Comments from the Autism Accreditation

There is a clear focus on expanding and ‘stretching’ pupils’ vocabulary, and strengthen their confidence to express themselves

Staff make themselves understood for example by simplifying or structuring verbal language and by providing visual cues. Visuals were used in the classrooms and on pupil desks, for example visual timetables were seen in all classrooms. The assessment team saw good use of visuals on the walls and on desks.

Visual resources were bespoke and in response to individuals’ needs. For example, one pupil had access to visuals to indicate how many times he could leave the room for the toilet during the lesson, which he would cross off each time. This enabled him to be more in control and develop a greater understanding, as well as communicate needs.

There were visual reminders to not touch staff and pupils, as it could make them sad. These were discreetly placed on the wall by a pupil’s desk.

There was consistent access to emotions boards in case pupils needed to communicate that they felt tired, angry, happy, etc.

Support in all lessons was very targeted. Staff were aware of all the pupils, and worked 1:1 as needed.

Staff referred back to previous lessons to remind pupils of what they had learnt.

Autistic pupils were provided with frequent opportunities to communicate as part of a group or 1:1 with staff and with each other.

All sessions observed had a lot of structure and a good pace. Pupils knew what was happening and what to expect. There were clear systems of reward in place, which varied from class to class and pupil to pupil, according to preferences.

Pupils were highly engaged in the activities, and were provided with numerous opportunities to voice opinions and make choices.

Although one autistic pupil said it was *‘a silly question to ask’* if he liked school, *‘because nobody who is young likes school’,* he went on to say that he thought Northcott is a *‘good place’* and that *‘for a school it is doing well’.* He also said that his days at school are good and that he enjoys the lessons*.*

*‘My teachers understand me and I can talk to them’*

*‘When I came I used to be very shy. Now I have found lots of friends and I never stop talking’*

*‘I now think that he will be able to go to college and to university. I never thought X would be able to do this, and now I am really confident’*

*‘X has never managed to build and maintain friendships. But now he has friends, and they are coming to our house for the first time this week. He has never had a birthday party before, and now he can have his first ever party’*

*‘I did not expect much, but the school is amazing. I never realised how much difference a school can make’*

*‘My daughter has had a lot of help with a recent bereavement, and it is so good to know that she has so much support by people who really know what they are doing’*

*‘It’s absolutely amazing. They do everything they can and go above and beyond’*

*‘They have been fantastic through the pandemic’*

*‘The school contact us if they need any information’*

*‘I can email or phone the school any time, I have contact details for a lot of staff members’*

*‘All I have done these past 12 months is send thank you emails’*

*‘The school is absolutely incredible’*

*‘My son never managed mainstream school, but he is doing so well now’*

*‘The school has really helped us to address some extreme rituals X had developed. They were out of control, and detrimental to his life. We have developed strategies, consequences and rewards together to support him, and it has got so much better’*

*‘We had a really lovely letter from the school, telling X about his recent achievements and it was so lovely to read’*

*‘My son started Northcott school when he was 7yrs he is now 14yrs and the school have always been helpful and very understanding my son has anger issues he has a one on one she has always been good with my son if he hadn't been in Northcott school god knows where we would be all the staff are brilliant can't thank you all for the help and support we have received thank you all.’*

Northcott helps me understand what I am doing and how I am learning.

Northcott is really good, I can talk to Lisa about my problems. I am happy here. Its a good place.

The school is fun to learn at and have fun.

I enjoy coming to Northcott.

I like coming to Northcott.

Its a good school with people who care about my needs

They just help me do something when I am stuck.

The teachers are so good , helpful and amazing. They are the best.

Thanks for all support and for helping when some times I get stuck.

Its good to go to a special school. You just love showing your autistic brain to do your work

Yes, the staff are doing so well.

In my opinion, Northcott School is a great place for education and gives all of the staff and pupils a great sense of community and they go above and beyond to support me in any situation as best they can. There really is no other place like Northcott School

i need a lot more help with my work because I don't understand at all but i think the staff are really good and helping me when I'm sad but the staff in my class are amazing.

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| My son doing really good at school  |
| EHCP reviews are a great way to discuss what support is needed and the best path forward. |
| My son started Northcott school when he was 7yrs he is now 14yrs and the school have always been helpful and very understanding my son has anger issues if he hadn't been in Northcott school god knows where we would be all the staff are brilliant can't thank you all for the help and support we have received thank you all  |
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