



Presfield High School & Specialist College

Headteacher: Tony Fay

6th February 2023

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher of Presfield High School and Specialist College. The governors are looking to appoint an inspirational leader for the school from 1st September, 2023 following the retirement of Mr Tony Fay.

Presfield enjoys an outstanding reputation in our community. It is held in high regard by partners, by parents and most importantly by students. We have a dedicated and forward looking staff with high levels of expertise in supporting our young people. If you join us, I feel sure that you will find working with them to be hugely rewarding.

All our students have a diagnosis of autism and an Education, Health and Care Plan. They are positive and engaged. They are our joy. Of course, each individual faces a wide and diverse range of challenges; our challenge is to give each one the confidence to move on into a happy and fulfilled adult life. Our touchstone is our belief that, *"If you have met one person with autism, you have met **one** person with autism"* (Dr Stephen Shore).

Our school has made enormous progress in recent years under Mr Fay's leadership. Throughout its history the school has prided itself on providing a safe, nurturing environment. That continues to this day as we have developed an increasing focus on achievement. Our students are proud to gain recognised qualifications as well as developing broader skills in communication and building relationships. Increasingly we have developed a blend of formal and informal approaches better to meet the needs of our students. One to one approaches are used extensively where this is helpful to students. We see our mission as being to support our students towards an independent, adult life.

The school is ambitious to develop further. We were very proud to receive recently the highest recognition from the National Autistic Society and are in the process of applying for Beacon Status. In addition, we are in the early stages of discussions with Sefton LA on how our role might be further enhanced.

The selection event will be held on the 20th/21st April at Sefton's Professional Development Centre in Formby. This is so that we can provide a quiet environment with ample space for activities. I would therefore encourage you to make arrangements to visit the school in advance so that you can gain a sense of what we are about and how this relates to your own vision. Mr Fay will be available to answer your questions and there will be opportunities to meet students and staff.

I look forward to receiving your application and, in due course, to meeting you.

Yours faithfully

Howard Cooper CBE
Chair of Governors



Presfield High School, Preston New Road, Southport, PR9 8PA
Metropolitan Borough of Sefton

Tel: (01704) 227831 Fax: (01704) 232306 Email: office@presfieldschool.org



PRESFIELD
HIGH SCHOOL

Shaping Futures, Changing Lives



“If you have met one child with autism you have met ONE child with autism” Dr Stephen Shore

Priorities for whole school development: SDP 2020-2023

1. Building resilience to promote independent learning
2. Empower students to recognise and advocate for themselves in order to access and contribute meaningfully to society
3. Encourage and equip families with knowledge and skills necessary to support their young people through the different stages of their school career, including the transition into adulthood

School Context

Number on Roll: 123

PAN: 88

Our staffing includes:

- Teachers: 20 (Including SLT)
- TAs: 35
- Therapists: (employed by the school):
- 1 Speech Therapist:(employed by NHS)
- 1 Occupational Therapist (commissioned by the school.)
- Other Staff: 12 (admin, Cleaners, Welfare, Site and IT)
- Tuition in Music is bought in
- Tuition in Dance is brought in

Pupils are usually taught in groups of 9 (it should be 8 and we have one group of 10).

Each lesson has:

- 1 subject specialist teacher
- 1 subject specialist TA
- 1 class linked TA

Presfield School changes lives, we know this is a big statement to make, but we passionately believe we not only change our students' lives but also those of their families. A resilient, well balanced young person who can advocate for themselves improves the environment at home. The student who is no longer scared of dogs enabling the family to walk freely in the park or the student who will now eat food that is not beige enabling a family to dine out are examples of the impact from our hidden curriculum.

Exemplar 1

To all the wonderful staff at Presfield. Thank you for your special skills, your thoughtfulness, your understanding, your patience and your guidance with XXXX over the last five years. It will never be forgotten. (Parent of a Year 11 Leaver)

Exemplar 2

All kids need a little help, a little hope and someone who believes in them. Thank you for being the people who believed in XXXX and helped him to believe in himself. Thank you for all your time, support, guidance and words of encouragement you gave xxxx during his time at Presfield and preparing him for the road ahead....We will always be truly grateful and will never forget you. (Parent of a Year 11 Leaver)

Exemplar 3

"XXXX casually dropped into conversation that he wore a life jacket on the boats at Gulliver's? This is HUGE! He has never been able to tolerate one for longer than 5 minutes, it presented a massive challenge at Beavers and Cubs (for 4 years) as he would get incredibly distressed. I'm so shocked, honestly - I had a little cry! Very proud Mum. Wow, he's really come so far in a year. Thank you so much for the wonderful, supportive environment you provide."- Year 7 Parent

Our primary focus is to support students to increase their employability and quality of life opportunities. Our qualification suite continually changes and expands to reflect our students' strengths and needs. Extensive work is undertaken to prepare students for the rigour of public examinations while maintaining our emphasis on developing life skills. We have recently successfully introduced an AS and A Level in Art.

All students have an EHCP with Autism/Aspergers identified as the primary need. As a National Autistic Society (NAS) Advanced accredited school (January 2023) we place as much emphasis on progress in social development, including understanding self, as we do in academic progress. We are now working towards Beacon status, the highest accolade the NAS can award.

The Autism Educational Trusts "show progress" tracker for Social development is used to target-set and track non academic progress. Sefton have adopted this tracker and are encouraging all schools to promote its use. This will enable social development progress as well as academic progress to be shared as students transition into and from Presfield.

In September 2022 the school catchment area was predominantly Sefton with 8% travelling from Lancashire. The social economic background of students is rich and varied. 13% of students come from Bootle, Seaforth/Litherland or Netherton all of which are in the most deprived 5% in the country. The school receives additional support from a Speech and Language Therapist, Parent Support Advisor, School Nurse and OT-Mental Health/sensory. All students have a sensory need assessment upon entry to the school. On a case by case basis we run intervention programmes to support emotional and mental health issues, reading recovery, dyslexia, anger management and self esteem. Our interventions are tracked using our provision map. We have developed a pastoral team to support students' regulation and confidence.

It is our belief that teamwork is essential. We recognise all school staff have an influential position in the school, and act as a role model for students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour. We expect all staff, governors and volunteers to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Governors have a high degree of skill and experience in relation to the role of the school. There is experience in finance, HR, school improvement, safeguarding, training, psychology and premises management.

Speech and Language Therapy

A SALT professional is based in school and all students on roll are under her caseload. She works with individuals and groups of children and reports on their progress regularly. She also provides professional development opportunities for staff.

Occupational Therapy

An OT specialist is based at the school. All students receive a sensory assessment within a term of entering the school. The OT delivers whole class sessions to support well being and self regulation. 1:1 interventions are in place for those students in need.

Behaviour

We as a staff aim to ensure that every child and situation is dealt with in a fair, compassionate, safe and dignified way. Our aim is to teach children to manage themselves through positive behaviour support.

When presenting challenging behaviour, the pupils at Presfield will fall into two categories where either they understand how to behave appropriately but choose not to, or demonstrate behaviours that may be socially inappropriate or difficult to manage resulting from anxiety or frustration.

Due to a lack of social understanding or communication difficulties associated with their diagnosis, pupils with autism are often unable to properly understand 'socially appropriate' behaviour or properly interpret other people's intentions. This means that they can be taken advantage of and 'led' by other pupils into behaviour that is unacceptable.

As part of the duty of care it can be necessary to intervene in difficult incidents. Where possible, such intervention should be planned, co-ordinated and guided by the principles and practices of Team Teach.

On rare occasions it may be necessary for staff to intervene physically to support a child.

Staff would only intervene and use reasonable force when:

- Pupils may be at risk of injuring themselves or others
- When an action occurs on school premises or during an authorised activity off premises where pupils may be causing damage to property.

Any such intervention should be planned, co-ordinated and recognised as an intervention approved by Team Teach. The following principles must be adhered to:

- there is an absolute necessity to engage in physical restraint
- intervention ceases as soon as is reasonably possible
- if isolated, seek support as soon as is reasonably possible
- return to familiar and established practice as soon as the situation is stabilised
- report and record the incident in its entirety as soon as possible

Team Teach

- All staff must engage in Team Teach training. .
- All staff must familiarise themselves with the "Help Protocol".
- Repair and restoration are a vital part of Team Teach and every effort should be made by staff to see the student who they have held before they go home to reduce their anxiety and show we have moved on.
- Staff should seek to continue repair and restoration on the next day if required.

Staff Wellbeing

Presfield School is committed to support staff wellbeing .

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." (World Health Organisation).

Evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease some mental health problems and also help people to flourish-(New Economic Foundation).

The NHS explain the five aspects of wellbeing that can help to boost an individual's mental wellbeing as:

- Connect – connecting with the people: family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spending time developing these relationships
- Be active – Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Finding an activity that an individual may enjoy and making it a part of their life.
- Keep learning – learning new skills can give a person a sense of achievement and a new confidence; e.g. a cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, or figuring out how to fix a bike.
- Give to others – even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve people's mental wellbeing and help build new social networks.
- Be mindful – be more aware of the present moment, including thoughts and feelings, of the body and the world around. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way people feel about life and how they approach challenges.

Staff Workload

Presfield is committed to reducing excessive workload and has modified systems and processes to support the reduction in unnecessary workload. We encourage all staff to speak up when workload pressures are too much. We see speaking up not as a sign of incompetence but actually a strength.

The School Day

8.55am	Registration
	Monday-collective act of worship in the hall 9:00-9:15
9.10am	Lesson 1
9.55am	Lesson 2
10.40am	Break
10.55am	Lesson 3
11.45am	Lesson 4
12.30pm	Lunch
1.20pm	Registration
1.35pm	Lesson 5
2.25pm	Lesson 6
3.10pm	Return to form class
3.15pm	End of day

Friday

Changes to the timetable from 1.20pm onwards

1.20pm	Registration
1.30pm	Lesson 5
2.10pm	Lesson 6
2.50pm	Assembly
3.15pm	End of day

Headteacher job description

This job description reflects the 'National standards of excellence for Headteachers' (2020). These standards are built upon 'The Teaching Standards' (2011) which apply to all teachers, including Headteachers. The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment for Headteachers, contained in the 'School teachers' pay and conditions document 2020'.

The role of the Headteacher

Headteachers are leading professionals and role models for the communities they serve. Their leadership is a significant factor in ensuring high quality teaching and achievement in schools and a positive and enriching experience of education for pupils. Together with those responsible for governance, they are custodians of the nation's schools.

Parents and the wider public rightly hold high expectations of headteachers, given their influential position leading the teaching profession and on the young people who are their responsibility. The headteachers' standards set out how headteachers meet these high expectations. The standards are an important benchmark not only for headteachers and those who hold headteachers to account, but also for those who train and develop school leaders.

Section 1: Ethics and professional conduct

Headteachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. They are expected to meet the teachers' standards and be responsible for providing the conditions in which teachers can fulfil them.

Headteachers uphold and demonstrate the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' at all times. Known as the Nolan principles, these form the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership

Headteachers uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour. Both within and outside school, headteachers:

- build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain
- uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law

As leaders of their school community and profession, headteachers:

- serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the behaviour of a good citizen
- uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research
- make a positive contribution to the wider education system in particular by spreading an understanding of the needs of autistic people, in line with the schools commitment to achieving Beacon status from the National Autistic Society
- Work in collaboration with the Local Authority and other partners to ensure that the needs of autistic children in Sefton, including but not limited to those attending Presfield, are more fully met

Section 2: Headteachers' standards

1. School culture

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- ensure a culture of high staff professionalism

2. Teaching

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of expertise and approaches which respect the needs of Autistic children as well as the nature of subject disciplines
- ensure effective use is made of formative assessment including and particularly in terms of their social and communication development

3. Curriculum and assessment

Headteachers:

- ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities
- ensure that all our students make progress in their social and communication development in line with the needs identified in their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

4. Behaviour

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils
- ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen

5. Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

Headteachers:

- ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities

- establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

6. Professional development

Headteachers:

- ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

7. Organisational management

Headteachers:

- ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk

8. Continuous school improvement

Headteachers:

- make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context

- ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

9. Working in partnership

Headteachers:

- forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community
- commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

10. Governance and accountability

Headteachers:

- understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- establish and sustain professional working relationship with those responsible for governance
- ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties

This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to the post. It reflects the position at the present time only and may be reviewed in negotiation with the employee in the future. The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document as they relate to Headteachers.

The applicant will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The Headteacher is expected to demonstrate this commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and is expected to hold all staff and volunteers accountable for their contribution to the safeguarding regulations



Person Specification

Post – Headteacher at PRESFIELD HIGH SCHOOL & SPECIALIST COLLEGE

Group Size 4: ISR Level 21 – Level 27

The **Essential Criteria** are the qualifications, experiences and skills or knowledge you **MUST SHOW YOU HAVE** to be considered for the job.

The **Desirable Criteria** are used to help decide between candidates who meet all the Essential Criteria. The Assessment Column shows how the school will obtain the necessary information about you. If the Assessment column says Application Form next to the Essential Criteria or Desirable Criteria, you must include enough information to show how you meet these criteria.

A. Training and qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Assessment : A – Application I –Interview R – References P – Presentation CC-Checking of Certificates
Qualified Teacher Status	/		A/CC
Degree or equivalent	/		A/CC
Evidence of commitment to ongoing continuing professional development	/		A/R
NPQH or equivalent leadership qualification.		/	A/CC
Evidence of working towards NPQH or equivalent Leadership qualification	/		A/CC

B. Experience of teaching and school management	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Significant teaching experience	/	In 2 key stages 11-19	A/I/R
Significant experience in teaching in special education	/		A/I/R
Significant experience of teaching children with ASD	/		A/I/R
Effective leadership experience at deputy Headteacher or senior management team level	/		A/I/R
Experience of successful implementation of strategies for raising achievement and ensuring effective teaching and assessment	/		A/I/R
An exemplary record of professional conduct	/		A/I/R
C. Headteacher standards	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
School Culture			
Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community	/		
Demonstrate an understanding of the needs of Autistic people and show evidence of having met those needs effectively	/		

A commitment to creating a culture where students experience a positive and enriching school life	/		
An ability to uphold ambitious educational standards which prepare students from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life. In particular, show evidence of enabling students with SEND to progress successfully into adult and working life	/		
An ability to promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment	/		
Be able to ensure a culture of high staff professionalism	/		
Teaching			
To be able to establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn	/		
To be able to ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of expertise and approaches which respect the individual needs of students set out in their EHCP. This should reflect both the learning needs of Autistic people and the distinct nature of subjects.	/		
To be able to ensure effective use is made of formative assessment both in the development of social and communication skills and in subject learning	/		
Curriculum and assessment			
An ability to ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught	/		

To be able to establish effective curricular leadership, developing leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities	/		
To be able to ensure that students develop social and communication skills to help them to form positive relationships in school and beyond	/		
To be able to ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum	/		
Behaviour			
Experience of establishing and sustaining high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, built upon relationships, high expectations, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils	/		
An ability to ensure high standards of pupil behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy	/		
Experience of implementing consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour	/		
To be able to ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen	/		
To understand the issues behind the infrequent use of physical intervention in the school, such as the use of Team Teach			

Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities			
Experience of ensuring the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities	/		
Experience of establishing and sustaining culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively	/		
An ability to ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate	/		
An ability to ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice	/		
Professional development			
Evidence of ensuring staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs	/		
Evidence of prioritising the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development	/		
Evidence of ensuring that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning	/		

Organisational Management			
Evidence of ensuring the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care	/		
An ability to prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds	/		
Experience of ensuring staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload	/		
Experience of establishing and overseeing systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently	/		
Experience of ensuring rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk	/		
Continuous School Improvement			
Experience of making use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement	/		
Experience of developing appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context	/		
Experience of ensuring careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time	/		

Working in Partnership			
An ability to forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers and the local community	/		
An ability to commit their school to work successfully with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support	/		
To be able to establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils	/		
Governance and accountability			
To understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility	/		
To be able to establish and sustain professional working relationship with those responsible for governance	/		
Experience of ensuring that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account	/		
Evidence of ensuring the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties	/		



Autism Accreditation

Specialist Award

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

Communication Passports, which are developed by the school's SALT, are informed by assessments and information gathered from staff. The Passports describe key communication needs and information around preferred communication methods, as well as personalised approaches and motivators. The school's SALT and key staff members provide ongoing training, support and guidance for staff across school with an aim of developing whole school consistent approaches in communication. During interviews, staff discussed the effectiveness of the school's CPD programme, informing practice and empowering staff through practical support.

Communication assessments and subsequent Communication Passports identify challenges or barriers each autistic student may experience in social communication and interaction. During interviews, staff described the range of group and individual interventions, delivered by the SALT and classroom-based staff, which aim to support the development of communication.

All year groups have a social communication lesson on their timetable each week which are planned and informed by the school's SALT. During interviews, staff discussed how the sessions provide opportunities for students to develop transferable communication skills which has supported the development of key employability and self-advocacy skills.

Social communication sessions are delivered to Year 7 classes by the school's SALT. Staff discussed how this has supported students to communicate with their peers, develop skills in turn taking and develop joint interests. Within Year 7, staff also discussed the positive outcomes achieved due to the recent introduction of the 'My Communication' sessions, which provide opportunity and purpose for students to practically practise and develop their communication. Staff also shared how Sixth Form students have supported in the delivery of the sessions, modelling key strategies and approaches and working with the Year 7s.

Students' communication Passports identify key approaches or tools which should be employed to enable students to understand others and express themselves. Personal review documentation includes clear references to the individual strengths and progress made by each student in terms of their communication. Students all have targets in communication which link directly to their long-term communication and interaction outcome, identified on their EHCP. During interviews, staff shared how targets are informed by the needs of the students and their individual AET Progression Framework. Show Progress, an online record keeping programme, is used to collect the data and allow the school to identify potential gaps in knowledge for each individual and the school as a whole.

In interviews, staff gave examples of how students have been supported in their communication and social engagement and the positive outcomes achieved as a result. Staff particularly highlighted the progress made by students in their development of core communication skills, which students are given planned opportunities to practise and generalise in the community.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities

During all observations, staff were able to make themselves understood by using a range of communication approaches. Staff were observed regularly simplifying or structuring verbal language, using communication boards, and using visual supports to reinforce spoken language. Where particularly good practice was observed, in all observations, staff referenced the universal set of visual social rules, linking them to specific tasks or opportunities within the lesson.

During all observations, students could make themselves understood to staff and their peers. The large majority of students used verbal language to communicate with staff and their peers but some students were observed using communication boards, visual supports and PODD where appropriate. Within all observations students were able to communicate effectively with staff and their peers during group work, question and answer sessions and community-based sessions. During discussions, staff shared how some students prefer to use Google classroom when in lessons to communicate if they need support or to share the answers to questions.

Within all observations, students were provided with opportunity and purpose to communicate as part of a group or 1:1 with staff, with each other and where appropriate members of the community. Each classroom has the school's key social rules on display and staff linked the rules to the specific tasks which were presented on the lesson schedule. Where particularly good practice was observed, in the majority of observations, staff referenced student's social communication targets or identified whole class social targets, which were then a focus of the lesson.

During all observations, staff planned time for students to work collaboratively with their peers during formal learning tasks, play and as part of trips into the community. Where particularly good practice was observed, during a school council meeting, students were provided with opportunity and purpose to communicate with their peers, with discussions being led and facilitated by Sixth form students. During discussions, staff and students described the number of social opportunities available to them throughout the school day, as well as discussing how some older students work with the younger students in a TA role and as mentors.

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

Learning Support Plans (LSPs), AET tracking documents and students' One Page Profiles include clear references to the individual strengths and progress made by each student in terms of developing independence. The school use the AET framework to identify evidence based progressive targets for students in their independence, including skills in road safety, healthy lifestyles and life skills. AET target setting documents describe long term aspirations, focussed areas of learning and SMART Targets, which break down the Long-Term Personal Goals in to achievable steps for learning; which are tracked and recorded using the AET progression framework and Show Progress.

Tools and approaches, used to support students in activities, transitions, coping with changes and making choices, are documented in Communication Passports and One Page Profiles. The sampled plans included references to the use of structured environments, social stories and individual timetables or checklists. The school have also recently developed an onsite immersive room which is used in preparation for trips into the community or as part of curriculum delivery. Staff particularly highlighted the positive outcomes as a result of using the room prior to a trip to London, enabling students to experience the sights and sounds of the tube prior to experiencing it during the trip. Staff discussed how they aim to further develop the resources to include more relevant and local environments.

The skills and challenges of each student are outlined in a number of documents, such as One Page Profiles, Communication Passports and Learning Support Plans. Within each document key tools and approaches have been identified to provide suitable levels of support for students whilst fostering opportunities for them to further develop skills in independence and working towards their identified goals.

Through the curriculum the school place an emphasis on students developing skills through experiences and regularly planned community-based sessions. The school also have an onsite house which is regularly used for sleep overs and life-skills sessions, offering students an authentic experience. Staff discussed the success of the sessions and the impact that they have had on the quality of life and confidence of students, which was also commented on by parents.

In interviews, staff gave examples of how they have supported students in following routines; coping with change; making decisions – and the positive outcomes achieved as a result. Staff discussed the development of life experience, confidence and key independence skills as a result of participating in a range of community visits. Staff particularly highlighted the development in confidence as a result of them having high expectations of students developing independence through experiential learning, and how sabotage is used to build confidence in problem-solving both in school and in the community-based sessions.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Within all observations, students were consistently supported to understand what they were expected to do now and what they were expected to do next. Across all observations staff used a consistently formatted Learning objective and whole class first, next, last display which identified the structure and content of the lesson. The consistency in the use of the system was exceptional, with key transitions signposted verbally and visually to students. In addition, some students also have access to a range of individualised tools including individual schedules, now and then, whole task lists, TEACCH workstations and visual prompts.

Within all observations, students were supported to do things for themselves rather than needing to be directed by a member of staff. The school's environment is low arousal and visually structured and careful consideration has been given to the visual supports used across school to support students to independently transition around the school and collect key resources within their class. During discussions, staff describe how they use sabotage as a tool around school and within the community to support students to develop confidence in problem solving within a safe environment.

Within all observations, students were supported to develop skills and confidence in actively expressing their opinion, as well as making and taking decisions. Staff supported decision making in a variety of ways across school including, in some classes, using communication boards and choice boards. Across all observations, staff were observed allowing students appropriate processing time following an instruction or question. Staff's awareness of processing time further reinforces the low arousal and calm environment and evidences staff being in-tuned to the needs of the students.

During all observations, students were provided with opportunities to consolidate and develop daily functional skills including core literacy and numeracy skills, communication, self-care and a range of transferable work and study skills. The school's curriculum places a particular emphasis on these skills, providing opportunities for students to regularly practise and develop these during planned sessions. Staff across school also discussed how they ensure the curriculum is built around students developing a range of core functional skills, informed by the AET Framework.

The school prepare the post 16 cohort for successful transitions to college by skilfully allowing them higher levels of independence and by allowing an identified and risk assessed group to leave the school premises during lunch to access local shops. Staff, students and families discuss the positive outcomes achieved as a result of this approach, supporting students to develop confidence and a level of independence that wouldn't be possible without these opportunities.

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions

The school's Occupational Therapist works in a graduated way across school, providing Universal, Targeted and Specialist support to students based on their identified need. The OT works closely with another staff member to support the development and implementation of sensory supports across school, which includes the regular delivery of training and observations of practice to support staff to refine and develop their practice.

Students' Sensory Profiles include details of identified sensory needs and approaches. One Page Profiles, Learning Support Plans and Risk Assessments also include information relating to students' sensory needs. These plans describe sensory experiences which students enjoy and experiences which they may find challenging, particularly when they need to regulate.

Sensory Profiles provide a summary of sensory processing difficulties that student's present with, alongside examples of personalised strategies and, where applicable, sensory diet principles written by the Occupational Therapist to provide specific advice. Students play an active role in the development of their sensory profiles and within Year 7 the school's OT delivers the Alert programme. The programme places an emphasis on students exploring their sensory preferences and aversions and at the end of the programme students will have created a personalised sensory profile. Examples of sensory strategies were seen to be used to good effect during the period of assessment and examples included provision of purposeful movement breaks and use of in class sensory areas and strategies such as the use of adapted seating, chewy sticks, ear defenders and fidgets.

Sensory Assessments enable the school to gather information on the challenges each student may encounter in regulating sensory experiences and allow staff to identify those sensory activities which provide them with positive feedback. Sensory Profiles record the approaches and/or tools which should be employed to help autistic students to regulate sensory experiences or avoid sensory overload. For some autistic students plans include agreed strategies and approaches that staff need to use such as the Zones of Regulation and the Alert Programme.

The school have invested in a range of sensory areas across school and students have access to in-class regulation areas, outside sensory equipment, soft play and sensory rooms. During interviews, staff discussed the specific intent of the areas and how they have been developed alongside the school's OT to ensure a consistent approach.

In interviews, staff gave examples of how they have supported autistic students in their sensory regulation or in avoiding sensory overload and a number of positive outcomes achieved as a result. Staff particularly highlighted the positive outcomes achieved by students taking ownership of their regulation and the increased use of language associated with regulating and being ready to learn.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Within all observations, students had access to sensory activities which they appeared to find enjoyable or relaxing. Students were observed accessing fidgets, adaptive seating, ear defenders and other sensory tools as part of regulation. Where appropriate, staff planned opportunities into lessons to enable students to explore their sensory preferences. During observations, there is a graduated response as students moved through school, with students within Sixth form accessing more regulation as part of walks or time outs. To further develop practice, in a small number of observations, staff should reflect on the language used when supporting students to regulate, encouraging them to take ownership and identify their own regulation tools, rather than being directed by staff.

Within all observation, students were supported to tolerate a range of sensory experiences within a safe and secure context. Careful consideration has been given to the school's environment to ensure that it is low arousal and visually structured, and during the assessment staff shared the progress made in these areas. As well as the low arousal classrooms, students also have access to a number of specialist sensory spaces across school which were well used by staff to support planned or reactive regulation. Students are also supported to reflect on the school's environment and during an observation of the school council, students were reflecting on whether they felt the school needs a bell. As part of the discussion students were considerate to the sensory needs of their classmates and made decisions based around student's needs.

Within all observations, students were supported to regulate sensory experiences which could interfere with what they are trying to do or cause them discomfort. Within lessons, students had access to ear defenders, individual work stations and staff used low arousal teaching approaches. Where particularly good practice was observed, where individual workstations were in place, staff gave students the options to complete their work at their individual desk, at a group desk or at a workstation.



Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

One-page profiles, Sensory profiles and Learning Support Plans show an appreciation of activities which each student finds enjoyable, for example One Page Profiles describe individuals' likes and activities they enjoy to participate in.

Learning Support Plans are developed for all students to identify their key proactive, active and reactive support needs. The plans are written in clear and concise language and provide an overview of the aims of the plan, triggers, the function/reason for the behaviour and strategies of support. Examples of positive and proactive strategies of support include:

- Use of quiet spaces
- Use of sensory resources
- Redirection to a preferred activity

The school's assistant head regularly analyses behaviour to identify trends and staff are able to refer for additional support as required. EHCP and AET review documentation includes clear references to the individual strengths and progress made for each student in terms of their social, emotional and mental health. During interviews, staff discussed how the AET progression framework is used to inform short-term goals, linked to the long term EHCP outcomes in Social, Emotional Mental Health.

During discussions, staff shared how the school's curriculum aims to provide students with meaningful life experiences and work experience placements which provide 'real life' opportunities for students to work towards achieving their personal goals and aspirations. Staff also discussed the focus on positive outcomes in terms of quality of life and life opportunities, including some students accessing offsite provision as part of their weekly timetable.

Individual plans of support and visual schedules evidenced the breadth of access to, and inclusion within, community activities. Risk Assessments take in to account identified risks for each student and link them directly to Learning Support Plans. Staff discussed their positive approach to community access to enable students to practise and generalise skills learnt within school, so that they are not just happening in isolation.

In interviews, staff gave examples of how autistic students have been supported that resulted in positive outcomes in terms of increased quality of life and life opportunities. Staff gave examples of how students have developed greater inclusion and involvement within the community as a result of them gaining confidence through the school's curriculum. Staff also shared examples of students accessing paid employment and relevant qualifications based on their aspirations, which is also evidenced with a case study found in the appendix of this report.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

Within all observations, autistic students presented as feeling safe and calm. Where appropriate, staff supported students through proactive and preventative strategies which appeared to support students to avoid anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring or escalating. Restrictive practices were not observed but staff discussed how these are only used as a last resort, under the strictest controls and extreme circumstances.

Within the majority of observations, students were supported to understand and regulate their emotions. Within lessons, students have access to strategies and displays which support them to identify self-regulation activities or tools. Where appropriate, staff used a range of visual strategies within the classroom which allowed students to communicate their emotions. Where practice could be further developed, staff should reflect on how students can discretely identify their emotions within the subject specific classroom; this may be through a universal discrete visual system on the desks.

Across all observations, students were treated with dignity, status and respect and were provided with meaningful positive feedback which appeared to boost confidence and self-esteem. Staff and students have clearly developed positive relationships which was evident in all observations, and where good practice was involved, in all observations, support staff played an active role in sessions

Within all observations, students were observed engaging in meaningful activities which they appeared to find fun or interesting. During interviews, staff discussed how the curriculum delivery is adapted to meet the interests and learning styles of each class, which was also evidence during the observations within lesson.

Within the majority of observations, students were encouraged to enjoy the challenge of trying out or learning a new activity or skill. Students with KS3 were supported to learn through practical lessons, whereas students in Sixth Form were challenged in their development of key functional life skills within the community.

Within all observations, students were supported to achieve a sense of completion and achievement, which was reinforced through positive feedback from staff and their peers as part of individual or group sessions. Within some of the more formal classes, students were supported to self-reflect on their progress and identify their next steps, whilst in some of the more semi-formal sessions, staff provided specific positive feedback to students on the completion of tasks.

Feedback from Autistic People

In interviews, staff described how autistic students are actively engaged in determining how they are supported; what activities they take part in and what goals they are working towards according to what is appropriate for their age and capacity. During interviews, staff discussed how each student chooses their own staff advocate who is available to offer advice and support, as well as acting as an advocate for their wishes during reviews and discussions with staff and family members.

During interviews, staff described how student voice is often gathered through a range of different approaches, based on the identified needs of the students. Staff emphasised the importance of student voice and shared how it is gathered prior to reviews and meetings to ensure that their views are including in any key decisions.

Staff shared evidence of the variety of ways student voice is collected throughout the year and during the assessment, the assessment team attended a school council meeting. During the meeting, which is hosted by Sixth Form students, students had the opportunity to share their views on a number of topics, including whether the students wanted a school bell.

Feedback from autistic students, which was obtained from 90 completed surveys, (78 of which were completed independently by the students) shows that;

- 75% feel that the support they are given is good, with 23% answering that it is sometimes good.
- 71% feel that staff understand me and my needs, with 25% answering that this was sometimes the case.
- 71% feel that staff listen to me on how I want to be helped, with 28% answering that this was sometimes the case.

23 students left a comment on the completed questionnaire, a selection of which are found below;

- Think the school is cool. I enjoy school. Education good.
- the staff listen to me and i am supported by staff who i can talk to when i need it
- the school is good.
- Depends on situation
- I put sometimes because I'm not sure.
- I feel as if my needs are not being met due to other people taking priority.

Feedback from Families, Carers and/or Advocates

In interviews, staff described how families, carers or advocates are supported and involved where appropriate to do so. The school have a range of mediums which families can use to communicate with the school; including phone calls, texts, emails and Arbour. The school's Family Support Worker and Deputy Family Support Worker regularly contact some hard to reach parents, offering home visits or additional meetings within the community. During a discussion, the Deputy family support shared examples of the support which has been offered for some hard to reach families, including support and guidance and supporting them to re-build bridges and positive relationships with social care.

During the assessment the school's Family Support Worker shared a range of coffee mornings/training opportunities which are regularly hosted at the school and within the community for family members, including parental workshops around a range of key approaches. Staff discussed how the trainings are based around the current identified needs of families and have previously included training in sensory, communication, e-safety and sleep.

The school host an annual 'Introduction to Understanding Autism Course' which supports families through four practical sessions. During the assessment staff shared the information on the website which is in place to support families, signposting them to services within the community and schemes to support with the cost of living.

One parent governor met with the assessment team during the assessment to discuss the progress made by their child at the school. The school effectively work collaboratively with families to ensure they are consistent in their approach. Family members feel confident in the school and the differentiated support available to the students.

Feedback from family members, which was obtained through 83 completed surveys, shows that;

- 98% of family members feel the support given to their relative is mostly (10%) or always good (88%).
- 95% of family member feel staff's understanding of their relatives' needs is good (11%) or always good (84%).
- 93% of family members feel the way they are kept informed and asked about their views is mostly good (18%) or always good (75%), with one parent identifying that they felt that this was poor.
- 96% of families feel the advice they receive from the school is mostly good (23%) or always good (73%).

38 family members left an additional comment as part of the questionnaire. The high response of positive comments left on the questionnaires by families evidences the significant positive impact that the school has had on the lives of students. Some responses included;

- The school has supported my son in the best way possible for his academic and social communications needed.
- The help and support my son is given is excellent we couldn't ask for more
- They really understand my child's needs. They work with me to help my child develop and grow.
- Presfield is a fantastic school that places the well-being of pupils at the heart of everything it does. I have been so impressed by their use of sensory circuits and their highly personalised approach to each child.
- Presfield school is amazing they have gone above and beyond with my so. Would recommend the school to everyone.

Summary of the Assessment

Topic	What the provision does particularly well	Development
<p>Social Communication, Interactions and Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly communication lessons provide opportunities for students to practise and develop key social, employability and self-advocacy skills. - Where particularly good practice was observed, in all observations, staff referenced the universal set of visual social rules, linking them to specific tasks or opportunities within the lesson. - Within all observation's students were able to communicate effectively with staff and their peers during group work, question and answer sessions and community-based sessions. - During all observations, staff planned time for students to work collaboratively with their peers during formal learning tasks, play and as part of trips into the community. Where particularly good practice was observed, during a school council meeting, students were provided with opportunity and purpose to communicate with their peers, with discussions being led and facilitated by Sixth form students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the ongoing changes to the school's cohort, continue to upskill and provide CPD opportunities for staff in a range of communication approaches.
<p>Functional Skills and Self-Reliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through the curriculum the school place an emphasis on students developing skills through experiences and regularly planned community-based sessions. The school also have an onsite house which is regularly used for sleep overs and life-skills sessions, offering students an authentic experience. - Across all observations staff used a consistently formatted Learning objective and whole class first, next, last display which identified the structure and content of the lesson. The consistency in the use of the system was exceptional, with key transitions signposted verbally and visually to students. - Staff's awareness of processing time further reinforces the low arousal and calm environment and evidences staff being in-tuned to the needs of the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to develop the resources linked to the immersive room to further support students prior to experiencing new environments.

<p>Sensory Experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students play an active role in the development of their sensory profiles and within Year 7 the school's OT delivers the Alert programme. The programme places an emphasis on students exploring their sensory preferences and aversions and at the end of the programme students will have created a personalised sensory profile. - Within all observations, students had access to sensory activities which they appeared to find enjoyable or relaxing. - Within all observation, students were supported to tolerate a range of sensory experiences within a safe and secure context. Careful consideration has been given to the school's environment to ensure that it is low arousal and visually structured. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although staff regularly and effectively supported students through co-regulation, there were missed opportunities to reference the Zones of Regulation or the Alert programme to promote independent self-regulation, or to support students to independently access preferred sensory activities.
<p>Emotional Wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are supported to access paid employment and relevant qualifications, based on their long-term aspirations. - Within all observations, autistic students presented as feeling safe and calm. Where appropriate, staff supported students through proactive and preventative strategies which appeared to support students to avoid anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring or escalating. - Within all observations, students were observed engaging in meaningful activities which they appeared to find fun or interesting. - Staff and students have clearly developed positive relationships which was evident in all observations, and where good practice was involved, in all observations, support staff played an active role in sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where practice could be further developed, staff should reflect on how students can discretely identify their emotions within the subject specific classroom; this may be through a universal discrete visual system on the desks.
<p>Feedback from Autistic People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The schools advocate system ensures that students are supported to communicate their views through a trusted and familiar staff member of their choosing. - The school council, which is managed by Sixth Form students, provides a forum for students to share their views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to refine the systems which enable students to gather their own evidence and reflect on their progress made towards their AET and EHCP targets.

<p>Families, Carers and/or Advocates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coffee mornings are regularly hosted at the school or within the community and are informed by parents. - The annual 'Introduction to Understanding Autism Course' supports families in their understanding of autism through four practical sessions. - The school effectively works collaboratively with families to ensure there is a consistent approach between home and school. Family members feel confident in the school and the differentiated support available to the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although 96% of families feel the advice they receive from the school is mostly good (23%) or always good (73%), this is the lowest score from the survey. Staff should reflect on how they share the training and advice sessions with families to ensure they know all of the support which is available to them.
<p>Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The headteacher's hands-on and positive approach is appreciated by families, staff and the students themselves. • The school invests in their staff by providing a large number of CPD opportunities delivered by specialist staff. During interviews, staff discussed the effectiveness of the school's CPD programme, informing practice and empowering staff through practical support. • The school's destination-focused curriculum places emphasis on students developing skills in independence, social communication and Understanding Self. 	



The Autism Accreditation Committee have great delight in confirming that the school meets the criteria for an Advanced specialist Award

The Committee found evidence from the Accreditation report that the provision met the following standards to a high level of quality and consistency.

- Staff have a working knowledge of evidence-informed approaches associated with good autism practice.
- They can adapt these specialist approaches so that support is personal-centred and tailored to individual abilities, interests, preferences and challenges.
- Adaptions are made to the environment to support individual well-being and self-reliance.
- Each autistic young person develops skills and confidence in communicating with others and engaging in a range of rewarding social activities.
- Each autistic young person develops skills and confident in carrying out tasks independently and in being empowered to make their own leading to them having greater control and self-autonomy in their lives.
- Each autistic young person enjoys an increasing range of sensory experiences whilst developing regulation strategies to help them avoid sensory overload.
- Support enables autistic people to take part in activities which are purposeful and engaging and which promotes their emotional well-being and social inclusion.
- Proactive and preventative strategies are employed to help each autistic young person avoid anxiety or distress and to help them understand and regulate their emotions.
- Feedback from autistic young people and their parents/carers who took part in a confidential survey was overall positive.

Several strengths are identified in the assessment report. Some areas of development are also highlighted. The Committee stress the importance of continuing to upskill and provide CPD opportunities for staff in a range of communication approaches to reflect a changing cohort. The Committee also recommend that the school continue to develop strategies to enable autistic young people to self-regulate their emotions and sensory input.

However the Committee consider that these areas do not detract from the overall high quality of practice within the school. Congratulations again for demonstrating standards of excellence in supporting autistic people.

What happens next

Once you have agreed terms and conditions you can expect to receive your certificate and logo. You can continue with your current Autism Accreditation plan or amend it by increasing or reducing the number of consultation visits. Please contact your consultant to discuss your options.

We recommend that you undergo another assessment in three years' time to show that you have maintained standards of excellent and to highlight new initiatives and developments. You can though request an earlier reassessment.

As an Advanced Service you can now apply for Beacon Status. This is awarded to provisions which in addition to providing consistent high quality support to autistic people, share their knowledge and understanding of good practice with families, external professionals and the local community.

Applying for Beacon Status

Application forms can be obtained from your consultant and should be returned to the Autism Accreditation Quality Manager at Stephen.dedridge@nas.org.uk.

The Panel can award Beacon status if the application form provides clear evidence that the provision carries out exceptional work that has had a significant impact on how:

- families understand relatives who are autistic.
- other professionals understand and respond to autistic people, including helping them to appreciate the personal experiences of autistic people.
- the local community or members of the public understand and respond to autistic people and which promotes the social inclusion of autistic people.

The application form should also explain how the provision works in partnership with autistic people and can provide details of awards or other examples of external recognition.

Beacon status will be withheld if the provision requires improvement in meeting statutory requirements.