and Excel documents. Please do not include photographs, images and logos in your application (other than the demand map). Your email must be no more than 10MB in size.

You also need to submit two hard copies (of **sections A-H** and the **financial plans**) by 'Recorded Signed For' post to:

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

It is essential that the hard copies are identical to the version you email.

Section I must be submitted in hard copy and sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to:

Due Diligence Team
Department for Education
4th Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Data Protection

Personal data is collected on this form in order to consider an application to set up a Free School and will not be used for other purposes. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Department for Education is the data controller for this personal information and for ensuring that it is processed in accordance with the terms of the Act. The Department will hold all personal information you supply securely and will only make it available to those who need to see it as part of the Free School application process. All personal information supplied in these forms will only be retained for as long as it is needed for this process.

Application checklist

Checklist: Sections A-H of your application		
	Yes	No
1. You have established a company limited by guarantee.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You have provided information on all of the following areas:		
Section A : Applicant details – including signed declaration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section B : Outline of the school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section C : Education vision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section D : Education plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section E : Evidence of demand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section F : Capacity and capability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section G : Initial costs and financial viability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section H : Premises	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. This information is provided in A4 format using Arial font, minimum 12 font size, includes page numbers and is no more than 150 pages in total.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You have completed two financial plans using the financial template spreadsheet.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Independent schools only/NMSS : you have provided a link to the most recent inspection report.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Independent schools only/NMSS : you have provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. All relevant information relating to Sections A-H of your application has been emailed to special.fsapplications2014@education.gsi.gov.uk between 9am on 17 December 2012 and 6pm on 4 January 2013 and the email is no more than 10 MB in size.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Two hard copies of the application have been sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3 rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Checklist: Section I of your application		
9. A copy of Section A of the form and as many copies of the Section I Personal Information form as there are members and directors have been sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4 th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT, between 9am on 17 December 2012 and 6pm on 4 January 2013.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section A: Applicant details

Main contact for this application	
1.	Name: [REDACTED]
2.	Address: [REDACTED] National Autistic Society 393 City Road London EC1V 1NG
3.	Email address: [REDACTED]
4.	Telephone number: [REDACTED]
About your group	
5.	Are any members of your group related in any way, including by marriage, to any other? NB this includes company members or directors, members of the project group, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
6.	If Yes, please provide more details:
7.	How you would describe your group: <input type="checkbox"/> A parent/community group <input type="checkbox"/> A teacher-led group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An existing Free School sponsor (<i>see below</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> An academy chain <input type="checkbox"/> A federation <input type="checkbox"/> An independent school <input type="checkbox"/> A state maintained school <input type="checkbox"/> Something else
8.	If 'Something else', please provide more details: The National Autistic Society is sponsoring the NAS Thames Valley Free School, which is currently in the pre opening stage and will open in September 2013.
9.	Is your group seeking to open more than one Free School application in this round? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
10.	If Yes, please provide more details: The NAS is submitting an application to open the NAS Vanguard School in Lambeth. This will be an autism specific special school for secondary age pupils.

11.	In addition to any support/advice from the New Schools Network, did you put together this application with support from another company or organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
12.	If Yes, please list the name(s) of the organisation(s) and describe clearly the role they played in developing your application. Please also describe the role (if any) you envisage for them in setting up and/or running the Free School if your application is successful:	
Details of company limited by guarantee		
13.	Company name: NAS Cheshire East Free School	
14.	Company address: 393 City Road London EC1V 1NG	
15.	Company registration number and date when company was incorporated: 8337825 20 Dec 2012	
16.	Does the company run any existing schools, including any Free Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
17.	If Yes, please provide details:	
Company members		
The members of the company are its legal owners. We require that there are a minimum of three members. The founding members are those that establish the company and sign the memorandum of association that is submitted (with the company's articles of association) when registering the company with Companies House. Further members may subsequently be appointed.		
18.	Please confirm the total number of company members: 3	
19.	Please provide the name of each member below (add more rows if necessary):	
	1. Name: ██████████	
	2. Name: ██████████	
	3. Name: ██████████	

Company directors

The company directors are appointed by the members and will eventually form the governing body that will oversee the management of the school. At the point of setting up the company, members are required to appoint at least one director – this may be one of the members. All directors at the point of application must complete a Section I personal information form. All individuals on the governing body must be formally appointed as directors of the company and registered with Companies House.

20. Where directors have already been appointed please provide the name of each and the positions they will hold (add more rows if necessary):

1. Name: [REDACTED]

2. Name: [REDACTED]

3. Name: [REDACTED]

21. Please provide the name of the proposed chair of the governing body, if known: [REDACTED]

Related organisations

22. Through its members, directors or otherwise, does the company limited by guarantee have any formal or informal links (e.g. financial, philosophical or ideological) with any other organisations within the UK or overseas? These may include: other Free School groups; other institutions; charitable bodies; and/or commercial or non-commercial organisations.

Yes
 No

23. If Yes, please provide the following information about each organisation:

- their name;
- their Companies House and/or Charity Commission number, if appropriate; and
- the role that it is envisaged they will play in relation to the Free School.

The National Autistic Society
Charity No. CR269425
Companies House No. 1205298

The National Autistic Society is sponsoring the establishment of the Free School and is expected to support the school through the provision of autism expertise, training and functional support.

24.	<p>Please specify any religious organisations or institutions connected to your application (local, national and international). In particular, please describe in specific terms the religious affiliations of your group, including where appropriate any denomination or particular school of thought that influences your group (e.g. Pentecostalism, Deobandism, Reform Judaism, etc).</p> <p>None</p>
Existing providers	
25.	<p>Is your organisation an existing independent school wishing to convert to a Free School?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
26.	<p>Is your organisation an existing independent school wishing to establish/sponsor a new and separate Free School?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
27.	<p>Is your organisation an existing state maintained school or Academy wishing to establish a new and separate Free School?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
28.	<p>If Yes to any of the above three questions, please provide your six digit unique reference number here:</p>
29.	<p>If you are an existing independent, NMSS or state maintained school or an Academy, please state the SEN currently catered for, the age range and current number of pupils on roll and your capacity:</p>
30.	<p>If you are an existing independent or state maintained school, NMSS or an Academy, please provide the date of your most recent inspection and a link to the report on the Ofsted or other inspectorate website:</p>
31.	<p>If you are an existing independent, NMSS or state maintained school or an Academy, please provide a link to your performance data for the last 3 years:</p>
32.	<p>If you are another type of organisation involved in education, e.g. an Academy sponsor, please describe that organisation. Please ensure you include your company registration number:</p> <p>The National Autistic Society (NAS) is sponsoring this Free School. The NAS' company registration number is 1205298.</p> <p>The NAS was established 50 years ago by a group of parents who were unwilling to accept that their autistic children were deemed "ineducable" by the State. They went on to set up the world's first autism specific school and today the NAS owns and runs seven schools across the UK:</p>

<p>six in England and one in Scotland. These provide a mix of day and residential education to children and young people with an autistic spectrum disorder.</p> <p>In addition, the NAS is sponsoring the NAS Thames Valley Free School, opening in September 2013, and is submitting an application for a further Free School in Lambeth.</p> <p>Ofsted has assessed four of the schools in England as 'Outstanding' (one school was opened earlier this year and does not yet have an Ofsted rating).</p> <p>The philosophy we follow in all our schools is to enable students to overcome their barriers to learning, develop social skills and coping strategies and learn to manage their own behaviour. Most importantly through carefully planned educational pathways we aim to prepare pupils to achieve and make a positive inclusive contribution to their community.</p> <p>As well as delivering the educational curriculum, the schools provide respite services and short breaks for local families, together with educational outreach to other schools.</p> <p>Moving on from schools the NAS operates a transitions support service and provides student support for those going on to further or higher education.</p> <p>In addition to education, the NAS provides a wide range of services to adults and families, including adult residential care and supported living, help and information, advocacy, befriending, training and family support. A campaigning organisation working to improve the lives of everyone affected by autism, the NAS has some 19,000 members and more than 100 branches.</p>
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**Please tick to confirm that you have included
all the items in the checklist.**



Declaration to be signed by a company member on behalf of the company

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a Free School in accordance with the requirements outlined in the 'How to Apply' guidance and the funding agreement with the Secretary of State. I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed:

Position: Chair of company / Member of company (please delete as appropriate).

Print name:

Date:

NB This declaration only needs to be signed in the two hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.

Section B: Outline of the school

1.	Proposed school name:	NAS Cheshire East Free School	
2.	Proposed academic year of opening:	2014	
3.	Specify the proposed age range of the school:	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-11 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-16 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-16 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 14-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 16-19 <input type="checkbox"/> Other If Other, please specify:	
4.	The SEN designations for which the school will cater (please tick all that are appropriate):	NB: An outline of SEN designations can be found at Annex B of the special 'How to Apply' guidance. <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) <input type="checkbox"/> Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD) <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty (BESD) <input type="checkbox"/> Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment (VI) <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment (HI) <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability (PD) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below)	
5.	Proposed maximum capacity of proposed special Free School	For stated pupils	60
		For Non-stated pupils	0
6.	Date proposed school will reach expected capacity in all year groups:	Sep 2017	
7.	Will your proposed school be:	<input type="checkbox"/> Boys only <input type="checkbox"/> Girls only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mixed	

8.	Will your proposed school include residential provision?	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
9.	If yes please provide more details here.	
10.	Do you intend your proposed school to have a faith ethos? NB Please refer to the glossary of terms in the 'How to Apply' guidance for more information about religious character/designation/ethos.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
11.	If Yes, please specify the faith, denomination, etc of the proposed school:	
12.	If you have a preferred site, please give details, including the post code:	██████████, Cheshire, ██████████
13.	Please tell us how you found this site:	██████████
14.	Is the site:	<input type="checkbox"/> a private building? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a public/government building? <input type="checkbox"/> don't know?
15.	If you have not identified a site yet, please tell us the postcode of your preferred location:	
16.	Local authority in which the proposed school would be situated:	Cheshire East

17.	If the preferred site is near to a local authority boundary please specify the names of the neighbouring local authorities:	Staffordshire City of Stoke on Trent
18.	This application form is designed to be used for special Free School applications (as defined at Annex A of the 'How to Apply' guidance). If the school you are proposing does not really fit the definition of a special Free School but does not fit the definitions of mainstream, 16-19 or alternative provision schools, you need to use the template that is the closest fit and explain how your school would differ. <i>If this applies to your application please briefly outline the main differences below.</i> You will also need to address these differences in more detail in the relevant sections of the application.	

Section C: Education vision

C1 Provide a clearly focused, coherent vision that underpins the application with a compelling rationale for establishing the school.

Vision for the school

The NAS has an organisational vision where people with Autism get to live the life they choose. The key influence on this is having access to the right education.

The school will be the realisation of this vision, enabling pupils who have the potential to access the national curriculum but who are struggling to maintain a mainstream place because of their autism. The school will enable these children to access the highest quality specialist provision without the need for extensive travel or a residential placement. Special schools for those with learning difficulties are inappropriate for these young people but our vision is to provide them with choice, opportunity and achievement.

The school will:

- Have a distinctive ethos and philosophy: from the moment a person enters the building they will know this is a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and have rich and varied experiences.
- Build on pupils strengths and capitalise on interests, giving them a reason to learn and instilling a belief in the importance of what they can achieve, not what they can't!
- Support pupils to achieve GCSE's, A Levels and other recognised qualifications.
- Build on the extensive knowledge and experience of the National Autistic Society to be creative, pioneering and innovative in its approach to meeting the needs of these specific groups of pupils.
- Be regarded as a regional resource; a school where it is common practice to share practice with local schools, the community and beyond.
- Be based on an overriding understanding between staff and pupils that expectations are high.
- Recruit staff on the basis that they have an uncompromising commitment to demonstrating outstanding teaching and learning which embraces best practice in Autism and education.

- Establish a curriculum that enables pupils to overcome their barriers to learning, develop social skills and coping strategies and learn to manage their own behaviour.
- Place an emphasis on social skills and citizenship work, supporting pupils to achieve and make a positive inclusive contribution to their community.
- Provide bespoke education through carefully planned educational pathways, which are focussed on long-term outcomes and seek to improve the current and future lives of the students, their families and members of the local community.
- Be innovative by encouraging pupils to optimise their education and life chances by creating personalised programmes that combine both mainstream and specialist provision.
- Be pioneering in its Autism specific ICT provision.

Rationale

The school will welcome pupils with Autism between the ages of 4 and 19 and it will specifically cater for pupils whose needs are not currently being met by the range of provision on offer. Pupils attending the school will have a statement of special educational needs and a diagnosis of autism. Pupils may also have other associated difficulties including mental health issues and co-existing conditions, such as epilepsy or Tourette's Syndrome.

Typically, children coming to the school will display characteristics that include significant levels of social isolation, severe levels of anxiety and repetitive behaviours, all of which impact on their learning.

By putting in place autism specific strategies and personalised curriculums we will create an environment in which students with these difficulties are enabled to develop a core foundation of knowledge and skills that are relevant to the future and which enable them to achieve increased inclusion in society. They will be prepared for further study at college or university, leading to employment opportunities.

We will seek to excite our students about school and learning through the delivery of a flexible and challenging curriculum, which is supported by a wide range of extra curricular opportunities. We will give them the prerequisite 'learning to learn' skills and help them to understand their own difficulties and develop 'tool kits' to help them through stages in life, particularly at transition points. We will deliver truly personalised learning that capitalises on individual strengths and removes barriers to learning, enabling our students to achieve their potential and beyond! We will build on the experience of seven NAS schools to devise and deliver the highest quality Autism specific curriculum possible.

Education has always been at the heart of what the NAS does. Fifty years

ago the charity was founded by a group of parents who were unwilling to accept that their autistic children were deemed “ineducable” by the State. Today the NAS has six schools in England and one in Scotland and is sponsoring a Free School which will open in Reading next September. Four of the English schools have ‘Outstanding’ Ofsted ratings (one school is too new to have been rated).

Through our schools, helplines and branches we continue to hear from parents and local authorities to the effect that many pupils with Autism are either out of school or in inappropriate placements, often out of borough. This is the situation in Cheshire East where a recently completed review of provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities identified that in 2010/11 some 85 children and young people were placed in ASD-specific out of borough placements, at a total cost of some £3.4million.

This proposal is a direct result of an initiative by Cheshire East to address the needs of pupils and families who require appropriate and accessible ASD specific provision. The requirement is for an outstanding ASD specific school within the community, underpinned by their vision that “no child or young person is left behind”. This is a vision that the NAS fully shares and supports.

Consultation to date has highlighted that the parents of children with ASD are concerned that Cheshire East is currently unable to provide a continuum of provision for their children and young people.

The school will primarily be a resource for use by Cheshire East but the proposed site is also accessible to children from Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Should Cheshire East not require all the available places, these neighbouring authorities will be invited to refer eligible pupils.

Other key stakeholders with whom we will work closely include parents, neighbouring special and mainstream schools and FE colleges.

The school will have a ‘revolving door’ policy. This means that the staff will work with the local authority to identify the right type and duration of placement so that pupils may enter and leave the school at any point in their career. The school will have a flexible menu of packages, for example:

- Full time placement for years 5 and 6 with inclusion programme in local school during year 6 to prepare for returning to mainstream at secondary age.
- Part time placement of older students, attending mainstream with support from Free School staff so that the student can access particular GCSE or A level lessons, but based at the Free School for pastoral support.
- Two terms placement of a key stage 1 pupil, followed by supported transition to local primary school.

However, it is recognised that for a small number of students, their needs will be such that their entire school career is based at the Free School.

Flexible placements will be outcome focused and designed to enable pupils to:

- 'Catch up' on learning, especially in core subjects, in preparation to learn alongside mainstream peers.
- Develop positive behaviour patterns, including developing techniques for self-management.
- Acquire relevant social skills to cope in a group setting.
- Develop self-esteem.
- Assimilate appropriate learning behaviours.
- Access mainstream environments in a structured and secure way.
- Access an inclusive education.

Approach to teaching

Bespoke educational packages will be designed around pupils, addressing their identified areas of challenge. Structured, carefully planned support to enable pupils to move back to their original placements will be part of the planned outcomes for those children.

The focus will be on collaborative working so that the non-specialist schools in the region benefit from the NAS Free School expertise, while the NAS Free School benefits from the expertise of non-specialist and mainstream schools. Continuous liaison and joined up working will facilitate better identification of those most at risk, enabling earlier intervention to help prevent placement breakdown. The NAS specialist Free School will enable the provision of a more flexible range of support models, increasing opportunities to move people on to other local provision with the continuing support of Free School staff, as required. As well as being a school for children and young people with autism, the school will be a centre of excellence, working with the local authority's autism outreach team to maintain mainstream placements wherever that is possible and appropriate.

At the time of admission a local maintained school will be identified as a partner provision. The choice of this partner school will be led by the pupil but the young person's family, as well as the Local Authority and the head teacher of the identified provision, will also be consulted. We will set up an agreement of understanding with the partner school with regard to the amount of and the nature of the contact that will take place. This will enable all pupils, even those who will stay in our schools for the duration of their education, to maintain a link to a local school (special or mainstream).

The NAS Cheshire East School's aims and practice will reflect those of the NAS and will be in line with the Society's other schools. The philosophy and teaching strategies are based on the SPELL framework. SPELL is an acronym for Structure, Positivity, Empathy, Low Arousal and Links. This is a common thread running through all of the specialist services provided by the NAS and underpins all areas of practice and environment. It is not a

competing or alternative therapy, but is a way of organising knowledge and recognising and promoting good practice.

Training and information on SPELL describes how within each of these elements, best practice can support the education, care and wellbeing needs of people with Autism through each stage of their life. SPELL incorporates the use of TEACCH, PECS, Studio 3 (Physical intervention training), physical exercise curriculum and a multi-sensory approach. This ensures that the correct level of structure for individual pupils is put in place, that positive expectations and approaches are implemented and that teaching emphasises the needs and strengths of the individual. More information can be found on SPELL and other Autism Specific teaching methods on the National Autistic Society's [website](#).

NAS schools are currently exploring the SCERTS framework. This model provides 'both a comprehensive framework and specific guidance for translating individualised priorities into attainable and measurable goals for a range of children' (<http://www.scerts.com>).

SCERTS provides a framework which encompasses Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support. The NAS SPELL approach fits well within this.

This will encourage all pupils to be as independent as possible. This is achieved through an emphasis on the teaching of social interaction and communication, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Children with autism have to learn new skills in a highly structured teaching environment and will not readily transfer these skills to similar less structured situations. This must be actively taught. Hence a high priority is placed on the 24-hour curriculum and on community based education. There has to be generalisation of learning across all environments: school, home and community.

There will be a commitment to ensure inclusion in its broadest sense starting with access to the curriculum, social activities with their peers and through positive links within the local community.

The school will have high aspirations and as such will have an uncompromising commitment to the pursuit of the highest quality of teaching and learning. Regular lesson observations, SLT learning walks daily and video coaching will support the school to achieve outstanding teaching and learning. The school will have the support of other outstanding NAS schools which will support the newly formed staff team to achieve this.

The school will emphasise the important role that learning support assistants play in maximising the attainment of pupils. Teachers and LSAs will receive induction to ensure good practice in relation to setting up an Autism specific learning environment and Autism specific teaching.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting will be held for each pupil, enabling the views of all professionals involved to be taken into account

when devising a child's IEP. IEP targets address autism specific areas of development including communication, social understanding, independence and self regulation.

Pupils will have individual programmes of work set in Maths and English directly informed by assessment. All targets will be set after taking into account their level of learning challenge, individual learning styles, strengths, interests and motivators and will be extended into the home and community setting. The school will become a member of the NAS education group and through collaborative working it will benefit from the organisation's experience and infrastructure.

The school has set the following core targets:

- 100% of post 16 students achieve an Entry Level 1 qualification
- 75% of post 16 students who achieve level C at GCSE's achieve a Level 2 qualification
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 at key stage 2 in core subjects to achieve level C at GCSE's
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 in ICT at key stage 2 to achieve level C at GCSE's
- 75% of pupils to achieve at least one foundation subject GCSE in an area most aligned with their strengths or special interests.
- 100% of pupils who are not entered for GCSE's to obtain an ASDAN qualification
- Pupils working at below level 2 and key stage one or below level 4 at key stage 2 to progress 2 levels per key stage.
- 50% of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make the expected progress with regard to age-related expectations
- 90% of students to attend a mainstream college or take on meaningful employment after completing year 11.
- 90% of pupils that return to mainstream schooling to maintain successful placements
- Reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour.
- For the majority of pupils to learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to engage with learning, make a meaningful contribution to their community and live with dignity and independence.
- For no pupils to be excluded.
- For pupils to acquire the technological skills that prepare them for 21st Century life enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.

These targets are appropriate for pupils as they are based on an evaluation of expected intake and general knowledge of the needs of pupils with Autism who are of average or high cognitive ability. They are based on our experience, together with the feedback we receive from parents and pupils within NAS schools and focus groups. The targets are ambitious and are pitched to challenge pupils and staff. They go beyond previous NAS data to aim even higher with the belief that such specialist provision will ensure pupils achieve beyond what would be possible in other settings.

Section D: Education plan – part 1

In the table below, please provide the proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and an explanation of how pupil numbers will build up over time. Please add additional rows/columns if appropriate. If you are an existing independent school or non-maintained special school wishing to become a Free School, please use the first column to show how many pupils you currently have.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Pre-school	1	1	1	2	2	2
Year 1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Year 2	0	2	2	2	2	2
Year 3	0	2	2	2	2	2
Year 4	1	2	2	2	2	2
Year 5	1	2	7	9	9	9
Year 6	2	3	4	9	9	9
EYFS and Primary total	6	13	20	28	28	28
Year 7	2	3	4	6	9	9
Year 8	2	4	4	6	6	6
Year 9	2	2	3	7	6	6
Year 10	2	4	5	6	3	4
Year 11	1	2	4	4	6	3
Year 12	0	2	3	2	1	3
Year 13	0	0	2	1	1	1
Secondary and post 16 totals	9	17	25	32	32	32
Total % of capacity	15 (25%)	30 (30%)	45 (75%)	60 (100%)	60 (100%)	60 (100%)

Assumptions made about pupil intake:

- Admissions data for the seven National Autistic Society (NAS) schools (available on request) has shown increased demand for specialist places between year 5 and year 9. The data clearly identifies that Year 7 pupils are consistently the highest pupil admission group for the seven schools. This data has informed estimations of the projected pupil intake. However, it is noted also that NAS experience of managing admissions has shown that pupils cannot be taken only from these year groups, otherwise the school would not be balanced across the key stages or develop proportionately.
- It is planned that whilst the school is growing to capacity it will be less likely to admit year 10 and 11 pupils as it is expected their placement will already have been determined.
- Whilst year 10 and 11 pupils won't be excluded from the admissions policy, these individuals will be less likely to benefit from the "revolving

door” philosophy of the school as they will not have had the opportunity for foundation work to prepare for this.

- Admissions data for the seven existing NAS schools demonstrates low demand for specialist places for Reception and Year 1 children and this trend is expected to continue. However, as the reputation of the school grows and schools and local authorities see key performance criteria being met, it is expected that they will increasingly be willing to send children to the school at a younger age. The approach of early intervention, along with the “revolving door” policy, will be seen as extremely desirable practice in terms of the placement of children with Autism. Therefore, we haven’t made assumptions that we will have the younger age groups initially but will be working with local authorities to promote this as the school develops.
- The school’s “revolving door policy” means that pupil numbers for each year group may fluctuate. For the purposes of planning out the numbers and curriculum it is assumed that if one pupil was to leave for a less specialist placement they would be replaced by a pupil in that key stage. This assumption is reflected in the grid of pupil numbers.
- In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum, both nationally and in Cheshire East. This increase may be partially explained by improved awareness and increased diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- ASD is of high incidence nationally with 16% of statements having ASD as the primary category of need. In Cheshire East the percentage is higher.

Section D: Education plan – part 2

Please refer to pages 19 to 22 of the 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

D1: Explain the rationale for your proposed curriculum, how it reflects the needs of your anticipated pupil intake and your plans for their progression and transition.

The Curriculum

Statement of Principles

In accordance with the NAS vision, the objective of the curriculum and education plan will be to prepare pupils to have the life they choose. We will help students develop a core foundation of knowledge and skills relevant to the future that will lead to increased inclusion in society and prepare them for further study, university and employment. We seek to excite our students about school and learning through the delivery of a flexible and challenging curriculum, which is supported by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. We will give them the pre requisite "learning to learn" skills and help them to understand their own difficulties and develop "tool kits" to help them through stages in life, particularly at transition points. We will deliver truly personalised learning that capitalises on individual strengths and removes barriers to learning, enabling our students to achieve their potential and beyond! We will build on the experience of seven NAS schools to devise and deliver the highest quality Autism specific curriculum possible.

Curriculum aims:

- To provide a "curriculum for life" that prepares individuals for each stage ahead.
- To encapsulate best practice in curriculum delivery and Autism methodology.
- To include Autism specific curricula for specific areas that are particularly difficult for our pupils (e.g. Preparing for transition, Social communication curriculum, Understanding their own diagnosis).
- To deliver Autism specific education in all other areas of the curriculum.
- To focus on depth in the core subjects and ICT.
- To prepare pupils for life in a technologically advanced 21st century, enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.
- To work in partnership with local schools and colleges to support pupils in accessing vocational, academic and personalised pathways.
- To provide sufficient flexibility within the curriculum to be compatible with individual student pathways, which may include part time learning in other schools or preparation for transition.
- To provide pupils with knowledge of themselves and how they learn and behave and develop strategies for self-management.
- To provide breadth through a mandatory enrichment curriculum and extended school day.

- To provide sufficient flexibility within the curriculum to enable individual pupils' strengths, talents and interests to be incorporated into learning and ensure sufficient individualisation so as not to push children to learn within a model that is not compatible with their abilities, needs and choices.
- To support pupils' wellbeing and build confident aspirational citizens who are able to make a positive contribution within their local community.
- To ensure opportunities to generalise knowledge into a variety of settings, including the local community.
- To include content that is exciting, motivating and creative.
- To provide social, moral, cultural and spiritual education that is evident in the ethos of the school and which is delivered throughout the curriculum.

Rationale and description of curriculum

Autism

Autism is a lifelong condition that affects language and communication, social awareness and imagination. Other associated factors may include attention, focus, imitation, perception, motivation, sequencing and repetitive stereotyped behaviour. In addition, some pupils may present with other conditions such as epilepsy, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Syndrome and Tourette Syndrome. These difficulties will all affect their learning to various degrees. A specialist education, structured individualised support and an appropriate curriculum can make a difference to the life of a pupil with Autism and can help to maximise skills and to achieve their full potential.

The School Curriculum will therefore be geared specifically to the needs of pupils with autism, with particular emphasis, therefore, on communication and social skills. Individual Educational Programmes (IEPs) will target the specific areas related to their Autism that present them with particular difficulty and act as barriers to learning and achievement across all other areas. These may include targets related to communication, social skills, behaviour, flexibility of thought, problems solving, citizenship and independence, as appropriate to the individual child. All children will have individualised Numeracy and Literacy programmes that enable advancement from their own starting points towards nationally expected levels of achievement.

National Curriculum

The planned cohort is pupils with ASD who are at average or higher than average levels of cognitive functioning who have previously not been able to access the appropriate education and make progress. It is for this reason that the school will opt to follow the National Curriculum. These pupils have the potential to achieve all that their mainstream peers do. Whilst they may need a different approach to teaching and learning, and highly specialised differentiation and support, they are able to access the content of the National Curriculum.

Experience, research and literature on teaching similar cohorts of pupils has demonstrated that formal learning and a structured curriculum, combined with specialised teaching and learning approaches, is advantageous. The National Curriculum will be accessed via carefully drawn up Autism specific schemes of work in each area which will ensure depth within core subjects but sufficient breadth and balance of learning opportunities through breadth subjects. They will enable progression and differentiation to meet the needs of a spectrum of abilities. They will also take into

account the different ways people with Autism learn and the likelihood of uneven profiles.

The curriculum will be designed to enable a fast track to catching up on any learning that has been missed out in earlier years. Within all schemes of work, opportunities for the generalisation of skills will be paramount, particularly in relation to enabling pupils to demonstrate their learning in community settings.

Flexibility

Whilst all National Curriculum subjects will be delivered, timetabling will enable a greater emphasis to be placed on the areas of need that are more prominent in pupils with Autism. There will be increased opportunities for development of communication/social skills, life skills and Personal, Social and Health education, with a strong emphasis on Citizenship. These areas will be interlinked so, for example, a life skills role play session where students learn the rules associated with eating out will be followed up with opportunities in community based education to generalise skills learnt in the classroom. Schemes of work for all subjects will detail the potential learning in these areas that will co-exist with subject specific learning.

ICT

ICT will be defined as a core subject. It is recognised that not only is it important to prepare our pupils for learning, living and working in the 21st century but also that individuals with Autism can excel in this area. The aim for most students will be to work towards accredited qualifications and potentially use this as a basis for college and career planning. Additionally it is recognised that individuals with Autism frequently benefit from using this as a preferred method of learning as it does not require the social element that other learning styles are based on. Whilst this does not mean other forms of learning will be under used it does mean this should be embraced as an effective tool for promoting self-led learning and achievement. There will be high expectations for standards of ICT teaching and learning and to achieve this it will underpin every area of the curriculum. We will embrace new and creative technologies, especially those that promote social interaction and will teach our pupils to be safe and confident users of ICT.

Our ICT activities will extend to include the availability of a learning resource area where parents and members of the community will be able to access ICT resources, develop their own expertise and confidence and become more informed about the school by viewing up to date, on line information about what is happening within the school.

Physical Education

Physical Education will be a key feature within the timetable and in recognition of the benefits of exercise on anxiety and behaviour for individuals with Autism. There is a wealth of literature highlighting the benefits of exercise for pupils with ASD (see NAS website). Pupils will have daily opportunities, either through timetabled PE sessions, use of a swimming pool or through our enrichment timetable. There will be a balance of exercise that enable pupils to be extremely active and improve their fitness and achieve goals as well as more therapeutic exercise such as Yoga.

Learning Behaviours

It is recognised that many of the pupils will have had previous negative learning experiences and may not arrive within the school as engaged motivated learners. They

may initially need to assimilate the necessary learner's behaviours before they can utilise the more formal types of education experiences. In order to learn, the pupils need to know what is expected of them and how to behave in different social situations. The school will have a curriculum document entitled "being ready for learning" which will detail how pupils will be supported in acquiring these essential prerequisite skills and behaviours. In the initial period that pupils are in school it will be essential to transform them into individuals that recognise and value the benefits of learning. Central to this will be building self-esteem through capitalising on individual's strengths and providing individualised curriculum opportunities that enable them to take part in the activities that excite them the most. Part of this will be to promote aspiration and encourage enterprise learning in order to assist pupils in understanding the link between working hard and positive outcomes for themselves.

Behaviour Management

It is assumed that almost all of the pupils within the school will either in their recent past or at the time of entry to the school display frequent challenging behaviour. Therefore, it is a priority that this is addressed through the design of our curriculum.

All pupils will be taught explicitly about the importance of developing appropriate behaviour patterns. Creative positive behaviour management and individual and group social skills and PSHCE work will put them at the centre of this. We will promote understanding that they are responsible for the choices they make and that there is a link between their actions and the short and long term consequences for themselves. Work in this area will encourage pupils to be empowered to make positive choices about their behaviour and future. It is envisaged some pupils will need additional programmes of work to support them in this area. Therefore individual schemes of work related to Anger Management, self-esteem and understanding their own diagnosis will all be delivered to those pupils demonstrating they require it.

Literacy & Numeracy

Literacy, Numeracy and ICT will be embedded in all areas of the curriculum and will have emphasis within timetable allocation. A separate social communication curriculum at key stages 1-3 will run to support pupils in the acquisition or catch up of skills

Extended Learning

The school will work with the young people and community to identify opportunities for extended learning, whether this is in the form of after school clubs (enrichment curriculum) or enabling our students to attend groups in local schools or the community. Staff mentors will be selected to support pupils in their activities beyond the school. A key priority will be to plan whole school and individual inclusion and access, whether that is a group from the school taking part in a local community volunteer project or an individual accessing a mainstream provision on a weekly or daily basis. There will be a strong focus on the community, underpinned by the understanding that they have a part to play as active citizens. This will be supported by a continuous drive towards promoting respect for themselves, their parents, the school and wider community.

Key Stage 4 & Life Skills

The key stage 4 curriculum will be divided into two central elements. The first will be to achieve accredited courses within the subjects of which they are capable. This will be provided through in house tuition and wherever possible, attending mainstream schools

to participate in their GCSE groups. The second main element of the key stage 4 curriculum will be about planning for transition. A curriculum document entitled “Learning to Live and Work” will detail arrangements for supporting pupils with acquiring the necessary life skills to prepare them for college and work. Students will learn about options open to them and have a career mentor or job coach who supports them in making plans and participating in work experience. These mentors / coaches will usually be experienced learning support assistants who have been given training in this role.

A curriculum overview is shown on the following page.

Curriculum Overview

Curriculum Principles

For students to develop a core foundation of knowledge and skills relevant to the future that will lead to increased inclusion in society and prepare them for further study, university and employment

To excite our students about school and learning through the delivery of a flexible and challenging curriculum, which is supported by a wide range of extra curricular opportunities

For students to acquire the necessary “learning to learn” pre requisite skills and help them to understand their own difficulties and develop “tool kits” to help them through life.

To deliver truly personalized learning that capitalises on individual strengths and remove barriers to learning and enables our students to achieve their potential and beyond!

Provision

Core subjects

English
Maths
Science
ICT

Breadth

PSHCE
Humanities
Expressive and Creative Arts
Life skills
Social Communication
PE

Enrichment (Extended school day)

Examples:
Yoga
Tai Chi
Fitness club
Environmental club
Design club
ICT club

Enablement

Autism specific schemes of work for each subject

Individualised learning pathways including:
Individual Education Plan targeting the specific areas that act as barriers to learning for each individual.
Individual numeracy and literacy programmes
Profile of learning style
Arrangements for inclusions / part time placements on local schools
Transition arrangements
Accreditation plans
Personalised interventions

Individual schemes of work that address specific areas of Autism difficulty:
Learning to learn
Transition
Understanding own diagnosis
Self esteem
Anger management
Anxiety management

Curriculum and pupil outcomes

Our pupil outcomes will be both qualitative and quantitative. They will address the areas of difficulty related to their Autism and will cover educational, behavioural, communication and community related measures.

All outcomes will be catered to the individual and they will be identified and agreed after the initial assessment period at the school. However, the school will be innovative with a core purpose to, wherever possible, offer a 'revolving door' to students.

Targets for pupil outcomes will be based on analysis of data obtained from National Autistic Society schools and an understanding of the identified cohort. They will be ambitious and pitched to challenge pupils and staff. They go beyond previous NAS data to aim even higher with the belief that such specialist provision will ensure pupils achieve beyond what would be possible in other settings.

Student outcomes will be individualised and based on the core aims of the school.

The school has set the following targets:

- 100% of post 16 students achieve an Entry Level 1 qualification
- 75% of post 16 students who achieve level C at GCSE's achieve a Level 2 qualification
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 at key stage 2 in core subjects to achieve level C at GCSE's
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 in ICT at key stage 2 to achieve level C at GCSE's
- 75% of pupils to achieve at least one foundation subject GCSE in an area most aligned with their strengths or special interests.
- 100% of pupils who are not entered for GCSE's to obtain an ASDAN qualification
- Pupils working at below level 2 and key stage one or below level 4 at key stage 2 to progress 2 levels per key stage.
- 50% of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make the expected progress with regard to age-related expectations
- For 80% of pupils to achieve their Individual Education Plan target (rising to 85% after 2 years when the school has had opportunity to ensure realistic yet challenging targets are being set and there is an effective system in place for identification and moderation of targets)
- 90 % of students to attend a mainstream college or take on meaningful employment after completing year 11.
- 90% of pupils that return to mainstream schooling to maintain successful placements
- Pupil attendance to be above 90% and for those where school refusal and non-attendance has been an issue their attendance to improve year on year.
- Reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour.
- For the majority of pupils to learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to live with dignity and as independently as possible
- For pupils whose behaviour is managed with restrictive physical intervention to implement restraint reduction programmes that eliminate or significantly reduce the need for this.
- For no pupils to be excluded.
- For pupils to acquire the technological skills that prepare them for 21st Century life

enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.

- Learn strategies that will enable them to take charge of their own learning so as to be able to access the curriculum offered to them.
100% of pupils will show an increased engagement with learning from their starting points.
- Be a part of their community and their wider society: 100% of pupils will participate in an activity within the community on a regular basis
75% of pupils will join a community group, be involved in a volunteer project or participate in a work placement.
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable them to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life.
- To capitalise on strengths and areas of interest, enabling pupils to excel in these areas and use these as a basis for informing transition and career planning.
- For all pupils to take part in a new enrichment activity and enjoy a hobby/ leisure activity that they report they would want to continue when they leave school.
- Enjoy learning and recognise the contribution they make to the school and community.

Curriculum plan

Schemes of work

The teaching of each subject will be supported by a scheme of work which details learning objectives, suggested activities (including core and optional extension activities), ICT, SMSC, community cohesion and other information.

The structure and the content of the schemes of work will be closely informed by the curriculum aims, ensuring there is sufficient focus on the core subjects and opportunities for cross curricular learning. The objectives, activities and structure will be designed specifically to support the achievement of pupil outcomes.

The schemes of work will also be devised in order to ensure there is sufficient flexibility in order to:

- Enable teachers to differentiate teaching.
- Enable pupils to follow interests and focus on strengths.
- Ensure that pupils who enter or leave the school at different times or who are following part time programmes in other schools, can still make progress and cover a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure the curriculum is not static but can be adapted according to individual needs

Writing the scheme of work to meet the above aims

One of the devices that will be used to ensure these aims are met is to leave some flexibility within the theme of some schemes of work. For example, whilst a suggested text may be indicated in the Primary English scheme of work it can be left to the teacher to decide if another text is more appropriate for their group. A second device is that each scheme of work will include optional higher level extension activities, enabling teachers to easily plan to challenge the most able within the group.

If a pupil is in a part time placement in another school an individual approach will be taken, for example we will meet with the partner school to identify comprehensively the

learning that will take place in their school. From this their education within our school will be planned, including a review of which schemes of work units they will or will not be covering and ensuring there is sufficient opportunities to progress. This will be detailed in their individualised learning pathway.

Teachers provide feedback on schemes of work via a scheme of work evaluation sheet and this will be used by the Senior Leadership team and subject co-ordinators to inform School Improvement planning. This could include minor amendments to scheme of work units or whole scheme of work reviews.

Schemes of work: Overview of Progression

The schemes of work progression will be informed by the National Curriculum in order to ensure our pupils are able to learn in line with their mainstream peers and transition back to mainstream placements at different points in their school career. The final planned schemes of work will take account of any changes arising from national legislation or guidance.

Key-stage one and two are organized within a cyclical structure to support pupils entering and leaving at different points, the small number of classes in EYFS and Primary and the transference of pupils between groups in accordance with their individual behavioural or cognitive needs. The schemes of work are organised as follows:

- EYFS -1 year scheme of work units
- KS1 and 2 - three 2-year rolling programmes
- KS3 – one 3-year programme
- KS4 – one 2-year programme

Units of work are either one term or one half term. Scheme of Work Overviews showing Units covered and progression have been written for key stages one to three. The next section includes two examples of these overviews.

Early Years

There will be schemes of work for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for the prime areas of communication and language; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development.

There will also be curriculum plans for the four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied: literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design.

Educational programmes will involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:

- Communication and language development: give children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical development: provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children will also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, social and emotional development: help children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, to form positive relationships and develop respect

for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings, to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.

- Literacy development: encourage children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- Mathematics: provide children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- Understanding the world: guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- Expressive arts and design: enable children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile will provide parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile will reflect: ongoing observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer will judge can offer a useful contribution.

It is planned that a greater percentage of time will be allocated to the prime areas. However, it is acknowledged that during the early years phase pupils will need breadth of opportunity in areas such as play. This is particularly important for pupils with Autism as they do not necessarily 'pick up' these skills automatically but may need to be taught explicitly to use equipment functionally rather than develop repetitive behaviours, such as lining up objects.

Arrangements for programmes of work and qualifications at KS1 / KS2

Schemes of work will be completed for the following subjects.

- English
- Maths
- Science
- ICT
- PSHCE (including Community based education)
- Thematic topics (Including Music / Drama)
- Life skills
- Social Communication
- PE

All pupils will undertake the year 1 Phonic screen and Standard Assessment tests at the end of key stage 2.

Appropriate access arrangements for tests would be planned at pupils' year 6 annual review in the Autumn term.

Arrangements for programmes of work and qualifications at KS3

For key stage 3 schemes of work will be written for the following units

- English
- Maths
- Science
- ICT (including the option to take GCSE early)
- PSHCE (including Community based education and Enterprise)
- Humanities
- Expressive and Creative Arts
- Life skills
- Social Communication
- PE

Planned progression of the schemes of work and Pupil outcomes

The scheme of work units have been based on existing schemes of work from National Autistic Society schools which have been judged externally by Ofsted as being outstanding. They have also incorporated topics that have been identified as being frequently of interest to this group of pupils. The individual units will be designed to improve outcomes and ensure progression which will enable progress in line with National Curriculum expectations but will allow enough breadth to include pupils working at below level 2 and key stage one or below level 4 at key stage 2 and enable them to progress 2 levels per key stage.

Specific subjects such as ICT, Life skills, PSHCE and Social Communication have been designed specifically to achieve the following pupil outcomes:

- For 90% of pupils that return to mainstream schooling, to maintain successful placements (life skills / social communication curriculum).
- For the majority of pupils to learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to live with dignity and as independently as possible (life skills / social communication curriculum).
- For pupils to acquire the technological skills that prepare them for 21st Century life enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.
- Learn strategies that will enable them to take charge of their own learning so as to be able to access the curriculum offered to them.
- 100% of pupils will show an increased engagement with learning from their starting points (Life skills).
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable them to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life. (PSHCE, life skills / social communication curriculum).

Arrangements for programmes of work and qualifications at KS4:

All pupils will work towards the following GCSE's:

- English (GCSE, AQA or ASDAN functional skills)
- Maths (GCSE, AQA or ASDAN functional skills)
- Science (GCSE, AQA or ASDAN functional skills)
- ICT (GCSE, AQA or ASDAN functional skills)

The programmes of work at Key stage 4 will specifically work toward the achievement of the following pupil targets:

- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 at key stage 2 in core subjects to achieve level C at GCSE's.
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 in ICT at key stage 2 to achieve level C at GCSE's
- 75% of pupils to achieve at least one foundation subject GCSE in an area most aligned with their strengths or special interests.
- 100% of pupils who are not entered for GCSE's to obtain an ASDAN qualification.
- For pupils to acquire the technological skills that prepare them for 21st Century life enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.

The GCSE syllabus for each of these subjects will inform the teaching and learning within these subjects. Specialist teachers will use medium term planning sheets to differentiate learning and ensure Autism specific needs are addressed when delivering the content of the syllabus.

Pupils will follow bespoke schemes of work designed by the school on the following subjects:

- PSHCE (including Community based education and Enterprise)
- Life skills (learning to live and work curriculum)
- PE

These will be written pre-opening and will build on learning in previous key stages. The Life skills Curriculum will be designed to improve outcomes in relation to preparing for transition and life beyond school. The curriculum will specifically improve outcomes in relation to the following targets:

- For 90% of students to attend a mainstream college or take on meaningful employment after completing year 11.
- Be a part of their community and their wider society: 100% of pupils will participate in an activity within the community on a regular basis;
- 75% of pupils will join a community group, be involved in a volunteer project of participate in a work placement.
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable them to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life.
- To capitalise on strengths and areas of interest, enabling pupils to excel in these areas and use these as a basis for informing transition and career planning.
- For all pupils to take part in a new enrichment activity and enjoy a hobby / leisure activity that they report they would want to continue when they leave school.
- Enjoy learning and recognise the contribution they make to the school and community.

Options:

In addition to the core timetable 2 further subjects will be offered to all pupils from the range of breadth (foundation subjects) These will include:

- Some options for additional foundation subjects GCSE's which may be delivered off site or by visiting tutors (and offsite may include modern foreign languages if requested by pupil / parents)
- ASDAN qualifications – bronze, silver and gold

- Foundation / vocational subjects such as performing arts (in partnership with a local College, using their facilities or accessing their provision)

Curriculum (throughout all key stages)

Our vision states that the school will:

- Help pupils to overcome barriers to learning
- Build on pupils strengths and capitalise on interests
- Place an emphasis on citizenship work, supporting pupils to achieve and make a positive inclusive contribution to their community
- Enable pupils to become safe confident users of ICT
- Seek to improve the current and future lives of the students

Our PSHCE curriculum will be central to this. It will be designed to support our pupils with the areas they find the most difficult and make them the most vulnerable. At key stages 1 and 2 the SEAL curriculum (social emotional aspects of learning) will be embedded throughout the scheme of work and will support pupils' emotional intelligence. E safety will also be prioritised, as experience and research (and recent news stories) has highlighted how vulnerable people with Autism can be in this area.

Citizenship will also be given greater emphasis, enabling pupils to understand their roles and responsibilities within society and identify the contribution they can make.

Specialist schemes of work

In addition to schemes of work that support each subject, the school will devise a range of specialist schemes of work that will focus on Autism specific aspects of learning. This will include the following:

- Transition
- Being ready for learning
- Anger management
- Self esteem
- Understanding diagnosis – What Autism means to me

These will directly support progress towards the following pupil targets:

- Pupil attendance to be above 90% and for those where school refusal and non-attendance has been an issue their attendance to improve year on year.
- Reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour.
- For the majority of pupils to learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to live with dignity and as independently as possible
- For pupils whose behaviour is managed with restrictive physical intervention to implement restraint reduction programmes that eliminate or significantly reduce the need for this.
- For no pupils to be excluded.
- Learn strategies that will enable them to take charge of their own learning so as to be able to access the curriculum offered to them.
100% of pupils will show an increased engagement with learning from their starting points
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable them to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life.

Overviews of Specialist Schemes of work

1. Transition

This scheme of work will include activities that enable pupils to:

- Prepare for transition to new schools
- Provide pupil with information about new schools
- For pupils to reflect on time at the school
- For pupils to learn about changes in their own life

It will be used by all pupils toward the end of key stage four to prepare them to leave school to go on to employment or college placements. For those pupils for whom 'the revolving door' policy applies and who are ready to leave the school earlier than key stage four, the transition scheme of work will be introduced at an appropriate time prior to transition.

2. Anger management

Pupils with Autism may experience extreme difficulty in managing their frustration and anger and this can be one of the core roots of behavioural difficulties. Anger management can be particularly problematic due to:

- Impairment of imagination may inhibit pupils understanding reasons for other behaviour, or reasons why they should do something
- Lack of theory of mind may mean they do not understand the thoughts or feelings of others or how their behaviour affects them.
- Impairment of social understanding may prevent them from 'reading' situations correctly, therefore they may over react.
- Impairment of communication may mean even the most able of pupils cannot always communicate effectively therefore become frustrated
- Sensory difficulties may also mean some things are more difficult for these pupils.

Our Anger Management scheme of work will seek to help pupils to :

- Understand their own difficulties in relation to above.
- To increase chances of inclusion in mainstream
- To enable pupils to take control of their own behaviour and use self-management techniques
- To reduce incidents of aggression

It will include the following sections:

- What is anger and why should I do anything about it?
- (Understanding and defining anger, recognising / labelling emotions, reasons for wanting to control it)
- What makes me angry and what makes other people angry?
- (Triggers, behaviours)
- What can I do about anger?
- (Taking responsibility and devising strategies)
- How am I doing and what next?
- (Self-management and evaluation and goals)

- Self Esteem

Our vision states we will:

“Have a distinctive ethos and philosophy: from the moment a person enters the building they will know this is a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and have rich and varied experiences”.

Self-esteem is the degree to which children feel accepted and valued by adults and peers who are important to them. The development of a sense of self is very complex. It is developed from within a person and shaped as well by the people around them (Katz, 1995). Being able to manage one’s own life, feelings, and decisions comes from the foundation of a strong sense of self. Being able to manage helps people cope when difficulties arise. Pupils with ASD may struggle more than their mainstream peers with self-esteem issues and it is therefore a fundamental part of our education and vision.

This scheme of work will be applied on an individual basis, as required and will complement existing PSHCE schemes of work. It will be written to include the following sections:

- Knowing myself
- My strengths
- What is special about me
- Achievements
- Goals
- Feelings about myself
- Trusting others
- Listening to positive feedback

3. Understanding diagnosis – What Autism means to me?

This scheme of work has been produced in order to address the need of pupils to explore and understand their diagnosis. It will cover preparatory work to understanding their diagnosis, about the diagnosis itself and how it affects them and others.

It will improve outcomes for pupils through enabling them to :

- Increase knowledge of self in particular in relation to understanding their own behaviour.
- Begin to recognise their own difficulties and develop strategies to overcome them.
- Recognise their own strengths so they can capitalise on them.
- Work towards alleviating depression, low self-esteem associated with frustration that arises from not understanding their own behaviour.
- Be supported through the difficult time of learning that they have Autism and better prepare them for the future.

It will be used:

- When they ask questions.
- When a person has unrealistic expectations about their future.
- When they will be exposed to other people talking about their Autism.
- There is no specific appropriate age; it depends on the individual. However, it is expected that this will generally be suitable for pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 and Key

Stage 3.

- Younger pupils can work on the concept of self, people being different and the body inside and out.
- When pupils have had sufficient preparation and work on: feelings, self-esteem, self-awareness, how the body works inside and out, how people are different and coping skills, albeit without the prerequisite skills of being able to talk about their feelings.

It is also important to recognise that for some individuals they may feel it is a relief as they feel better informed, feel proud of their strengths and have a reason for and hopefulness about moving forward and developing strategies to overcome difficulties.

Supporting guidance will describe preparation, liaison, monitoring and methods of delivery.

Note: all of these specialist schemes of work will be supported by in-house training in these areas.

Implementation of the Schemes of Work

Prior to the proposed school opening, key staff will write all the schemes of work units. The process will begin by collecting together curriculum documentation and guidance and schemes of work from other schools, including those with similar profiles and those whose curriculum has been described as outstanding. This will, in particular, draw on the proven expertise of the National Autistic Society schools.

In the first 2 years the implementation of the newly written schemes of work will be thoroughly monitored and evaluated in order to ensure the curriculum is the best it can be. This monitoring and evaluation will include obtaining comments from pupils, teachers and Learning Support Assistants, observations of teaching and auditing of planning, assessment and progress. Schemes of work will then be adapted accordingly. There will be a document entitled 'Writing, Implementing and Evaluating a Scheme of Work' which will provide guidance on this process.

Teachers will use the schemes of work to differentiate the objectives in order to tailor teaching and learning to meet the needs of individual pupils.

They will plan using half termly planning sheets and these will be evaluated at the end of each half term to demonstrate what each pupil has achieved within that unit of work. These will be used to inform other assessments and report writing. The planning sheets will include reminders of pupil IEP targets and whole school targets to focus staff awareness on the importance of these.

Arrangements for pupils in part time placements

For the school's vision of a 'revolving door' policy it is anticipated that one of the challenges, and one that is key to its success, will be to ensure the curriculum meets the pupils' needs. This will be especially true for pupils who are in part time placements, preparing for return to mainstream or who are using other school or community facilities. Where pupils are not based at the school full time and therefore only following part of the curriculum for their year group, pupils' individual learning pathways will detail curriculum arrangements and how the school will ensure they are receiving a balanced and appropriate curriculum.

Curriculum Policies and supporting documentation

Curriculum policies will be written for all subjects by subject leaders. These will detail:

- Scope
- Entitlement
- Introduction
- Aims
- Roles and responsibilities
- Organisation, Planning and Delivery
- Resources
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Health and safety

A set of Autism specific documentation will be written to inform teaching about the areas most problematic for pupils with Autism and these will inform schemes of work and planning. These include:

- Autism and choice
- Autism and Motivation
- Autism and Independence
- Autism and Play
- Autism and Flexibility of thought
- Autism and Social Understanding
- Autism and Problem solving
- Autism and theory of mind.

These will be drawn up as a result of a series of staff meeting discussions in order to develop the learning and understanding of the staff team in these areas.

Transition

Transition Planning is essential for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. A planned policy taking a proactive approach ensures transition is not only suitable but is carried out as smoothly as possible with the least amount of upheaval to the pupil and the pupil's education. Effective transition planning is crucial to the success of the school and its vision, in both preparing pupils for their future lives and realising the vision of the 'revolving door' policy.

People with autism can find transitions particularly difficult and this can affect the opportunities they pursue in life. Reasons for this are related to specific impairments related to autism and include:

- Difficulty coping with change
- Uncertainty about what might happen next
- Lack of flexibility of thought, making it difficult to predict or imagine what will be happening next
- Poor executive function and problems with planning and sequencing, meaning that they may find it difficult to plan ahead
- Difficulties in communication. An individual may either find it difficult to communicate that they are anxious about a change or even understand that it is a change of activity or location that is causing them stress.
- Many individuals need an increased time to process so it may not always be that the child does not want to make that transition but that they are going to need time.

- Issues with motivation; individuals may not understand why we want them to finish an activity that they are enjoying. Particularly if this is a transition from preferred to non-preferred, for example playtime to Maths.
- Increased anxiety caused by factors above.

The school will seek to address all of these issues and prepare and support pupils so they can cope more easily with transitions during their time at school and beyond.

We envisage pupils will transition to a range of different provisions including mainstream schools, mainstream colleges, special schools and specialised college course or work placements. Therefore, it is understood that transition planning will be a complex process that will involve developing relationships with a range of schools, businesses and agencies.

The school will produce a detailed transition policy that describes the strategy in more detail. However some key aspects of the strategy will include:

- All pupils will have a transition plan that will be completed at annual reviews at key transition points (year 5, 6, 9, 10, 11). All pupils will be included in this process.
- The revolving door policy means that pupils will leave the school at different points in their school career. When a move to another school is agreed or a pupil has reached year 11 an individual transition profile will be completed. Staff and pupils themselves will contribute to this document which can be used in the future to inform future schools, colleges and work placements about the individual.
- The school will utilise the knowledge and experience of the NAS in supporting pupils with transition including the support of the NAS Transition Co-coordinator. In addition to the links we are already developing with local schools, colleges and workplaces it will also be a priority to establish firm links with local Connexions teams.
- Pupils will have an identified transition coach or job coach who will prepare them for their next identified stage. These 'coaches' will be drawn from the more experienced members of the staff team (mostly Learning Support Assistants) and given specialised training. This training will be developed by the school and will be informed by best practice by linking into organisations that specifically work in this area e.g. Prospects (NAS) and Norwood charities. These key staff will be involved in all aspects of planning and supporting the pupil through transition, including making required visual resources, such as social stories and planners, and will be responsible for liaising with others involved.
- Transition Action Group meetings will be held which will include the "coaches" and a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team. The purpose of these meetings will be to ensure adequate communication and to monitor and review all aspects of the transition process.
- The Principal will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of transition and keeping the governing body updated, He/she will ensure records are passed on to the pupil's next placement.
- A transition scheme of work (part of the KS4 'Learning to Live and Work' curriculum) will detail learning that can take place to prepare pupils for transition. Where pupils' transition to other schools at other points in their school career than during key stage 4 units of work will be available to support and prepare pupils.
- Transition planning will be bespoke and will include whatever is necessary for individuals with Autism to have a successful transition. Some individuals will require

a long time to process changes and opportunities to visit a new placement on several occasions. For others a drawn out process can cause increased anxiety and it is better to tell them the information they need to know and have a quick transition. Key staff will make these decisions in consultation with the pupil, parents, multidisciplinary team and other stakeholders, based on their knowledge of a pupil's past ability to cope with significant life changes. In transition planning, an understanding of the autism specific difficulties and thorough knowledge of the pupil are seen as vital.

D2: Set out a viable curriculum plan with appropriate focus on breadth and balance, core areas of learning, and calendar and timetable.

Provisional School Calendar

Term	Begin of term	Half term holiday		End Of term	End of term holiday		No of school days
		Begin	End		Begin	End	
Autumn 2014	Monday 1st Sept	Monday 27 th Oct	Friday 31 st Oct	Friday 19 th Dec	Monday 22 nd Dec	Friday 2 nd Jan	75
Spring 2015	Monday 5 th Jan	Monday 16 th Feb	Friday 20 th Feb	Friday 3rd April	Monday 6 th April	Friday 18 th April	60
Summer 2015	Monday 20 th April	Monday 25 th May	Friday 29 th May	Friday 23 rd July	Monday 4 th August	Friday 29 th August	60
Total							195
INSET days	Monday 1 st September Tuesday 2 nd September Monday January 5 th Thursday 2 nd April Friday 3 rd April						

Based on the experience of the National Autistic Society we anticipate that the six week summer holiday could be problematic for some of our pupils and parents and we will therefore have alternative models of holidays and terms, reducing the summer break to four weeks. However, taking account of planned inclusion programmes and planned links with local schools and colleges, we will need to keep in line with traditional school term dates for most of the year.

We will reduce teachers' holidays from 13 weeks to 10 weeks plus one week's autism methodology training, increasing actual teaching days by 10 to 205.

The term dates will also be amended in light of any national or regional changes and to accommodate the extra 10 taught days. The Principals and Governors will determine the timing and focus of the extra 10 taught days.

School Events on dates to be decided:

- Parents evening Autumn term
- Parents evening Spring term

- Parents evening Summer term
- Christmas show
- Sports day
- Other potential events: date to be decided
- Parents workshops
- Parent ICT sessions including learning platform and eSafety
- Parents social and fundraising events
- Theme / activity week
- Residential week
- Governors / PTA meetings

Teaching Hours

For Key Stages 1, 2, 3, and 4 there will be a total of 32 teaching hours per week

Curriculum allocation

Assumptions:

- Many pupils with Autism find mealtimes difficult, therefore it is envisaged that the lunch and breakfast sessions will incorporate specific teaching of social skills, communication and individual educational plan targets. For the purpose of calculating teaching hours per day it is set that 25 minutes of lunchtime will be included as teaching time.
- % of teaching time is rounded to nearest whole number
- English and ICT teaching time will also be embedded into thematic teaching, humanities and creative / expressive arts therefore total teaching time will be above figures stated below:

Curriculum subject	Hours (mins) per week key stage 1 / 2	% of total teaching time	Hours (mins) per week key stage 3	% of total teaching time	Hours (mins) per week key stage 4	% of total teaching time		
English (including social communication curriculum)	5.833 (350)	18%	5.833 (350)	18%	5 (300)	16%		
Maths	5 (300)	15.5%	5 (300)	16%	5 (300)	16%		
Science	3 (180)	9%	2.66 (160)	8%	2 (120)	6%		
ICT	2 (120)	6%	2 (120)	6%	2.66 (160)	8%		
PSHCE	5 (300)	15.5%	7.33 (330)	17%	6 (360)	19%		
Breadth (thematic work): History Geography RE Art Design and Technology	2.66 (160)	8%	Humanities	1.66 (100)	5%	Options 1 & 2	3.33 (200)	10%
			Creative and Expressive Arts	0.833 (50)	3%			
Music / Drama	0.83 (50)	3%						
MFL			Delivered through theme weeks		Delivered through theme weeks			

PE	1.66 (100)	6%	2.5 (150)	8%	2 (120)	6%
Enrichment activities (extra curricular clubs including homework)	6.00 (360)	19%	6.00 (360)	19%	6.00 (360)	19%
Total	32 (1920)	100%	32 (1920)	100%	32 (1920)	100%

School timetable

Time	Duration	Activity
8.30 – 9.00	30 minutes	Registration and breakfast club
9.00 – 9.30	30 minutes	Assembly & Individual Education Plan targets / Individual study
9.30 – 10.30	60 minutes	Lesson 1 - core
10.30 – 10.50	20 minutes	Break
10.50 – 11.50	60 minutes	Lesson 2 - core
11.50 – 12.50	60 minutes	Lesson 3 - core
12.50 – 13.40	50 minutes	Lunch
13.40 – 14.40	60 minutes	Lesson 4 – Foundation breadth subjects
14.40 – 15.30	50 minutes	Lesson 5 – Foundation breadth subjects
15.30 – 15.45	15 minutes	Break
15.45 – 16.30	45 minutes	Enrichment activity
16.30 – 17.00	30 minutes	Homework club

An example key stage 3 timetable

Time / Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.00	Registration & Breakfast club	Registration & Breakfast club	Registration & Breakfast club	Registration & Breakfast club	Registration & Breakfast club
9.00 – 9.30	Assembly IEP / Individual study	IEP / Individual study	IEP / Individual study	Assembly IEP / Individual study	Assembly IEP / Individual study
9.30 – 10.30	English	English	English	English	English
10.30 – 10.50	B	R	E	A	K
10.50 – 11.50	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths

11.50 – 12.50	<i>Social Communication</i>	<i>ICT</i>	<i>ICT</i>	<i>Creative and Expressive Arts</i>	<i>Science</i>
12.50 – 13.40	<i>L</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>H</i>
13.40-14.40	<i>Life skills</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>Science</i>	<i>Humanities projects Creative and Expressive arts</i>	<i>PSHCE / Citizenship / CBE</i>
14.40 – 15.30	<i>PE</i>	<i>PE</i>	<i>PE</i>		
15.30 – 15.45	<i>B</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>K</i>
15.45 – 16.30	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>
16.30 – 17.00	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>

An example key stage 4 timetable

Time / Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.00	<i>Registration, & Breakfast club</i>	<i>Registration & Breakfast club</i>	<i>Registration & Breakfast club</i>	<i>Registration & Breakfast club</i>	<i>Registration & Breakfast club</i>
9.00 – 9.30	<i>Assembly IEP / Individual study</i>	<i>IEP / Individual study</i>	<i>IEP / Individual study</i>	<i>Assembly IEP / Individual study</i>	<i>Assembly IEP / Individual study</i>
9.30 – 10.30	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Maths</i>
10.30 – 10.50	<i>B</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>K</i>
10.50 – 11.50	<i>English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>English</i>
11.50 – 12.50	<i>PSHCE / Citizenship / CBE</i>	<i>PE</i>	<i>PE</i>	<i>Life skills (learning to live and work curriculum)</i>	<i>ICT</i>
12.50 – 13.40	<i>L</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>H</i>
13.40-14.40	<i>PSHCE / Citizenship / CBE</i>	<i>ICT</i>	<i>ICT</i>	<i>Options 1</i>	<i>Options 2</i>
14.40 – 15.30		<i>Science</i>	<i>Science</i>		
15.30 –	<i>B</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>K</i>

15.45					
15.45 – 16.30	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>	<i>Enrichment curriculum</i>
16.30 – 17.00	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>	<i>Homework club</i>

About the timetable

- Breakfast club will be optional but will be encouraged. Where pupils do not attend breakfast club registration will be at 8.50. This is to give parents as much support and flexibility as possible.
- Enrichment activities will be mandatory
- Enrichment activities will include a minimum of 2 Physical Education activities per week
- Enrichment activities will be offered to pupils on a termly basis and include a range of clubs. Pupils will select activities according to interests. These may include, but are not limited to: Yoga, Tai Chi, Basketball, Science investigators, Environmental champions, school council and specific ICT clubs e.g. film making, using shared active surfaces or the production of a school newspaper
- It is envisaged that the enrichment options that will be offered initially (whilst the school is not full) will be limited and designed around current pupil interests. Teachers will be expected to lead 2 enrichment activities per week; others will be led by Learning Support Assistants who have interests or strengths in that area. These will be developed over time and will include pursuing wherever possible the support of the community, volunteers and parents. For example the school will seek to employ or utilize volunteer sports coaches in specific areas or attend after school clubs in the community.
- The IEP / Individual study session will be entirely based on the individual's needs. For the majority of pupils this will be carrying out specific work on their Individual Education Plan targets. The individual study will be designed around the pupils need's, It may include:
 - Preparation for any work / school placement or transition.
 - Time for therapy programmes e.g. OT
 - Individual directed study on chosen area of interest
 - Additional work in any subject
- Depending on the individual each day or each week during registration / tutor time staff will assist pupils in planning how they will use their individual study and their homework time, with the intention of pupils acquiring work planning strategies and becoming more self-directed over time.
- Assemblies will be planned out for the year and delivered by different staff. There will be a weekly whole school theme, which may include learning about other religions and their celebrations, and a range of PSHCE themes that promote citizenship and appropriate behaviour.
- For the school's vision of a 'revolving door' policy it is anticipated that one of the challenges, and one that is key to its success, will be to devise individual timetables based on pupils' needs. This will be especially true for pupils who are in part time placements, preparing for return to mainstream or who are using other school or community facilities. The example timetables above are merely starting points; it is

not envisaged all pupils will follow these timetables. However, the timetable has been designed with this in mind so for example pupils using community facilities such as Newbury College for enrichment activities will use homework time to travel to the location on these days.

- Pupils individual learning pathways will detail timetable arrangements and how the school will ensure they are receiving a balanced and appropriate curriculum that in turn will lead to the achievement of individual targets.
- Pupils with Autism benefit from the consistent use of terminology. Therefore throughout the school the terms 'English' and 'Maths' will be used rather than 'Literacy' and 'Numeracy'.
- The teaching of SMSC will be embedded across the curriculum in assemblies, registration (tutor time) and breadth subjects.
- Theme weeks will be built into the school calendar. These will have a 3 year rolling programme including 1 pupil choice, 1 staff choice and 1 modern foreign language week
- At key stage 4, in addition to the core timetable two further subjects will be offered from the range of breadth (foundation subjects). These will include:
 - Some options for additional GCSE's which may be delivered off site or by visiting tutors (and offsite may include modern foreign languages if requested by pupil / parents)
 - ASDAN qualifications (transition challenge, bronze, silver and gold)
- Foundation / vocational subjects such as performing arts (in partnership with local Colleges, using their facilities or accessing their provision).

Organisation of pupils

Pupils will be in classes of a maximum of 8 pupils.

Class sizes

At capacity (YR4 / 2017 onwards)	EYFS and KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4 and post 16
No of pupils	6	22	23	9
No of classes	1	3	3	2

Development phase: YR1 - 3	EYFS and KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4 and post 16
YR1(2014) pupil numbers	2	4	6	3
Yr 1 no of classes	1		1	1
YR2 (2015) Pupil numbers	4	9	9	8
YR2 no of classes	2		2	1
YR3 (2016) Pupil numbers	5	15	11	14
YR3 No of	3		2	2

Pupils will stay with their own class for the majority of learning. In EYFS and Primary they will stay with one teacher and team Learning Support Assistants. In the secondary phase they will be taught by specialist teachers in core subjects and move to the appropriate classroom along with a set team of LSAs.

Allocating pupils to classes

It is envisaged that the admission and leaving dates for pupils (because of the ‘revolving door policy’) could be at any time during the school year and at any point in the pupil’s school career. Therefore this means that pupils will not typically start during the EYFS and move through the school year by year. This will necessitate careful and continuous planning and flexibility. We may for example admit a year 5 pupil in the spring term and them be with us into year 7 where they then follow a plan to go back into mainstream.

It is recognized that it will also be important for the school to respond quickly to demand for places, especially where other placements have broken down and a pupil is out of school. This will be a continuous challenge for the school as year groups will not always have equal numbers and therefore classes may need to have pupils from more than one year group. It is expected that in the first years of opening the school will need to have a mixed key stage one and two classes but it is the intention that wherever possible there are no more than 3 year groups within one class and that classes are organized with groups of children from the same key stage.

In addition to this, the nature of the pupils and challenging behaviour means that there are other factors that need to be taken into account and balanced against each other when grouping children into class. These include:

- Year group.
- Ability.
- Friendships (where pupils have shown they have emerging friendships with pupils it is particularly important to foster these as it can be more difficult for pupils with Autism to develop friendships).
- Incompatibility (some pupils may be wary of a peer’s unpredictability or a pupil may be a trigger for a peer’s behaviour. It is also not uncommon in ASD for pupils to develop obsessional behaviour towards a peer).
- Previous learning – units of work covered, accreditation / qualification implications.

The Senior Leadership team will meet at relevant points to discuss and agree class groupings.

Organising pupils for non-class based activities

In order to maximise individualisation, at times pupils will be grouped flexibly. It is anticipated that this will be a continuous process to ensure best compatibility, best opportunities and to maximise inclusion. Below is a table which describes a range of potential different activities and the implications for grouping. This list just gives examples and is not exhaustive.

Activity	Implications for grouping
Small group using sensory room and	Mixed ability

soft play facilities.	Pupils with highest level of physical sensory needs can access specialized resources.
2 / 3 individuals attending mainstream GCSE sessions.	Setting Pupils who have selected specific options at key stage 4 can access appropriate teaching to achieve qualification.
Setting of selected pupils from key stage 2 and 3 classes.	Setting Pupils benefit from working alongside pupils with similar abilities and therefore assisting the prevention of self esteem issues. Teachers can direct learning more effectively.
Selected pupils from school attending interschool sports day.	Mixed ability / Vertical grouping Pupils able to participate in community events related to strengths and interests.
Selected pupils attending local after school group as part of enhancement activities.	Mixed Ability / Vertical grouping Pupils able to participate in community activities related to strengths and interests.
Social skills group within school.	Setting Pupils with similar social communication needs can work on developing social skills together.
Two pupils within key stage 2 show advanced ability and attend key stage 3 ICT lesson in order to complete their GCSE early.	Flexible arrangement across year groups / Setting Pupils are enabled to follow own learning pathway.
School Council Meetings or visit associated with school council e.g. to local council, local newspaper or NAS participation group.	Mixed ability / Vertical grouping Pupils are chosen to represent their class and school according to their interests.

Organising pupils for non-academic purposes

Pupils will be grouped for the majority of non-academic purposes by phase. The table below gives three examples:

Activity	Implications for grouping
Assembly	2 assemblies per week will be with age phase split into EYFS/Primary and Secondary 1 whole school assembly
Lunch time	Pupils can opt to eat lunch with friendship groups that may not be in their own class. *
Arrangements for breaks	There will be 2 supervised outdoor play areas (EYFS/primary and secondary) and designated supervised indoor areas. Pupils will be able to advocate where they will spend their breaks. *

* It is acknowledged that it is important to monitor age appropriateness when allowing pupils to advocate about whom they spend portions of their time with. However, this must be balanced in a common sense and considered way with the positive outcomes of developing friendships within this group of pupils.

D3: Show how your staffing structure will deliver the planned curriculum.

Staffing Allocation

This section is included as the specific staffing ratios and allocation of staff are seen as integral to meeting the needs of this group of students. Further information can be found in on staffing more generally in section F.

At capacity (YR4 / 2017 onwards)	EYFS and KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4 and post 16
No of pupils	6	22	23	9
No of classes	1	3	3	2
No of teachers	1	5	5	2
No of Learning support assistants	2	10	10	12

Development phase: YR1 - 3	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
YR1(2014) pupil numbers	2	4	6	3
Yr 1 no of classes	1		1	
YR1 No of teachers	2		1	
YR1 No of Learning support assistants	3		2	
YR2 (2015) Pupil numbers	4	9	9	8
YR2 no of classes	2		1	
YR2 No of teachers	4		2	
YR2 No of Learning support assistants	8		5	
YR3 (2016) Pupil numbers	5	15	11	14
YR3 no of	3		2	

classes			
YR3 no of teachers	5	2	2
YR3 No of Learning support assistants	10	4	4

Plans for determining staffing allocation were based on the previous experience of the National Autistic Society in ensuring the safe supervision and effective education of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. The staff ratio is 2 pupils to one adult (which includes teachers) with some built in flexibility to have movement or additional support where required. It was decided from the outset that it was important for Senior staff to have partial teaching roles as this would foster improved relationships with pupils and act as models of excellent practice for staff.

Specialist subject teaching

In addition to subject leaders throughout the school for all subjects the school will employ subject specialist teachers for the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and ICT.

Arrangements for Flexible use of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

Each year (excluding year one) the school will designate a number of the secondary phase learning support assistants as float LSAs:

- Float LSAs will be the most experienced staff who can work across all classes and be deployed as required at any given time.
- They may cover or lead individual and group sessions such as Occupational therapy programmes, cover PPA time and facilitate activities that require additional staffing e.g. visits into the community, placements in other schools.
- The model of float LSAs is well established in National Autistic Society schools and has been proven to provide added value to the educational provision.
- During periods when staff are attending training, are absent or moving on to another job it provides the continuity and consistency so necessary for people on the autistic spectrum, providing cover until a staff member returns to work or another staff member is recruited and trained. This has been proved in the past to save agency staff costs in specialist schools with intensive labour costs, thus providing improved value for money.
- They will be key to enabling individualisation, and will support with inclusion and transition programmes.

The arrangements for deployment and use of other additional staff to support educational provision

- Clinical Psychologist, Speech and Language therapist and Occupational therapist will all work 0.2 of week.
- The ICT tutor will work 0.6 of the week.

The school will plan to utilise a range of other professionals who will add value to the provision. The experience and reputation of the National Autistic Society has in the past

positively influenced its seven schools' ability to recruit volunteers, students and researchers who wish to further their experience. The school will build on this experience to attract a range of professionals, either at low or zero cost to deliver some additional activities for pupils within the main and enrichment timetables. This may include:

- Sports coaches e.g. from local football club.
- Volunteers or students from specific disciplines e.g. art therapy.
- Drama and dance groups.
- Where the school can not procure for zero cost, funding will either be acquired through fundraising activities or from the curriculum and activities budget.

The school will also work with the local authority school improvement centre and will employ a school improvement partner.

Specialist rooms

The entire building will be designed in line with the National Autistic Society's SPELL framework in that it would have structured and low arousal spaces. Essential on site specialist rooms would include :

- Teaching kitchen
- Science and Technology room
- Additional quiet working rooms / calm / safe spaces
- Central learning resource area (including computer workstations and quiet areas where pupils can retreat to, to do their work, if finding classroom stressful)
- Meeting / parents / training room
- Life skills base
- Pupil common room

Specialist ASD resources

It is well known that individuals with Autism can benefit from a range of visual resources to minimize anxiety, aid understanding, enable processing, develop executive function (planning and sequencing), learn social rules and cope with change. Therefore an essential element of high quality teaching for this population is to produce high quality Autism specific resources.

The school will use 'Communicate in Print' (Widget company) symbol software for those students who also need symbol versions of the written word. Examples of resources that aid the teaching of students with Autism include:

- Individual timetables or planners (object, photo, symbol, word, weekly or Filofax/PDA/Smartphone)
- Quick reference guides e.g. signs telling you what to do when you have finished a piece of work.
- Individual workstations with individualised visual cues
- Jigs for completing tasks: e.g. making a cup of tea, washing hands, preparing to go home.
- Social stories ([REDACTED])
- Comic Strip Conversations ([REDACTED])
- ICT based resources such as PDAs, smart phones etc. building on existing good practice and leading research from NAS schools such as the HANDS project

Arrangements for Teacher's Preparation Planning and Assessment (PPA)

It is recognised that in order to achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning

teachers will need to spend a considerable amount of time preparing for lessons, assessing pupils work and preparing differentiated resources. This is especially true for Autism specific teaching, where it is expected that in order to maximise pupils' knowledge and understanding and to support communication and positive behaviour, a wide range of visual resources will be required.

Teachers will receive at least the minimum amount of PPA time. Additionally teachers will only be expected to run two enhancement curriculum activities so will not be in contact with pupils throughout all of the extended day.

PPA time will be covered by Senior / Experienced Learning support Assistants and in some cases the Senior staff during their contact hours (Principal / Deputy Principal) and detailed in a timetable for PPA.

The use of ICT

ICT will be used as a natural tool to enhance and enrich learning and teaching, and to improve and develop communication within and beyond the school. It will be embedded in all areas of the school's work and will be used in a variety of ways to encourage learning, communication, leisure, creativity and sense of community.

ICT has much to offer pupils with ASDs. It allows learning to take place in a variety of stress reducing ways, facilitates communication in a less threatening manner and allows pupils to access learning in a variety of locations both within and beyond the school. ICT allows transitioning between feeder schools and the free school to be carried out in a way that allows for a sense of continuity and preserves teaching materials and learning resources.

The new school will give all prospective students space on its Learning Platform to allow them to access curriculum materials and teacher input before they physically arrive at the school, ensuring that they are familiar and secure with elements of the teaching structures when they do arrive.

We will work with their feeder schools to maintain and develop those resources already available to ensure continuity and to maximise resources for the pupil.

Across the school ICT will be available in all curriculum areas and will support learning where appropriate for the individual. The networking and wireless systems will allow students to use their own devices where appropriate and will support students in being confident, competent and safe users of technology in all aspects of their lives. An important element of this will be to ensure that pupils have access to ICT leisure facilities and learn how to behave safely and appropriately with gaming and social networking systems.

The nature of the core ICT curriculum will cover the National Curriculum, but will strive to do so in a way that maximises the interest, enthusiasm and passion of the pupils. In line with the emphasis on visual resources and visual learning in all parts of the school, much emphasis will be put on use of video and graphical resources, alongside other multimedia work. It is expected that pupils will maintain the school's web presence, manage much of the internal communication and take part in work based activities with partner organisations in order to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that

will allow them to take a full part in 21st century life.

Opportunities to take formal qualifications in ICT will be provided as early as possible, along with vocational and work based training where appropriate, as it is recognised that ICT is an area in which many people with ASDs may thrive and find fulfilling employment opportunities.

Pupils undertaking GCSE's will use online resources to support their learning. Our ICT tutor will receive support from the National Autistic Society's ICT advisor to identify the best on line learning resources and we will link into the learning platforms of partnership schools in order for our pupils to access their resources.

The school will be aware of the overlap between traditional ICT resources and assistive technology and will strive to provide systems and resources to enable pupils to communicate, learn, and live independently. The NAS has substantial experience in the use of technology in learning and communication, as well as a range of professionals across a number of disciplines who can advise and inform the use of these technologies for all pupils and staff.

The NAS in its mission statement seeks to "make sure everyone living with autism gets the support they need", "provide the best possible education and support" and "share our learning and experience". It therefore fits with our core aims to ensure the new school is a centre of excellence and source of training, information and support for the use of ICT for people with ASDs across the region.

The new school will aim to provide a local and regional resource for schools it works in partnership with to train and to support staff in those schools so that pupils may be supported in transition into and out of the new school. This training and support will be provided formally as required, in order to enhance the CPD and skills development of all staff across the region. With the diminishing role of Local Authority Advisors and associated support at the present time, this ability to provide advice as needed will be important for all schools to ensure quality of provision in the region.

The new school will ensure that the Information Management systems for pupil data and assessment match those of other local schools so that pupil data may be seamlessly and securely transferred electronically to and from the new school to ensure timely information sharing, ensuring continuity of care and support for pupils. We will have meetings with the relevant local schools to ensure these systems can be aligned.

In order to ensure the quality of the ICT provision in the new school, it will immediately engage with the DfE supported ICT Mark accreditation scheme, which assesses whether a school is achieving a mature and effective standard in the use of technology. The NAS Education Group, in common with its development plans for its other schools, will provide an ICT Mark Assessor to work with the school leadership team to engage with the assessment process and ensure that the school achieves the necessary level of e-maturity.

In addition, the NAS Education Group will provide CEOP ambassadors to carry out training on e-Safety across the school with all pupils and work with staff on ensuring a safe and secure experience for all.

D4: Set out a clear strategy for ensuring that the needs of pupils with differing abilities are met.

Statement of Principles

In accordance with our vision, the objective of our strategy will be for our pupils to have access to the right education: enabling pupils who are currently not accessing effective or suitable education to access the highest quality specialist provision. We will deliver truly personalised learning that capitalises on individual strengths and removes barriers to learning. All our pupils, regardless of ability, gender, race, disability or economic background will be respected, achieve beyond what is expected and be empowered to make positive choices about their own lives. Expectations for all pupils will be high. We will be pioneering in our use of ICT and embrace this in meeting the needs of pupils with differing abilities. Our planned provision will support pupils to make a positive inclusive contribution to their community. and through equipping pupils with the 'tools' they need for different stages in their life, we will seek to improve the current and future lives of the students, their families and members of the local community.

The SEN Code of Practice

The Governing Body, in co-operation with the Principal, will determine the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEN. The Governing Body will report to parents annually on the school's policy on SEN and will nominate one governor with responsibility for SEN. The SEN governor will liaise regularly with the SENCo /Principal and teaching staff and report back to the full Governing Body.

The Principal will have designated responsibility for taking on SENCO duties and will oversee the implementation of the code of Practice, arrangements for statements and annual reviews. All arrangements will be compatible with existing national guidance and legislation.

All teaching staff will be aware of the SEN policy and procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for all pupils' SEN needs. They will be skilled at adapting the curriculum to meet their needs. Learning Support Assistants will support the delivery of the curriculum and care of pupils in line with the SEN policy.

'Partnership with parents plays a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation between parents, schools, LEAs and others. This is important in enabling children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential' (2:1 SEN Code of Practice 2002).

In accordance with the SEN Code of Practice the school believes that all parents of children with SEN should be treated as equal partners. The school will have positive attitudes to parents and will provide user friendly information to ensure that they understand the procedures and are aware of how to access advice and support.

Parents will be supported and enabled to:

- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents and play an active and valued role in their child's education.
- Have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the SEN framework.
- Make their views known about how their child is educated.
- Have access to information, advice and support during decision making processes

about Special Educational provision.

- Be involved in supporting the target setting process for IEPs and to express their views.

The school's SEN policy will detail all responsibilities and arrangements in this area, including:

- Equal Opportunities statement
- Objectives
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Admissions Arrangements
- Allocation of Resources
- Identification, Assessment, Provision and Review
- Access to the Curriculum
- Access to the Wider Curriculum
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Links with Other Schools and Facilities

In line with the code of Practice pupils will have an **Individual Education Plan** that includes targets, which will be set annually and reviewed termly. Parents and other stakeholders will be invited and encouraged to contribute to the drawing up of IEPs. Parents will be given guidance on the work they can do in the home to support achievement and generalisation of IEP targets. All class based staff will be responsible for the daily recording of progress on IEP targets and class teachers will monitor these weekly. The Head of School will monitor achievement on a termly basis.

The school will have a whole school target of 80% achievement of IEP targets in the first 2 years, rising to 85% from then onwards. All pupils will have a pupil version of their IEP and wherever possible will be taught how to assess whether they are achieving targets and input into the setting of new targets.

The **Annual Review** will take place yearly and will include the following elements:

- Review of appropriateness of statement (this will include the identification of any needs not currently noted on the statement, as assessed by the multi-disciplinary team).
- Review of appropriateness of provision.
- Review of arrangements for any standardised assessment (KS2) or qualifications / accreditations.
- Transition planning.
- Pupil contribution. This will include pupils sharing their Record of Achievement and attending the review to talk about their views on school. Differentiated questionnaires will be produced to enable pupils prior to their review to consider their views and what they might communicate.
- Update on learning pathway plan

Contents of Annual Review reports

All reviews:

- Report on annual objectives (from IEP)
- 3 x Termly evaluation of IEP (termly targets)

- Annual summative assessments (individual subject)
- National Curriculum levels (comparison table last year, this year)
- New annual objectives (for IEP)
- New termly targets (for IEP)

Some reviews(as appropriate):

- Occupational therapy report
- Access to Learning Plan
- Behaviour Support plan
- Behaviour report and analysis of data
- Speech and Language therapy report
- Sensory assessment and profile

All pupils will have an extended Individualised education plan entitled an **Individual pathway plan**. This will take the form of a pupil folder that will include all the following elements:

- Individual numeracy and literacy programmes including any arrangements for “catch up” intensive programmes.
- Profile of learning style.
- Pupil information (Pupil Profile, Access to Learning Plan, Behaviour Support Plan and Sensory Profile).
- Arrangements for inclusions / part time placements in local schools / community
- Transition arrangements.
- Accreditation plans.
- Personalised interventions.

Arrangements for “Catch up” Intensive Literacy and Numeracy programmes

It is anticipated that the majority of pupils will have fallen behind their mainstream peers in literacy and numeracy so the timetable and curriculum is designed to give an emphasis to these areas. However, students who need additional support beyond this will be targeted with intensive small group and individual sessions, supported by ICT based resources to be used across the school and at home.

Literacy will be supported using schemes such as Catch Up Literacy, RAPID Reading and Literacy Acceleration. Numeracy will be supported using schemes such as Catch Up Numeracy and Rapid Maths. In both curriculum areas resources will be offered through the Learning Platform (allowing work to take place around and away from the school) as well through online resources, which apart from those resources offered directly through the schemes will include programmes such as Accelerated, Lexia and RM Maths/EasiMaths.

Sessions will be taught by individual teachers, including the Principal and Deputy Principal, who will be shadowed by LSAs and mentee teachers until these members of staff are fully able to take over the majority of sessions. Individual teachers will still oversee and mentor other staff throughout the process.

These sessions will substitute for other sessions on the timetable as appropriate and may form part of either homework or individual learning time.

In future developments the school will plan to start a Reading Recovery Centre. This

will involve training our own teachers and those from other schools to be able to support pupils effectively in the local area.

Provision for gifted and talented pupils

DfE guidance states that every school should keep a register of its gifted and talented pupils. Schools are also required to indicate which of their pupils are gifted and talented on a termly basis in their School Census return. We will adhere to these requirements.

The school's SENCO will have designated responsibility for overseeing progress, attainment, differentiation and challenge in relation to this group of pupils. These pupils' individual learning pathways will detail specific targets and special arrangements, such as amendments to timetables and inclusion arrangements. As part of pupil tracking the data related to this group of pupils will be carefully monitored.

The school will write a gifted and talented policy that includes arrangements for identification, individual tuition, differentiation, mentoring and assessment including Assessment for Learning.

In identifying gifted and talented learners, DfE guidance encourages schools to focus on:

- Learners who are gifted and talented relative to their peers in their own year group and school;
- A range of abilities including talent in the arts and sport;
- Ability rather than achievement, so that underachievers are amongst those identified.

Methods for identification of gifted and talented pupils will include:

- 1) Teacher nomination via pupil review or Management Support and Development meetings.
- 2) Checklists
- 3) Testing – achievement, potential and curriculum ability
- 4) Assessment of children's work
- 6) Parental information
- 7) Discussions with children
- 8) Referrals from community resources (such as sports coaches and local clubs)

Provision for specific groups of pupils

We recognise that whilst all our pupils will have a diagnosis of Autism and will therefore have specific need related to that they may also have additional needs. Pupils from our intake may also be:

- Physically Disabled
- Looked after children
- From deprived backgrounds
- English as Second Language
- From ethnic minorities

The school will be committed to promoting equality and diversity, by providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all pupils.

The school will write an equal opportunities policy which will detail how pupils from

these groups will be identified, supported and how progress will be monitored. The school's SENCO will have designated responsibility for overseeing provision and progress of these groups and will train groups of staff as necessary. As part of pupil tracking the data related to these groups of pupils will be carefully evaluated and monitored.

Pupils additional needs will be identified through:

- Talking to parents
- Talking to previous schools
- Reports from professionals
- Observations
- Baseline and ongoing assessment
- Specific assessments – administered by Psychologist, occupational therapist etc

Pupils may also have other developmental disorders or specific learning difficulties such as dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia or Fragile X. The school's SEN policy will detail arrangements to support these groups of pupils.

The school's Accessibility plan will detail specific arrangements to support those pupils with a physical disability.

They may also have additional health needs such as Epilepsy. The school's medication policy will detail arrangements to support these pupils.

Arrangements for individual therapies

The school intends to employ a speech and language therapist one day per week, an occupational therapist for one day per week and a clinical psychologist for the equivalent of two days per week. It is recognized that there may be difficulties in recruiting for posts for such a short period of the week and it is planned that these staff will be commissioned from existing NAS or other specialist schools. The school will also identify learning support assistants who can develop a specialism in these areas.

All pupils will have a statement of special educational need and as such may have provision for individual therapies detailed within their statement and the school will address these prescribed needs as priorities. If there is a pupil who has a need identified on the statement that is beyond the provision of the school, the identified SENCO will work with the local authority, either on admission, at the baseline review or at annual reviews to identify the way forward on how this need can be met. This may include organising an external therapist to visit the school either on a regular basis or to assess, establish a programme and support staff in its delivery.

It is expected that these individual therapists will not have the capacity to deliver a significant amount of individual therapy and therefore it is intended that they will work in a more holistic way. They will be responsible for overseeing the development of the pupils in their specific area, carrying out assessments, setting and reviewing programmes and training staff in order for them to carry out programmes effectively. There will be times that individuals may benefit from direct therapist time and this will be identified and agreed in conjunction with the Senior Leadership team.

The therapists will use a range of assessments to support their work and will play a key

role in identifying pupil needs that are not recognised in their statement.

Use of a range of Autism specific Teaching and Learning Approaches

Teaching and Learning approaches will be in line with those of the National Autistic Society. Rather than adopting one Autism specific teaching method the school will have an eclectic approach that combines the best elements of the best methods and practices. All approaches will be ethical and proven to be effective through research and experience.

The SCERTS method is currently being incorporated into the NAS schools approach and the NAS Cheshire East school will also adopt the SCERTS philosophy and framework. This structure allows for a variety of teaching methodologies based on individual needs of the child (see below). All approaches will be ethical and proven to be effective through research and experience. They will adhere to the National Autistic Society's SPELL framework of principles for good practice in Autism. SPELL is an acronym that stands for: Structure, Positive, Empathy, Low arousal, Links.

SCERTS approach

SCERTS[®] is an innovative educational model for working with children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families. It provides specific guidelines for helping a child become a competent and confident social communicator, while preventing problem behaviours that interfere with learning and the development of relationships. It also is designed to help families, educators and therapists work cooperatively as a team, in a carefully coordinated manner, to maximize progress in supporting a child.

The acronym "SCERTS" refers to the focus on:

"SC" - Social Communication – the development of spontaneous, functional communication, emotional expression, and secure and trusting relationships with children and adults;

"ER" - Emotional Regulation - the development of the ability to maintain a well-regulated emotional state to cope with everyday stress, and to be most available for learning and interacting;

"TS" – Transactional Support – the development and implementation of supports to help partners respond to the child's needs and interests, modify and adapt the environment, and provide tools to enhance learning (e.g., picture communication, written schedules, and sensory supports). Specific plans are also developed to provide educational and emotional support to families, and to foster teamwork among professionals.

Examples of Autism specific teaching methods that will be used include:

- TEACCH: 'Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children'. The primary aim of TEACCH is to use structured approaches to help to prepare people with autism to live or work more effectively at home, at school and in the community.
- The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): is a tried-and-tested approach that uses pictures to develop communication skills. It's appropriate for children and adults with a wide range of learning, speech and communication difficulties, including autism
- Social Stories and comic strip conversations assist a person with Autism to understand a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant social cues,

perspectives, and common responses in a specifically defined style and format.

- Intensive interaction: is an approach to teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication to children and adults who have severe learning difficulties and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development.

This is not an exhaustive list and all approaches will be applied to individuals and groups according to needs identified through their baseline assessment.

(More information can be found on SPELL and other Autism Specific teaching methods on the National Autistic Society website.)

Partnership working

The school views partnership working to be integral to the success of its vision. This will be an outward facing school with community engagement at its core.

We intend to commit both time and resources to ensure that our partnership work is effective and sustainable and that our collaborative approach improves the attainment, achievement and progression of the pupils in our schools and children with autism in other schools, colleges and wider community. The model of leadership has been chosen to enable the school to sustain this leading edge approach to specialist schooling and have the capacity to deliver this vision.

We are committed to the aims detailed in the White Paper “Your child, Your Schools, Our future: building a 21st Century Schools system” and support the view that the future is “every school working in partnerships: as no school can do it alone”.

Partnership working - Parents

Existing contacts

1. NAS Cheshire East Branch
2. Registered NAS members
3. Cheshire East Autism Support Group.

Possible contacts / areas to research

Autism parent groups in local towns and cities in East Cheshire

Parent partnership in local towns and cities in East Cheshire

Benefits / application

- A wide range of parents are already supporting the proposed school and have a relationship with the NAS
- We already have contact details of a significant number of local parents who will be able to contribute to our knowledge and understanding of existing local community provisions and future needs

Partnership with parents will support the school to run appropriate parent workshops and training events. (There is an established NAS ‘help!’ Programme)

Partnership working - local schools (including SEN providers)

Conversations with local schools will be held to confirm a mutual commitment to work together to meet the needs of the local school community and identify how we can all

contribute to raising the awareness and skills in meeting the needs of pupils with autism.

Benefits / application.

We will engage with local schools to:

- Share staff expertise.
- Share best practice.
- Develop joint training opportunities.
- Extend curricular offer across all the schools.
- Extend autism skills, knowledge and reach into the community.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to have dual placements.

This will be done through (example not exclusive):

Raising standards.

- Half termly meetings between the two senior leadership teams.
- Peer support for the Business Managers.
- Problem solving.

Increasing opportunity

- Sharing space and resources like the sensory room, performing arts centre , playgrounds, training kitchen.
- Opportunity to share best practice.
- Joint training opportunities for staff & sharing trainers.
- Supply cover for absences.
- Sharing therapist support.
- Exploring procurement whenever the opportunity arises.
- Participate in joint educational visits.
- Extension of the curricular offer for both schools.

Partnership working - local colleges/universities

Possible contacts / areas to research

We will work closely with local Colleges and Universities to ensure close cooperation, especially with regard to the transition of students from school to college.

Benefits / application

- Use of college buildings, for example theatre and Media suite.
- College Tutors for extended and enrichment activities.
- Opportunities to share expertise from our school. The free school to provide autism specific training for college staff and to advise on support packages for college students with autism.
- Pupils build confidence to move along pathways to FE as familiar with college staff and environment.
- Colleges will develop appropriate accredited courses for free school pupils 14+ and extend our curricular offer.
- Seamless transition to FE courses and Adult life for pupils who identify this as their

chosen pathway when leaving the school at 16.

Developing a university partnership

- We value the benefit of being part of research projects and recognize that this is a way to improve pupil outcomes and ensure evidence based best practice is embedded in our curriculum and teaching and learning.
- These links will also benefit staff personal development and learning.
- Partnership with the local university will strengthen higher education pathways for some of the pupils who attend the school on either short or longer term placements.

Partnership working - local businesses

Existing contacts

Contact will be made with local businesses to inform them about our plans for the proposed free school.

Benefits / application

- Opening transition pathways to work for our pupils.
- Identifying needs of the local businesses to inform our curriculum development.
- Sponsorship and fundraising opportunities.
- Volunteering opportunities for our pupils in businesses and business staff in our school.

Partnership working - Local Authority

Existing contacts

- Cheshire East LA. Close partnership to develop the proposed school from conception.

Possible contacts / areas to research

- Neighbouring local authorities (Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent).

Benefits / application

- Support for school
- Referrals to school
- Extension of local authority provision
- Cost saving for local authority
- Reduction in exclusions

Partnership working - LA Children's services and health authority

Possible contacts / areas to research

- Social services
- CAMHS

Representatives from these agencies will be invited to 'Community Conversations' at the school, once it is established.

Benefits / application

- Improved outcomes for our pupils and families through access to a wider range of services.
- Greater understanding of the needs of children and young people with autism across the disciplines.

Social integration and emotional development

Effective multi-agency and partnership working as described above will improve outcomes for our pupils and their families. Through the facilitation of well-planned and supported visits, curriculum opportunities and joint working, we will enable many of our pupils with autism to overcome their high levels of anxiety about accessing learning in other educational settings. Due to the nature of autism we know that the pace of this will be dictated by individual need and for most it will be a carefully staged approach.

It is anticipated that on entry, pupils are likely to have had negative experiences of previous schools and may have been in either inappropriate placements or out of school. The first priority in terms of social integration is for pupils to feel safe, secure and happy at our school. This will be achieved by:

- The positive ethos of the school which is underpinned by respecting and valuing every student.
- Developing an understanding of their history and their starting points.
- Identifying areas of strength and motivation and giving pupils reasons why they want to attend school.
- Adopting the attitude of “doing what it takes” to enable an individual to transition smoothly into the school.
- Flexible strategies to maximising the inclusion of every pupil.

Secondly, pupils will need to assimilate the necessary learners’ behaviours in order to utilise the more formal types of education experience. The school will have a curriculum document entitled “being ready for learning” which will detail how pupils will be supported in acquiring these essential prerequisite skills and behaviours. In the initial period that pupils are in school it will be essential to transform them into individuals who recognise and value the benefits of learning. Central to this will be building self-esteem and aspiration through capitalising on individuals’ strengths and providing individualised curriculum opportunities that enable them to take part in the activities that excite them the most. Following on from this individualised learning, support and behaviour management strategies, detailed in pupils’ learning pathways files, will help them to understand their own difficulties and develop “tool kits” to help them to cope through different stages in life,

We will aim for our pupils to achieve their potential and beyond by recognising and being confident that they have potential and recognising that there is a link between working hard and positive outcomes for themselves.

Once pupils are safe, secure and engaged in learning, the third priority for social integration will be for pupils to develop social communication skills that prepare them for accessing their local community and local schools. For pupils with autism it is acknowledged that this is an extremely big challenge. Lorna Wing and Judith Gould (1979) in their then pioneering research into the Triad of Impairments, describe four

types of social impairment in people with autism: aloof, passive, active but odd and over formal stilted group. These 4 sub-groups are helpful in understanding the difficulties inherent with autism and social integration:

- Aloof – these individuals may behave as if others do not exist, have little or no eye contact and ‘seem to be in a world of their own’.
- Passive – may accept social approaches and become involved but in a passive way (often making them very vulnerable).
- Active but odd – this group have the desire to communicate but make that contact in strange ways, lacking appropriate social skills.
- Odd and over formal stilted group – often seen later in life and in more able people with Autism, excessively polite and formal, trying hard to stick to the rules of social interaction without really understanding them.

It would not be possible to address fully the issue of social integration for our prospective population without truly understanding these subgroups. It is anticipated that the majority of pupils will fall into the last 3 groups that are typically associated with more able and verbal individuals.

Each of these sub groups requires a different approach. We will use existing research and knowledge of practice combined with our own experience and creative thinking to devise our own innovative Social Communication curriculum. It will include a starter questionnaire to ascertain which group (or groups) the individual falls into and then describe programmes of work that relate to each area.

Pupils in Key Stages 1 - 3 will have a designated timetabled session for social Communication. This will include following this Social Communication curriculum and participating in social skills groups within school using other commercialised materials available to develop skills, such as turn taking and listening.

The Social Communication curriculum will prepare our pupils for the fourth element of social integration, which is to be included in a wider community. All pupils will participate in some way in activities within the local community, according to their needs and abilities. (See following Model for details). For this to be successful it is essential that pupils are part of the decision making and feel fully prepared for their integration, particularly where this involves being included in a local mainstream school or participating in work experience.

Even where there are autism specific problems inherent with this, in that some pupils may not be motivated to be included, it is seen as the responsibility of the school to adopt an individual approach to supporting pupils to see the benefits to social integration. In addition to the foundation preparation that takes place within our own school environment, each pupil regularly accessing the community or local school as part of a set placement will have an identified “coach”. (See transition arrangements for further details of this). It is envisaged that stages 3 and 4 of social integration will form the main part of a pupil’s time at the school and may run concurrently.

Throughout their school career each pupil’s individual learning pathway file will detail the arrangements in relation to each stage of this social integration.

Social integration is central to the vision of the school and it is seen as absolutely

essential to achieving our aims. It is inextricably linked to our population's future life opportunities and is therefore seen as a continuous process that leads to transition planning.

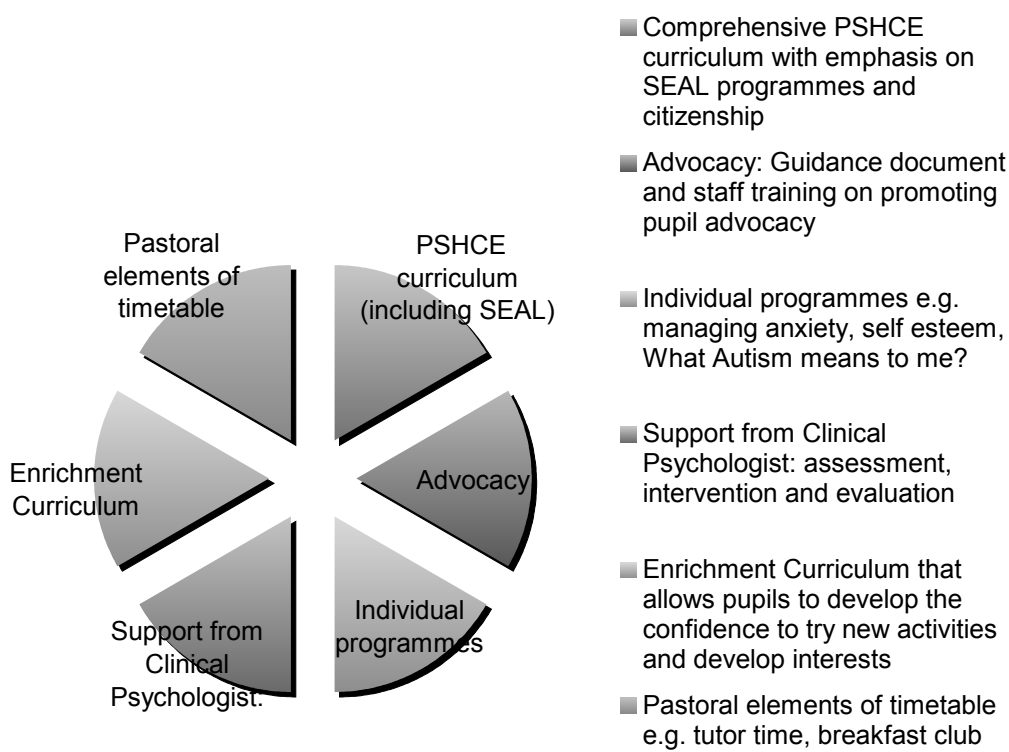
Emotional Well being

Emotional wellbeing is described in this section as it is so fundamentally central to the needs of this particular cohort.

In order to prepare pupils for being socially integrated and active citizens in society it is necessary for pupils not only to acquire the necessary social skills, as will be developed through the Social Communication Curriculum, but also to develop the confidence, motivation and aspiration to want to contribute and belong. It is well known that individuals with autism suffer from higher levels of anxiety than the majority of the general population, whether this is related to not being able to predict situations and responses, worrying about the appropriateness of their interactions or fearing change.

It is also reported that children and young people with LD (including autism) are more likely to experience mental health problems than the general population. Therefore an essential component of any Autism specific provision is to ensure that pupils' wellbeing needs are met. We will seek to do this through a number of dimensions:

Dimensions of Wellbeing curriculum



Advocacy

The overriding vision of the school will be for people with Autism get to live the life they choose. In order to meet this aim we need to enable pupils to become confident advocates for themselves.

The British Institute for Learning Disabilities states:

Advocacy is about making things change because people's voices are heard and listened to. It's about making sure that people can make their own choices in life and have the chance to be as independent as they want to be.

BILD Website 2012

Whilst it is not anticipated that our pupils will have significant learning difficulties, it is anticipated that the majority may often express their needs and views through challenging behaviour. They will be taught how to express themselves, make real choices and advocate for themselves in an appropriate way that ultimately enables them to make their own decisions and follow life pathways that they choose. Pupil advocacy will pervade every area of the school, from its ethos, to philosophy of behaviour management to its curriculum. It is intended that the staff at the school will collaborate to produce a policy on advocacy that details the school's philosophy and practice in this area.

PSHCE curriculum

Our vision is that the school will:

- Help pupils to overcome barriers.
- Place an emphasis on citizenship work, supporting pupils to achieve and make a positive inclusive contribution to their community.
- Seek to improve the current and future lives of the students.
- Enable pupils to become safe, confident users of ICT.

Our PSHCE curriculum will be central to this. It will be designed to support our pupils with the areas they find the most difficult and make them the most vulnerable. At key stages 1 and 2 the SEAL curriculum (social emotional aspects of learning) will be embedded throughout the scheme of work and will support pupils' emotional intelligence. E safety will also be prioritised, as experience and research (and recent news stories) has highlighted how vulnerable people with Autism can be in this area.

Citizenship will also be given greater emphasis, enabling pupils to understand their roles and responsibilities within society and identify the contribution they can make.

Psychology assessments

The following specialist assessments will be used to support obtaining accurate detailed information, identification of need and planning for intervention:

- The Psycho educational Profile Third Edition (PEP-3)
- The Vineland assessment of adaptive behaviour
- The British Ability Scales (BAS)
- The Wechsler Individual Achievement Test Second UK Edition (WIAT-II UK)
- The Neale Analysis of Reading
- Sensory Profiling Checklist

Also, free to download assessment measures we have/may use include:

- Nisonger Children's Behaviour Rating Form
- Goal Based Outcomes Measure
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
- Children's Yale Brown Obsessive Compulsive Scale etc.

Enrichment Curriculum

Enabling pupils to develop wider interests outside the 'standard' curriculum.

Pastoral timetable

The pastoral elements of the timetable hold the primary aim of enabling pupils to feel safe, secure and prepared for learning. The elements of the pastoral timetable include:

- Tutor time
- Individualised learning time
- Breakfast club
- Homework club

Staff teams will be consistent, highly trained and develop close relationships with their pupils. In the secondary phase pupils will attend lessons with different specialist teachers for core subjects but will spend all of their pastoral time with their form tutor. This model gives the benefits of consistency, which is beneficial to those on the autistic

spectrum, whilst still enabling them to participate in aspects of a secondary model and generalize their learning.

The equality act 2010

It is an aim of the School that there will be a distinctive ethos and philosophy in the school. From the moment a person enters the building you will know this is a school where pupils and staff are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives. This includes and applies to all staff, parents and children no matter what sex, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief or disability or gender.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for all pupils and staff in the school to take account of their SEN and disability. Governors will also be given training to ensure that they fully understand equality law. The school will be a community where all people are treated with fairness and respect. The accessibility plan will be part of the School development plan and it will detail how pupils will be supported to access learning, how the physical environment of the school will increase access for all pupils and how information will be available for pupils and parents in a range of different ways .For example those parents who have learning disabilities or visual difficulties may prefer to have information available on tape.

As required by the Public Sector Equality Duty, the school will publish information on the school website to show how it is complying with the duty. The due regard detailed in the duty, to eliminate discrimination, to improve equality of opportunity, remove barriers, to foster good relationships between different groups, meet the needs of disabled children and encourage participation in the life of the school, is an intrinsic part of School's education plan.

D5: Tell us how your definitions and measures of success will deliver your aspirations for pupil achievement.

We will provide the highest quality of Autism specific education, enabling pupils to achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives. We will have ambitious expectations and an uncompromising commitment to demonstrating outstanding teaching and learning which embraces best practice in Autism and education. We will never stand still, we will continually engage in a cycle of monitoring and evaluating pupil achievement and improving all aspects of the school.

How will we define success?

Our overall measure of success will be in the realisation of our vision and having evidence that we have achieved what we set out to. The table below illustrates how the success of our vision will be measured and how this links to pupil outcomes.

We are successful when the school achieves its vision:	We will know this by:	This will lead to positive outcomes for pupils:
Has a distinctive ethos and philosophy: from the moment a person enters the building you will know this is a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and have rich and varied experiences.	Obtaining the views of: Pupils Parents Staff Other stakeholders Visitors to the school (including Ofsted)	Pupil surveys indicate pupils feel they are respected, their views are taken on board, they are able to make choices and that they enjoy a variety of experiences. Pupils communicate positively with peers, staff and parents Pupils speak positively about their future.
Build on pupils' strengths and capitalise on interests, giving them a reason to learn and instilling a belief in the importance of what they can achieve, not what they can't!	Comparing pupils' attendance, engagement with learning and behaviour over time (from starting point) Pupil contributions to annual review Pupils transition and career planning Monitoring enrichment curriculum Monitoring quality of teaching and learning and curriculum.	Pupils' attendance and behaviour are good and enable them to have increased access to learning. (Poor attendance, school refusal and challenging behaviour show quantifiable reduction) Pupils' engagement with learning is high. Pupils speak positively about their strengths and how these will be incorporated into their future Pupils' overall expectations of themselves are high; they are ambitious and work towards own goals Pupils are willing to try new activities and believe they can succeed.
Support pupils to achieve GCSEs and other recognised qualifications.	Accurate assessment and recording and pupil tracking that analyses progress from starting point and against expectations. Benchmarking against other schools	Pupils achieve beyond what is expected for themselves given their starting points Pupils achieve beyond (or at least in line with) National expectations Pupils achieve nationally

	Qualifications achieved by pupils	recognised qualifications
Build on the extensive knowledge and experience of the National Autistic Society to be creative, pioneering and innovative in its approach to meeting the needs of these specific groups of pupils.	<p>Observation of teaching and learning</p> <p>Staff meeting minutes – (where new approaches are discussed)</p> <p>Pupil Learning pathway plans showing evidence of individual approaches</p> <p>Involvement in research</p> <p>Journal club</p> <p>Senior Leadership team observations</p> <p>School Improvement Plan</p> <p>Attaining Accreditation status (National Autistic Society programme) and as a member contributing to its good practice network meetings</p>	<p>Pupils have access to highly specialised and individualised teaching and resources</p> <p>Individual approaches, strategies and interventions enable pupils holistic needs to be met and increase access to learning</p> <p>Pupils are inspired and excited to participate in creative learning experiences</p>
Be regarded as a regional resource; a school where it is common practice to share practice with local schools, the community and beyond	<p>Cascading knowledge through outreach, external training and conferences</p> <p>Setting up shared interest groups</p> <p>Hosting visits</p> <p>Delivering PSHCE sessions for pupils within other schools about Autism</p> <p>Hosting student placements</p> <p>Establishment of the school as one of the first ASD specific teaching school (though this does not form a main part of the plan this would be identified as a future development of the school)</p>	<p>Pupils from beyond our school benefit from our knowledge and expertise:</p> <p>Increased understanding of Autism, challenging behaviour, communication</p> <p>Increased opportunities for inclusion</p> <p>Wider understanding and acceptance of differences within the community</p> <p>Acknowledgement of the contribution they make within the community</p>
Be based on an overriding understanding between staff and pupils that	<p>Obtaining the views of:</p> <p>Pupils</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Pupils are involved in target setting and set and evaluate own targets / goals</p>

<p>expectations are high.</p>	<p>Other stakeholders Visitors to the school (including Ofsted) Staff performance reviews Teaching and Learning observations Monitoring of target setting</p>	<p>Pupils are aspirational and talk about how they can challenge themselves and achieve even more Pupils believe they can achieve and know staff want them to do well Pupils can talk about why they want to do well and how they will get there. Pupils have a positive identity; they understand their own diagnosis and the difficulties it can cause for them but they do not use this as an excuse or a reason to think they will not do well in life</p>
<p>Recruit staff on the basis that they have an uncompromising commitment to demonstrating outstanding teaching and learning which embraces the best practice in Autism and education.</p>	<p>Observations of teaching and learning Staff performance reviews Monitoring of staff induction and training programme</p>	<p>Pupils are supported to achieve by staff who 'will leave no stone unturned' in delivering high quality teaching and support</p>
<p>Establish a curriculum that enables pupils to overcome their barriers to learning, develop social skills and coping strategies and learn to manage their own behaviour.</p>	<p>Monitoring of curriculum Observations of teaching and learning (including enrichment activities, social skills groups and leisure time) Behavioural observations and analysis of incident data Achievement of individual Education Plan objectives Obtaining the views of: Pupils Parents Staff Other stakeholders Visitors to the school (including Ofsted)</p>	<p>Pupils demonstrate and talk about how they're behaviour has improved and how they manage their own behaviour Pupils have a positive self-esteem, self-identity and are proud of their achievements Pupils have friends and feel more confident in social situations in and outside of the school Pupils have developed a toolkit that assists them in learning effectively, they can talk about what factors are in place for them to learn well</p>
<p>Place an emphasis on social skills and citizenship work,</p>	<p>Monitoring of curriculum Observations of activities that take place</p>	<p>Pupils' behaviour in the community is positive and members of the</p>

<p>supporting pupils to achieve and make a positive inclusive contribution to their community.</p>	<p>in the community Feedback from members of the community</p>	<p>community recognise this. All pupils carry out activities in the community and can talk about the contribution they make Pupils are prepared for the future and aspire to be included in society</p>
<p>Provide bespoke education through carefully planned educational pathways, which are focussed on long-term outcomes and seek to improve the current and future lives of the students, their families and members of the local community.</p>	<p>Evaluation of Individual Learning pathways Obtaining the views of: Pupils Parents Staff Other stakeholders Visitors to the school (including Ofsted)</p>	<p>Pupils access a truly individualised education that focuses on their needs and individual outcomes Pupils leave the school with increased self-esteem, knowledge of their strengths and clear about the positive contribution they wish to make. Pupils are happier in both school and home for the duration of their time at our school. Pupils are supported effectively through difficult times and become emotionally more resilient and able to cope.</p>
<p>Be innovative in its 'revolving door policy', truly addressing the issue of personalisation and offering a menu of flexible packages that provide the package of education needed for the time that it is needed.</p>	<p>Evaluation of admissions and 'revolving door' data and provision Evaluation of Individual Learning pathways Views of: Pupils Parents Local schools Case studies on pupils who have returned to mainstream education Relationships with mainstream schools Training and support offered to mainstream schools Follow up support required Obtaining follow up data</p>	<p>Pupils get the support they need for the time they need it. Pupils catch up on learning and acquire the necessary social, life and behavioural skills to function well in a mainstream placement Pupils' self-esteem is improved Pupils join schools that understand their needs and know how to support them</p>

	on pupils progress and wellbeing in their mainstream school	
To be pioneering in its Autism specific ICT provision.	State of the art ICT resources Availability of new technologies Involvement in research around Autism specific technology Monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure ICT is fully integrated into all aspects of curriculum Pupil attainment in ICT Development of bespoke e-safety training which highlights specific needs of pupils with Autism	Pupils are safe confident users of new technology Pupils have access to the most up to date resources, particularly that support their Autism specific needs ICT adds to pupils lives and opportunities Pupils, at times in their education, have opportunities to learn or catch up on learning through a means that is not dependent on social interaction Pupils achieve beyond what is expected in this subject Pupils leave school with ICT skills that would support them in college or employment

Specific Targets for pupils:

The above table describes how the success of the school will be linked to its vision and it describes the expected positive outcomes for pupils that will result from successful implementation of the vision.

However, it is essential that the school defines exactly what it will measure in relation to pupil success. We have identified the following pupil targets:

Core targets:

- 100% of post 16 students achieve an Entry Level 1 qualification.
- 75% of post 16 students who achieve level C at GCSE's achieve a Level 2 qualification.
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 at key stage 2 in core subjects to achieve level C at GCSE's.
- 75% of pupils who achieve level 4 in ICT at key stage 2 to achieve level C at GCSE's.
- 75% of pupils to achieve at least one foundation subject GCSE in an area most aligned with their strengths or special interests.
- 100% of pupils who are not entered for GCSE's to obtain an ASDAN qualification.
- Pupils working at below level 2 and key stage one or below level 4 at key stage 2 to progress 2 levels per key stage.
- 50% of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make the expected progress with regard to age-related expectations.

- For 90 % of students to attend a mainstream college or take on meaningful employment after completing year 11.
- For 90% of pupils that return to mainstream schooling to maintain successful placements
- Reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour.
- For the majority of pupils to learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to engage with learning, make a meaningful contribution to their community and live with dignity and independence.
- For no pupils to be excluded.
- For pupils to acquire the technological skills that prepare them for 21st Century life enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.

Supporting targets:

These targets underpin and support the achievement of core targets:

- For 80% of pupils to achieve their Individual Education Plan target (rising to 85% after 2 years when the school has had opportunity to ensure realistic yet challenging targets are being set and there is an effective system in place for identification and moderation of targets).
- Pupil attendance to be above 90% and for those where school refusal and non-attendance has been an issue their attendance to improve year on year.
- For pupils whose behaviour is managed with restrictive physical intervention to implement restraint reduction programmes that eliminate or significantly reduce the need for this.
- Learn strategies that will enable them to take charge of their own learning so as to be able to access the curriculum offered to them.
100% of pupils will show an increased engagement with learning from their starting points.
- Be a part of their community and their wider society: 100% of pupils will participate in an activity within the community on a regular basis.
- 75% of pupils will join a community group, be involved in a volunteer project of participate in a work placement.
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable them to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life.
- To capitalise on strengths and areas of interest, enabling pupils to excel in these areas and use these as a basis for informing transition and career planning.
- For all pupils to take part in a new enrichment activity and enjoy a hobby / leisure activity that they report they would want to continue when they leave school.
- Enjoy learning and recognise the contribution they make to the school and community.

These targets are appropriate for pupils as they are based on an evaluation of expected intake and general knowledge of the needs of pupils with Autism who are of average or high cognitive ability. They are based on knowledge of what parents and pupils within NAS schools and from the focus groups say they want to achieve and are informed by achievement of this group of pupils within NAS schools over recent years. These targets will be continually monitored and reviewed.

These targets will inform school improvement planning and if there is a target not being

met this will be addressed through the school improvement plan before it is judged to be unrealistic or any amendments are made.

These pupil targets will be reported on annually to both parents and governors via the Principal's report.

How will success be measured?

External Measures

- Providing data to DFE on end of Key stage results, including SATS and P level progression.
- Ofsted inspections.
- Accreditation Inspections (NAS Autism specific peer review resulting in being awarded accredited status – recognition of effectiveness of Autism specific provision) The school will plan to join the accreditation programme in year 2 and achieve Accredited status by year 4.
- Reports from external professionals e.g. Educational Psychologist, Occupational therapists.
- Feedback from School Improvement Partner.

Internal Measures

All analysis will start with cohort data, which will lead to the analysis of individual pupil information. All analysis will inform school improvement planning, staff performance reviews and the identification of learning and development needs and therefore the training plan.

Quantitative Indicators

- Pupil numbers.
- Attainment (test scores, end of key stage levels and achievement of qualifications)
- Pupil attendance.
- Behavioural Incident data and removal of behaviours from support plans.
- Number of students who return to part time or full time placements in less specialist settings.
- Number of students who take up college placements or employment on leaving the school.
- Pupil exclusion data.
- The school Business manager's annual report demonstrating the school's ability to balance a budget and be value for money.
- E-safety incident data.
- Achievement data for whole school targets.
- Achievement data for achievement of Individual Education Plan objectives.
- Pupil tracking and annual analysis of data to monitor whether: pupils achieve at least what is expected for themselves against own starting points and pupils achieve what is expected according to national norms.

Qualitative Indicators

- Views of pupils (from their contribution at annual reviews, pupil satisfaction surveys and via the school council).
- Views of parents (from parents group, parents evenings, their contributions to annual

reviews and parent satisfaction surveys).

- Governors' visits, observations and reports.
- Views of members of the community (from open evenings, stakeholder questionnaires and focus group meetings).
- The school's ability to balance a budget and be value for money.
- Annual review summative assessments (subject report).
- Annual review report on 'what has been achieved since the last review?'
- Reports from internal professionals e.g. Educational Psychologist, Occupational therapists, including outcomes reports showing progress as a result of interventions or on sleeping, eating, toileting programmes.
- Review of statement of Special Educational Needs (or proposed combined education, care and health plan) demonstrating pupils have made sufficient progress that these require updating.
- Pupils learning pathway files (including targets for transition, mainstream placement, individual intervention programmes).
- Notes of meetings: for example class meetings discussing a specific pupil issue may show progress over time.
- Evaluation of School Improvement Plan.
- Senior Leadership Team termly pupil review.
- Teaching and Learning observations (including data on judgements of lessons).

Other sources of evidence

- Individual pupil case studies: each year the school will complete case studies for 3 pupils reporting in details their progress and outcomes against a range of measures.
- Records of achievement: will show examples of annotated and cross-moderated work that illustrate progress through National Curriculum levels.
- Magic moment and major milestones. Pupils in EYFS/Primary will have a portfolio that includes comments from themselves, staff and parents on major achievements, these will relate to the things that are most difficult for our pupils to achieve and are not easily measurable such as the first time they cope with a specific situation or manage something independently such as delivering a message. For secondary pupils these will be called major milestones and will be completed by pupils as part of their form time.

Strategy for success:

The elements that support successful pupil outcomes are:

- Achieving excellence in the quality of Teaching and Learning
- Accurate and thorough procedures for Assessment Recording and Reporting
- Pupil self-evaluation and Assessment for Learning
- Effective school Leadership: Arrangements for school self-evaluation, improvement and monitoring

1. Achieving excellence in the quality of Teaching and Learning

The school's vision states that we will have an uncompromising commitment to demonstrating outstanding teaching and learning.

In order to establish this there will be an ongoing programme of staff development and monitoring of teaching and learning. This section outlines the strategy for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

The quality of teaching and Learning is measured in a number of ways as illustrated below. Many of these are also measures of pupil outcomes. Arrangements for the measures not discussed earlier are described on the following page.



Quality of displays

The school will have a displays policy that includes guidelines for Autism specific displays that provide enough interest and support for learning but which are not too distracting so as to detract from the low arousal nature of our classrooms. The school will view displays to be fundamental in promoting the ethos of the school and as such will be produced to an exceptional standard reflecting the best achievements within the school. The quality of the school's displays will reflect how much their work is valued. An identified staff member will have overall responsibility of the quality of displays and will support staff and share good ideas.

Short term and Medium term planning

The Principal will carefully monitor the quality of planning and will provide support as necessary. High quality teaching and learning has to be planned for and must be informed by assessment and the schemes of work.

Programme of lesson observations

Lesson observations fall into five different categories and have different purposes:

- Senior Leadership observations: each class will be observed once per half term. They will be observed against set criteria and recorded on a lesson observation form. Formal feedback will be given which will feed into staff performance reviews. These observations will also look at the quality of the support given by the learning support assistants and will inform learning support staff training programmes. These will identify areas of good practice that should be shared at staff meetings and areas for development. The standard of the lesson will be rated and data collected across a year will inform an overall judgment on the quality of teaching and learning which will be reported on as part of the Principal's annual report to parents and governors.
- Subject specific observations: curriculum leaders will observe their peers delivering specific subjects and give informal feedback and support. These will usually be in line with the school improvement plan.
- Video coaching sessions: once a term each class will be videoed. The teacher and line manager will then watch the recording together and the line manager will adopt a coaching approach, supporting the teacher to identify their own thoughts on the lesson and how to take their class forward. The teacher will then watch the video with their class team and carry out the same exercise. Staff will receive training on coaching in order to acquire these specific skills.
- Support for Learning team individual pupil observations: specialist staff (Speech and Language therapist, Psychologist etc) will observe individual pupils as required throughout the year, in order to advise staff and inform assessments, support or intervention programmes.
- Peer observations: teachers will have the opportunity to observe excellent practice from other teachers within the school and in other schools, particularly in

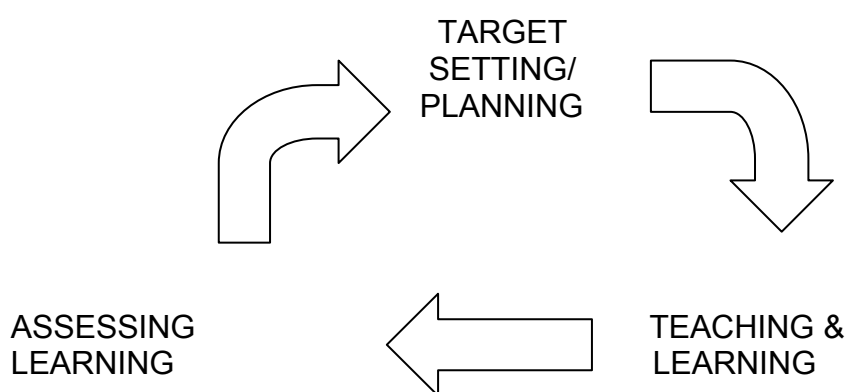
National Autistic Society schools. This will be agreed and planned within school improvement planning and staff performance reviews.

Pupil work

The school will have a marking policy which will detail how work should be annotated and stored. Pupils work folders will be viewed by the senior leadership team at regular intervals and should match medium term planning.

2. Accurate and thorough procedures for Assessment Recording and Reporting

The school will have comprehensive procedures for assessment, recording and reporting. These will all link together to give the full picture of the child and will be used to inform planning for individual and group learning, following the cycle illustrated below.



The following table outlines the arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting:

Type of assessment	Timing of assessment	Method of assessment	Recording and reporting
Baseline	0-12 weeks of pupil entering school	Collation of previous history. Teacher observation and assessment Psychologist, SALT, standardized tests and observation info. covering: Cognitive ability Learning style Attainments Social skills and independence Communication Behaviour	Teacher, psychologist and SALT all produce separate reports, which form the baseline assessment package. Senior staff check through package for inconsistencies and accuracy Package is distributed with the IEP to parents/carers, the LEA, and anyone else professionally accountable to the child.
EYFS	Monitored	EYFS teacher	At the end of the EYFS

	weekly recorded termly	completes foundation stage profile with class team using observation and classroom assessment tasks	the assessment will be summarised and recorded on the EYFS Stage Profile and sent home to Parents.
Annual Reviews	Refer to current annual review schedule for completion dates	Teacher using Bsquared results, own observations and using the termly evaluations of the IEP. New IEP produced, including annual targets and first terms termly targets Psychologist & SALT: standardized tests observation Teacher and psychologist use Access to Learning plans, the incident recording data and observation. New Access to Learning Plan drawn up.	Teacher, SALT and Psychologist all produce annual reports, which are distributed to parents/carers, the LEA and others professionally accountable to the child after checking by senior staff. New IEP agreed and distributed. Record of Achievement presented, where possible by pupil who is invited to attend annual review New Access to Learning Plans distributed to class team and parents. At Annual review appropriateness of provision, staffing levels and statement of special educational needs are reported and reviewed. Notes are taken and distributed to all who attend and send apologies. Local authority / Social care representatives invited to annual reviews and if they do not attend sent notes of meeting and all information.
Review of Individual education Plan	Termly	Teacher reviews progress on annual objectives and current terms Individual Education Plan objectives and in	Head teacher monitors progress and checks new targets. New Individual Education Plan termly targets sent out to

		conjunction with parents and multidisciplinary team sets new targets.	parents.
Annual sensory assessment	Once pupil has been in school for 6 months then annually	Sensory assessment completed by parents, staff and multi-disciplinary team	Sensory assessment used to complete sensory profile. Circulated to parents and all staff.
Termly National Curriculum Assessment	Summer term	Teachers use Bsquared to record progress.	Moderated annually by Deputy Principal and subject leaders. Annually data imported to CATL PLANA and analysed by Head of School. Report produced and cascaded to staff, parents and governors.
Vocational Assessment ASDAN transition challenge , bronze and silver awards	Ongoing Key stage 3 - 4	Pupils complete units of work, produce portfolios of evidence and this is assessed by member of staff trained and responsible for ASDAN	Reported at annual reviews. Liaison with parents as necessary
GCSE	Key stage 4 (or earlier for individual pupils)	Pupils participate in GCSE course work and examinations	Marked externally and reported to parents and governors
End of key stage standardised assessments	End of key stage 2	Pupils sit standard assessment tests	Marked externally and reported to parents and governors.
Ongoing : Behaviour/ Speech and Language/ Occupational Therapy	Ongoing as required	Observations, Behaviour checklists, functional analysis, incident recording, recording of progress on occupational therapy programmes, communication development etc. Monitoring of interventions	Record and evaluate using individual documentation. Behaviour data Inputted into computer, Summative print outs as required Outcomes report produced
Daily formative assessment	At end of day and whilst working with	IEP recording sheets Individual Maths / English programmes recording	IEP assessment used to inform future IEP termly targets / annual review

	child on individual programmes (1:1 work)		Maths / English used to inform Maths and English programmes completed during pupils 1:1 time and inform Bsquared assessment
Whole school targets	Termly and end of year	Teachers complete sheets detailing class' progress on whole school targets.	Incorporated into data analysis and end of year report to parents and governors.

Because our pupils may join the school mid-year or after a period of disrupted education it will be necessary to ensure baseline assessment procedures are carried out quickly, thoroughly and accurately. During this period there will be increased support from the multi-disciplinary team and senior staff in order to ensure this is achieved.

Pupil tracking

The school will gather, share and use assessment and other data to check whether individual pupils, classes, year groups, specific groups (gender, ethnicity, Looked after children etc and the school as a whole are 'on track' to meet their targets.

We will use a range of assessment tools, including Bsquared, CATL PLANA and SIMS assessment manager to ensure compatibility with systems from our feeder schools and schools our pupils move on to. Teachers will use B squared assessment software to record progress made at the end of each term and the Head teacher will use CATL PLANA software as a basis for data evaluation. The data will be analysed and conclusions drawn, information will be cascaded at teachers' staff meetings, Management, support and development meetings and the senior leadership team's improvement planning day (held in June). Conclusions and recommendations from the analysis will directly inform future target setting and School Improvement planning.

The school will use national tools (such as RAISE on line) where appropriate or in line with any mandatory regulations.

3. Pupil self-evaluation and Assessment for Learning

All lessons will follow a format that promotes assessment for learning. The teacher will introduce the lesson with clear targets. At the end of the lesson pupils and staff will reflect and record whether these have been achieved. As it is a priority for pupils to be self-motivated to learn and to a certain extent take control of their own learning pupil self-evaluation will be central to all teaching and learning activities. Pupils will also contribute to judgments on whether they have achieved their individual education plan targets and will reflect on their standards of behaviour.

4. Arrangements for school self-evaluation, improvement and monitoring

The school will operate a constant, rigorous cycle of self-evaluation. This will directly inform school improvement planning in the form of the Schools annual and 3-year school improvement plan. This in turn will be closely linked with budget setting.

Systems for ongoing monitoring will ensure the senior leadership team are constantly up to date with how well the school is doing and are able to manage change and improvement effectively.

The cycle of school improvement is as follows:

Sept - May	June	July	Sept	Autumn term
Ongoing monitoring from senior Leadership team Termly Staff performance reviews Ongoing programme of observations of teaching and learning	Collations of data: Pupil results Teaching and learning observations	Senior Leadership team meet and agree School Improvement plan (1 yr and review 3yr plan) Accessibility Plan is reviewed and updated.	Senior Leadership team look at training needs analysis and plan training for the year.	Set budget in line with School Improvement plan and training plan.

Annual self-evaluation

The quality of the school will be measured using the following indicators:

- Attainment and progress
- Quality of learning and teaching
- Pupil attendance
- Behaviour and safety
- Pupils' enjoyment of school;
- Parents' and carers' attitudes
- Leadership and management including governance
- Budget planning and management.

In June the school will analyse and report on the following:

- Pupil data
- The overall standards they attain (test scores, end of key stage levels and achievement of qualifications)
- The standards attained by different groups such as girls and boys, the gifted, children in public care, the talented, those from different ethnic groups, and those with different special needs,
- The progress made by different groups of learners over time - for example, how well they do between entering the EYFS and leaving the EYFS or between Key Stages 2 and 4, or in all age settings across all the key stages
- Outcomes from learners' personal development and well-being
- The school compare itself with similar schools nationally and will use this information to set challenging targets
- Pupil attendance, including individual reports for those whose attendance is below 90%
- Behavioural Incident data and removal of behaviours from support plans.
- Number of students who return to part time or full time placements in less

specialist settings.

- Number of students who take up college placements or employment on leaving the school.
- E-safety incident data
- Achievement data for whole school targets
- Achievement data for achievement of Individual Education Plan objectives
- Pupil tracking and annual analysis of data to monitor whether: Pupils achieve at least what is expected for themselves against own starting points and pupils achieve what is expected according to national norms.
- Teaching and Learning observations

Additionally we will obtain the views of pupils, parents, staff and stakeholders via satisfaction surveys. The results of these will be collated and key themes taken forward into improvement planning. The summer newsletter will report on any actions that will be taken as a result of these surveys.

The school will complete case studies for 3 pupils reporting in details their progress and outcomes against a range of measures

The School Business Manager will also produce an annual report demonstrating the school's ability to balance a budget and be value for money. This will be in line with the budget cycle and will be reported to parents and governors.

Ongoing monitoring

On a half termly basis the Senior Leadership team will be responsible for completing monitoring sheets. The Principal, Deputy and School Business Manager will all have designated areas to report on. For example the Head teacher will report on teaching and learning and progress of pupils, the Deputy will report on the quality of the learning environment, behaviour and safety of pupils and the School Business Manager will report on the quality of premises and provide budget information. The Principal will view these documents and if required use them as a basis for planning Senior Leadership Team meetings or staff meetings.

Once a term the Senior Leadership Team will allocate one of their senior leadership meetings to carry out two evaluation tasks:

- Evaluation of School Improvement Plan – this will assess how much progress has been made towards achieving the school improvement plan and will identify any additional support / resources required.
- Senior Leadership team termly pupil review – each pupil will be discussed under the following headings:
 - areas of progress
 - areas of concern
 - risk assessment
 - individual interventions and
 - inclusion and transition planning

Teachers will be asked to provide any comments beforehand and the support for learning team (Speech and Language Therapist, Psychologist and Occupational Therapist) will join the Senior Leadership Team meeting.

These two tasks will inform reports presented at governors meetings. The Principal will also produce a termly update for staff and parents on progress on the School Improvement Plan.

The Role of Governors

School governors will play a key part in school self-evaluation and will receive regular reports from the Principal that will enable them to monitor all aspects of the school's provision. They will be involved in the writing and approving of all school policies and school improvement plan. They will also be involved in the Performance management of the Senior Leadership team, in particular the Principal of the school. Governors will regularly visit the school and carry out observations and produce reports on their findings. These will feed into governors meetings, Senior Leadership team meetings and school improvement planning.

Arrangements for staff training

The school will have clear and comprehensive induction and staff supervision procedures. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that the training and development needs of all staff are addressed and that comprehensive training plans are in place.

Training within the school will be of a very high standard and will be offered through a variety of internal and external courses including: child protection, communication, health and safety, sensory issues, first aid, basic food hygiene and Team Teach. Continued professional development for all staff is identified through Management, Support & Development (MSD) meetings and annual Performance Management Reviews and will be fed into the school's training needs analysis and training plan.

The school will have a wider understanding of training and it will be commonplace for learning activities such as shadowing, video coaching, role modelling, web ex training and professional meetings to take place.

The school will ensure that staff development opportunities are always positive and supportive and valued by the team. However, where there is unsatisfactory performance this will be dealt with transparently and clearly, with the belief that nobody can improve if they are not given the information and support they need.

Weekly staff meetings will be built into the training plan and will focus primarily on continually working towards innovative, pioneering and exceptional Autism specific practice and high quality teaching and learning.

In addition to five INSET days staff will work an additional training week, which will be taken from the allocation of school holidays. Based on the experience of the National Autistic Society this is the correct amount of full days required to ensure staff are trained in mandatory subjects, such as child protection and Team Teach, and still have sufficient opportunity to engage in new learning and development opportunities, in line with the school improvement plan and their own needs. The school views this additional training week to be essential in enabling it to meet its vision.

Future plans for external training, outreach and becoming a Teaching School.

The school will be both ambitious and committed to how it can support a wider

population of pupils with Autism through training, support and outreach. We will strive to :

- Be regarded as a regional resource; a school where it is common practice to share practice with local schools, the community and beyond.
- Improve the current and future lives of the students, their families and members of the local community

From opening, the school will respond to requests for support, training and outreach from its local partnership schools and sees this as fundamental to its aims. Where the school does not have the capacity to meet demand they will draw on the National Autistic Society's outreach and advisory service.

From year 3 the school will write into its school improvement plan how it can build capacity to increase this work from year 4. It will also explore the feasibility of becoming one of the first Autism specific teaching schools in the country.

Who will be accountable for success?

- The Principal and governing body will have overall accountability for the success of the school.
- The governing body will regularly ensure that the Principal and Senior Leadership team are accountable by ensuring reports to governors demonstrate that the school is meeting its targets.
- All staff will have clear job descriptions that outline their responsibilities
- The line management system and structure ensures every member of staff is held accountable for the outcomes of students in their area of responsibility.

The Governing Body is ultimately accountable to parents and the wider community for the success of its school. It should ensure information is communicated to parents and the community and is responsible for ensuring high standards through setting strategic direction, ensuring within-school accountability, and monitoring and evaluating school performance.

D6: If you are intending to cater for pupils with SEN but without a statement, describe your admissions policy.

Not applicable.

D7: Describe how your approach to behaviour management, pupil wellbeing and attendance will improve pupil outcomes.

Statement of Principles

In line with our vision we will have a distinctive ethos and philosophy: from the moment a person enters the building they will know this is a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and have rich and varied experiences. We will build on the extensive knowledge and experience of the National Autistic Society to be creative, pioneering and innovative in its approach to meeting the needs of these specific groups of pupils. The provision in this area will be based on an overriding understanding between staff and pupils that expectations for behaviour and attendance are extremely high! Staff will have an uncompromising commitment to the wellbeing and safeguarding of pupils. All policies and practice will be carefully thought out in order to support pupils in being successful in managing their own behaviour and engaging in community activities.

Safeguarding

In order for pupils to access effective education, learn, make progress and achieve, they need to feel safe, secure and empowered. The school's safeguarding strategy must enable them to do this.

The school will place safeguarding procedures in the highest priority and we will ensure our provision is of the highest standard. It is recognized that the school will cater for one of the most vulnerable groups of pupils in that impairments in social understanding and communication mean that they may have increased difficulty in communicating safeguarding issues or may not have the social understanding to know that behaviours directed to them, or by them, are wrong.

The school's policy and practice in relation to safeguarding will adhere to our legal obligations and be informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Govt. 2010;
- Safeguarding Disabled Children Practice Guidance, Department for Children, Schools and Families 2009
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DES 2006)
- Children Acts 1989 and 2004.

The school will have a comprehensive safeguarding policy outlining responsibilities and arrangements.

The Principal will take on the role of Designated Protection Officer and will be responsible for all aspects of safeguarding. The governing body and Principal

will have ultimate accountability for overseeing policy and practice.

All staff, governors and volunteers will be trained in safeguarding on a continuous basis. Training will include:

- Statutory safeguarding training delivered biannually by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Internal induction and refresher training, delivered by Designated Protection Officer and covering all internal procedures for reporting and recording.
- Safer Recruitment for staff and governors, delivered externally by an accredited body to all staff who have involvement in interviews, including governors.

The school will develop links with local and national safeguarding agencies such as Social Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Local Safeguarding Board, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and the police. It is expected that a proportion of children may be classed as Looked after Children and may have their own designated social worker. In these cases the school will be committed to establishing a close working relationship and maintaining regular contact.

The school will display, in each room, guidance for pupils on what to do if they are worried or someone is upsetting or hurting them. This guidance will be available in different formats (including symbol versions) so all pupils can access it. It will contain details of who they can talk to, including people outside the staff. Numbers for Childline, Kidscape, Ofsted and an independent advocate will be displayed. The independent advocate will be appointed and trained on autism and safeguarding procedures by the school and will regularly visit the pupils to meet them informally and to go through the guidance on what to do if they are worried, upset or being hurt. This guidance will also form part of PSHCE lessons on keeping safe. Other PSHCE lessons will teach pupils about their rights, what is unacceptable behaviour towards them and the importance of telling adults.

Where pupils disclose information to staff, staff will follow the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns. They will follow the guidance given during their safeguarding training on how to interact with pupils during a disclosure, how to support their emotional needs and not ask questions that would jeopardise any future enquiry.

This will include:

- Listen to what the child is saying.
- Say nothing – do not ask any questions, do not ask the child to explain what they are saying and do not give any examples.
- Give the child non-verbal attention – show the child that you are actively listening to what they are saying, e.g. this could mean stopping what you are doing and sitting beside the child.
- Try to avoid disruption, e.g. if the child chooses to disclose information in private and a member of staff comes into the room, ask them to leave via non-verbal behaviour if possible, similarly, if another pupil comes into the

room ask them to leave by saying that you need to be alone.

- When the child stops talking – at the first opportunity write down exactly what has been said by the child. This is a priority and may involve you arranging for someone to cover so you can leave the room and have silence so it is easier to remember.
- The information should be given directly to the Designated Senior Person –Deputy Principal, as soon as possible
- If the Designated Senior Person is not on duty then the information must be shared with the most senior staff member on duty
- Do not discuss what has happened with any other member of staff unless directed to do so by the DSP. This information is confidential. Do not betray the child trust.
- You can tell other staff (particularly the teacher and key worker) working with the child the s/he is upset and may need
- Record the incident on a Concerns Form; put it in a sealed envelope and give to the DSP as soon as possible.
- These procedures will also be followed where staff are concerned, either about something they have observed, something they have been told or where they can see over time pupils are failing to thrive.

Whistle blowing

The school will devise a separate policy on whistle blowing based on the procedures and policies of the National Autistic Society. The purpose of this will be to ensure employees are aware of their duty to report any concerns they have about the practice of colleagues. The ethos and policy of the school will be to encourage openness and honesty. Where staff disclose information they will be protected against any victimisation, harassment or recrimination. A whistle blowing flow chart will detail the procedure for reporting and acting upon concerns. In all safeguarding training and management support and development meetings staff will be reminded of their obligations and the importance of this duty,

Safe recruitment procedures

In accordance with legislation and guidance, the school will ensure that all correct procedures are in place prior to employment.

All our job advertisements will state that successful candidates will be required to submit an Enhanced Disclosure application. When an offer of employment has been accepted, the staff member will be asked to come in to the school to meet with the School Business Manager to complete an Enhanced Disclosure application form and to provide the appropriate documentation. When completed, the form is sent to the CRB and until the Disclosure application has been cleared the staff member will not be able to start employment.

All staff, governors and volunteers will have enhanced CRB checks. All CRBs will be updated every 3 years.

Each candidate will be asked to supply details of three referees, one of whom must be their most recent employer. At the time of interview, referees are

contacted and asked to complete a standard reference form (or letter for personal referees) which makes particular reference to any reason why the candidate may not work with children. When the written references are received they are telephone verified. A candidate would not be able to commence work until this process is completed.

The School Business manager and one member of staff on all interview panels will have been trained in Safer Recruitment Procedures.

All visitors, including contractors, will be supervised to ensure that they won't have unrestricted access to the young people or their accommodation. All bank staff, students and volunteers will follow the same procedure as other staff. Where agency staff are used the School Business Manager will be responsible for liaising with the agency and the person themselves to ensure all documentation has been checked.

The School Business Manager will be responsible for ensuring the single central register is complete and up to date. Governors and the Principal of the school will monitor this on a termly basis.

Managing challenging behaviour safely

We aim to have a school where pupils are respected, achieve beyond what is expected, are empowered to make positive choices about their own lives and manage their own behaviour. To enable pupils to do this it is important that they are at the centre of positive behaviour management strategies, which they help to decide and put into action themselves. The school's philosophy will be to empower students to control their own behaviour and therefore we will only use Restrictive Physical Intervention in exceptional circumstances. Other strategies (as detailed on children's Access to Learning Plans) will be employed and Restrictive Physical Intervention will only be used where there is no alternative.

The rights and dignity of our pupils, including when demonstrating aggressive behaviour, must be of the utmost priority. Any restrictive physical intervention must always be used with a view to keeping them safe, with the aim of allowing the individual not only to recover self-control, but also to acquire alternative behaviours that may, over time, decrease the level of intervention needed.

The school plans to use TEAM TEACH training to improve staff, knowledge and understanding of how to prevent and manage challenging behaviour. A small element of this training will include physical intervention techniques. The decision to work with this organisation has been taken on the basis of their experience, compliance with legal frameworks and to be in line with other local schools. The school plans to identify an experienced member of staff who can participate in the TEAM TEACH training for trainers' course and become a licensed trainer.

The school will record all restrictive physical interventions and will report these to parents and relevant stakeholders. The Head of School and a designated member of the governing body will be responsible for monitoring these

records. The school will write a Policy on Restrictive Physical Interventions which will be informed by TEAM TEACH training and by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children's Act 1989
- Education and Inspection Act 2006
- BILD (2011) Code of Practice Build
- Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupils with Severe Behavioural Difficulties. (DFE 2003).
- Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (DFE 2011)

Medication

In addition to a diagnosis of Autism, it is expected that some pupils may have other associated conditions, such as mental health issues, ADHD, challenging behaviour and epilepsy. Therefore it is expected that a number of pupils will take associated medication. Pupils may also have other conditions such as diabetes or asthma. The school will have a comprehensive policy for the storage, control and use of all medications and this will detail arrangements for training, self-administration and reporting errors. The Deputy will be designated as having overall responsibility for Medication. The governing body and Principal will have ultimate accountability for overseeing policy and practice.

We will access the NAS medication training. Opus pharmacy services are the preferred supplier of medication training to the NAS. There is a comprehensive range of courses available which increase staff awareness and understanding of medication, enable staff to support individual with storage and administration of medicines and minimise the likelihood of error.

The training is offered in 3 formats:

- On line course
- Face to face teaching
- Distance learning work books

The content of the training has been developed by qualified pharmacists and meets and exceeds the outcomes set by regulators for the people who are being supported. Following the training all staff are required to be observed by assessors to ensure competence, before they can administer medication on their own. The training offers on line competence refresher training to ensure on-going training and knowledge updates

The training for staff is refreshed every 2 years to ensure on going competence, or can be immediately accessed when new staff join.

Internet and digital media

All staff will have a duty and responsibility to protect the pupils in our care from being exposed to material that compromises their safety or could potentially cause them harm by creating fear or anxiety.

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT), including the

Internet, has developed over the past 25 years and now involves every pupil and member of staff. While these advances bring many benefits, they have their dangers, particularly for our pupils whose lack of social understanding and theory of mind may impact on their ability to make safe decisions when using on line technology independently.

It is the aim of the school not to block access to these technologies but to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and put in place a number of safeguards that will protect them. A key part of this protection will be the teaching of e-safety to pupils so they can recognise and manage the risks themselves during use in school, residential unit or the home. E safety is embedded into the ICT and PSHCE curriculum at several points throughout each key stage. The school will also write guidelines for staff to detail their responsibilities and strategies to support pupils in keeping safe. This document will be entitled: "Using social media and technology safely: Guidelines for staff". The school will also develop a 1 day training package for staff on e-safety.

All incidents related to safety will be reported to the designated E-safety officer of the school and the Headteacher, who will in turn report details of the incident and outcomes to the governing body.

Procedures for keeping children safe when not on site

Educational visits are an essential part of a child's development, helping them to reinforce learned skills and to develop new skills essential for outside school. They build self-esteem and provide a motivating context for a range of learning experiences.

Both the HSE (2011) and DFE (2011) websites emphasise the importance of educational visits in education. It is acknowledged this is possibly even more important for pupils with Autism, especially as experience has shown many parents report that they find it difficult to take their child out on weekends or holidays due to challenging behaviour. Additionally our pupils may also be leaving the main school site to attend part time placements in other schools. As with other aspects of safeguarding our intended pupils, due to the impairments associated with Autism, may find it especially difficult to make appropriate choices about their safety when out of school.

It is therefore vital that we teach pupils how to carry out these activities safely and make appropriate decisions as well as having clear guidelines in place to support staff. The school will write an Educational Visits Policy and guidelines for staff. These will detail all arrangements for keeping pupils safe, including:

- The school educational visits co-ordinator.
- Responsibilities and training of visit team leaders, deputy team leaders and inclusion support Learning Support Assistants.
- The completion, signing off and storage of activity planners.
- Risk assessments for offsite activities.
- Arrangements for pre visits.
- Procedure in case of emergency and named emergency contacts in school (including what to do if a child absconds).

- Arrangements for transporting and administering medication whilst off site.

Guidance on emergency supervision planning, including plans for how staffing allocation will change, for example, if there is behaviour incident. Also including any specific information about the visit or group, for example:

- x must have hand held at all times.
- x must have his hand held by 2 people whilst....
- All children must have hands held whilst walking next to lake.
- All children must be watched so they don't put their hands in their mouth after touching the animals and must wash their hands.
- Informing parents and consent.
- Specific arrangements for swimming, adventurous and residential activities.
- Contacts for information e.g. Local authority educational visit advisor.
- Arrangements for keeping up to date records of pupils on the visit including taking a camera with photos from that day of pupils.
- Guidance on factors to consider on the day, for example:
 - The weather.
 - Distance away from bus.
 - Business of venue.
 - Mood of children.
 - Arrangements for head counts.

All significant incidents during educational visits will be reported to the designated Educational visits co-ordinator of the school and the Principal, who will in turn report details of the incident and outcomes to the governing body.

Risk assessments

The school has an overriding duty to keep children and staff safe. It is particularly important to recognise that there are increased health and safety risks for both pupils and staff due to the challenging behaviour of some pupils with Autism.

The school will have risk assessments for activities that take place in and outside of school that can present a risk to pupils, staff or the public. Relevant staff will be trained on how to write risk assessments and all staff will sign to say they have read existing risk assessments.

The School Business Manager will complete and maintain an up to date risk assessment register which will be monitored by the Principal and a member of the governing body.

The school will promote a positive risk taking philosophy. This philosophy should lead to an identification of the potential risks involved, and the development of plans and actions that reflect the positive potentials and stated priorities of the individual. Risk assessments will be seen as a tool which enables pupils to do activities safely, rather than prevent them from being included.

The rights of the individual must always be taken into account and a person

centred approach should be adopted. Where possible the individual should be fully involved in the risk assessment process. This may require the use of modified forms for the capture of information e.g. the use of pictograms. These should be used to inform the risk assessment which should also be recorded on the standard forms.

Pupils will also be taught through Community based education, our PSHCE and Life skills curriculum how to keep themselves safe. Our behaviour management philosophy will promote pupil's understanding the outcomes or consequences of the choices they make.

Prior to opening the Head of School will write policy and procedures for risk assessments based on the existing ones from the National Autistic Society.

Pupil wellbeing and pastoral care

See earlier section for details on emotional wellbeing and pastoral care.

Anti bullying

The school recognises that for pupils to thrive and achieve they need to enjoy and feel safe coming to school. The school will remove any barrier that may compromise this and as such will take the issue of bullying very seriously. Through its vision and ethos the school will seek to create an atmosphere where pupils respect themselves and each other and adopt positive behaviour management strategies. However, it would be unrealistic and foolish not to be prepared for bullying incidents.

Due to impairments in social understanding and imagination, bullying issues are perhaps even more complex for people with Autism. For example a vulnerable pupil may not recognise that they are being bullied and believe themselves to be part of the group because they are paying them attention or asking them to do things for them. Another example may be where a pupil with Autism becomes obsessional about another pupil and targets them in either a positive or negative way. Such issues will be explored through policy and staff training and staff will be trained to understand and address these from an Autism specific perspective.

The school will have its own Anti Bullying policy, which will detail the school's arrangements for tackling bullying. It will include the following information:

- Statement of Intent
- What Is Bullying?
- Autism and Bullying
- Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying
- Objectives of this Policy
- Signs and Symptoms
- Procedures
- Outcomes
- Prevention
- Organisations that can help

Because of the ‘revolving door’ policy, transition arrangements and the plan to have inclusive part time placements, these difficulties could be compounded for pupils who may attend more than one school. Where pupils are moving to other schools or attending other schools on a part time basis we will liaise with the partnership school re the vulnerability of our students, their own anti bullying policies and will, where necessary, provide support and training for their staff team.

Promoting good behaviour

The school views its strategy for promoting positive behaviour to be absolutely fundamental in achieving its vision and aims. Pupils will only achieve beyond what is expected if challenging behaviour is replaced with positive behaviour patterns and no longer acts as a barrier to learning and inclusion. Evidence of demand for our proposed group indicates that many pupils have previously had negative experiences of schooling, demonstrated frequent displays of challenging behaviour and in some cases have been excluded. The school’s behaviour strategy must take pupils from this starting point and:

- Motivate pupils to attend school and engage with learning
- Have high expectations of themselves; planning to behave well and achieve
- Eliminating negative views of themselves, instilling a belief that they can do well
- Enable them to develop an understanding of their own behaviour and use self-management techniques
- Enable them to cope through difficult periods in their life
- Understand the link between making positive choices and long term outcomes for themselves.

The school’s strategy for the management of behaviour encompasses 2 key elements: the ethos of the school and its approach.

Ethos

From the opening of the school staff will meet and agree a common understanding of the ethos of the school in relation to the management of behaviour. All staff will agree to work within the same principles and will understand their importance in relation to meeting the aims of the school. The table below illustrates key principles and how they will contribute to pupil outcomes.

Principle	Key Indicators
Low arousal Non-confrontational approach	Pupils’ behaviours are diffused. Pupils work together with staff not against them. Pupils feel safe and trust staff.
Empathy and Understanding	Staff understand Autism and empathise with difficulties individuals face, therefore when faced with challenging behaviour do not take behaviours personally and see it as their responsibility to help pupils through difficult times. Pupils feel understood by staff and know they are there to help.

High standards	Pupils and staff aim for this to be a school where pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils know that staff want them to achieve. Negative self-fulfilling prophecies are eliminated and it is common practice for pupils to be polite, respectful and communicate positively with staff and peers. Pupils and staff will feel pride in belonging to this school!
Pupil empowerment	Staff place pupils at the centre of controlling their behaviour and making decisions about what will help them. Staff will reinforce that if they behave in a certain way that is their choice and talk to them about the likely consequences of their actions. Pupils are self-motivated to behave well and understand the connection between behaving well and outcomes for themselves.
Relationships are key	Staff understand that in order to be effective in supporting pupils through difficult times they must have firstly established a positive relationships with them. This will be fostered through ensuring staff take an interest in pupils, spend time with them in enjoyable activities and take time to listen to their needs / wants. Pupils will feel safe and secure with their core staff team and with the Senior Leadership team, they will know they are liked (even if they make mistakes) and that staff care about them. They will understand that staff are there to help them be the best they can be!
Pupils cannot learn when they are distressed or anxious	Staff are skilled in judging situations and don't push pupils at the wrong time. They know that they need to support pupils emotionally and allow them to have time out of lessons and complete learning at other times. Pupils learn to identify their own feelings and learn how to manage their anxiety. They learn to talk to staff and ask for help and understand they can catch up on learning at other times. They do not feel pressured.
High quality teaching and learning engages pupils and reduces challenging behaviour.	Staff understand that there is a direct link between the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' motivation and behaviour. They see it as their responsibility to deliver engaging, relevant and fun

	lessons. Pupils value and enjoy lessons and see the purpose of attending and behaving well.
We do not exclude!	Zero % exclusions. Staff understand that there is no option but to work together and with parents to identify an alternative solution. Pupils feel safe and secure and do not feel the need to test boundaries.

These positive outcomes in turn will lead to good behaviour and a reduction in discipline issues.

Approach to Behaviour

Multi-disciplinary meetings

Each class will hold one class meeting per half term. A member of the Senior Leadership team and members of the Support for Learning team (Occupational therapist, Psychologist and Speech and Language therapist) will attend. These will enable staff to collectively understand behaviours and set clear expectations. They enable strategies to be agreed and applied consistently. Where pupils are experiencing periods of extreme difficulty an individual meeting will be held and all adults involved in the life of the child will be invited to collaborate to plan the way forward.

Access to Learning Plans (ALPs)

These documents will contain clear expectations for behaviour and effective behaviour support strategies, including self-management techniques. It is acknowledged that for any form of behaviour plan to be effective it needs the pupils themselves to be 'signed up' to its implementation. In the EYFS and Primary departments pupil versions will be written and given to pupils. In the Secondary department pupils will be involved in the writing of these plans.

Recording and Analysing Behaviour data

The school will purchase a commercial programme which will enable staff to record behavioural incidents on each day they occur. The school will use the Significant Event Recording System (SERS) developed by the National Autistic Society in conjunction with Advanced Health and Care organisation. A member of the senior leadership team will be designated as having responsibility for overseeing behaviour and will work with the Psychologist and other key staff on analysing data for specific pupils and identifying interventions / strategies that will support incident reduction.

Monitoring

At a fortnightly Senior Leadership Team meeting any concerns, issues or patterns will be discussed in order to ensure the Leadership team are up to date, respond quickly and are able to deploy additional targeted support where necessary. These will be presented to governors on a termly basis.

Ready to Learn Curriculum

The school will have a curriculum document entitled "being ready for learning"

which will detail how pupils will be supported in acquiring essential prerequisite skills and behaviours. This will have an emphasis on building self-esteem, agreeing rules for behaviour and working, understanding reasons for rules and understanding the link between working hard and positive outcomes for themselves. It will also teach pupils explicitly about what is expected and appropriate behaviour and simple techniques for self-management. It will include some elements of anger management work such as “the volcano in my tummy”, ‘behaviour thermometer scales’ and breathing techniques. This will give pupils the foundation skills to begin to understand and manage their own behaviour.

Residential weeks

These are viewed to be one of the elements of the curriculum that supports positive behaviour. They are a proven opportunity for staff and pupils to develop trusting relationships and a chance for pupils to develop self-esteem through acquiring new skills and overcoming problems.

Systems for working in different locations and at different times

Pupils will be taught that they do not need to exhibit challenging behaviour if they are not coping in a group setting. An essential component to the school will be an identified central learning resource area with computers and individual workstations that pupils can request to use at different points in the day.

Approach to Pupil well-being and pastoral care

As described in more detail elsewhere, our approach to emotional wellbeing of pupils will include:

- Comprehensive PSHCE curriculum with emphasis on SEAL programmes, SMSC and Citizenship
- Advocacy: Guidance document and staff training on promoting pupil advocacy
- Individual programmes e.g. managing anxiety, self-esteem, What Autism means to me?
- Support from Clinical Psychologist: assessment, intervention and evaluation
- Enrichment Curriculum that allows pupils to develop the confidence to try new activities and develop interests
- Pastoral elements of timetable e.g. tutor time, breakfast club

Training

In addition to TEAM TEACCH training (see above on arrangements for the safe management of challenging behaviour) the school will devise its own training and behaviour management guidance. This will emphasise the ethos of the school in relation to challenging behaviour and will cover:

- Triggers
- Cues
- Causes
- Recording and analysing data
- Functional analysis

- Challenging behaviour and communication
- Anxiety
- The ice berg theory (underlying, unseen anxieties of individuals)
- The bridge theory (staff should see it as their responsibility to meet the child halfway or beyond)
- RPI plans
- Seclusion and withdrawal
- Sanctions
- Individual programmes
- Individual risk assessments
- Use of motivators, distracters and rewards (including motivator assessment)
- Arrangements for pupils who abscond
- Pupils who self-injure
- Role of Clinical Psychologist
- Working with parents and social care providers
- Working with other schools (training and outreach)
- Training in the management of behaviour
- Organisation of classes to promote positive behaviour (compatible pupil groups, staff: pupil ratios)
- Organisation of learning environment
- Link between quality of teaching and learning, motivation of pupils and positive behaviour
- Crisis management
- Pupil and staff debriefs

Work with parents and other agencies

The school will see parents as partners in the pursuit of positive behaviour. Parents will be involved in the drawing up of Access to Learning plans, will be offered training through parents' workshops and will be invited to any multidisciplinary meetings about their child.

The school will make it a priority to establish close links with other partners in this area including social care providers, respite services and Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) teams. The school will also draw on its existing links with experts from the National Autistic Society and other organisations, including behaviour consultants from Studio 3 and Professor Chris Oliver from Birmingham University who is currently working on Autism and self-injurious behaviour.

The school will devise Guidance sheets for drivers and escorts and will offer training on an annual basis.

Specific procedures to support a reduction in discipline issues:

A range of positive behaviour support strategies will be detailed on the Pupil Support plan and will be deployed consistently in order to reduce discipline issues. These include:

- Rewards, motivator.
- Achievement assemblies and end of year Awards event.
- Involvement of Senior Leadership team – key staff identified as support to

most challenging pupils.

- Pupil contract.
- Pupil debrief.
- Social stories ([REDACTED]).
- Systems for completing work in different locations and at different times.

The use of restrictive physical intervention will not be used just to reduce discipline issues and maintain good order; they will only be used as an emergency, when there is no other alternative and in order to keep pupils or staff safe.

The use of sanctions will not commonly be used as whole school policy as it is generally not in line with our ethos and approach to managing challenging behaviour. However, it is acknowledged that for a small group of pupils to understand the affect they have on lives of others and how their own choices affect their own life it may be deemed necessary. Therefore, sanctions may be applied on an individual basis according to the arrangements detailed in the Behaviour Support policy. These will be agreed at a multidisciplinary meeting and recorded in a Sanctions book. Where sanctions are part of a planned intervention the agreement of parents will be sought.

Securing good attendance

“The better the quality of education, the better the students’ attendance. Good leadership and management, high quality teaching and a flexible curriculum have a significant impact on attendance. ... In particular, there is a strong correlation between inspection judgements about attendance and the quality of teaching and learning.”

Attendance in secondary schools, Ofsted 2007

The school will demonstrate its understanding of the importance of this link and will monitor and evaluate pupil attendance patterns through monitoring the quality of teaching and learning via lesson observations and learning walks.

The school believes that the success of its vision and intended pupil outcomes is fundamentally influenced by pupils’ motivation and ability to attend school.

Through our attendance strategy we will seek to ensure pupils:

- See the benefits of attending school.
- Know how to keep themselves healthy.
- Understand clearly that the school has high expectations in relation to attendance.
- Know that poor attendance will be addresses.
- Communicate with the school about reasons for poor attendance.
- Participate in dialogue to identify strategies to increase attendance.

The school will monitor and evaluate pupil attendance patterns via :

- Analysis of pupil attainment data and identification of those pupils whose results are affected by poor attendance

- Half termly summaries of attendance, identifying those who are most vulnerable
- Reporting to governors termly
- It will address attendance issues through:
 - Systems for catching up on missed work
 - Consistent and timely communication with parents to identify ways forward and follow up on absences
 - Identified mentors for pupils and specific meetings to talk about reasons why they are not attending and to agree targets.
 - Individualised strategies for increasing attendance – nothing will be seen as too much trouble, the school will deploy whatever means necessary to support pupils to get to school and learn, whether this will mean helping with transport issues, providing learning to do at home, encouraging pupils who have missed morning sessions to come in for afternoon sessions.
 - Record attendance issues formally at annual review meetings
 - Liaise with attendance welfare officer of local authority.
 - Liaise with relevant medical professionals e.g. General Practitioners.
 - In the case of persistent absences or regular school refusal, hold a multi-disciplinary meeting.

Autism and attendance

It is not uncommon for pupils with Autism to experience higher levels of anxiety and mental health problems. This in turn can increase the likelihood of school refusal. This is particularly compounded by this group's difficulties with transition and becoming fixed in routines, resulting in school refusal becoming an embedded behaviour that is difficult to break.

Therefore, in such cases it is essential for school refusal to be taken extremely seriously and a response plan formulated and agreed promptly. This plan will require the school to have a flexible approach and where necessary, to look at adapting the curriculum in order to motivate the pupil to attend school.

Registers

The school will maintain accurate and up to date registers in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

E: Evidence of demand – part 1

E1: Provide evidence showing clear levels of parental demand, need for the numbers and type of SEN provision and number of places proposed. Include solid evidence from local authorities that shows they will be willing to place children at your school in line with parents' wishes and the special educational needs of children. Independent schools and NMSS will need to demonstrate evidence of demand beyond their existing pupil and parent base.

Table 1: For pupils with statements of SEN

If your school is new provision:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places for children with statements in each year group.
- In **column B** please provide the number of children of the relevant ages local authorities would anticipate naming your school in their statements.
- In **column C** please provide the number of children of the relevant ages whose parents have indicated that they would request your school to be named in their child's statement.
- Please leave **column D** blank.

If your school is an existing independent school or NMSS applying to become a special Free School:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places in each year group.
- In **column B** please provide the number of children already on roll at your school with statements of SEN.
- In **column C** please provide the number of children with statements of SEN of the relevant ages, who are not currently on roll but local authorities anticipate naming your school in their statements.

- In **column D** please provide the number of children with statements of SEN of the relevant ages, who are not currently on roll but whose parents have indicated that they would request your school to be named in their child's statement.

	2014				2015			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
Reception	1				1			
Year 1	1				1			
Year 2					2			
Year 3					2			
Year 4	1				2			
Year 5	1				2			
Year 6	2				3			
Year 7	2				3			
Year 8	2				4			
Year 9	2				2			
Year 10	2				4			
Year 11	1				2			
Year 12					2			
Year 13								
Totals	15	12+	See below		30	24+	See below	

Notes

While Cheshire East has indicated its support for the school and confirmation of demand for places (see Annexe 1) they have not provided a detailed break down of anticipated student numbers by year group. They have, however, indicated a total requirement of 12 in the first year, increasing to 24 in the second but with additional placements in both years likely as students are brought back from out of borough placements.

In any event, it should be noted that the specific admissions criteria for an autism specific school make it difficult for many parents to give meaningful responses since:

- Some children might not yet have a formal diagnosis of autism
- Parents might not know if their child will receive a statement of SEN
- Many parents initially prefer the idea of a mainstream school and only favour a special autism school when it has become clear that a mainstream setting is unsuitable.
- Many parents are unsure about the range of provision available

Cheshire East Council came into being in April 2009 when Cheshire County Council was disaggregated and two new unitary authorities were formed.

Cheshire East has a diverse, rural and urban profile. The area is classed as significantly rural with more than half the population living in rural or rural market town areas. The other 8 towns, although urban, have outskirts which contain areas classified as more rural than urban.

The population in Cheshire East has steadily increased over the past nineteen years, from 340,500 in 1991 to 363,800 in 2010 – an increase of 7%.

In 2010, Cheshire East began an extensive Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Review of its specialist services for children with SEND. One of the key recommendations from this review was that there was a pressing requirement for local specialist provision for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) between the ages of 4 to 19 because the existing provision across mainstream schools, resourced provision or non ASD-specific special schools was not meeting their needs.

One reason for this was that the division of Cheshire into Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester meant that those special schools designated for pupils on the autistic spectrum all fell within the other boroughs.

This gap was further confirmed by work that the NAS did with Cheshire East in 2012 to develop a Baseline Assessment examining the needs and shortfall in provision for young adults transitioning from education. The NAS has subsequently been asked to draft a Development Plan for the borough which will be highly relevant for young adults graduating from the school in the future.

At present, however, many pupils have to travel around the region to schools in other boroughs in order to access appropriate specialist education. This is not only stressful and unsatisfactory for the young people concerned but is also expensive for Cheshire East, both in terms of the fees payable and the transport costs.

The NAS participates in the Autism Strategy Group, working with the local authority and parents of children with ASC and our experience with this Group confirms that parents are very concerned that Cheshire East cannot currently provide a continuum of provision for their children and young people.

Local parents and carers have also voiced their dissatisfaction with the situation via their representatives on the SEND Review Group and through a parents' body known as 'The Cheshire East Autism Support Group'. The latter has been particularly supportive of the plans to develop an autism specific school.

The Children and Young People Database (CYPD) figures for 2010/11 indicate that 85 children and young people in Cheshire East were placed in ASD specific out of borough placements, at a cost of £2.5 million. Additional

travel costs for these pupils came to £0.4 million, giving a total cost funded by Education of £2.9 million. In addition, Health contributed £59,000 and Social Services a further £0.5 million. The overall sum for ASD specific out of borough placements for 2010/11 was thus in excess of £3.4million.

Given this background, together with a clear upward demographic trend for the diagnosis of autism in children, there is a strong case to establish an ASD specific special school within Cheshire East.

ASD affects communication, social interaction and the ability to think flexibly. Many children with ASD need a highly structured adapted environment, and become too stressed to learn if overloaded with information and faced with choices and changes. This environment is difficult to create within a mainstream school, and inconsistent with the needs of most 'neuro-typical' children. The aspiration is therefore to provide a school environment in which each child and young person with ASD is able to cope with the world and is given every opportunity to develop the skills needed to cope within today's social networks.

Cheshire East's original plan had been to develop a local authority autism specific school to address these identified needs. The site of a disused primary school at Church Lawton (near Alsager) was identified for the location and extensive work undertaken both to explore the feasibility of the site and to develop design proposals. In the event, however, it was appreciated that a better approach would be to develop a free school with a suitable partner organisation and this application is the result of this policy decision.

Two open drop-in events were held in Church Lawton so that anyone with an interest in the school could find out more. Those attending were asked to complete a questionnaire and the results are shown at Annexe 2.

Given this background, Cheshire East strongly supports this application and a letter confirming their backing and commitment is attached at Annexe 1.

It is envisaged that the proposed school will be an innovative model that will provide a continuum of effective provision, better value for money, supporting a more buoyant market with greater parental choice and flexibility than the current status quo.

Table 2: For pupils without statements of SEN complete the table using information below to assist you.

Not relevant to this proposal since all pupils will have a statement of SEN.

Section E: Evidence of demand – part 2

Please refer to pages 23 to 25 of the 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

While extensive **PR & Media activity** has already been undertaken by the local authority to assess demand and local reaction to the redevelopment of the [REDACTED] as an autism specific facility, the NAS will undertake further activities over the coming weeks to publicise this application for a free school and to gather further evidence of demand. Press releases will be issued to publicise the application and an on line questionnaire will be distributed across the region. An open drop in day will provide an opportunity for all those with an interest in the school to ask questions and to express their views and we will work with local support groups and families to ensure their views are fully taken into account.

NAS channels will also be used to publicise the proposal, including Twitter and Facebook and via local NAS members and branches.

Providing autism expertise beyond the boundaries of the school.

In line with other autism-specific education provision that the NAS has developed across the UK, the Free School in Cheshire East will act as a hub for autism expertise across the region and we will liaise with other schools, both mainstream and special, to explain and develop the role of the free school, including the 'revolving door' concept. We have found in the Thames Valley that other educational institutions have reacted very positively to the development of the free school.

Future PR & Marketing for a new Special Free School

The National Autistic Society has 50 years' experience of delivering autism-specific education to pupils of all ages and from across the autism spectrum. If successful in our application for an autism-specific Special Free School in Cheshire East, we will work in partnership with local authorities, other education providers in the area, local support groups, parents and pupils to ensure the provision we create is relevant and meets specific local demand. This contact with stakeholders will continue to take place on a number of levels:

1. **Face-to-face** via meetings with the local authority (SEN contacts and commissioners), local support groups and NAS Branches and any resident groups in the immediate area around the new service.
2. **A targeted letter campaign** will be conducted for key local individuals to ensure they are fully informed about ongoing development plans and to give them the opportunity for personal input to those plans. This will include the relevant local Parish Council Clerk, Councillor, MP and autism support groups.

3. **A dedicated web site** for the school will be developed and will include a questions and answers section and admissions policy, together with contact details so that those who wish to know more or to register their interest in naming the school for their child, can get in touch.
4. **'Internal' communications** will ensure all NAS staff, members and volunteers are kept informed about the school's development and all will be given the opportunity, on an ongoing basis, to share their views and ideas for the new provision via the online community on the NAS website and via usual email, telephone and web-based channels.
5. **'External' communications** will target local media to track progress with the school and to raise awareness of local parental demand through case studies of parents whose children are currently provided for elsewhere but who hope to transfer to the Free School once opened.

E2: Demonstrate how you intend to engage with the wider community, including, where relevant, children from a range of backgrounds, faiths and abilities.

The needs of the local community

We are intending to set up a special free school for pupils with autism between the ages of 4 and 19. The school will specifically cater for 60 pupils who have average or high cognitive ability but whose needs are not currently being met by the spectrum of provision on offer.

The school will specifically address the needs of those pupils who find it difficult to maintain a mainstream placement and for whom placement in a special school for those with learning difficulties may not be appropriate. These are a group of pupils who should be able to access mainstream qualifications but are at risk of under achievement.

This is the story of a pupil who was able to succeed academically only after a suitable placement was found:

██████████ ██████████.

In order to maintain successful placements of these pupils the school will provide support programmes that include both school and home. We intend to link in with local respite provisions and other social care providers to provide a fully holistic approach. Our focus is on collaborative working and we have already built relationships with number of local schools and colleges and have further meetings planned to establish more partners.

It will be an exciting new model, providing inclusive educational day placements for the highest need pupils It will seek to provide an alternative solution to the residential placement which, whilst appropriate for some students is costly and does not always meet parental or pupil choice. In this way the school will provide greater value for money. The provision planned for these pupils will be bespoke in every way.

Our pupil intake

We know that the needs of young people with autism and their families in the Cheshire East and neighbouring authorities are not being met and we have collated the following information to inform the picture of autism across Cheshire East and the wider community:

- In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum, both nationally and in Cheshire East. This increase may be partially explained by improved awareness and increased diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- ASD is of high incidence nationally with 16% of statements having ASD as the primary category of need. In Cheshire East the percentage is higher.
- In 2010, Cheshire East began an extensive Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Review of its specialist services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability. One of the key recommendations from the review was the identified need to develop local specialist provision for children with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) between the ages of 4 to 19.
- In particular, the Cheshire SEND Review identified a gap in educational provision for children and young people with ASD, whose needs are not currently being met in mainstream schools, resourced provision or non ASD-specific special schools and hence are placed in ASD-specific provision out of borough. There is no ASD-specific special school in Cheshire East to provide these pupils with an appropriate placement.
- The current provision of four resourced primary schools and two resourced secondary schools, within Cheshire East does not meet the continuum of provision required for children and young people affected by autism or offer much parental choice.
- Currently, the local authority does not have an ASD-specific special school to provide these pupils with an appropriate local placement. Consequently, pupils travel around the region to access appropriate specialist provision at considerable cost to the local authority and to the dissatisfaction of many of their parents.
- For example, children and young people accessing ASD-specific provision out of borough are travelling to Cheshire West, Staffordshire, Stockport, and small percentages attend independent specialist schools and residential care across the country.
- The Children and Young Peoples Database (CYPD) figures for 2010/11 indicate 85 children and young people were placed in ASD-specific out of borough placements, at a cost of £2.5 million, with an additional travel cost for these pupils of £0.4 million. The cost for these out of borough placements for ASD-specific provision funded by Education was £2.9 million. In addition, Health contributed £59,000 and Social Services contributed a further £0.5 million. The overall sum for ASD-specific out of borough placement for 2010/11 was £3.4million.
- Also, parents of children with ASD are concerned that Cheshire East is unable to provide a continuum of provision for their children and young

people.

- Given the above, and the increasing diagnostic trends for ASD and local parental interest in an ASD-specific special school, there is a strong case and demand for establishing an ASD-specific special school within Cheshire East.
- The consultation process to date has identified the need for the proposed school to be an innovative model that will provide a continuum of effective provision, better value for money, with greater parental choice and flexibility than the current status quo.
- Cheshire East Councils' aspiration is to work in collaboration with our school to create an outstanding ASD specific special school for children as close to their local community as possible, underpinned by our vision that 'no child, or young person is left behind', enabling every child and young person to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- It is anticipated that the pupils will come from a variety of school or pre-school placements. This may include:
 - Out of borough placements, either inter-authority or independent specialist schools
 - Resourced school, either primary or secondary
 - Pre-school placements, where their needs have already been identified

Views of stakeholders and development of relationships to meet students' needs

Schools and colleges

The proposed free school will have a focus on collaborative working in order that the non-specialist schools in the region benefit from the NAS Cheshire East School's expertise and the Free School benefit from non-specialist and mainstream schools' expertise. Collaborative working would facilitate better identification of those most at risk, earlier intervention to prevent placement breakdown where possible, more flexible range of support models within the NAS Cheshire East specialist provision where required, and increased opportunities to move people on to other local provision with support from the staff at Free School where possible. As well as being a school for children and young people with autism, we intend to be a resource for our partnership schools. We will work with them to support young people with autism to maintain placements in their schools.

We will establish relationships with local schools and colleges and expect to identify opportunities for

- Extending curricular opportunity for pupils with autism, parents and school staff through schools working together. We will deliver parent workshops for parents of children in our school and invite those from our partner schools. For example, we will share building facilities such as swimming pools, media suites and performing arts studios
- Through partnership solutions we will raise standards and improve early interventions. Our partners will be invited to join us in mutual training and staff development. We will provide outreach support and advisory clinics so that those pupils at risk of placement break down can be

supported at an early stage.

- High quality transition from school to chosen pathway to adult life. We will work with local colleges to establish FE pathways for some pupils

Ongoing community engagement to inform the curriculum offer

We will send communications about the ethos, curriculum and educational vision of the proposed free school to all those who are likely to be interested in it. We will also hold parent forums in the area to present the vision to parents who wish to attend.

Local community engagement

Volunteers from the local community

We aim to be viewed as a true community school. This is always a challenge for a special school as unlike mainstream schools, the majority of the pupils although from the local authority, may not come from the immediate local community. The school calendar will include an open day each year and regular open door and show case events that we will advertise and encourage local residents to attend. We will encourage local groups to use our facilities for meetings and clubs where ever possible. We already have a strong relationship with the leading autism charities, and we will work with them to encourage any local members to engage with the school.

Example events

School Events:

- Parents evening Autumn term
- Parents evening Spring term
- Parents evening Summer term
- Christmas show
- Sports day

Other potential events: date to be decided

- Parents workshops
- Open day
- Professional days
- Community conversation event
- Parent ICT sessions including learning platform and eSafety
- Parents social and fundraising events
- Theme / activity week
- Residential week
- Governors / PTA meetings

The extended day enrichment curriculum will offer a range of opportunities for local residents to volunteer to support pupils or even to lead on an area of interest. For example, our NAS school in Scotland has a yoga class run by a local volunteer. It is planned that staff mentors or volunteers will support our pupils to access after school clubs or other relevant activities in

their own community or local schools.

It is important that volunteers are highly trained and have an understanding of autism and the impact autism can have on learning and life skills.

Using ICT curriculum to engage with the local community

Local businesses will be identified and contacted. The majority have some kind of technology focus and we plan to engage some of these organisations in volunteering and work experience schemes for our pupils. We aim for our ICT curriculum to be leading edge and to embed its use in all areas of our curriculum. It offers pupils with autism the opportunity for learning to take place in a variety of stress reducing ways and develop knowledge, skills and understanding that will allow them to take an active and enriched part in 21st century life. We plan to engage local businesses and partner with them to provide vocational experiences for our pupils and volunteer opportunities for their staff to work with our pupils.

The NAS in its mission statement seeks to “make sure everyone living with autism gets the support they need”, “provide the best possible education and support” and “share our learning and experience”. It therefore fits with our core aims to ensure the new free school is a centre of excellence and source of training, information and support for the use of ICT for people with ASDs across the region.

Our ICT activities will extend to include the availability of a learning resource area where parents and members of the community will be able to access ICT resources, develop their own expertise and confidence and become more informed about the school by viewing up to date, on line information about what is happening within the school.

Volunteering and inclusion opportunities for pupils

Inclusion activity for our pupils will be part of whole school planning and individual programmes. We aim for our pupils to understand that they have a role to play as active citizens. We envisage pupils taking part in local volunteering projects in groups and as individuals and we plan for the majority of our pupils to access local schools on a regular or for some, even daily basis.

A significant number of our curriculum aims are focussed on reducing anxiety, building pupil confidence and self-management skills so as to enable active citizenship.

We aim:

- To provide a “curriculum for life” that prepares individuals for each stage ahead.
- To ensure opportunities to generalise knowledge into a variety of settings, including the local community.
- To support pupils’ wellbeing and build confident aspirational citizens who are able to make a positive contribution within their local community.

- To work in partnership with local schools and colleges to support pupils in accessing vocational, academic and personalised pathways.
- To provide pupils with knowledge of themselves and how they learn and behave and develop strategies for self-management.

Community engagement

The Cheshire East Free School ethos is outward looking and supports all staff to be community ambassadors for the pupils attending the school. The education plan places an emphasis on citizenship work which supports pupils to achieve and make a positive contribution to their community. This will involve breaking down barriers for many of the young people at the school as the majority will have experienced failure in their school placements and may feel disengaged with their communities and be reluctant to re-engage.

Local authorities and councils

We will maintain close relationships with Cheshire East LA and the neighbouring authorities and see these as key to the success of the school. We have written confirmation that Cheshire East is willing to name the school in pupil's statements (Annexe 1).

We will invite Cheshire East to nominate a representative to serve as a Governor for the school.

The NAS is already working in partnership with Cheshire East, developing a Baseline Assessment earlier this year to examine the needs of young adults transitioning from education and the drafting of a Development Plan. This work illustrates the positive relationship that the NAS has with the local authority and this will be further enhanced through the development of the school.

The NAS also has a branch operating in Cheshire East and plays an active role in the Autism Strategy Board.

We have had a number of discussions with representatives of Cheshire East LA and have on going communications, as part of our communication plan to keep them engaged in developments and any press or media releases.

Schools and colleges

At the time of admission a local maintained school will be identified as a partner provision. The choice of this partner school will be led by the pupil but the young person's family, as well as the local Authority and the head teacher of the identified provision, will be consulted.

The NAS school will set up an agreement of understanding with the partner school with regard to the amount of and the nature of the contact that will take place. Discussions will be held with primary and secondary schools in the area to develop future partnerships.

We will ensure that our planned Technology and ICT provision is compatible with other schools in the area. The school will have a role as a local resource centre of excellence providing advice on effective use of ICT for pupils with autism and communication difficulties.

All of our NAS Education Group Schools work closely with a number of universities across the UK and we envisage the Cheshire East Free School linking with local universities. The school will also share best practice with the NAS Thames Valley Free School and will be able to benefit from the experience derived from being open 12 months ahead of Cheshire East.

The NAS operates a Transitions service to help young people moving on from school and also has a Student Support scheme (based in Manchester) to help those in further or higher education to make the most from their student experience.

Business

We know that to give our pupils the best preparation possible for their chosen pathways in adulthood, we need to engage local businesses. As detailed in the Social and Communication curriculum, all pupils will have an identified transition or job coach who will prepare them for the next stage of life and we plan to engage with local businesses to support this. All people with autism find communication, problem solving and collaboration very difficult and yet these are skills needed for work and higher education. We will work with our pupils not only to develop these skills but also to find future pathways that suit their strengths and aspirations.

The NAS operates a Supported Employment Service, working with young people to help them prepare for work and with employers to ensure that they provide autism friendly working environments.

We will build strong partnerships with local businesses, especially in the IT world to share knowledge about autism and showcase our pupil's skills. Within the NAS we have leading edge expertise in educational ICT and we will ensure that the school's IT curriculum reflects this and is also compatible with the ICT structures in mainstream schools. We will also collaborate with local businesses to ensure that ICT is relevant to the workplace.

We intend to build relationships with local businesses so that we can work together to explore how we can better support young people with autism in the community and also develop skills in our young people that are relevant to local businesses and their future growth.

Black and minority ethnic communities (BME) and faith groups

The Cheshire East Free School will be a community school drawing pupils from across the local area. They will represent the range of faiths cultures and backgrounds in the diverse area of Cheshire East. The school will appreciate and celebrate diversity and welcome children and young people with autism from all faiths and cultures. Contact will be made with religious

leaders from the community with the aim that they will be able to contribute to the programmes of RE at the school.

Children with autism from BME communities can experience discrimination on two fronts, their disability and their ethnicity. We will include training in cultural awareness for all our staff and work closely with parents to ensure BME groups have appropriate information on how to access the school.

Parents

Our first steps in Community engagement will be through family engagement and our work with parents and carers. Research affirms that family engagement is critical to educational success. We want our parents to have a central role in supporting learning in our school and to be;

- School partners in developing school activities,
- Advocates for the school,
- Involved in decision making and leadership.

We intend to do this through;

- Transparent and structured admissions policy.
- Clear expectations articulated in the initial interviews conversations between student, family and school.
- Ongoing consultation on development of individual learning plans and curriculum focus.
- A shared understating between the parents, student and school of agreed personalised learning goals identifying how a student learns best, pace of learning and ensuring that they gain the competencies needed to success in school, college and the work place.
- Parent school agreement on homework and strategies to support access to learning across school and home settings.
- Half termly parent workshops based on the highly respected NAS Help! Parent programmes. These workshops will include subjects such as Anger Management, Visual Resources, Managing Homework and Teen Life.

The NAS operates a network of branches across the UK, including one in Cheshire East. These branches support parents and families affected by autism. They are embedded in the local community and often run a number of autism specific community services, including:

- Spectrum youth club for children with autism aged 9-13
- Short breaks through the Oasis club for 13-19 year olds
- Day trips for children and their families
- Coffee mornings for parents of children with autism
- An adults with autism social pub group

The wider community

The school leadership team and staff will use the close partnership with parents to drive continuous improvement in our engagement with and contribution to our wider local communities. Community engagement will be embedded into our school Development Plan and is fully reflected in our

Well Being curriculum and Enrichment curriculum. Our PSHE curriculum includes community-based education as recommended by DfE (2011) and supports young people with autism to take the theoretical learning from the classroom into real life situations. Generalisation and transfer of knowledge is difficult for anyone with autism and so this is an essential part of any specialist curriculum. Students will be encouraged and supported to make a positive contribution to the wider community and to their school community.

We believe that our students need to be fully supported outside of the school day and we need to engage the community to support them in their acquisition of the accomplishments necessary for success in work and FE or HE. Whatever pathway our young people choose to take they will need the key skills of communication, problem solving and the ability to be able to work collaboratively. These key skills are a major challenge for people with autism.

The NAS is a membership organisation. We will keep all our members in Cheshire East fully informed on the development of the Free School and will build on this relationship to encourage our local members to become friends and supporters of the school.

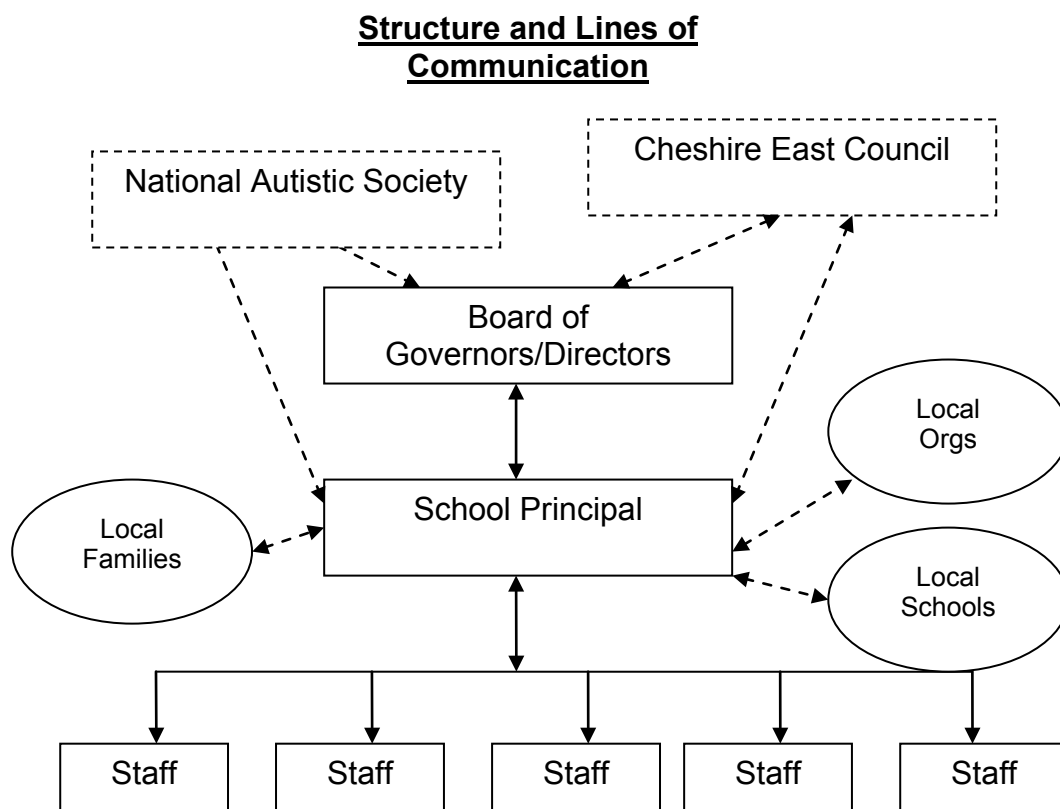
Section F: Capacity and capability

F1: Demonstrate a clear understanding of, and describe, the respective roles of the company members, governing body and principal in running your school

Overview of Members and Directors

A diagrammatic representation of the structure of the school is shown below.

The solid lines indicate both communications and specific accountabilities, while the dotted lines indicate lines of communication but without direct accountability. Note that the arrows are double headed, indicating that at all levels communications are a two way process.



The Board of Governors has the overarching responsibility for all aspects of the school's performance. The day to day management of specific areas will be delegated by the Board to the Principal (Head Teacher) but the Board will remain responsible and accountable to external stakeholders.

The Board will be constituted in line with the Department for Education's standard articles and any potential conflicts of interest will be managed accordingly.

Key policy areas for which the Board will set and monitor the strategy will include:

- The admissions policy.
- Strategic plans for future developments and growth.
- Capital investment programmes.
- The educational performance of the school.
- The welfare of the pupils.
- The financial performance of the school.
- The school's relationship with the Secretary of State for Education.
- The status and reputation of the school with stakeholders in the region, e.g.:
 - Parents and families
 - Other schools
 - The school's reputation with local authorities
 - The school's relationship with the NAS
 - Ofsted reports and recommendations

The Principal will primarily be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Board's strategic and policy decisions are communicated and implemented.
- Feeding back information to the Board.
- Ensuring that agreed policies and procedures affecting the teaching and care of the pupils are implemented and followed.
- Monitoring the quality of the teaching and care at the school and agreeing action plans with the Head of School, as appropriate.
- Monitoring the financial performance of the school, taking action as necessary.
- Monitoring and contributing to the development of relationships with partner schools and colleges.
- Ensuring that friendly and productive relationships with neighbourhood organisations are developed and maintained.

In addition, the Principal will have the primary responsibility for:

- Admissions.
- Staff recruitment, training and retention.
- Delivery of the curriculum.
- The efficient financial administration of the school.
- Ensuring that the school's policies are appropriate, up to date and are applied.
- The quality of the education.
- Managing and developing relationships with partner schools, so that the school's 'revolving door' policy is developed and maintained.
- Managing relationships with local external organisations.
- Relationships with parents and families.
- Relationships with local authorities across the region.
- Developing and maintaining relationships with local colleges and employers in order to facilitate successful student transitions.

F2: Show how you will access appropriate and sufficient educational expertise to deliver your vision.

Setting Up the School

Our school will be delivered by a project team that combines project management skills and experience with in depth knowledge and experience of managing and operating autism specific schools. The team will be resourced to meet the workload demands of the project.

Key roles, together with their responsibilities, are as follows:

Executive Sponsor of the Free school within the charity

The Executive Sponsor, [REDACTED], will be responsible for owning the Free School project on behalf of the organisation. This person will be ultimately responsible for the realisation of the vision. [REDACTED].

Project Director

The Project Director is [REDACTED], [REDACTED], consisting of seven schools and education support services. [REDACTED].

Project Manager

The NAS has an established Programme Management Office (PMO) with a number of qualified and experienced Project Managers. The PMO will allocate a Project Manager to assume responsibility for the management of the Free School project on a day-to-day basis, reporting to the Project Director. He will be responsible for ensuring that the various work streams are progressing in line with the project plan for the free school and within budget and that risks are identified and managed. The Project Manager will liaise closely with all those involved, especially the NAS Head of Finance, the Head of Marketing and the NAS Internal Auditor and will be supported from the resources of the PMO.

Education Consultant

The consultant ([REDACTED]) will advise on curriculum, pupil outcomes and the core business of teaching and learning. [REDACTED].

The Project Steering Group

The Steering Group will provide active guidance and direction to the development of the free school. It will focus on the goals and objectives and ensure that these continue to be appropriate and achievable. The creation of a new Free School requires close cooperation between the host local authority, families in the school's catchment area and the NAS so membership of the Steering Group is designed to reflect this imperative.

Membership will include (*inter alia*):

- A representative from Cheshire East LA
- Members of the parents group
- A young person with Autism
- NAS Head of Finance

- Manager of the key Local Autism Group

In addition, the project team will be able to draw on the resources of the NAS in specialist areas such as HR, IT, Property and Marketing.

Running the School

The NAS established the world's first autism specific school 50 years ago and has been at the leading edge of autism education ever since. The experience and knowledge that has been gained from running seven autism schools across the UK will inform all aspects of running the Free School, from the selection and training of staff and assessing the needs of the students, to delivering effective education designed to meet each child's specific needs.

The Board of Governors will combine educational expertise with first hand knowledge of autism and a range of management skills. As a resource for the community, the governing body will include representation from Cheshire East Council, together with local parents of children with autism. It is expected that at least one trustee will be a young adult with autism with highly relevant recent experience of education.

Confirmation of sufficient time commitments for the project team

Setting up a Free School is a flagship project for the NAS and will be a high priority for all those involved. For this reason, the time required to manage and deliver the project will not be a barrier to the project's success.

F3: Show how you will access appropriate and sufficient financial expertise to manage your school budget.

The school will implement a procurement policy for the acquisition of services that will include Treasury, Accounts Payable, Payroll, Financial and Management Accounting support. It is anticipated that the NAS will bid for the provision of these services, using its long experience in the management of autism specific schools. Should it be successful, then the NAS team will include the NAS Director of Finance (CIPFA qualified), supported by a Head of Finance (ACMA qualified) and an experienced team which includes seven qualified and two part qualified accountants.

This team has worked across the commercial, voluntary and not for profit sectors and has extensive experience in budgeting and forecasting, statutory reporting, cash management, provision of financial advice, developing and implementing stringent financial controls and project management.

The NAS currently runs seven commercially viable specialist schools and sixteen adult services across the UK, all of which are supported by this Finance Team.

Peer support will be available for the school's Finance and Business

Manager from the existing Finance Managers in NAS schools. Hands on training will be provided through shadowing the local Finance and Business Managers at other NAS schools.

F4: Show how you will access other relevant expertise to manage the opening and operation of your school.

The three founding members of the NAS Cheshire East Free School are [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] is [REDACTED] as well as being the parent of a child with autism. [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] is [REDACTED] of the National Autistic Society.

[REDACTED] is [REDACTED] of the NAS. [REDACTED].

The NAS has the experience and knowledge acquired from 50 years of operating autism specific schools and this will be available to support and guide the NAS Cheshire East Free School. In addition, management expertise in functions such as HR, IT, procurement, finance, premises and marketing will be made available. The NAS is a charity with annual turnover of almost £100m and some 3,500 staff (plus a further 1,000 volunteers). It therefore has the structures and resources to provide the range and depth of management expertise and experience that the Free School will need.

We are seen and trusted as leading edge practitioners in the field of autism and provide specialist information for professionals, people with autism and families. Our conferences provide a crucial platform for greater collaboration, helping professionals to share information and best practice.

In order to plan and manage the workloads associated with this project and other NAS developments, a Programme Management Office has been established with a number of experienced project managers and support staff recruited.

F5: Provide realistic plans for recruiting a high quality principal, other staff and governors in accordance with your proposed staffing structure and education plans.

We anticipate following the procedure we used successfully to recruit the Principal Designate for the NAS Thames Valley Free School in October 2012. Thus the interview panel will include at least one of the three designated members of the Free School Trust and at least one of the governors of the Free School. An NAS Trustee and the NAS Director of Education, NAS Director of HR and a person who is on the autism spectrum will also be part of the panel.

Advertisements will be placed on the NAS Website and in the Guardian and Times Educational Supplement.

The Principal will be recruited to be in office from January 2014 so that he or she can play the lead role in promoting and marketing the school across the borough, developing constructive relationships with existing schools and colleges, as well as taking control of key operational matters, such as recruitment of the staff team and assessing potential student referrals.

The profile tables detailed below use the six domains of the National standards for Headteachers (DfES 2004).

The skills and attributes have been based on suggestions by NCSL in 2010 National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services full report on Executive Headship. www.nationalcollege.org.uk

National standards	Professional qualities and attributes of the Head of School
Shaping the future	<p>Commitment to and understating of the school vision, core values and aims and the skills to work with the NAS, the school governors, staff and pupils to express this vision.</p> <p>Ability to work in collaboration with the school's senior management team to translate the vision into agreed targets and operational structures.</p> <p>Drive and motivation to support others to create a shared learning culture and positive inclusive climate.</p>
Leading teaching and learning	<p>Ensure that all pupils have relevant daily targets.</p> <p>Be an outstanding autism classroom practitioner and be able to model such. Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and be able to challenge poor practice at every level.</p> <p>Ensure that data analysis is used to drive improvement.</p> <p>Ensure that autism practice is effective and evidence based.</p> <p>Establish an effective review cycle that ensures planning, allocation of resources and improvement targets are of the highest quality.</p>
Developing self and working with	<p>Develop and maintain high quality staff induction and continuing professional development.</p>

others	Ensure that an effective performance review cycle is followed for all staff.
Managing the organisation	Produce and implement evidence based improvement plans and policies. Monitor the use of resources to ensure value for money. Ensure that the needs of all pupils are met through an organisational structure which reflects the vision, values and aims of the school.
Securing accountability	Lead the establishment of an ethos where all are valued and enabled to work collaboratively. Ensure that all staff have clearly defined accountabilities and responsibilities that are understood and agreed. Work with the governors to ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met.
Strengthening community	Ensure the pupils have a range of community based learning experiences. Collaborate with other schools, colleges, local stakeholders and charities to make sure community needs are understood. Work with parents to ensure that they are fully included in the work of the school and their child's education.

Qualifications

Qualified teacher status

A degree or equivalent

A further SEN qualification

If not already held, aspirations to undertake NPQH or equivalent leadership training.

Experience

Experience of working at Head or Deputy level

Teaching experience in a range of schools settings, preferably both mainstream and children with autism

Experience of training others in autism practice

Confident to develop a curriculum

Commitment to inclusion

Recruiting high quality staff

The Principal will be responsible for the recruitment of all staff.

The staff will be recruited following a robust procedure which will identify how

closely their qualifications, experience and values meet with those of the NAS Cheshire East Free School and the way in which the curriculum is to be delivered.

The Principal and Lead Teacher will need to be experienced teachers who are confident in their knowledge of autism and mainstream secondary education and also committed to working collaboratively with other schools and colleges. Other staff may be less experienced but with the support of the extended NAS Education group and the NAS learning and development structure, the lack of autism expertise will be quickly and effectively addressed. Experience of employment of NQTs in other NAS schools, for example, has shown that their enthusiasm and open mindedness usually means that they rapidly embrace the opportunities to develop their autism knowledge.

High quality training and continuous professional development in educating children and young people with autism will be a key part of our offer to potential staff and we believe this will attract people to apply for the roles.

The NAS HR department will lead on placements of adverts and as well as the usual national papers for Teachers, adverts will be placed in local press and on the NAS website. Support staff vacancies will be advertised through local press, local shops and through local charity and NAS Branch newsletters.

All appointments are subject to the successful completion of a six month probationary period and appointees will be subject to rigorous reference checks, enhanced CRB, POVA/POCA checks and the satisfactory completion of induction training.

We will have a comprehensive three week staff induction programme that covers topics including: autism, SCERTS, behaviour support, safeguarding, and person centred planning. The NAS Cheshire East School and the NAS are committed to delivering high quality, values-led training to all its staff. Following a robust induction programme, ongoing training will be delivered locally and also through the NAS training department. All NAS support staff are trained to reach NVQ level 3 standards in care and support and the proposed Free School will adhere to these standards. All staff will receive supervision from their line manager every 2 months. This is an opportunity to provide staff with feedback and direction as well as to discuss any other issues.

Governors

We know that inspection evidence makes it clear that there is a relationship between governance, the quality of leadership and management, and the quality of provision and pupil achievement (Ofsted May 2011). We recognise the importance of the governors and believe them to be the most important decision making group for the proposed school.

The three Company members, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and

have extensive experience between them in business and charity leadership and school governance. One of the company members will initially take on the role of Chair of Governors and support for the role will be accessed through the National College of Schools leadership programme, funded by the government. The Governing body will adopt a code of practice that will be adapted from the model version provided by National Governor's Association (NGA 2010).

The School Business Manager will have the role of clerk to the Governors and this role will be included in the Job Description. However, responsibility and lines of accountability for the role of clerk to the governors will be discreet and clear to ensure that there is no confusion across the two roles. The role of clerk is important in ensuring that governors' time is used efficiently and effectively .The school will access the local authority governor support service to ensure that the clerk receives regular training and briefings.

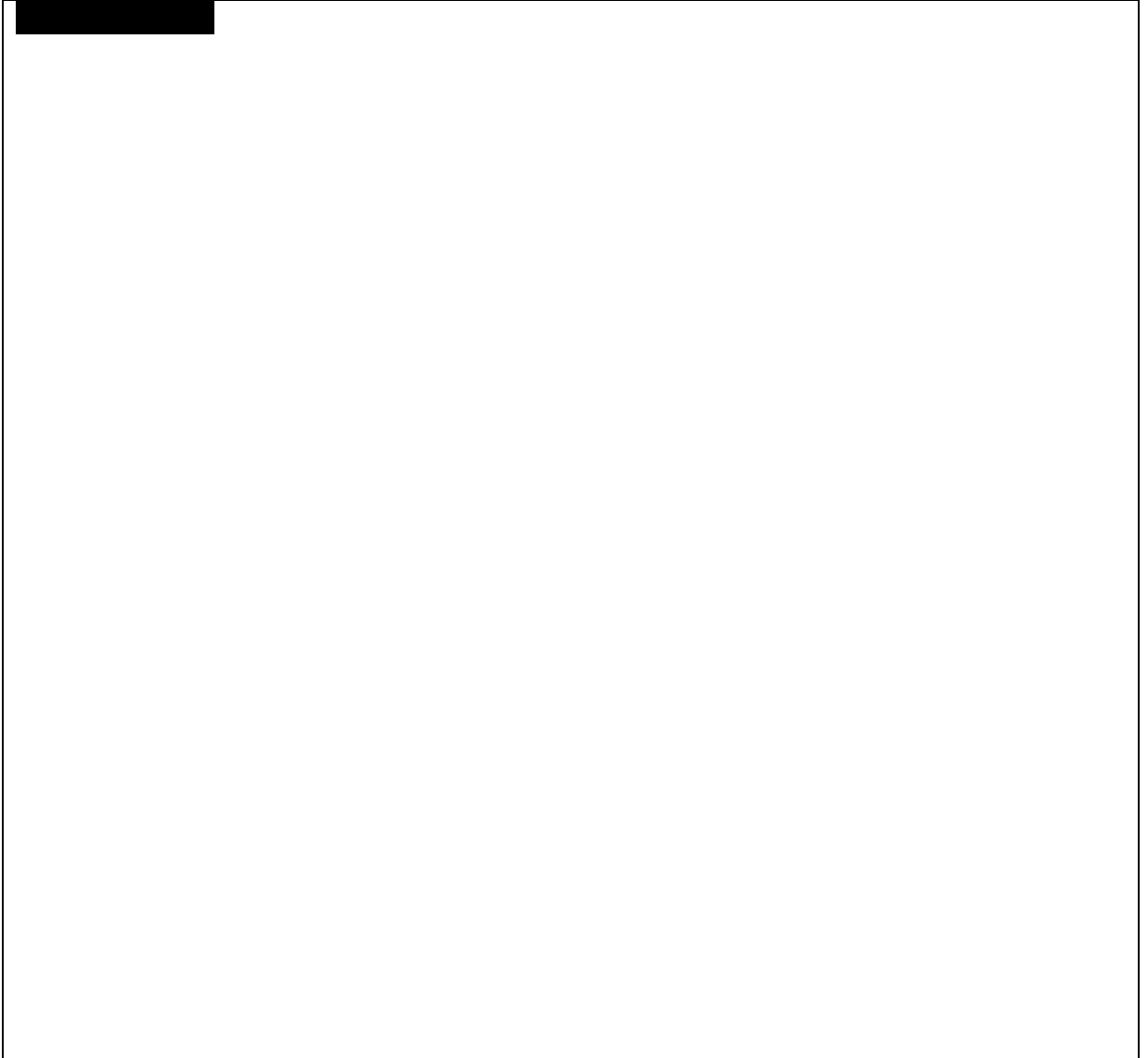
In line with good practice in corporate governance the proposed school will give due regard to promoting equality and diversity and will endeavour to ensure that in recruiting governors , the governing body represents the community the school will serve. We also expect the governing body to have an important role in engaging with parents and the wider community to promote the school's work. We plan for there to be a governor section on the school web site that's explains the governors' roles and keeps the parents and pupils up to date with their work.

The NAS Cheshire East Free School steering group will reflect the leading role taken by families in the area to initiate the project, ensuring that they continue to play a key part in the development of the school, ensuring that it focuses on and addresses local needs.

The governing body will be recruited to provide a mix of expertise and local representation. Specifically, it is anticipated that as well as a local parent, a representative of Cheshire East local authority and of a local mainstream school and or college will be invited to become governors.

Section G: Initial costs and financial viability

Please refer to pages 30 to 34 of the 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section. As explained in the 'How to Apply' guidance you are required to complete the necessary financial planning spreadsheets as well as providing a supporting narrative. The templates can be found [here](#). Please use this section for the narrative.



Section H: Premises

Cheshire East LA has identified a potential site for the school at the [REDACTED] near Alsager, Cheshire, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
The site is centrally located within the borough of Cheshire East and is easily accessible via the motorway network but the site itself is on the edge of a village in a location which is essentially rural and tranquil in character.

The local authority has carried out substantial work to explore the feasibility of this site, including architect's drawings for alternative designs and layouts, site surveys and consultations with local residents. Their thinking is that the preferred option is to demolish the existing buildings and to replace them with purpose designed facilities.

The built environment is a very important factor in enabling children with autism to feel comfortable and unstressed and thus able to achieve their potential. The NAS will use its considerable experience in the design and specification of ASD-specific buildings to ensure that the new building creates a calm and supportive environment that stimulates learning and development for all pupils.

Annexe 1
Letter from Cheshire East Confirming Demand for the School



Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Children & Families
Dalton House
Dalton Way
Middlewich
Cheshire CW10 0HU

Tel: 01606 271504
[REDACTED]

DATE: 27 December 2012 [REDACTED]

YOUR REF:

Dear Sir, Madam

Confirmation of support for National Autistic Society Cheshire East Special Free School

We confirm that the Local Authority of Cheshire East supports **National Autistic Society Cheshire East Special Free School's** application. We understand that the Cheshire East Free School is a specialist SEN school catering for the needs of children with Autism in both primary and secondary phase (60 pupils), in Cheshire East and it is proposed to open in September 2014 if not sooner.

We confirm that we agree there is a need for the type of proposed provision in the local area and we will consider naming the school in line with our statutory duties in appropriate pupils' statements of SEN. We anticipate naming the Cheshire East Special Free School on the Statement of Special Education Needs of a minimum of 12 pupils for the first academic year following the school's opening and on a further 12 in the second year. However there are number of youngster who will be receiving their education outside Cheshire East's boundaries and it is highly likely, with appropriate review the provision will be named in the statement.

We agree to pay the negotiated top up fee per day pupil.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Annexe 2
Data Indicating Unmet Demand for Autism Education

In May 2012 a drop in session was organised at Church Lawton Memorial Hall inviting the public to feedback on proposals to develop a new special school for children and young people with Autism Spectrum Condition on the former Church Lawton Primary school site within Cheshire East.

We invited feedback through a survey questionnaire which was handed out to visitors during 2 drop in sessions which took place on Monday 21st May from 2.00 – 4.00pm and 6.00 – 8.00pm.

This report provides a summary of the responses together with comments recorded on each of the answers presented by the respondents.

Q1. What is your postcode?

From the 67 respondents who answered the following postcodes were recorded by local area ward within Cheshire East:

Local Area Ward	Response Percent	Response Count
Odd Rode		41
Alsager		9
Knutsford		2
Wistaston		2
Congleton West		1
Gawsworth		1
Macclesfield Central		1
Macclesfield Hurdsfield		1
Mobberley		1
Nantwich North and West		1
Poynton West and Adlington		1
Sandbach Elworth		1
Willaston & Rope		1
Wilmslow Dean Row		1
Crewe East		1
Middlewich		1
Out of the area (Newcastle-under-Lyme)		1
	Answered question	67
	Skipped question	2

Q2. Please indicate whether you are a:

	Response Percent	Response Count
A local resident	66%	44
Parent/carer of child with SEND	21%	14
Teacher	6%	4
Other (please specify)	4%	3
Parent/carer of child without SEND	1%	1
Headteacher	1%	1
Governor	0%	0
Representative of support group/charity	0%	0
Child/young person with SEND	0%	0
	Answered question	67
	Skipped question	2

The following answers were recorded from 3 respondents who chose other (please specify):

1	Child Development Service
2	Parish Clerk
3	Adjacent Farmer

Q3. Do you have:

	Response Percent	Response Count
A general interest in the proposal	71%	49
Specific interest in SEND	29%	20
SENCO responsibilities	0%	0
	Answered question	69
	Skipped question	0

Q4. Do you support the proposal to establish the first special school for children with autism within Cheshire East?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	97%	67
No, if so please state why	0%	0
Undecided, please state why	3%	2
	Answered question	69
	Skipped question	0

The following additional comments were received by respondents:

	Comments
1	Yes – In principle. Church Lawton primary school had an excellent reputation with regard to Autism - it is a pity that this expertise was lost at the closure of the school.
2	We support the idea that the children require a special school but are concerned about its location. I don't think it should be close to the canal - very secure fencing is required all around the school - the road links to the school are not suitable the estate roads are too narrow.
3	100% Yes
4	I think this is an excellent idea - a very good use of the existing site.
5	Very much so. It is a much needed provision within the area.
6	I think that it would be a shame when there is a need for this school if the land was sold off.
7	Please indicate if a residential facility is being considered in the future?
8	Maybe children with autism need to have contact with all other children.
9	We think consideration should be given to re-vamping & re-opening the school as a primary school - in view of the proposed nearby developments (400 houses on 'Twyfords' + 91 on nearby Paddock).

Q5. Do you support the initial proposal to develop a special school for children and young people with autism on the former Church Lawton primary school site?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86%	59
No, if so please state why	4%	3
Undecided, please state why	9%	6
	Answered question	68
	Skipped question	1

The following additional comments were received by respondents:

	Comments
1	In principle. The plans appear to require the demolition of the current building rather than incorporating into a new development - we were informed that the school was wastes of tax payer's money therefore where will funding for this project come from?
2	Proposed developments support the need to utilise the premises as an existing primary school in order to attract families *Alsager Twyfords site and Rectory Farm proposals
3	We currently employ so qualified staff from the surrounding area and we would be concerned that they would come & work for you. It is very difficult to get "good" staff.
4	I support the initial proposal for a special school but I have concerns about the future needs for a mainstream primary school due to the proposed hundreds of dwelling in the immediate area.
5	I think there will be a shortage of school space if the local housing development goes ahead where will the new intakes go? Concerned about future development of Twyfords and possibly Rectory Farm Estate. Old Knutsford Road there could be a lot of children requiring a new school.
6	I wonder why when more housing is proposed on Rectory Farm area and Twyfords site, why this could not be developed as a primary school. The buildings are modern and much better than the 'old' building. However, how are proposed developments going to accommodate children who may move into the area?
7	But is still 45 mins drive from Macclesfield.
8	Good use of former educational site.
9	School transport? Large coachers, mini buses, taxis, which?
10	Two new sizable housing developments are proposed Church Lawton Rectory site

	& Twyford's site. Could be in excess in 200 homes? Ordinary primary & education facilities in the local area.
11	If it were planned to become a residential site, could you please indicate in the proposal when it goes to planning?
12	However, its geographical location is extreme when the highest percentage of the children will come from Crewe/Nantwich.
13	Only after due consideration to the above comments.
14	If proposed housing development materialises there is no provision for primary education in Lawton. Other local schools are at capacity & too far away. Much prefer to re-establish site as a primary school
15	Within the next 5 years this school will be needed to provide additional primary places as a result of the building of family homes at the Twyford's site (1/2 mile) and on Rectory farm, part of the estate on which the school is situated. Alsager primary schools are already oversubscribed. Church Lawton is situated at the edge of the Cheshire East catchment area - increasing the transport costs of children to the school.

Q6A. Now that you have attended the drop in session do you have any concerns or issues that have not been addressed regarding parking?

	Response Percent	Response Count
No	74%	48
Yes, please provide details	26%	17
	Answered question	65
	Skipped question	4

The following additional comments were received by respondents who answered yes:

	Comments
1	What provision is being made for parents collecting and delivering their children?
2	If students attend on a one to one basis, this will increase the amount of traffic & parking necessary to accommodate all requirements.
3	Concern that when the school holds events, as all schools do, parking will overflow onto Cherry Tree & Brown Avenue. Suggest an area of the grounds is made dual purpose for school activity use which can then be used as an overflow car park.
4	Cherry Avenue is a narrow road and I believe parking will be an issue. The local bus has problems at times.

5	Building design for 1. How practical 2. How much to maintain in 10 years
6	Make adequate parking places available within the grounds so that the surrounding roads are not clogged up with cars.
7	An analysis will be required of the number of pupils, the number of staff required to work with them (the teaching assistants, health care staff, cooks etc.) and whether the parking is sufficient. It probably needs extending.
8	Developers may block access to our house and neighbours
9	Glad that there will be an enlarged access area for care/minibuses to turn within the school grounds. There needs to be enough car parking spaces to accommodate special needs staff (more classroom assistants needed than in a mainstream school)
10	For the projected staffing levels of teachers/TA's and caretakers and other support staff there appears to be a woefully inadequate parking provision on the present plans for the site. The school is also flagged as a possible centre of excellence which may entail a number of visitors. This in itself would require extra car parking spaces. I am very concerned that parking will 'spill over' up Cherry Tree avenue and Brown Avenue, causing danger and disruption to local residents.
11	This could lead to problems.
12	Parking planned appears to be inadequate.
13	We live next to school (47). Secure fencing is a must - conifers left in but maintained regularly - Fencing is broken - Need renewing - Height increased - (next to the path) - Noise of lorries during construction phase need reviewing
14	Obviously insufficient when there will be at least 60 staff travelling from outside the 'village'.
15	Not enough spaces for approx. 60+ staff not including taxis/minibuses.
16	Not sure that planned provision of parking spaces is adequate for total number of staff, helpers, visitors + parents/taxis dropping off pupils.
17	60 pupils could potentially require 60 vehicles plus staff. This will extend from the school grounds to adjacent side streets causing residents disruption for vehicles and hazards for pedestrians.

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