



Accreditation Awarding Body Report  
 Higford School (93)  
 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Status awarded to Higford School  
 by the Accreditation Awarding Body

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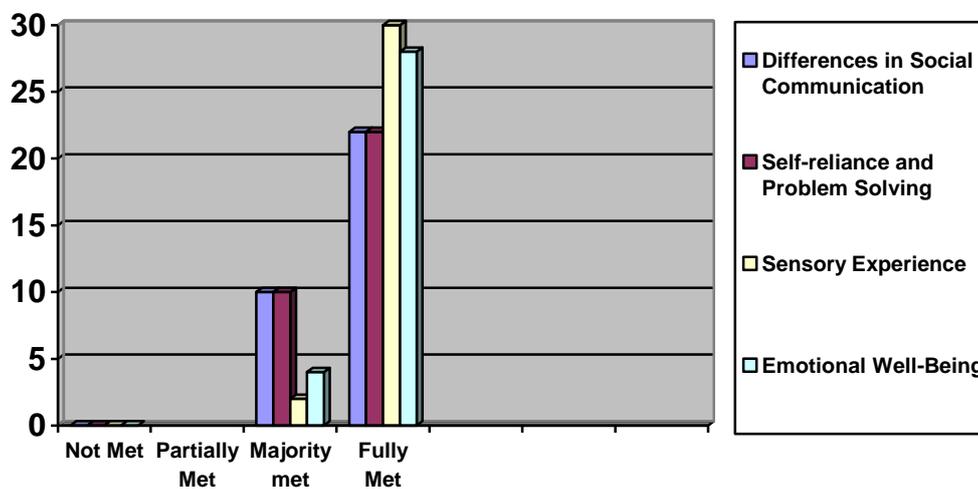
Accredited

Service Strengths and Achievements	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Good Practice</b></p> <p>Strong Practice within the whole Accreditation membership</p>	<p><b><u>Education &amp; Residential Standards</u></b>  <b><u>C23: staff actively work in partnership with other professionals, who support each autistic student, to deliver a consistent and unified approach</u></b></p> <p>The clinical team has extensive knowledge and experience of autism, which is reflected in the range and quality of the support it provides.</p> <p><b><u>Education Standard E5: activities differentiated and personalised to take into account each autistic student's strengths, challenges, interests and styles of learning</u></b>  <b>and</b>  <b><u>Residential Standard E5: activities differentiated and personalised to take into account each autistic student's strengths, challenges and interests</u></b></p> <p>Lesson and session planning is highly personalised</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Area of Strength</b></p> <p>Strong practice within the service should be seen as a goal to further improve practice within the service and allow progression on the service's Accreditation journey.</p>	<p><b><u>Education &amp; Residential Standards</u></b>  <b><u>C6: current knowledge and understanding of autism is taken into account in the overall design and maintenance of the environment</u></b></p> <p>Careful consideration is given to ensuring the environment meets students' individual needs.</p>

**Educational & Residential Standards  
C28: the views, preferences, interests,  
hopes and wishes of each autistic  
person are fully reflected in decisions  
made about the support and  
opportunities provided**

Staff-to-staff, staff-to-parent and staff-to-student relationships underpin students' academic and personal development.

Observation scores

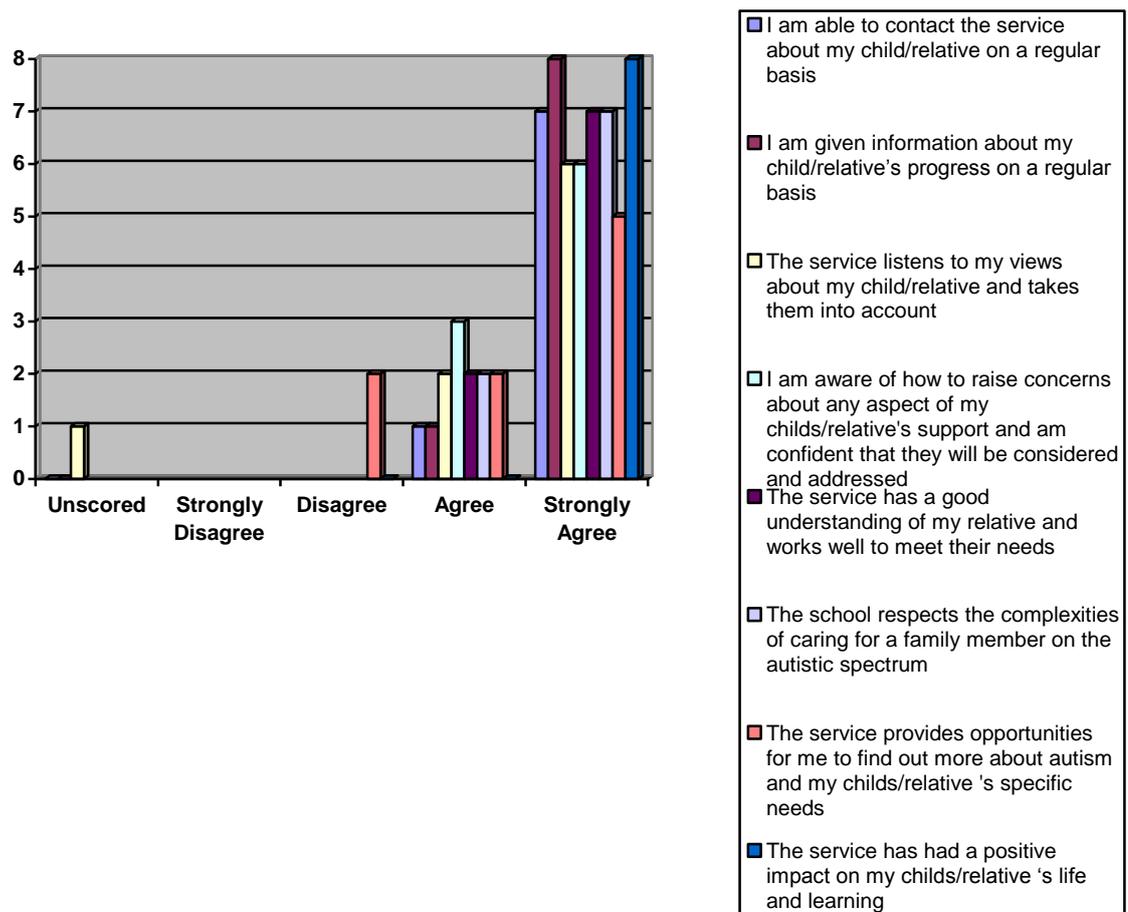


Family Questionnaire Scores

The graph below shows the scores from the returned family questionnaires. The overwhelming majority of parents are clearly happy with the support their child receives. A number of positive comments were made, including:

- Higford School is a very good school. It meets my son's needs, which are autism and challenging behaviour and he's doing very well.
- We have been hugely impressed in how quickly [our son] settled at Higford, how excellent the education, care and facilities are. He has made significant progress in all areas. We feel with this setup he will continue to develop and gain the skills required for transition at aged 19 including accessing and "living in" the outside world.
- We particularly value the school's holistic approach - the clinical team work closely with teachers and support staff, but they also liaise with outside organisations, e.g. our child's social worker and sensory therapist, to ensure everyone is kept in the loop and providing a consistent approach.

- What has made school effective for our son is the willingness of staff to offer him the warmth and unconditional acceptance to build relationships that allow him to progress. Our son has already been to two special schools, but this is the first that has been able to meet all of his needs and not try to fit him into someone else's framework.
- This school is perfect for our son. Always doing the best. Well done.
- An extremely dedicated team of staff across education and care ensure the highest level of support to myself and my child.
- Communication is excellent, ensuring any issues causing anxiety are addressed immediately.



### Action Plan for Service

#### Action for Development

An area for development is not an area of great concern, but should be seen as a goal to further improve practice within the service and allow progression on the service's Accreditation journey.

**Education Standard E9: each autistic student supported in developing problem-solving skills and coping strategies relevant to independent functioning outside or after school (e.g. in terms of work skills or independent living)**

The school intends to offer improved work

experience opportunities.

**Education & Residential Standards**  
**C12: staff induction and professional development programmes reflect a contemporary knowledge and understanding of autism whilst challenging common stereotypes and myths**

A strategy to maintain relevant and fresh training will further strengthen the ability to optimise outcomes for students.

**Education and Residential Standards**  
**U16: staff identify and record the best way of interacting with each autistic student to reinforce the student's sense of self-worth and self-esteem**

The school recognises that there is scope to add further value to its Information Exchange tool by using it to record positive events.

### **Things Higford School should celebrate:**

- Effective sensory strategies, informed by a deep understanding of each individual student, contribute to the high levels of emotional well-being.
- The family atmosphere in the houses, and the comfortable atmosphere in lessons.
- The work of the clinical team, whose knowledge and expertise are used to refine personal provision across the site. The high degree of personalised provision.

## **Summary**

The awarding panel congratulate Higford School upon maintaining the high standards required of Autism Accreditation. The school has demonstrated a strong and continuing commitment to the Autism Accreditation process, this being the third time they have been accredited. The Accreditation review team were clearly impressed with the highly personalised and holistic support provided to students which no doubt has a significant positive impact on their quality of life in adulthood.

Signed

*Stephen Dedridge*

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Senior Advisor (South), Autism Accreditation*