

Autism Champions 18/19

Rochdale Additional Needs Service and Rochdale Educational Psychology Service are committed to improving the experience and outcomes for pupils with autism spectrum conditions. Boarshaw Primary School has been taking part in the training and accreditation programme "Autism Champions". A designated member of staff has been to 3 training days and 6 cluster meetings.

The Accreditation review took place on 20th June 2019. School have successfully met the threshold in all 4 areas:

- 1) Leadership
- 2) Support for individual pupils
- 3) Environment and resources
- 4) Partnership and Liaison with Parents/carers.

Practice is clearly evidenced in the following areas:

Leadership

The school ethos statement makes references to inclusion and accessibility for all pupils. *This can be found on the website and in the inclusion policy.*

The school has an ASC policy.

All staff undertake ASC awareness training.

All staff have annual refresher training *delivered by the ASC Champion and SENCo.*

Teachers and support staff are supported in ASC friendly practices.

There is a noticeboard in the PPA room which signposts staff. There are also resources and boxes filled with resources such as sensory equipment, fiddle toys and different pen grips.

Recognition across whole school of the link between anxiety and challenging behaviour and withdrawn CYP.

This is highlighted by the provision available. There are cool down areas in classrooms, nurture spaces in school and a variety of interventions such as yoga and talking and drawing therapy.

Supply staff are provided with ASC policy and profiles of Individual CYP. *School have whole class files which include pupil profiles and also use Edu Key.*

Monitoring must include ASC effective practice. *ASC is a regular agenda for learning walks.*

ASC is a standard agenda item at staff/departmental meetings. *School hold termly SEN meetings.*

Evidence from the self-evaluation that autism awareness initiative has impacted on ASC awareness across schools.

Support for individual pupils

Up to date, co-produced, individual profiles are shared amongst all staff.

Pupil progress and targets, including social skills and emotional health, are closely monitored and regularly evaluated. *School provide a range of learning opportunities such as Military School, Duke of Edinburgh junior award and Third Space Learning.*

Teachers and support staff regularly liaise with regard to support for individual pupils.

Effective measures are in place to report and deal with harassment or bullying.

Individuals' social inclusion at breaks and lunchtime is monitored and supported. *Pupils have access to The Den and lunch rooms. Structured play is available outdoors.*

Environment and resources

Environmental modifications are made to key areas which may present particular sensory processing difficulties. These include the dining room, corridors and assemblies. *The Den is available for lunchtimes. Some pupils wear ear defenders. Some pupils use fidget cushions in assemblies.*

There are a range of visual supports available in classrooms and shared areas. *Each classroom has a visual timetable, Now and Next boards and sensory toolkits.*

There are opportunities to work free from distractions. *School use 'focus tables' in the classroom and there are quiet rooms available if needed.*

There are appropriate places to go at difficult times. *School have a variety of areas available (The Den, The Snug, The Cove, The Lagoon). These rooms have been decorated to create a calm and safe environment. Within these rooms there are calming activities and the opportunity to access sensory resources. A pupil shared, 'When I'm upset and all that there's this thing called The Den. Now there's this thing called The Cove where you relax and play and its silent'.*

Pupils with ASC are catered for during planned changes to the school day and curriculum. *School consider the needs of pupils when planning activities. A pupil shared, 'There's this thing called Whoopsie Daisy which tells me if something is going to be different, like a visitor.'*

Partnership and liaison with pupils, parents/carers

The school actively seeks to work with parents and pupils and values the contribution they make and will record/respond to parents' specific concerns. *A parent described, 'School have included my views, and they have been lovely. They have been great for emotional support. Over the time he has been here they have become friends. They are always happy to listen and take on new information. They have handled his autism very well. They have allowed him to be free. They always ask me to share information about changes such as moving house. They have been talking to him about it in school and explaining things. They explain it through a learning based system such as reading books'.*

Effective communication is in place for parents to understand ASC and how to support their child at home. *School hold coffee mornings and have theme weeks such as Autism Awareness Week. When discussing the support available, a parent shared, 'They don't just do it for children with autism. They do it for everyone'.*

Parents are invited to contribute to reviews of their child's progress at regular meetings.

Pupils are involved in recognising their strengths and difficulties and are included in planning support. *School use big books and speech bubbles to engage pupils. They have meetings with pupils and allow them to choose the food and drink.*

School works with all pupils to raise awareness of ASC. *ASC is discussed in assemblies and there is a display board which pupils can look at.*

Action Plan

School met all of the criteria for the accreditation and have successfully achieved 'Autism Champion' status.

We discussed that it may be useful to add ASC training to the induction checklist for new staff and for school to provide an e-learning module for them to complete.

School have a committed team who are constantly striving to improve outcomes for pupils with ASC. They are willing to make adjustments for all pupils and seek to provide a safe, secure and homely environment. They recognise that at times it is the small things which mean the most, such as a child being able to go into a safe space with a familiar adult and use the coffee machine to make themselves a hot chocolate and discuss their worries.

School are excellent at being flexible in their approach to meet the needs of the children in their care. It was very evident in the review that one of the many strengths of the school is the excellent relationship with parents.