

Creating 'Autism Friendly' education in an inclusive mainstream primary school

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Editorial comment

This paper describes how the author and the staff of a mainstream primary school set up a new resourced provision for autism that developed the children's skills and desire to explore, connect and contribute to activities and experiences offered. Their goal was to enable autistic children to work, play and learn together with other children at the school, as independently as possible. To this end, the traditional way in which staff support children with autism and SEND was altered so that the children were less dependent on one-to-one Teaching Assistants and class teachers were enabled to build a close relationship with the autistic children. Regular training sessions were given to all staff to enhance their knowledge as to why autistic children might respond as they do, to focus on the positives and to provide staff with clear and effective strategies to enable children to understand what they were to do across the school day. The attention to detail given to every aspect of the school day and the support provided to enable the autistic children to enjoy and learn from their time at school are very impressive.

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I would like to thank all the teachers, teaching assistants, therapists and children who have helped to make this vision a reality.

Introduction

This paper describes the different elements introduced into a large mainstream primary school to ensure children with autism can thrive and enjoy learning. It shows the impact of vision and training on an environment in which autistic pupils are enabled to explore, connect and contribute, and describes how well-being and attainment can be promoted through a curriculum that develops independence and engagement alongside the fundamental areas of social communication and emotional regulation. The views of stakeholders were sought to evaluate the success of this project.

In this paper the word 'child' is used to refer to the pupil with autism and 'peer' to refer to the pupil without autism.

The school and its ethos

Five years' ago the primary school, located in an inner city borough with a rapidly growing population, was enlarged and a new resourced provision for autism established in the heart of the school building. As well as ten new mainstream classrooms, additional learning spaces included a classroom sized 'Social Room' furnished with a central circular carpet, a smaller group room, a soft play room, a sensory room, a small room for calming and a wet room. Outdoors, the large playgrounds were already well equipped with climbing frames, a seesaw, roundabout and trampoline – essential for children with sensory modulation difficulties – and indoors, a therapy swing was subsequently acquired (Tumble Forms 2 Deluxe Vestibulator II System, available from www.healthandcare.co.uk). A large family room with a kitchenette was made available for parent

meetings, cooking and other group sessions. Most important, however, was the fact that the headteacher was committed to making the school fully inclusive of some of the Borough's most severely autistic children and had been funded to employ an autism specialist teacher to achieve this. Creating a fully integrated Resourced Autism Provision (RAP) has been my role and the school's project.

The existing ethos of the school has underpinned the development of the RAP; it is one of mutual respect and cooperation. Pupil wellbeing is prioritised and targeted through individualised programmes designed to overcome barriers to learning and build resilience. To compensate for the historically low socioeconomic status of the locality, the school curriculum is deliberately broad with frequent and varied class visits, special day events and after school clubs such as art, music, sport, chess, debating and drama. It is the positivity, flexibility and creativity of this child centred ethos that makes the drive to increase the independence and engagement of autistic pupils possible.

Staffing

To begin with, following the usual practice of inclusive mainstream schools, additional Teaching Assistants (TAs) were employed to support each child with a high level of need. The child was based in the classroom with their peers but separate from them. They sat with the TA at their own table or 'workstation' and followed a differentiated curriculum which included specific interventions taught to the TA by therapists to whom the child had been referred. Large scale research studies have found that when the day-to-day responsibility for the learning and care of a child is delegated to a TA in this way, the class teacher becomes less involved and less able to include the child as part of their class, resulting in less progress (Russell, Webster and Blatchford, 2013, page 65). It has been important, therefore, to establish class teachers as the primary resource of the school's autism provision and to change the role of the TAs accordingly.

The vision

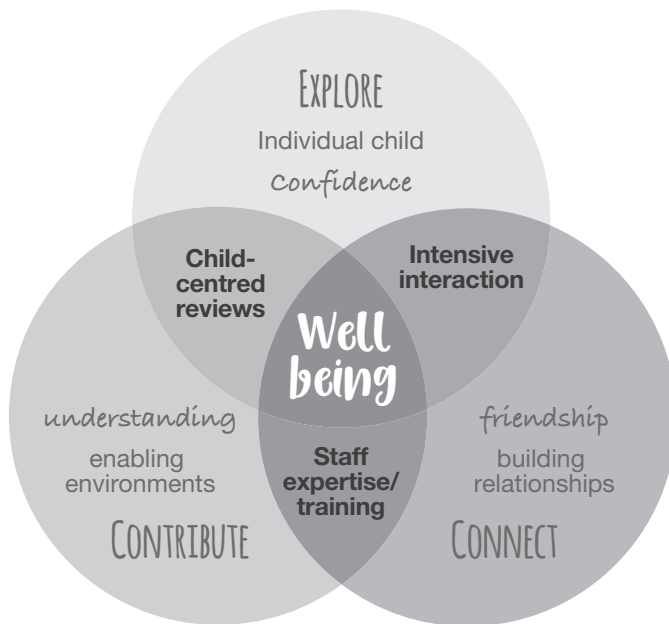
Hand in hand with the school motto, 'Explore. Achieve. Fly.' is the motto of the RAP 'Explore. Connect. Contribute.' This summarises a differentiated

educational vision that has autistic wellbeing at its centre. The diagram in *Figure 1* was discussed by the school senior leadership team and chair of governors at the start of the project and the curriculum for autistic pupils was re-evaluated from this perspective. This led to the play based principles of Early Years and Foundation Stage (focusing on the individual pupil, building relationships and enabling environments) being promoted across Key Stages 1 and 2 to ensure that those with delayed social communication skills continue to develop confidence, friendship and understanding through play.

Provision Explore

In contrast to some specialist provisions where children are taught in an environment designed to be distraction free, learning in a lively mainstream primary school takes place in a microcosm of the outside world, full of colour, sound, smells and objects of potential interest. This necessitates children being allowed some control over their experience as they learn how to emotionally regulate themselves and avoid sensory overload. In order to facilitate this, the vision for the RAP gives children the freedom to fully explore the whole school environment as well as their classroom. It was apparent from the start that if individual children were to be less closely managed by TAs, they were likely to become more 'free-ranging' posing concerns for health and safety. Rather than curtail children's exploration unnecessarily, general and individual risk assessments ensured boundary fences and gates were secured, storage cupboards (and gecko cages) locked and all staff alerted to their collective responsibility for all children at all times. Other doors within the school are not locked enabling children to gravitate to the locations they find most comfortable or stimulating. Observing this provides staff with valuable knowledge of the child's sensory preferences and special interests, enabling them to create similar conditions within the classroom to attract the child to remain there willingly among their peers. Alternatively, the preferred locations may be included regularly on the child's schedule or presented to them as a choice which they can request in order to self regulate.

Figure 1: The vision for the resourced autism provision



Connect

The ability to connect with others and communicate one's needs effectively is a fundamental human right and generally learned in infancy. This ability is delayed in autistic infants, often to the extent that they are isolated, or even 'people averse', when they start school. Alongside freedom to explore, the RAP vision prioritises opportunities to connect with others as the foundation of the child's education. Strong positive relationships are built between the child and their class teacher using the practice of Intensive Interaction (Hewett, Firth, Barber and Harrison, 2012) and with the large number of TAs who lead the RAP group sessions. In addition, release from a one-to-one TA in class increases the likelihood of pupil interaction and the development of peer friendships. The vision for the purpose built Soft Playroom and Social Room is for pupils to have fun playing together. Adult modelling when necessary enables this social exploration to take place in ways

that are safe and enjoyable for all and able to be generalised to the playground and other less structured contexts. A peer who gains the recognition and trust of the child they are befriending is likely to be chosen by them as a friend or partner on subsequent occasions – an achievement of which they are rightly proud.

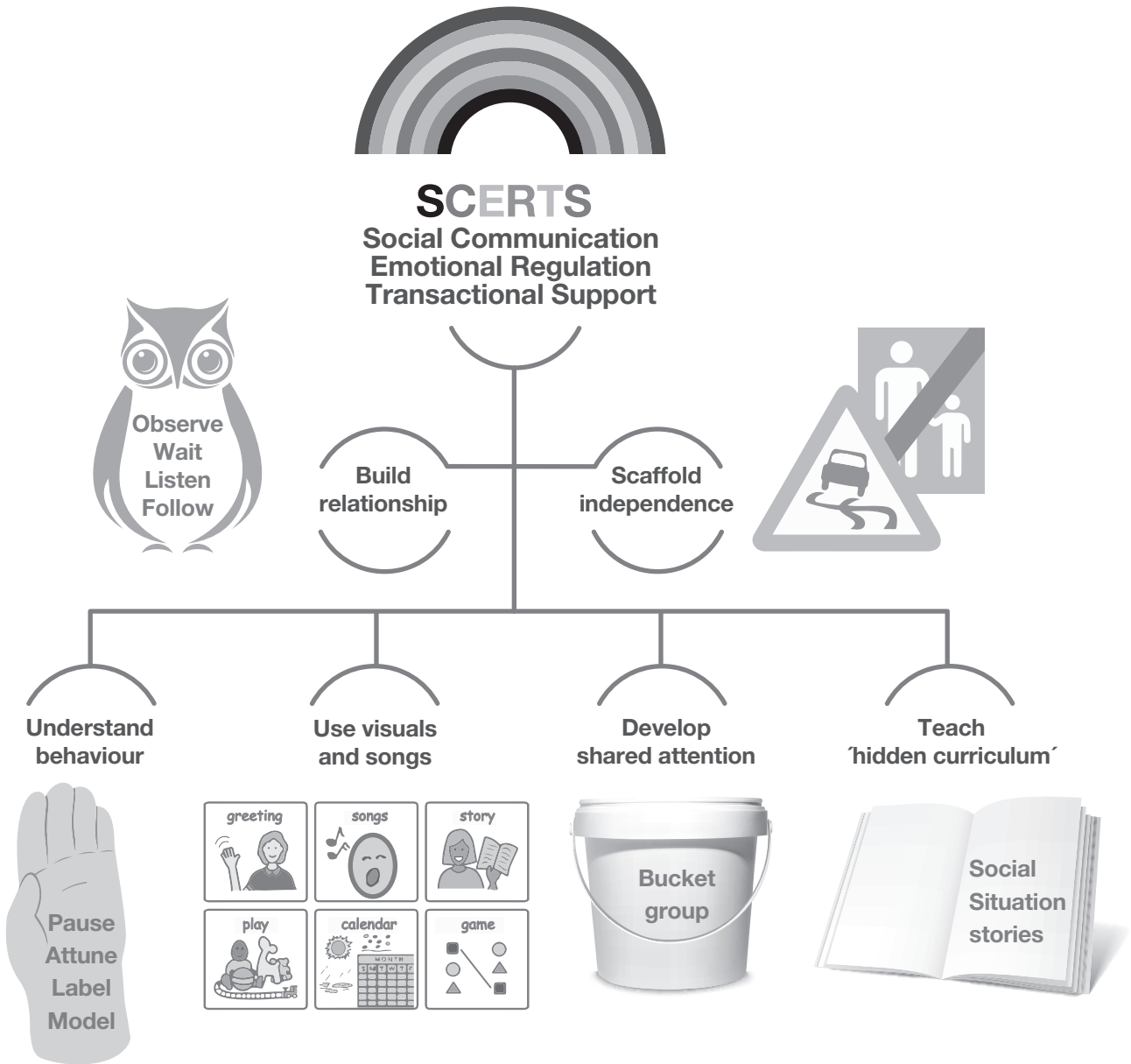
Contribute

A third aspect of the RAP vision is that every pupil has a sense of being a valued member of their class. As children begin to understand the social situation they are part of through exploring and connecting, they develop the confidence and motivation to engage with school routines and contribute to class activities in ways that are meaningful and purposeful for them. The class teacher facilitates this through the rapport they build during Intensive Interaction sessions with the child, and by planning and scaffolding how the child might contribute independently of TA support. A highlight each year is the child's active participation in their Annual Review. They may perform a song with their peers, share cakes they have baked or show craft work to their parents and others involved in their education and care. Everyone's views are recorded under child centred headings: what people like and admire about me; what I like; what I need; what is going well; and what next. The meeting is invariably a celebration of the child's personality and achievement.

The training programme

Training has been paramount in bringing the RAP vision to fruition. During the first year all staff training days were primarily about autism, delivered by Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists as well as the school's Inclusion Team. In addition, a five minute presentation on supporting pupils with autism became an ongoing part of the weekly whole school staff meeting, and class teachers are regularly scheduled to share and celebrate the successes they experience. All training has been multi sensory, using objects, symbols and songs to demonstrate an inclusive style of teaching. *Appendix 1* and the pictures in *Figures 2 and 3* illustrate some of these.

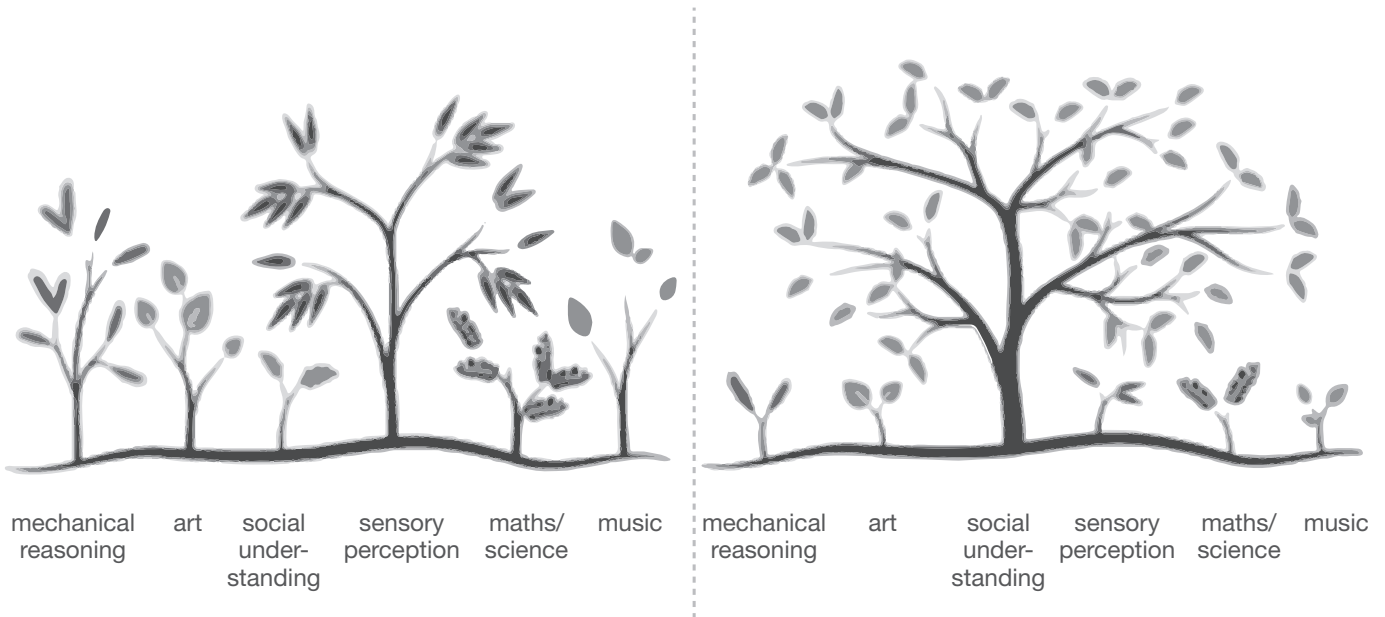
Figure 2: Elements of the training programme



The RAP vision is embedded in the educational approach known as SCERTS which emphasises Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (Prizant, Wetherby, Rubín, Laurent and Rydell, 2006). The metaphor depicted in *Figure 3*, used in training staff, parents and pupils, shows why children benefit from this approach. It contrasts autistic and neurotypical brain function development by representing each as a forest clearing in which

saplings grow (Attwood, 2007, page 333). Those in the 'neurotypical clearing' on the right are dominated by a huge sapling labelled 'Social Understanding', whereas the same sapling in the 'autistic clearing' on the left is dwarfed and overshadowed by others such as 'Sensory Perception' and 'Mechanical Reasoning'. In this case, therefore, it is evident that Social Understanding needs to be the initial focus of the child's education rather than the National Curriculum.

Figure 3: Brain function development depicted as saplings growing in an 'autistic' and a 'neurotypical' forest clearing



The SCERTS approach identifies social communication as fundamental in a child's educational development. Accordingly, it divides the wide spectrum of autistic ability into three groups: a Social Partner uses less than three words (spoken, signed or otherwise communicated) and benefits from the interactive activities enjoyed by neurotypical infants of less than 18 months; a Language Partner regularly and in context uses between three and one hundred words and makes progress through activities that typically engage 18 month to three year olds; and a Conversation Partner is able to create at least twenty different word combinations yet may still need play based interaction to develop socially and emotionally. Training in SCERTS enabled teachers to plan curriculum activities appropriate to the child's communication stage and developmental level regardless of the chronological age of their class.

Building relationships

The first practical goal of training was for staff to get to know children through relationship building. The pupil with the most severe autism in each class was invited

to arrive at school ten minutes earlier than their peers to enable the class teacher to spend time with them one-to-one. Training – summarised by 'OWLF' - taught staff to Observe, Wait, Listen and Follow the child's lead. It is now the role of every class teacher to greet the child at the door each morning, schedule any necessary conversation with parents for later in the day and ensure TAs are occupied elsewhere. The class teacher is then able to learn from the child how to engage them in a range of mutually enjoyable 'Communiplay' activities (Lloyd, 2015, page 50). These interactive routines, repeated at suitable moments throughout the day, model the teacher's positive relationship with the child for peers to emulate. Class teachers are asked to avoid any negative or restrictive contact with the child that might undermine the trust they are building (or escalate unwanted behaviour) but instead to ask the Inclusion Team for immediate assistance whenever they find a behaviour too challenging. Walkie-talkies were provided for this purpose initially but are very rarely needed any longer. Out of class, TAs also do OWLF and Communiplay with individual children in many of the RAP group sessions.

Scaffolding independence

The second goal was to establish routines that help the child to be more involved in the class, independent of TA support. To achieve this, techniques such as scaffolding and backward chaining were taught to staff, parents and helpful peers, and new 'independence targets' were circulated listing 35 behaviours which, throughout the day, children can be expected to learn to do on their own. For example:

- I can go directly to my coat peg on arrival, and attempt to take off and hang up my coat
- I can choose a place to sit with my class for registration
- I notice when my class lines up and can join them in the line
- I can walk with my class when they leave the room

TAs are asked to step back and observe, enabling the child to explore their classroom learning environment independently. They are also asked not to lead children by the hand on school premises. This has proved challenging for TAs accustomed to giving a child as much support as possible, and TAs are asked to avoid using physical contact as a means of control or as a substitute for effective communication. The traffic sign warning of a slippery road reminds staff to 'steer into a skid' by initially going with the child's 'wrong direction' as the best means of getting them back on track.

Understanding behaviour

The third tier of training evident in *Figure 2* includes further whole school strategies to develop positive interaction and independence. "Keep calm: use PALM" is a maxim revisited frequently: 'Pause' from reacting to behaviour perceived as challenging; 'Attune' to the behaviour as a communication; 'Label' the underlying emotion by mirroring it for the child and naming it; 'Model' an alternative equally satisfying but more socially acceptable way of behaving. Both staff and parents received training on understanding children's behaviour (see *Appendix 1*) and using an ABC chart to analyse the Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence pattern of recurring difficulties. Staff are encouraged to stay solution focused when feeling challenged and to

affirm the child's strengths and progress in other areas. Using alternatives to saying 'no' while remaining calm, clear and consistent enables creative ways forward to emerge and mutual understanding to deepen.

Using visuals and songs

It has been important to establish the use of visuals throughout the school. These include timetables, 'now – next' and 'choosing boards' with either objects of reference or picture symbols, and Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) core vocabulary boards or iPad apps – personalised for each child by the speech and language therapist. Teachers are encouraged to practise multi-sensory communication with the whole class as well as with the individual child: for example, by turning a routine instruction into a song and by showing relevant objects when discussing an event or activity. The visual cue for leaving the classroom to go to a RAP session is a brightly coloured 'RAP-sack' – a backpack containing the child's communication board, schedule visuals, favourite objects and other personal essentials – and a high visibility vest which the child puts on in addition if they are going out of school. Each RAP location has its own song which, when sung by an accompanying TA, provides the child with an ongoing prompt to lead the way to the activity depicted on their 'now-next' board.

Songs are also used to structure each group session:

- '*We are waiting ...*' (tune: London's burning) – an action song that occupies children while the group gathers
- '*Hello everyone ... who is here today?*' (tune: Nice one, Cyril) – children find their photos and put them on the green 'I'm here' side of the board
- '*Make a circle ...*' (tune: Frere Jacques) - most sessions begin with the children in a circle watching as the in-session schedule is drawn on an A3 whiteboard
- '*Cross it off ...*' (tune: Hot cross buns) - children cross activities off the schedule as the session progresses
- '*We have finished ...*' (tune: Wind the bobbin up)
- '*I'm walking back to class ...*' (tune: The farmer's in the den) – children walk independently back to their classrooms, followed by a TA if necessary

This last song is also effective in reassuring a child who has become dysregulated on an educational visit and needs to know that they are now returning to school. Other songs are used for other activities; for example, to drill the children in road safety: *'Stop. Wait at the road, looking, listening, left and right. Don't get hit by a car, a lorry or a motorbike. Cross when the road is clear.'* (The tune is based on an advertising jingle.) Many children learn to sing the words of these songs before they can speak them and initiate these at the appropriate times. Peers also use singing to engage with a nonverbal child, and those who opt to be Playtime Partners have their own training song: *'Hello, friend, shall we play? What is fun for you today? When I see what you do, I can do it too. That way I can play with you.'* (Tune: This old man.)

Developing shared attention

The most useful training for developing class inclusion has been Attention Autism. Gina Davies, who pioneered this structured approach to building a child's capacity for shared attention, emphasises that it is the responsibility of the adult leading the group to be irresistibly interesting. The child quickly learns to sit with a small group while one fascinating object at a time is taken out of a bucket and put back again and, in later stages, is motivated to watch and take turns in the activities that follow. 'Bucket Group' (as it is called in the school) is then generalised to the classroom context. Each teacher creates their own shared-attention box or bag for socially inclusive class plenaries containing an object of interest to the child and other props relevant to the class lesson. If a TA is present, their role is to sit modelling full attention on the teacher while the child sits with their peers, able to focus on and interact with their teacher in a meaningful way. Within a few months this practised expectation of shared attention has made it possible for all the children to sit safely round a campfire during 'Forest School' taking turns with long sticks toasting bread.

Teaching the 'hidden curriculum'

The 'hidden curriculum' is the normative social behaviour that most pupils know and understand intuitively. Those with autism tend to learn from their mistakes when they realise their behaviour has elicited

disapproval. Over time this can damage self-esteem resulting in anxiety and self-harm. Staff are taught to clearly state the behaviour they want rather than criticise behaviour they don't want, and to notice and praise acceptable behaviour as often as possible giving explicit information to the child about what they have done well. Likewise, peers are helped to ignore unwanted behaviours and to communicate positively and effectively with the child at other times.

Another essential aspect of training has been in the use of Social Stories (Gray, 2000), adapted by staff and re-named 'social situation stories'. Pictures and words are combined in various ways into a booklet – according to the communication level and needs of the child – to help them understand and learn the acceptable alternative behaviours modelled through PALM. These stories need to be simple yet specific enough to still apply in similar situations occurring later in the child's life. They explicitly teach the 'hidden curriculum' of social expectations within school and society.

The RAP in practice In the classroom

The RAP curriculum is designed to be meaningful, purposeful and agreeably social from the child's point of view. The fundamental areas of communication, social interaction, emotional regulation, independence and engagement are prioritised over the academic content of an activity. For example, if a pre-verbal child pushes away a numeracy activity, the teacher acknowledges the child's communication bid and offers a choice rather than persisting with the task. The class teacher decides how much time – over and above a minimum five hours a week – the child spends accessing inclusive activities in class and how much they spend in out of class RAP groups (see *Appendix 2*). Classroom time is planned to be predictable and enjoyable so that the child wants to be there with their teacher and feels safe enough to explore, connect and contribute amongst their peers.

Out of the classroom

Up to five group sessions a day - focusing on the same curriculum goals – take place in the RAP rooms, school halls, playgrounds and local community. Each of these is led by a different team of TAs or specialist teachers

and they include:

- ball games with the school dog and cooking on Mondays
- walking to the local swimming pool and drama on Tuesdays
- taking a minibus to a gymnasium, shopping and music on Wednesdays
- using public transport for outings and a picnic on Thursdays
- art and PE on Fridays

The RAP sessions teach skills that can be generalised back into the classroom so that children become confident participating with their peers in class PE, music and art lessons, as well as joining them on educational visits.

The Transactional Support Grid

Class teachers plan for and assess each child's progress across the five curriculum areas using a Transactional Support Grid in which they detail the actions required of all supporting adults to ensure the child's goals are worked on consistently throughout the day (see *Appendix 3*). At the start of the term and again at the end, when progress is evaluated, both the teacher and the TAs give a score to each goal (0 = never seen; 1 = rarely; 2 = sometimes; 3 = often). To ensure teachers choose new goals that are achievable, it has proved helpful to require a minimum initial score of 1 - indicating that the desired behaviour has already been witnessed at least once. The Transactional Support Grid also includes an 'at home' goal with strategies to be put into place by parents and carers. Class teachers, therapists and other staff are able to visit children at home on occasion to provide support with this.

The end of year transition

Towards the end of the school year the current class teacher shares the Transactional Support Grid with the future class teacher who is given time to observe the child and to begin to build a relationship with them. Both teachers then meet to discuss the child's personal profile and to plan a photo book or other resource that will prepare the child for change after the school holiday. To help with continuity, the daily RAP groups stay much the same from one year to the next, varying

and developing along with children's abilities, interests and learning styles. For example, if the first day of term is a Tuesday, the children will go swimming in the same way they did every Tuesday the previous year. Since the children all know each other and know the TAs who lead the RAP sessions, this reassuring familiarity allows them to adjust more easily to their new classroom situation.

An evaluation of the Resourced Autism Provision

In evaluating the impact of the RAP it has been important to ascertain the views of stakeholders. All the parents of children in the school allocated High Needs Funding for autism by the Borough were invited to complete an anonymous questionnaire, together with the majority of school staff and several visitors with a professional interest in autism. Out of 100, approximately 86 questionnaires were returned. Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the school as a place in which children with autism thrive and learn: a total of 87 per cent gave a score of 80 – 100 per cent satisfaction. This included all class teachers, all visitors and 22 out of 24 parents. The most frequently recurring comments accompanying these scores were:

- **From class teachers:** there is a caring ethos; staff have expertise and are consistent in approach
- **From TAs:** children are taught to be independent and explore learning in many different contexts
- **From other staff:** children are included and understood and grow in confidence
- **From parents:** children are happy, go out of school a lot and make progress
- **From visitors:** there is an emphasis on meaningful purposeful activities and enjoyable interaction with staff and peers

In response to the question, "If you were to move to another inclusive primary school what strategies would you want to continue to use?" The most mentioned were PALM; Core Communication Boards; use of visuals; Transition Songs, and RAP-sacks. In addition, class teachers valued the Transactional Support Grid, and parents found sharing their own and others' experiences helpful.

Finally, suggestions to 'make the school more autism friendly' included:

- *From class teachers:* an on-going 'refresher' programme of all aspects of training, with more modelling of best practice for teachers and TAs by the Inclusion Team
- *From TAs:* more sensory resources for children to touch as they walk around the school and for choosing and exploring in outdoor areas
- *From other staff:* more peers able to join in autism specific activities out of class
- *From parents:* more progress meetings and regular home-school communication
- *From visitors:* more liaison between staff to ensure consistency of specific approaches for individual children.

Acting on these proposals will continue to improve the RAP for the stakeholders who have suggested them. However, the primary stakeholders are the pupils with autism themselves. It is essential that future changes to the RAP are considered from their perspective also, taking into account their individual preferences, special interests and learning styles. Four Inclusion Ambassadors in Year 6 – who have led sessions on 'Being a Playtime Partner' for parents, peers and for pupils at another school – were asked to find out and evaluate the views of children at Conversation Partner Stage in Years 4 and 5. Their findings are in their own words and reflect their understanding and empathy:

"After interviewing six pupils with autism we concluded that we need more equipment to play with in the playground but, other than that, this school is very autism friendly."

"The children all gave the school ten out of ten."

"We think that autistic children have the best time and we can see that they enjoy a lot of activities, from swimming to Lego Team."

"We would rate our school 8 or 9 out of 10 because we think that the children who can't speak might be a bit isolated."

"Some younger pupils need to learn how to interact with autistic children and to recognise when they are lonely and when they are not."

Concluding comments

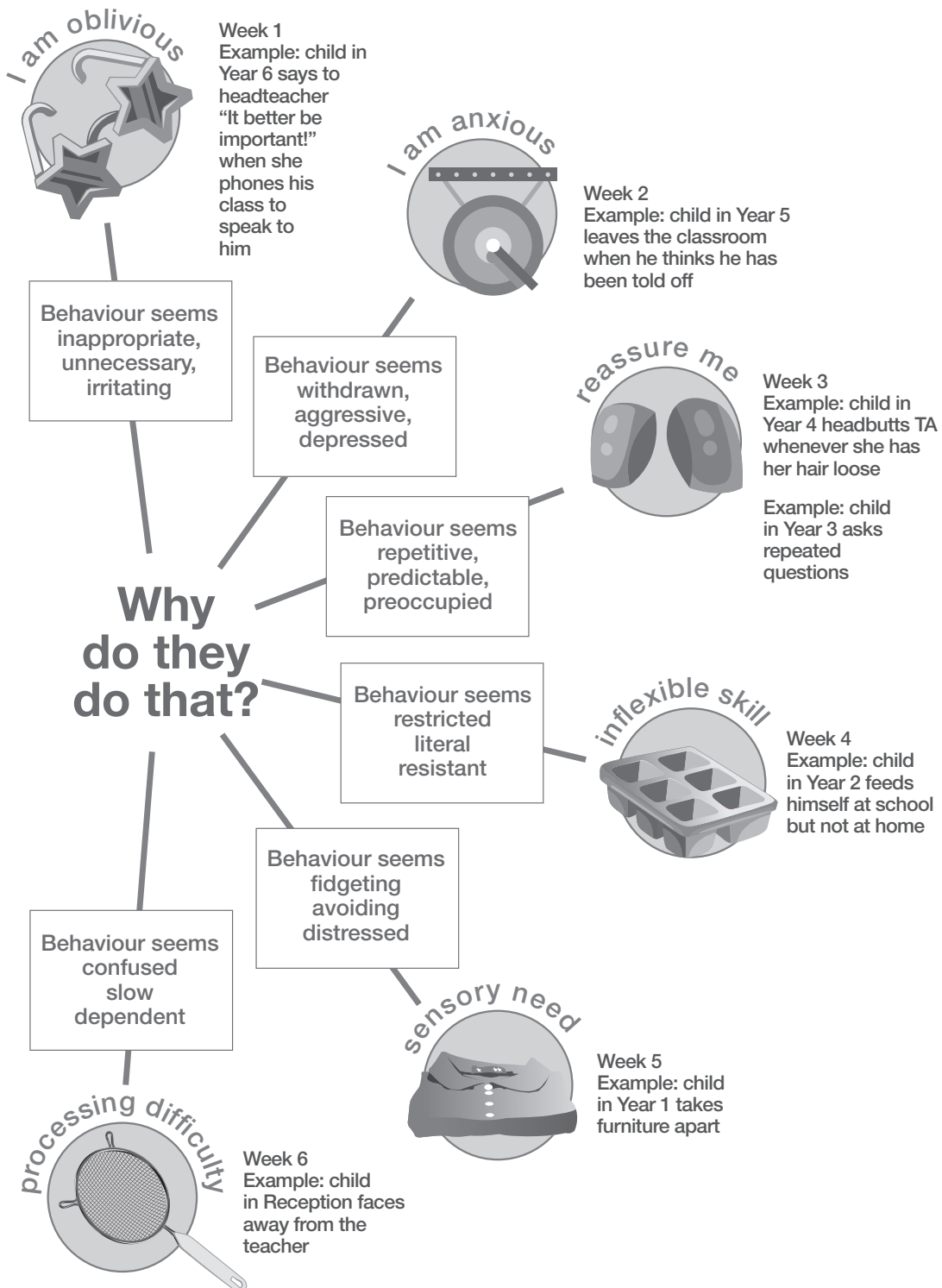
To become a fully inclusive school it has been important to establish class teachers as the primary resource of the school's autism provision and to change the role of TAs accordingly. This has required a comprehensive training programme for staff, parents and pupils, as well as a child centred school ethos promoted by the Senior Leadership Team. Creating an autism-friendly learning environment that prioritises social communication, emotional regulation, independence and engagement has improved the wellbeing and understanding of all pupils – both those with autism and their peers - giving them the freedom to be themselves in school and enabling them to enjoy their education. An autism friendly school is a healthy school, valued by children and parents, fulfilling for staff and of ultimate benefit to society.

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Appendix 1

Term 1 weekly whole staff 5 minute training: 6 sessions each using an object of reference and real life examples.



Appendix 2

Weekly schedule of a child at the Social Partner stage.

Sample schedule	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8.50am–9.15am 8.55am toilet	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	
9.15am–9.40am 9.35am toilet/ drink/snack	Bucket group	Swimming (including toilet/ drink/snack)	Communiplay	Out and about (including toilet/ drink/snack)	Cooking	
9.40am–10am	Rock and roll		Beckton gym		Sensory story	
10am–10.25am 10.20am toilet/ drink/snack	Soft play		(including toilet/ drink/snack)			
10.25am–10.45am	Trikes and bikes					Messy play
10.45am–11am	Play time					Play time
11am–11.15am	Teacher led class time					Teacher led class time
11.15am–11.40am 11.35am toilet/ drink/snack	Circle time					Soft play
11.40am–12 noon	Dog skills	Soft play	Music interaction	Picnic out or Lunch and play time	Trikes and bikes	
12 noon–12.45pm 12.30pm toilet	Lunch and play time	Lunch and play time	Lunch and play time		Lunch and play time	
12.45pm–1pm 12.30pm toilet	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	
1pm–1.25pm 1.20pm toilet/ drink/snack	Food fun	Sing a song	Sensory story	Circle time	RAP gym	
1.25pm–1.45pm	Communiplay	Roof top challenge	Messy play	Swing and spin		
1.45pm–2pm	Play time	Play time	Play time	Play time	Play time	
2pm–2.25pm 2.20pm toilet/ drink/snack	Sensory story	Drama games	Shopping	Sensory story	Art group	
2.25pm–2.45pm	Messy play	POD		Messy play	Swing and spin	
2.45pm–3pm	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	Teacher led class time	

Appendix 3

Transactional support for a child at the Social Partner stage (partially completed)

Support grid	Pupil:	Date:
	Teacher:	Class:
	TAs:	

Class teacher evaluation score; *TA Evaluation score: Level: never 0; rarely 1; sometimes 2; often 3

1	Communication goal I can request social games (eg lifting my arms for tickles) with familiar adults.	#1	*1
2	Social interaction goal I can join in with my class or group when prompted by an object of reference.		
3	Emotional regulation goal I can choose bouncing or drinking when shown the gym ball and my bottle.		
4	Independence goal I can walk back to my classroom independently when I hear the cue song.		
5	Engagement goal I can share attention and take a turn with my teacher and a peer.		

Whole day support (all staff)

Interact with X by getting down to her eye level.

Use single words and visual cues when communicating. Label whatever X is paying attention to.

Prompt X to put on her RAPSack when transitioning between learning locations.

Always finish activity after singing Finished Song.

Ensure X is toileted and given water to drink at times specified on schedule.

RAPSack to contain Home Liaison Book, water bottle, favoured toy, Location objects of reference, including toy toilet.

Sessions	1	2	3	4	5	Transactional support	Who
Arrival and registration						Greet X at door holding favourite toy just below your face. Wait for X to reach for and follow toy to coat hook before giving it to her. Offer gym ball and drink bottle if X is unsettled. Show X her sitting square and place in mid-front of carpet for register.	Class teacher
Class literacy						Use Sparkle Bag with class. Pull out favoured toy then class book. Offer choice of book or toy when X reaches for toy. Prompt X to leave class group by putting toy in her RAPSack. Show object of reference and sing Location Song for transition.	Teacher TA
RAP sessions						Respond positively to any social interaction. Avoid saying 'no'. Use familiar structure and routines during session. Offer choosing breaks. Ensure planned activity uses 3 or more senses and is purposeful for X. Allow time for X to respond to 'Finished Song' by seeking her RAPSack. Sing 'Back to Class' song and let X lead the way.	Session leader TA
Playtime/ lunchtime						Keep X engaged with gym ball/tickles until class line up for lunch play. Show playtime objects (hat, ball) to prompt her to go out to play with class. If she persists in showing plate to request lunch, acknowledge request and take her to eat early with peer friend.	TA Class teacher
Gym/art/ music						See notes above for RAP Sessions. Allow time for X to take in new layout of room/hall. Notice her eye-pointing and label object of her gaze. Wait for her response. Affirm by imitating (or by tickling if she lifts her arms with eye contact).	Art/PE/ Music teachers
Numeracy/ science						Put different activity on each group table (eg stacking cubes, magnetic shapes, Numicon, texture squares). Give X choice of 2 activity objects and encourage if needed while she finds same activity on table. (Peers interact with X while using same objects for differentiated goal, eg measuring.)	Teacher
Home time						Show X her sitting square; place on carpet where X sits for goodbye song. Wait for X to fetch own coat and bag from hooks and bring to carpet. Do up bottom of zip (only 10 cm) when X approaches for help. Ensure Home Liaison Book is in home bag.	Teacher TA

At home target	Strategies
I can show or give an object to make a request for more.	Parents/Carers to create fun opportunities for X to choose between 2 objects. Always use count-down then 'We have finished' song to end choosing time. Don't give in to screaming demands: offer choice of favourites once X is calm. Respond to requests X initiates whenever possible: eg beaker = 'more drink'; shoe = 'go outside'; duck = 'play with water'; spoon = 'more food'. Create predictable requests eg drink out of reach with empty beaker within reach.

Signed by:	Classteacher		Date:	
	TAs		Date:	
	Parents/carers		Date:	

Goals	Evaluation of goals and support	0=never 1=rarely 2=sometimes 3=often	
		#	*
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

At home target	
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Signed by:	Class teacher	Date:	
	TAs	Date:	
	Parents/carers	Date:	