



AUTISM ACCREDITATION PEER REVIEW

SERVICE REVIEWED: Stanley School

DATES OF REVIEW: 8-10 March 2016

**TEAM MEMBERS: Francine Brower
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OVERVIEW OF PROVISION

Stanley School is a large local authority generic special school for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, Complex Needs and Autism. There are 108 children on role with 50 children on the autism spectrum and others undergoing assessment. Some pupils with ASC are taught in discrete classes while others are within mixed groups in the main body of the school.

Since the last review, following the retirement of the Headteacher, the school has appointed a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. In 2014 the school successfully moved into a new building that shares a site with a mainstream school. The building is purpose built with specialist areas for group and individual work. (See area of strength below). The school is currently in the process of building two new classrooms and will move to 120 places on completion of this work, Stanley School is located with a mainstream primary school under one roof. The schools work closely together to provide integration opportunities and share some facilities. The Deputy Headteacher of Stanley School has provided training for mainstream colleagues and this has been well received.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Observations

The team observed **25** sessions in both discrete and mixed groups. Observations included areas of the curriculum, sensory, transition into school, Learning Outside the Classroom (LOT), lunch integration, lunchtime French Club, swimming and an after school club. Incidental observations occurred across the school day and the staff team welcomed the review team to drop in to sessions unannounced.

Interviews and Discussions

Meetings were held with:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- LOTC Coordinator
- Parents
- Communication Coordinator
- Sensory Coordinator and Data Analyst (teacher)
- SLEUTH Coordinator (Behaviour)
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist

Documentation

The review team also reviewed a range of documents including:

- ASD Policy
- Communication Policy
- IEPs
- Planning and Assessment Policy
- Managing Behaviour and Bullying Policy
- Transition Policy
- Sensory Issues Policy
- Sensory Profiles
- Sensory Guidance Cards
- Sensory Programmes for in Class Support
- Classroom Sensory Observations
- Curriculum Overview
- PSHE Policy
- Working with Parents Document
- Parents Practical Solutions Sheets
- Transition Book and Welcome to Stanley School
- Stanley School Prospectus
- School Improvement Plan 2015-16

KEY FINDINGS

As a result of this process, the following areas were identified as examples of what the service does well.

Specific areas of strength	Reasoning
<p>Core Standard 7 – Individual Plans Specialist Standard 2 – Teaching/Learning – Curriculum</p> <p>The review team consider a specific area of strength to be appropriate planning for identified children to have their needs met through the innovative Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC) programme and the way in which this is contributing to their overall wellbeing.</p>	<p>Recognising the very specific needs of some of the children within the school a member of staff undertook work related to Learning Outside the Classroom as her MA dissertation. A PowerPoint presentation of this research outlines the various activities and venues that are used and provides statistics on the behaviours exhibited within the class base and outdoor environment, Analysis shows the progress made by pupils over time. Each of these sessions begins with a PowerPoint about the venue to be visited – PowerPoints have been developed for all venues. LOTC supports communication, sensory, independence, interaction with others, and provides personalised learning. Following the visits pupils produce work in relation to the visit including linked activities such as recognising shape in the environment and then in resources at school. Various areas of the curriculum are covered including, maths, science, geography and physical education. There are now two classes participating in this programme and in addition to the evidence provided by staff, parents spoke very highly of the way in which it is supporting their children. They attribute the ability to take their children to public places to the opportunities provided through LOTC and the skills the pupils learn from these experiences.</p>
<p>Specialist Standard 1 – School Accommodation and Resources</p> <p>The excellent physical environment provided through the new school building (2014) including the spacious well appointed classrooms, specialist rooms and colocation with Pensby (mainstream) Primary School, enabling opportunities for integration, is recognised as an area of specific strength.</p>	<p>Stanley School benefits from excellent accommodation in a new school building, sharing its site with a mainstream school that provides integration opportunities for a wide range of pupils. The spacious accommodation with large classrooms incorporating quiet and sensory rooms, a learning wall with built in floor to ceiling cupboards and the generous storage rooms make the environment very appropriate to meet the needs of the children. Each classroom has access to outdoor play providing for scheduled breaks and space for children who need exercise breaks throughout the day.</p> <p>A wide range of specialist rooms are provided within the school. This includes, sensory room, soft play, very well resourced ICT room, Food Technology, large hall/dining, parents’ room and wide corridors enhanced by uniform blue seating at intervals. The space is further extended through the use of areas within the attached mainstream school and the integration opportunities it provides.</p> <p>Careful consideration has been given to adapting the environment to better provide for sensory needs. For example, the corridor ceiling was very high resulting in echoes. This has been lowered to provide a more acoustically friendly environment.</p>

<p><u>Specialist Standard 2 – Teaching/Learning - Curriculum</u> <u>Specialist Standard 4 – Teaching/Learning – Session Organisation and Resources</u></p> <p>The use of technology throughout the school along with the work being done to support the development of ICT through discrete lessons in a dedicated ICT room, including the high standard of planning, organisation and visual support to pupils is seen to be an area of specific strength.</p>	<p>The school has a fulltime ICT coordinator who takes groups of children to develop their skills and independence in this area. The dedicated space is very well resourced with a wide range of motivating resources including a 3D printer, switches to activate a range of sounds and iPads for individual use. These resources support focus on the skills being taught through ‘working for’ attached to a timer showing the visual passage of time during 1:1 support. Whilst one child was being introduced to the skills through clear visual instructions, three other children engaged independently in a range of motivating technology. The record keeping is detailed and well maintained and the scrap books provided for each child demonstrate participation and progress through photographs and text.</p> <p>Observations within classrooms also demonstrated very good use of the Smart boards in providing motivating sessions that engaged pupils in the topics. In one such lesson the touch screen was used to unveil a range of foods that were available for tasting. In other sessions out of school activities were revisited through slide shows.</p>
<p>Core Standard 13 – Family and Support Links</p> <p>The school’s support for parents and the parent-to-parent support offered from Stanley School is considered by the review team to be an area of strength,</p>	<p>The returned parent questionnaires demonstrate the confidence parents have in the support they receive from the staff team of Stanley School. In addition to this evidence the review team had the opportunity to interview parents and listen to their stories. The confidence they have in the school, the support they have received over a number of years and the progress they have seen in their children is a credit to the school. In addition to the many examples of how the school has been a ‘life saver’ during difficult times, the parents have regular parent groups that either meet at the school or in a Wirral café to ensure the opportunities are accessible. Parents have an online chat forum to communicate with each other and share support.</p> <p>A Working with Parents document explains initial and day-to-day contact, school details such as the role of the school nurse, parents group, workshops the Parent Teacher Association, special occasions and events. This is supplemented by the well produced newsletter.</p> <p>The Personal, Social and Health Education Policy states aims under three core themes – Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. It acknowledges the importance of working with parents/carers as key partners.</p> <p>Information sheets are provided for parents including practical solutions for clothing issues, baths and showers, hair washing, brushing, and cutting, heavy work, movement and touch.</p>

The following actions were also identified for the service to work on:

Actions for development	Reasoning
<p><u>Core Standard 15 – Sensory Issues</u></p> <p>Stanley School recognises the sensory needs of children with autism and the impact of appropriate support. The ongoing development of sensory issues is considered an action for development.</p>	<p>Whilst sensory issues are acknowledged across the school and provided for in many respects this was observed to be staff initiated in most contexts. The provision of individual sensory diets focusing on enabling pupils to recognise their heightened anxiety and to self-regulate through introducing relevant resources and visuals would encourage pupils to initiate/request favoured choices and activities, e.g. relaxing sensory resources, activity break, massage, bear hug jackets, quiet withdrawal, etc.</p> <p>Stanley School has a Sensory Manager who supports staff and works with individuals and small groups of children. Training in sensory processing has been provided for all staff and a number of staff have accessed workshops in this area. A well equipped sensory room has equipment provided by the OT service. However, it was felt that without the expertise of an Occupational Therapist who has an understanding of sensory processing and the time to capacity build within the school, there are missed opportunities for maximising the support to children.</p>
<p><u>Core Standard 10 Communication</u></p> <p>An action for development is to maximise every opportunity for pupil communication throughout the day. This includes focussing on the principles of PECS and progress through the stages, enabling children to gain independence in having their needs met through initiating communication with others. In addition to using snack time as an opportunity for exchanges this should be broadened to include activities throughout the day within the classroom, lunchtime and play.</p>	<p>Whilst PECS was seen to be used in the classrooms and the use of Proloquo2go further enables communication, the review team suggest that this be developed to include playtime activities by providing visuals within the play areas outside. This will support the development of communication, help to generalise the use of PECS and support turn-taking and waiting for popular pieces of equipment</p> <p>The previous review report advised development of PECS throughout the curriculum. School have chosen to use iPads with Proloquo2go to motivate pupils to make choices. Where these were seen to be used they were indeed effective and motivating for pupils. The review team recommends that school give consideration that some pupils may benefit from a PECS approach to develop their functional communication. PECS is more spontaneous, does not require turn-taking and is a more low-tech, accessible approach for pupils to use at home and in school, ensuring consistency and generalisation of the communication skill. Children for whom the “exchange” part of communication is important would therefore benefit from a PECS approach. The communication co-ordinator is hoping to access Pyramid PECS training. The review team would support this as it would help to clarify the difference between the communication approaches as well as explaining the theory and practice of the PECS approach. PECS style choice boards were seen at snack time in EYFS where pupils were offered the board with up to 3 photographs when it was their turn. PECS targets were displayed and pupils were recorded at stage 1 but were able to choose from 3 photos. The review team suggest revisiting the PECS targets with a view to considering the introduction of individual PECS books for some pupils for whom it will be a primary home/school means of communication.</p>

	<p>Choice boards were used effectively at snack time, to choose activities during Learning Outside The Classroom (LOT) and for pupils to choose a reward to work towards. In the EYFS it was felt that visuals would be advantageous during outdoor play so that pupils could make choices of outdoor equipment. This would enhance the choice making opportunities for pupils as pictures of equipment and activities are already available on the cupboard doors inside some of the classrooms.</p>
<p><u>Specialist Standard 4 – Teaching/Learning – Session Organisation and Resources</u> <u>Specialist Standard 5 – Teaching/Learning – Methods</u></p> <p>An area to work towards is to review the use of TEACCH across the school with an emphasis on preparing children for the future through consistent use of personal timetables and schedules, visual structure and the development of independent work systems across environments.</p>	<p>Although members of the current staff team have been TEACCH trained in the past, the review team saw little evidence of structure that assisted children to self-organise and follow work systems to develop independence in sessions. Recognising that this programme can benefit children from early years through to adulthood and provides a structure to enhance confidence and independence, the review team suggest that a key member(s) of staff has opportunities to attend TEACCH training and Advanced TEACCH to rekindle its use across the school.</p>

PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Action taken to address recommendation
Although there were no recommendations from the previous review the following areas for development were endorsed by the panel.	
<p>Core Standard 10: Communication The review team suggest that the way in which PECS is currently being used is reviewed with a view to extending this. A suggested aim could be to ensure that PECS sentence strips or books are part of the resources for each curriculum area and that termly PECS targets are set for each pupil for whom the approach is relevant.</p>	See action for development above.
<p>Core Standard 15: Sensory Issues The review team identifies a potential area of development to be for the sensory team to devise a method of measuring the impact of the sessions they are delivering on pupils and on classes and secondly to give written guidance to classes as to modifications which could be made within the classroom for the pupil in order for them to better manage their sensory needs.</p>	<p>A report entitled 'Quantifying the Impact of Sensory Provision within Stanley School' analyses two comparative pupil profiles, considering the change in reduction of anxiety over the time between the two profiles. The report provides information on anxiety scores in the areas of eye contact, food, hearing, movement, smell, touch, and visual systems. The information is presented in graphs and demonstrates reduced anxiety for each pupil in the cohort with varying levels of reduction.</p> <p>Staff continue to work closely together to monitor the impact of sensory programmes. Please see action for development related to sensory issues.</p>
<p>Core Standard 14: Transition The review team suggest that the successful transition of pupils into the new school environment is a potential area of development.</p>	<p>The staff team worked closely with parents/carers and pupils to enable a smooth transition to the new school. Staff confirmed that the children adapted well to the new environment and that they are comfortable within it. The review team can confirm that children across the school are well settled and comfortable within the school.</p> <p>In conversation with parents they also reported that staff worked hard to support the transition to the new school including visits to the site to watch its development and photographs to follow progress.</p>

FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE SCORES

<i>SCORES</i>					
<i>Number of Questionnaires sent out (information provided by the service):</i>					50
<i>Number of Questionnaires returned:</i>					15
<i>Number of sections not scored (figures only reflect sections scored):</i>					
	<i>VERY UNHAPPY</i>	<i>UNHAPPY</i>	<i>SATISFIED</i>	<i>HAPPY</i>	<i>VERY HAPPY</i>
<i>Contact</i>				4	11
<i>Support</i>				3	12
<i>Advice</i>				3	12
<i>Involvement</i>			1	6	8
TOTALS	0	0	1	16	43
PERCENTAGES	0%	0%	1.7%	26.7%	71.6%

All responses to the questionnaires were positive across all four areas.

Contact:

Staff are always available to discuss any issues

We have a chat book as my son is non verbal

Excellent communication every day in the chat book, also phone calls and when necessary meetings with the teacher and Headteacher

They let me know what my son has done every day and how he is. If there is anything wrong they ring me

Regular parent evenings to discuss progress

We have a pupil diary between parent and school which is a vital part of communicating

Support:

- The staff across the whole school are phenomenal. They really do know the children and are always looking for ways to help them
- My son is very happy at school. He loves being there.
- Since being at Stanley he is reaching his full potential.
- They work with me with issues that need working on. If there are more serious issues I can go and see them.
- Excellent support by extremely knowledgeable and helpful staff
- My son has been at the school since July and the improvements are amazing. I feel there is full support for my son.
- Couldn't be happier with the schooling my son gets.
- My son is so happy going to school. I couldn't thank them enough and I'm beginning to see big changes in him for the better.

Advice:

- Meetings are regular and well informed
- The school nurse is very positive
- We have workshop meetings and they phone if anything needs to be discussed
- Very well in support to advise us when needed
- We all work together putting ideas in and supporting each other
- I often ring and speak to his teacher if I need to discuss things
- Always advise if having problems and provide support and help
- I feel full support from Stanley School
- I feel the school gives me full support and the school nurse is amazing

Involvement:

- Sometimes I find that my son has done something marvellous in class and I wish I'd known at the time.
- We are kept informed about how my son has done in school and out in the community
- We are involved every day when necessary, about his moods

- Our son is on a timetable for LOTC so we have a timetable of what he does in the morning. We are always informed of what he does in the afternoon. They have sent photos of all of the locations to support him and we are in contact daily.
- I can go in and see them whenever I want if I need extra help
- Reading book – but only in preschool class
- I always feel like I am involved and have done from the start, all I will say is I think this school is amazing!
- We get lots of photos of what the children do in the day which is great as our son doesn't speak yet.

OBSERVATION SCORES (25)

Topic	Not Met	Partially Met	Majority Met	Fully Met
Differences in Social Communication	0	5	8	12
Self-reliance and Problem Solving	0	3	7	15
Sensory Experiences	0	2	4	19
Emotional Well-being	0	1	6	18
TOTAL	0	11	25	64
PERCENTAGE	0%	11%	25%	64%

Throughout observations there was evidence to demonstrate that the Stanley School team are committed to and passionate about their support for the children in their care. The positive school ethos permeates through all settings across the day. A wide range of sessions were observed and pupils were enabled to participate and engage in well planned lessons. The physical environment provides spacious accommodation and specialist areas that enhance the opportunities available for pupils. Resources were seen to be of high quality and thoughtfully chosen/developed for the needs of the children. Behaviour is skilfully managed and the calm demeanour of staff along with respect for each individual ensures that children are supported during times of anxiety.

FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATIONS

Topic	Comments
Differences in Social Communication	All Stanley School pupils have a Pen Portrait providing a brief description of their diagnosis, learning, communication and behaviour needs and used to give new staff and visitors an overview of the pupils in each class. An in-depth communication policy from 2011 contains practice guidelines and theory of different speech and language therapy and interaction approaches is due to be rewritten in a more concise format by the teacher with responsibility for communication. Revisiting the communication policy is part of her whole school action plan alongside the development of "Communication Passports" for each pupil. The review team would support both of these actions as well as the audit of visual support used in school for both receptive and expressive communication.

Stanley School has one day per week Speech and Language Therapy support provided by the NHS. This time includes dysphagia work and EHCP advice. The time for training and development of whole school communication strategies is therefore limited and she works in a consultative way liaising with the communication co-coordinator via email. She provides observation and advice if requested by school to meet a specific need. The SaLT does not have official PECS training and this goes some way to explain the current observed mismatch of PECS theory and practice.

A variety of "Total Communication" approaches were observed including the use of differentiated verbal language, signing, use of Proloquo2go on the iPad, visual timelines, "I am working for" cards and some PECS within structured activities.

Visual support is used to different levels based on the ability of the pupils. Where pupils are verbal and working at a higher cognitive level there is visual support in the form of timelines, job lists, behaviour strategies and active listening cues. Pupils are given verbal instructions and the support is sometimes there to reinforce the words. In the EYFS classes there are large photographic visuals to signal activities e.g. snack time. Most classes have one group timetable. There are visuals for pupils to request a short break or to ask for help but these were not observed to be used by pupils on a regular basis. In the main the review team observed that short breaks and other withdrawal strategies were adult directed by staff who know the pupils well and anticipate their needs. Working to develop the spontaneity of pupils is recognised as an action for development. One class used photographic visuals to enable a pupil to identify a classmate, find the right plate and cup and take them to the right person. In some observations the review team observed high levels of verbal language where it was felt that less verbal and more visual would have better met the needs of the pupils. During LOTC "Stop and Go" visuals were used very effectively for pupils to know when they were allowed to go ahead onto the next part of the walk and when they needed to stop and wait for everyone to be together. Timers were used to great effect to count down to the end of a preferred activity. An further example of communication strategies being used to great effect was during the ICT lesson where visual support was used throughout to promote participation in the lesson, turn-taking and independent completion of tasks. This good practice provides models for development across the school.

Social integration was seen between classes during integrated lunchtimes, French Club and After School Club. Positive interactions between staff and pupils and between pupils were apparent throughout the observations. Opportunities for pupils to play games together with support proved successful and the children were seen to be having lots of fun.

Pupils at Stanley school benefit immensely from integration opportunities with the co-located Pensby Primary school. There is a TA3 integration co-ordinator who works with the Deputy Headteacher and class teachers to identify pupils suitable for integration opportunities. This support was seen to be particularly effective during a year 5 science lesson in Pensby. 2 pupils joined the class of 36 mainstream children. They participated in a group discussion and experiment using marbles to investigate the properties of craters. At present 20 children are accessing integration opportunities with positive results. 50% of the pupils who undertook integration opportunities last year accessed MLD provision as opposed to going to SLD secondary school.

The review team observed social integration opportunities at lunchtime in two different ways. Some of the older Stanley School pupils accessed their lunch in the busy mainstream dinner hall. The pupils were able to line up, collect their lunch and find a place to sit with the mainstream pupils. There were some "where will I sit?" moments for a couple of pupils but with time they both coped well and managed to sit and eat their lunch. The other lunchtime opportunity was where the whole school had dinner in the hall and were joined by some pupils from Pensby School. This is usually done on Fridays but the school wanted the review team to observe the session.

	<p>With a high level of staff support most of the pupils coped very well and the whole event passed calmly. It was good to see pupils who normally eat their lunch in their own classrooms coming together. Lunchtime is an area where the review team feel that PECS or choice-making could be developed on a relatively simple level – hot dinner or sandwich? /yoghurt or fruit?</p>
<p>Self-reliance and Problem Solving</p>	<p>Staff adopt a calm, “hands off” approach. Where possible and safe pupils are encouraged to walk on their own or with a peer. Pupils are given jobs to do such as fetch the milk or take the register. The school is a safe environment and some pupils are able to do errands unescorted.</p> <p>During integrated lunchtimes pupils were supervised from a distance with only the occasional prompt from vigilant staff. This allowed them to independently line up, request lunch, find a seat and socialise with mainstream peers. The school’s integration programme helps pupils to work on their self-reliance and independence skills. During a year 5 science lesson 2 pupils from Stanley school were able to participate with discreet and sensitive support from their TA.</p> <p>The LOTC sessions provide an excellent opportunity for pupils to problem solve and to practice independence and social skills. Two classes of pupils who are hard to engage within the classroom setting are taken every morning to participate in outdoor activity. Each day of the week has a different focus and destination but the main routine remains the same. This activity takes place rain or shine and school prioritises resources and staffing to ensure it goes ahead. Pupils are encouraged to walk independently whilst out and staff have worked hard to teach them to listen to verbal instruction and respond to visual prompt. Pupils are trusted to climb up hills and rocks and then down the other side to meet staff. Pupils practice their social skills in choice making at the café. They do themed independent activities using quality resources whilst waiting for their snack and drink. One pupil hosts the choice board and practices his maths skills by remembering how many drinks he needs to give out. The skills practised and displayed during these learning opportunities were put into focus back in the classroom during the afternoon where pupils worked 1:1 on their maths skills to follow up the morning’s learning. Pupils were seen to need frequent breaks interspersed with short work activities. The pupils’ needs for such intensive support were not as apparent during the freedom and motivation of the outdoor curriculum and whilst outdoors, pupils were enabled to show skills which are inhibited within the classroom setting. Staff report that pupils’ focus is much improved in the afternoon session following a morning of LOTC. Parents report that they are now able to take their children to public places with more confidence and one family reports that they were able to take their first holiday as a result of skills developed during LOTC sessions.</p> <p>During an ICT session extensive visual support enabled pupils to participate in activities independently. They were able to follow visual instructions, choose an activity to work towards and operate a timer to count down the time until the activity was available. Pupils were so familiar with the routine that they were able to take part with little or no prompting. At the end of the session, through the use of symbol and oversized sand timer, pupils tidied up and lined up at the door without activity willingly in spite of the session being enjoyable and motivating.</p> <p>Independence of pupils is given high priority. However the review team feel this could be enhanced by working on the development of expressive communication for pre-verbal pupils and those pupils for whom speaking is a challenge. The use of PECS, communication books or other AAC would enable these pupils to develop functional and spontaneous communication and so not be as reliant on the adult to make suggestions. An example of this was observed where an adult suggested that a pupil bounced on</p>

	<p>a therapy ball, knowing that he liked to do this. The pupil did so unenthusiastically and then touched a nearby drum. The adult then realised that he wanted the drum and gave him this. Had the pupil been able to use the PECS system or a choice board he would have been 'in charge' of his resources. Choice making activities within structured sessions are well-established but opportunities for pupils to make requests and needs known outside of these times would in turn increase independence, allow them to make their own decisions and minimise the need for staff prompts.</p> <p>The use of "in-task" schedules and individual pupil schedules would also increase pupil independence. Pupils could then be less reliant on adult prompts or verbal instruction, instead taking their cues from the visuals. This would also clarify how many tasks the child needs to complete before finishing work and getting a reward, This would complement the "I am working for" system. Using TEACCH style work systems would further promote independence and reduce the need for adult verbal instruction. If pupils can follow a visual schedule and complete work independently they will be more receptive to the introduction of change when it occurs. For instance, a pupil was upset when the integrated lunchtime session was changed from Friday to Wednesday and would not eat any lunch because things were different. A visual schedule and visual preparation with a "Change" or "surprise" symbol may have reduced his anxiety.</p> <p>Following a PE lesson pupils were given time to dress themselves. One child was shown a page on the iPad (Proloquo2go) with symbols of clothes items. This helped him to see what he needed to put on. This was adult initiated. A help picture is available in the classroom on the back of the door and although available for children it is not readily accessible. The review team suggest that "activity strips" containing pictures/symbols of the sequence of getting dressed alongside a "help" card would enhance independence and gradually reduce the need for adult direction.</p>
<p>Sensory Experiences</p>	<p>The school's Sensory Coordinator works to support children as individuals and groups. The sensory room provides a range of equipment to focus on individual needs, including a tunnel, platform swing, peanut balls and ramp. Two sessions were observed within the room, one with a focus on proprioceptive/vestibular needs and the other on gustatory with a group of children being encouraged to accept tactile, smell and taste. During the proprioceptive/vestibular session it appeared that the 2 pupils had free choice of equipment and rather than a sensory circuit they explored and played on their favourites. Through the use of a visual schedule the session would be more focussed and would allow for activities that provide for 'alerting', 'organising' and 'calming'.</p> <p>The Stanley School Sensory Issues Policy provides a description of 'hypo' and 'hyper' in each sensory area along with strategies and ideas, use of sensory rooms and professionals who can help. Examples of problems, such as 'picky' eating and clothing are given possible explanations and ideas to support. The policy is supported by a sensory activities document with ideas and website information for each area.</p> <p>To highlight the senses each day is represented by a colour, scent and music played through the sound system as the children arrive. The colour is displayed on the entrance door and a member of staff on door duty sprays scent into the air.</p>

	<p>Children were seen to use chewies, ball chairs, wobble cushions, fidget box and weighted hug jackets. Pupil profiles outline sensory needs such as exercise breaks and deep massage. Many lessons included sensory components that provided motivating opportunities for children. For example in an early years group the topic on monsters included gel and monster parts in a sturdy well sealed zip lock bag for children to manipulate and organise. In another session with a focus on Holland the pupils were introduced to a variety of foods - cheese, sausage, breads, syrup waffles – and were encouraged to smell and taste each. The presentation through a child touching a flag on the Smart board, a food appearing and then that child sharing that item around the group was very well done.</p> <p>Many staff have attended workshops on sensory issues and all staff attended an INSET presented by Julia Dyer, a specialist physiotherapist and Advanced Sensory Integration Practitioner. An annual Merseyside event has provided further opportunities for sharing good practice and exploring sensory issues.</p> <p>As discussed above, the school has undertaken research on the impact of their sensory support on the behaviour of the children involved. Within one classroom a table offers children a range of resources to encourage self-regulation including, fidget toys and wrist band that are imprinted with 'I'm okay' on one side and 'It's not okay' on the other.</p>
<p>Emotional Well-Being</p>	<p>Careful consideration is given to the appropriate group for each child and the team are flexible if this requires change. An example of this is a child on the autism spectrum grouped within a PMLD class as the quiet classroom environment supports his sensory needs. All staff are trained in positive behaviour management through the 'APPROACH' programme. Throughout the review it was evident that staff understand and adhere to appropriate management techniques and utilise them as necessary. In one session a pupil became distressed and was calmed, offered alternatives and quickly responded. This was in keeping with her behaviour plan.</p> <p>Stanley School has a comprehensive Managing Behaviour and Bullying policy that provides aims, outlines good practice, identifies behaviour management and explains a hierarchy of intervention. Posters throughout the school, with the heading 'Let's Think About Behaviour' alert staff to behaviour being a form of communication and if so for them to consider the communication behind the behaviour and to think about what the child is telling them before they respond. This was seen in practice with staff tuned into what children may want/need if anxiety was demonstrated. Distraction, short breaks, calm voices and choices were offered in response. An on line behaviour recording system. 'SLEUTH' is used to monitor incidents and identify if behaviour is improving. Reports seen during the review demonstrate that</p> <p>In house cover is provided for staff absence to ensure children are being supported by staff with whom they are familiar and to maintain consistency. Throughout the review it was evident that staff both understand and respect the pupils they are working with. The ethos created across the school is calm and affirming, with appropriate rewards and praise being provided in all contexts including greetings as children arrive at school, incidentally along the corridor and within structured sessions. Good humour is used by staff and in some instances this was mirrored by students.</p> <p>A pupil questionnaire was seen by the review team. Questions asked were 'what is the school like for you?', do you find some places too noisy or too busy?', what would make your class a better place to learn?', would you like to take short breaks between lesson?'. The results were then analysed to inform practice.</p>

	<p>Staff routinely treat each child as an individual and demonstrate respect. Differentiation is well planned for, ensuring that sessions are appropriate to meet needs at appropriate levels. Children were seen to be supported in whole group, pairs, small groups and with 1:1 support.</p> <p>Parents are well-supported to recognise differences in social communication and develop behaviour management and communication strategies. During a parent support workshop, suggestions were made and discussed with one parent and the Headteacher, class teacher and school nurse. Parent comments praise the school very highly for its support.</p> <p>Anxiety caused by transition is recognised across the school day, end of year changes and the move from primary to secondary school. The school's Transition Policy defines the processes involved, identifies when extra help may be needed and outlines the information that is exchanged. An end of year checklist seeks to ensure that the protocol is followed and that parents are involved within this. Transition books both introducing the pupils to Stanley School and providing detailed information on the child as they join the school were seen by the review team.</p>
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CONCLUSION

Throughout the review it was evident that Stanley School is committed to providing for the needs of children on the autism spectrum. The findings from observations above demonstrate this through examples of practice within sessions. Each of the identified strengths outlined earlier in this report contribute to the overall complexion of the school. This, coupled with the very positive relationships the staff have with pupils, creates an ethos that respects the children and works to meet their individual and diverse needs.

The school produces very well presented newsletters with multiple photos of children and their activities with each class providing a section telling about what it has done over the half term. Yellow Pupil Record files provide detailed information on the child throughout the time within the school, year on year progress across subjects referenced to P levels. The completed column gives the date when attained. Annual CASPA data reports match targets to results for each individual. The Annual Report provides a commentary on communication, participation in areas of the curriculum, engagement, topics covered and progress made. The Annual review of Statement includes the pupil profile with short and long term aspirations, skills and strengths across cognition and learning, communication and interaction, sensory and physical, and social emotion and mental health.

The comprehensive School Improvement Plan has detailed targets with a focus on the needs of children with autism including extending the use of PECS across the curriculum, further development of sensory, e.g. sensory groups and Sensory Clubs', and development of communication passports. These developments are recognised by the review team as areas to focus on in the coming years.