

AUTISM ACCREDITATION REVIEW REPORT



Camphill School Aberdeen (CSA)
Review Date: 25-27/02/2014

Review Team

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INTRODUCTION

The review report is designed to provide a concise and focused insight into the organisation's performance against accreditation teaching/learning standards. The Review Report focuses to the criteria for Autism Accreditation.

1. The service has a specialised knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders.
2. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the organisation, resources and management of the service.
3. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently informs the individual assessment and planning for all people with autism.
4. The knowledge and understanding of autism spectrum disorders consistently results in positive outcomes for all people with autism.

The Review Report will be submitted to the Autism Accreditation Panel and forms part of the decision making process.

PROVISION BEING REVIEWED

Name of Provision being reviewed	CSA: Murtle and Camphill sites
Contact Person	Mari Sterten
Details of provision(s) (Please list separately all provisions being Reviewed and add/delete bullets as required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address(es); - Number of Placements; - Type of Service/School; and - Specialist Standard used 	<p>Camphill School Aberdeen (Murtle) Central Office Murtle House Murtle Estate Bielside AB15 9EP</p> <p>Camphill School Aberdeen (Camphill) Camphill Estate Milltimber AB13 0AP</p> <p>The current pupil/student role is 78</p> <p>31 boarders and 10 day pupils across 10 house communities</p> <p>Excluded from the review: 11 Boarders at Cairnlee (Young Adults provision) 2 Day placements at Cairnlee 1 Placement @ 2 hours 3 days per week at Cairnlee 23 Students in St. Andrew's Project</p> <p>Type of service reviewed: Day and residential school provision for children aged 5-18 years</p> <p>Specialist Standard: Residential School Standards</p>
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Email address	office@crss.org.uk
Autism Specific Aims for Care / Education	<p>To provide a holistic environment where the child can feel safe, secure and relaxed, with healthy rhythms of eating, sleeping, activity and rest, predictable routines and a high level of consistency and continuity. To support and facilitate the child's learning, with particular attention to developing communication, social skills, and independence skills, but also creativity and play. Develop meaningful manual, cognitive and artistic potential.</p>
Management and Staff Structure	<p>CSA is a therapeutic community. The majority of staff at CSA are voluntary co-workers, who live and work with the children. They have rooms in the same houses as the children, or they live nearby in separate accommodation. Some of the teachers,</p>

therapists and general support staff also live within the community and are volunteers. Some other staff are salaried and live outwith the community. Teachers and therapists are highly qualified and the majority of the long-term co-workers have the BA in Social Pedagogy.

CSA is governed by the Council of Management, which includes external members, drawn from the local business and professional community, and internal members, nominated by the Camphill community.

The day-to-day management of CSA is delegated by the Council of Management to a co-worker group known as the Central Coordinators Group. The coordinators take responsibility for particular tasks (e.g. education coordinator, house coordinator etc.). The Coordinators delegate the business of the School to their task groups. The Coordinators also act as a direct line of communication to the Council. The ethos of CSA is to provide management based on consensus, collaboration, accountability, self-regulation, and the delegation of responsibilities to groups and individuals.

House coordinators are in charge of one of the ten houses and they are responsible for the supervision and mentoring of new co-workers. CSA generally has an intake of new co-workers once a year. Some of the co-workers remain to live and work in the community. Others may leave after a year. New co-workers must undergo a one year foundation course which covers all aspects of work within the school. This programme is based on well researched principles drawn from the European Social Pedagogy tradition and also contains specific sessions on working with autism and supporting communication. The new co-workers have a structured training session once a week. They then have to evidence their understanding of the theory through their practice and in reflective supervision sessions with their house coordinator, which also happens once a week.

The co-workers work across the houses and school/therapy settings/workshops. They work with teachers and classroom assistants (in class), with specialist therapists (in therapeutic sessions), and with craftmasters (in the workshops and gardens). The house coordinators meet once a week and feed back to the central coordinators meeting, which in turn feeds into the Council of Management.

There is a teachers' college, a therapists' college and a craftmasters' group. These are akin to school departments. These groups meet weekly and also send representatives to the central coordinators meeting.

Four standing committees provide more specialist advisory input to the school, in keeping with its philosophy and mission statement. These are:

- Social Pedagogy Committee for Education, Social and Cultural affairs, focusing on the support and development of practice
- Administration Committee for Finance, Property and

	<p>Administration affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Committee for Strategic Development, and • Cairnlee Committee
<p>Description of service/school</p>	<p>CSA is an independent day and residential school. It offers residential places for full time or weekly boarders, as well as day placements for local pupils. It offers an inclusive, comprehensive and holistic approach to education, care and therapy for pupils with severe and complex needs. Around 80% of the pupil roll is on the autism spectrum.</p> <p>All pupils, whether day or residential, belong to a house community. The house community consists of the pupils, their co-workers (1-2 co-workers per child, depending on need), house coordinator, teachers and therapists (most of whom live on site, some with their families).</p> <p>In school, the classes are grouped according to age, using the Waldorf Curriculum (formulated by Rudolf Steiner) which incorporates the national Curriculum for Excellence. As the school is now a registered centre with the Scottish Qualifications Authority, pupils have the opportunity to undertake nationally recognised SQA qualifications. CSA also offers pupils the option of undertaking Duke of Edinburgh Awards and The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society Awards. For pupils aged 16-19 years, there is an extended schooling programme which offers a programme geared toward graduation and the future. This can either be a continuation of pupils' existing schooling in their class, building on skills, knowledge, values and attitudes, or as post-school transition course and vocational training in addition to or as an alternative to college. Young people from either CSA classes or from other schools can opt for CSA's post-16 courses and choose a more practical or vocational focus to their studies. CSA offers life-skills' courses, practical literacy and numeracy, and vocational training in catering, child care, horticulture, farming and craft. Work experience in local settings can also be arranged with young people as part of their continued educational programme. An independent supported-living unit is also on offer to support young people in their transition to independence.</p> <p>Individual therapies are provided to meet the specific needs of pupils. The therapies include speech eurhythmy, art, music, play, exercise, bath, massage, counselling, horse riding and physiotherapy.</p> <p>Pupils are also given the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of craft workshops. These include sculpture, pottery, felt, weaving, metalwork, woodwork and willow-work among others. The school also has gardens and estate grounds in which the pupils are given real</p>

opportunities to care for the outdoor environment, grow and harvest their own food, and provide much-needed resources for the community (e.g. wood for the wood-fired stoves in the houses).

CSA has a range of other services which dovetail into its residential and day school provision. These include:

AMBER KINDERGARTEN

This is a nursery for 3-7 year olds, offering Waldorf educational approaches, close alignment to the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. It offers five morning sessions and two afternoon sessions a week.

CAIRNLEE

Cairnlee offers further training for up to 12 young adults from 16-25 years. Located in Bielside, just 5 miles from Aberdeen, Cairnlee is comprised of 4 houses, craft workshops, gardens and assembly hall, all situated in a beautiful small estate in the midst of a suburban setting. The grounds offer opportunity for work and leisure and are within easy walking distance of local amenities and public transport.

FAMILY SUPPORT

In addition to the ongoing support for the families of residential or non-residential pupils attending Camphill, CSA offers support and guidance to other families through various other services.

A family in crisis because of the complex learning needs or challenging behaviour of a child can receive support and guidance in a short-term residential placement in St. Andrew's House. Here the needs of the whole family can be assessed and addressed. CSA's experienced staff can help family members develop a better understanding for each other's needs and also develop strategies to manage the challenges they face.

Staff from Camphill's St. Andrew's Project can also go to the family home to offer support and guidance. CSA is registered to provide outreach support for families wherever it is needed, and this can take the form of daily or weekly visits to the home to assess the family's needs and to offer support and guidance on the management of challenging behaviours, parenting issues and complex additional support needs.

THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMMES

Therapeutic intervention is available to all the children and young people attending school in Camphill. It is also available as a part outreach package or part-time placements for children and young people who are not pupils of the School.

ST. ANDREW'S PROJECT

Camphill's St. Andrew's Project offers bespoke support for children and young people and their families who require extra help and support due to the risk of family or school breakdown. The project is registered to provide school-home support services, respite services, emergency care for 1 to 10 year olds, individualised intervention programmes and family work. Experienced staff offer an ecological assessment, particularly highlighting the child or young person's perceptions of their strengths, challenges and their vision for themselves. From this assessment a therapeutic programme is created, tailored to facilitate the individual's sustainable development and potential. This may include work in Camphill settings such as individual therapies, specialist care or educational programmes. Often programmes will include, or comprise wholly, outreach work with the child or young person in their home community, family setting or school.

In addition St. Andrew's offers individualised transition programmes for young people aged 18 to 21. The same principles and methods mentioned above are used in establishing these programmes.

Systemic family work and emergency care with the possibility of residential accommodation for the whole family is also available.

St. Andrew's Project also offers respite services for pupils and other children or young people. Respite services are flexible and can include day, or part-day care, and there is some provision for overnight stays.

THE NATURE NURTURE PROJECT

This project provides an early intervention programme for children and young people, comprising the restorative effects of free play in a natural environment and closely attuned nurturing interactions with specially trained staff. The project facilitates the development of resilience in the most vulnerable, such as children and young people from families affected by substance misuse, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, abusive relationships, neglect and poverty.

Nature Nurture runs groups for early years (18 months –

4 years of age), early primary (5-7 years of age), late primary (8-11 years), early secondary (11-13 years) and older secondary (14-16 years). All groups attend weekly sessions, either morning or afternoon, and all but the early years' groups also receive whole-day sessions for a week in school holidays. All sessions take place outdoors irrespective of weather and include adventurous play, physical challenge, creative activities including craft, opportunities to interact with animals, social skill building and collaboration, and opportunities to develop respect for and understanding of the natural world. The structured framework of the sessions allows the children to develop a sense of security and to learn to keep themselves and others safe, but also gives the space for child-initiated learning and play. .

TRAINING

Camphill has a long history as a community of lifelong learning and continued professional development. As part of its commitment to training, the School offers core training and continued professional development in specialised areas of work. The School runs a Foundation Year Course for all co-workers in their first year of work in CSA.

The BA in Social Pedagogy (BASP) is a practice-based training offered by CSA. Until recently this was offered in partnership with Aberdeen University. It is now in its final year with Aberdeen University and is in the process of moving its partnership agreement to Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. The BASP seeks to integrate theoretical teaching with practical experience in the Social Pedagogical areas of care, education, therapeutic activities and crafts. The teaching is informed by the philosophical principles of Rudolf Steiner which adopt the view of the human being as a biological, social, psychological and spiritual entity. In its interdisciplinary character, the BASP represents a challenge to traditional concepts of professional training.

A number of practice placements are offered for social work students as well as teachers in training from Aberdeen University and Robert Gordon University.

CSA organises and hosts a number of professional conferences with international speakers. CSA also offers continued professional development training in autism, play therapy and *Nature Nurture* for staff within CSA as well as from other organisations. Autism training is currently offered to schools, parents' group and other professional bodies throughout the UK, and to other countries including South Africa, Lebanon and India (2010-2012) A postgraduate course in *Nature Nurture* is in development with Aberdeen University.

<p>Philosophy of service/school</p>	<p>CSA is part of the international Camphill Movement. The foundation of the work is an acknowledgment of the spiritual uniqueness of each human being, regardless of differences such as disability or religious or racial background. This is also expressed in anthroposophy, developed by Rudolf Steiner. The approach integrates education, care, crafts and therapy to create a holistic response to the needs of individuals. A particular feature of community life is the cultivation of social integration through the celebration of personal anniversaries, seasonal activities and festivals.</p> <p>The primary task of the CSA is the care and education of children and young people with additional learning and support needs. Believing that each person's needs are unique, CSA aims to formulate responses and approaches which are highly individualised, such as one-person learning programmes, learning in the outdoors, therapeutic programmes etc.</p> <p>As a community that recognises the need for self-development to help others effectively, the work reflects innovation in educational, social and therapeutic practice. For example, CSA were instrumental in running the first degree in Social Pedagogy in Scotland (in association with Aberdeen University).</p> <p>Creating a community where children, young adults and co-workers feel a sense of belonging, support and growth is very important to CSA and they endeavour to live and work together in ways which promote this aspiration. Fundamental to the approach is the recognition of the strengths and abilities of each member of the school community. They have a commitment to treating everyone with respect and dignity and to enabling them to discover their potential. They work towards a future where people with additional learning and support needs are fully included in society.</p> <p>Whilst physically located across three estates, CSA operates as one School and strives to create a unity of purpose and collegiate working. As an eco-school, they are also committed to caring for the land, striving to value the environment and use, where possible and practical, sustainable resources. They integrate this philosophy and practice into the daily life of the School, creating learning opportunities to support and enhance a healthy lifestyle such as land work, gardening, etc. The numbers of children with a diagnosis of ASD have been rising (now around 80% of the pupil role), and training and methods have adapted to ensure that the challenges presented by the Triad of Impairments are met.</p>
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<p>Are there any safeguarding issues which you feel would have an impact on the Accreditation Review?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Description of Physical Environment / Buildings</p>	<p>The part of CSA being reviewed is based across two separate sites set in a rural location on the outskirts of Aberdeen in the north of Scotland. Between the two sites, there are 10 pupil houses.</p> <p>Both sites have park-like grounds with large trees, playgrounds and gardens. The accommodation for pupils and co-workers are in beautifully designed, large houses where life is shared in 'family settings'. There are purpose-built schoolhouses, gym halls with climbing wall, craft workshops (pottery, metal work, sculpture, weavery, candle-making, woodwork, tools for self-reliance, estate work and garden.) There are purpose-built therapy facilities for art therapy, play therapy, eurhythmym and music therapy, therapeutic speech, bath therapy, massage therapy, colour light therapy and therapeutic movement.</p> <p>There is a working vegetable and herb garden which allows the school to be partly self-sufficient, and there is also a separate sensory garden which is particularly used as a therapeutic and educational tool. The estate is the home of 2 donkeys and also offers therapeutic horse riding. There is a squash court, a football field, an outdoor trampoline and a half-pipe.</p> <p>Murtle Estate has a swimming pool, and houses the therapeutic riding school, and a farm with sheep and cattle. It also has a large hall for festival gatherings, concerts and plays. Murtle hosts the Camphill Medical Practice, with 2 practicing doctors and a nurse.</p> <p>Within walking distance along a safe path, lies the village of Newton Dee. Pupils can go shopping here and can also visit the adult Camphill facility which has shops, a café, a bakery and a farm, which provides the sites with organically grown products, milk and bread. Some of the older pupils go to Newton Dee for work-placements.</p>

<p>PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS As identified by the Panel</p>
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Recommendation 1

CS10: Staff should be made aware of the difficulties pupils with autism including those who are verbal can have in processing large chunks of spoken information and the value of providing effective visual cues.

The Review Team can confirm that staff demonstrated good practice when using spoken language with pupils. They made use of visual cues (e.g. photographs, *Boardmaker* symbols, pointing etc.) and used language appropriate to the situations within which they were teaching and supporting pupils.

Sources of Evidence

Observations of staff across both sites

Recommendation 2

CS10: The school should ensure that co-workers fully appreciate the importance of ensuring that young people have access to and are encouraged to make use of their communication supports at all times.

The Review Team can confirm that co-workers generally used the individual communication supports for the pupils. Co-workers were observed to support pupils using individualised communication support such as PECS or pictorial and object cues. Communication supports were outlined in pupil plans. Some of the newer co-workers could have used non-verbal communication supports more effectively.

Sources of Evidence

Observations of staff across both sites
Pupil plans
Communication policy

Recommendation 3

CS14: Whilst sessions are generally well organised with a clear beginning, middle and end, the school is to ensure that transition cues are used to communicate changes in activities during a session. This might include 'countdown', posting symbols from a visual schedule, transition music, timers etc.

The Review Team observed evidence of well-structured activities, in the classrooms, in therapy sessions, in the craft workshops and in the houses. A variety of transition cues were used. These included a countdown clock, visual timetables, simple verbal instructions, and use of a thanking ritual at the beginning and end of meals.

Sources of Evidence

Observations of staff across both sites
Transition policy

Recommendation 4

SS2: A review should be carried out as to how relevant learning outcomes and achievable success criteria can be identified for sessions and how these can be shared with support staff and the pupils themselves.

The Review Team can confirm that a review was held with a former *Education Scotland* Inspector to look at achievable success criteria and learning outcomes. The teaching staff have developed a range of IEPs and the latest *Education Scotland* Inspection report gave CSA three 'very good' and two 'excellent' ratings, which is the highest possible grade in Scotland.

Sources of Evidence

IEPs

Education Scotland Inspection report

Interviews with teachers

Recommendation 5

SS10: Staff should receive support and training in strategies to reduce prompt dependency.

The Review Team can confirm that there has been progress in this area. While we did see instances of prompt dependency, these were isolated. Also, in our view, this was often more apparent from newer co-workers. Support for new co-workers is excellent but there may still be some room for improvement in this area.

Sources of Evidence

Observation of staff across the sites in a variety of activities
Communication policy
Interview with education coordinator

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT As identified in the IDR
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Potential Area 1**Core Standard 6 and Specialist Standard 2**

The school aims to increase pupils' involvement in all aspects of their learning, including the important aspects of planning and self-assessment. This will include increased input into IEP documents, a greater involvement in planning an appropriate broad and balanced curriculum and activities suited to individual needs/preferences and greater use of self-evaluation in assessment and progress monitoring.

All of the IEPs viewed had evidence that pupils were involved in their planning, assessment and self-evaluation, in accordance with their abilities. The timetables are highly individualised and the pupils clearly thrive on the activities, therapies and craft opportunities provided. Each of the activities is designed to meet specific need and is in line with pupil interests. Another important way in which the pupils are involved is through the work of the pupil council, which is chaired by pupils and has representatives from across the community.

Sources of Evidence

Observation of pupil council

IEPs

Discussion with pupils

Potential Area 2

Core Standard 6 and Specialist Standard 2

The school aims to enter candidates for externally accredited certification such as Access 1, 2, 3 Awards as a newly accredited Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Centre. They also aim to continue to source appropriate externally recognised qualifications and certification as appropriate to each individual student, for example entry into the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme.

The Review Team can confirm that CSA is now a registered centre with the SQA. We saw evidence of pupils gathering evidence for assessment for SQA subjects. Teachers were also able to talk about the internal and external quality control needed to offer SQA qualifications to the national standards. One of the teachers has the role of SQA coordinator.

Sources of Evidence

Pupil work and SQA assessment material
Interviews with teachers
Interview with SQA coordinator

POTENTIAL AREAS OF STRENGTH As identified in the IDR
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Potential Area 1

Specialist Standard 2 – Teaching and Learning – Programme / Curriculum and Activity Content

The broad and balanced school curriculum which takes full account of the Curriculum for Excellence, the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum and the specific individual needs of each student through carefully tailored and individualised programmes and pupil led initiatives such as the pupil council, Eco-School award, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, etc. is seen to be a strength.

The Review Team agree that the curriculum is an area of strength for CSA. The curriculum is rich and varied, and is entirely suited to the pupils' needs. The breadth of activities offered ensures that the children are valued and respected as learners, individuals and community members. The range of activities provided takes account of strengths and areas of special interest and provides access to appropriate qualifications, vocational opportunities and progression to independence for young people on the autism spectrum.

The underlying therapeutic approach which is part of the ethos that underpins all care and educational practice within CSA nurtures social and emotional growth, as well as self-esteem, and the Review Team feels that the school deserve recognition and commendation in this regard.

The Review Team observed that the School has a wide range of work-based facilities and vocational opportunities available to students in addition to activities that encourage nurturing the environment and caring for others. (Additional information on this strength will be supported when looking at the evidence of the review standards.)

Sources of Evidence

Curriculum document

Observations of class and workshop activities

Interviews with teachers

Education Scotland Inspection report

Potential Area 2

Core Standard 2- Staff Recruitment and Induction and Core Standard 3- Professional Training and Development

The carefully considered approach to staff training and induction through the use of co-worker training and carefully developed professional development strategies is seen to be a strength.

The Review Team agree that this is an area of considerable strength for CSA. All co-workers go through a comprehensive induction and foundation year training programme. This includes autism-specific training, which is run by the education coordinator who has an MSc in Autism. They also undertake training in behavioural support. Co-workers who wish to progress can then undertake the BA degree programme in social pedagogy.

Internationally renowned speakers such as Olga Bogdashina continue to work with the school and there is clear evidence of the impact of her work in sensory profiling, within the IEPs and personal plans for the children.

Learning is embedded in practice through the supervision/support system. Every person going through the induction and foundation course has a personal supervisor/mentor. The supervisor meets with the co-worker once a week to discuss learning and reflect on how this is put into practice. There is also an annual review where individual training needs are addressed.

Sources of Evidence

Induction and foundation training file

Interviews with co-workers and supervisors/mentors

Interview with autism accreditation coordinator

REVIEW STANDARDS

SPECIALIST STANDARD 1
Environment

The physical environment is fit for purpose/suits its stated purpose and meets/is responsive to the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the needs of people with autism in relation to their environment.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

CSA makes consistent references to the holistic environment throughout its policies and procedures. The curriculum document emphasises the importance of use of the environment in achieving the best learning outcomes for pupils. CSA continues to work to its autism action plan which reflects the needs of children and young people with autism. Sensory checklists based on the work of Olga Bogdishina form an important part of the plans for pupils and acknowledge that sensory sensitivities have an impact on children and young people with autism. The Behaviour Support Strategies (BSS) Document explains the importance of a secure and caring environment that is orderly, safe and consistent. BSS is a BILD accredited organisation offering comprehensive training to staff in many organisations across Scotland that work with children on the autism spectrum. BSS *'has a strong ethos in supporting people who access Services to communicate, exercise their rights and get their needs met in a proactive and empowering manner'*. CSA follows BSS commitments to maintain their accreditation with BSS. CSA *'s* guiding vision states that *'creating a community where children, young adults and co-workers feel a sense of belonging, support and growth is very important to us and we endeavour to live and work together in ways which promote this aspiration'*. The Waldorf Curriculum, upon which CSA's approach is based, strongly emphasises the role of environment and this emphasis is clear in every activity within the school. The annual report also emphasised the role of environment in the wellbeing of pupils and was pleased to report that the school had achieved the Gold Standard from Eco-Schools Scotland.

2. The physical environment reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and meets the needs of the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

In keeping with the written documentation, the educational and residential facilities are structured and fitted out to a very high standard. Classrooms were orderly and welcoming. Craft workshops such as sculpture, metal work, pottery, woodwork, weaving and felt work not only reflected real work situations but at the same time, had good use of work zones and visual cues evident. These spaces were calm and ordered, giving a great sense of peace. There was noise within the gym, as may be expected. However, pupils did not appear to find this distracting and worked well on all of the activities within which they were engaging. Pupils were mostly supported by one or even two co-workers. At the first sign of distress, the pupil was supported. If a pupil had to leave, they were re-integrated back into the lesson or activity as soon as possible.

While CSA is not an autism-specific provision, it still has a calm, low arousal environment. The school general areas and the residences have soft colour schemes and appropriate robust yet homely furnishings. In the residences, pictures, mirrors, soft furnishings and ornaments figure widely and there were no signs of any damage or breakages. The common living areas within the residences are zoned into larger and smaller homely segments and bedrooms giving good opportunities for space and quiet if needed. Bedrooms can be personalised in line with the preferences and needs of the residents. For example, one young person who was very badly affected by his autism had a tent bed, and visual prompts for activities and routines on his bedroom wall.

Both campuses are based in beautiful rural surroundings and have safe and well-structured play areas which are available to pupils both during the school day at break times and in the evening when they are in residence. The play equipment within the play areas is robust and encourages appropriate risk taking in a safe and structured environment.

The gardens and grounds in the estate are immaculately laid out and cared for. This provides a healthy natural environment for the pupils. Beltane semi-independent flat is a post-16 provision. In keeping with the school's emphasis on supporting young people to achieve their fullest potential, this facility is based at the edge of the Camphill campus. The flat is also well structured, fitted out and decorated to a high standard, while remaining homely and



welcoming. From the front gate and grounds, to the smallest features within the education and residential buildings across the two sites, the message that comes across is that all community members are valued and important, and that a good environment is central to wellbeing and progress.

3. The physical environment is used effectively to promote well-being and progress for the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

CSA places children at the heart of all of its activities. This includes taking account of individual needs in relation to the environment. Sensory profiles exist for the children who need them. The issues which can affect children on the autism spectrum are taken into account in activities within the residences and the classroom and strategies put in place within the environment to reduce these impacts to a minimum (for example, visual signifiers for time passing, ear protectors, access to massage and bath therapy to calm and soothe.)

It was noted that pupils at the school can take part in wider community activities such as shopping, drama clubs or folk dancing, either in the wider community or within the other parts of the campus. There is also a tradition of celebrating seasonal festivals as a large group, which is facilitated with the existence of a beautiful community hall in the Murtle campus. Pupils are involved in the organisation of these events and also take part in them. One of the parents who was interviewed spoke highly of the inclusive nature of the celebrations and performances. She described how even those children with the severest and most complex needs who may be confined to wheelchairs take part in performances and celebrations with the support of their co-workers. With her voice full of emotion, she said "Have you ever seen the performances? It's joint, with the child and the co-worker. It's so inclusive you have to see it to believe it"

The environment of this school is excellent in every aspect. Above all, it gives a very concrete representation to pupils that they are worthwhile and respected. The spaces within the school and the residences are well used to promote the wellbeing and progress of the pupils. The bedrooms provide a safe space into which pupils can retreat if they need to and the communal spaces provide opportunities for interaction. For example young people sat together at small tables at all mealtimes, and there are no television sets in the houses. Mealtimes seemed to be a particularly valued time for

the pupils. Not only are they wonderful times for interaction but also they help pupils on the autism spectrum to manage their feelings. For example, after lunch, the pupils and co-workers sit at the table for a moment of quiet time. One young person sitting at the table with me was very hyperactive but he managed to sit at the table for that short time and manage his impulses. This was recognised and praised by the house coordinator.

The staff have an ethos of making sure that children are cared for, included and valued. They realise that the environment has an impact on this and the review team saw good examples of a variety of communication methods to help children get the very best out of the environment offered.

4. People with autism are able to function effectively within the physical environment and their well-being is enhanced.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

There is no doubt that some of the children who attend this school and who are on the autistic spectrum have presented extremely challenging behaviours. For example one parent told us of her son who smashed up the home, and had severe tantrums and sleep problems. She related that her family was at breaking point. Yet there was little sign of these challenges within CSA. This is due in part to the calming and structured environment of the school and residences. Pupils were at ease in the environment and free to explore it as they wished. Good supervision was in evidence at all times. Teachers, co-workers and therapists were all involved in supporting children and all of them ate with the children during the school day and evening. The presence of adults who genuinely care about the children and the adults' use of positive encouragement and calm boundary setting is also a major factor in the children's sense of safety and comfort.

The two school sites are different environments but they all reflect the same ethos of respect, care and community.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

- Autism action plan
- Behaviour Support Strategies Document
- Annual report
- CSA website: guiding vision

Sensory checklists

Interviews & Discussions with:

Discussion with co-workers
Interview with house coordinators
Interview with Bath and Massage therapist
Interview with Play therapist
Interview with Therapeutic movement therapist

Observations:

Class lesson in gym
Class lesson covering history, maths, English and ICT
Speech eurhythmy session
Therapeutic movement session
Lunch and supper in two residences
Sculpture and pottery workshop sessions
Tour of grounds and gardening activities in vegetable garden and sensory garden

Areas of Strength

Environment (Specialist Standard 1)

The Review Team consider the environment at CSA to be an area of considerable strength. The rural location, layout of the school and residences, and the well-designed outdoor spaces provide pupils with a safe, well respected and homely setting within which to live, learn and flourish. The two school campuses are based in areas of great natural beauty. This provides healthy living and learning environments which are used to the full. The therapy rooms, workshops and residences are warm, welcoming and calming environments which contribute well to the support of those children on the autism spectrum.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 2

Teaching/Learning - Programme/Curriculum and Activity Content

The programme/curriculum and the content of activities are informed by an understanding of autism/takes into account the needs of the people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. Within policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines there is a clear written description of the needs of people with autism in relation to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The St John's School Curriculum Document clearly sets out the curriculum and how this translates for each class/age. The curriculum is based on the Waldorf Curriculum, as developed by Rudolph Steiner, which is used in all Camphill educational establishments. Within the policy is a clear statement of the barriers to learning created by the Triad of Impairment – involving Language and Communication difficulties, Social and Emotional issues and Flexibility of Thought.

The curriculum includes specific areas relevant for children and young people with an ASD – independence skills, communication, social and emotional development, therapeutic activities, craft activities, physical activities, self-help skills and community activities. Sensory issues are addressed for all individuals in a holistic way. The curriculum document discusses the multi-disciplinary approach to meeting these individual needs. Meeting these needs is a core feature of the policies, procedures, local protocol and guidelines. This was clear from the policy, individual plans, observations across the curriculum and in the houses. It came across strongly in interviews and discussions. A large number of IEPs and Personal Plans were viewed by the Review Team. These were extremely detailed and included all curriculum areas as well as therapeutic activities. Summaries listed each individual's general needs in relation to their ASD and these included information on sensory integration, communication, learning style, flexibility of thought issues and dietary needs.

The links between *Curriculum for Excellence*, the curriculum used in all settings within the Scottish education system, are made clear

within the document. *Curriculum for Excellence* highlights the importance of active learning and using environments outwith the classroom. It also fosters a holistic approach to developing the 4 capacities – successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective learners. These aspects are addressed within the Waldorf approach as discussed in the document and echoed in interviews and discussions with a range of staff.

The Curriculum Document includes discussion of a range of aspects which are important for pupils with an ASD and Laterality. Physical activities, both inside and outdoors, are an important aspect of the curriculum. This includes Movement and Co-Ordination, Spatial Awareness and Laterality. Aspects of the Maths curriculum are linked with spatial awareness. Numeracy and Literacy run across the curriculum. There are detailed Handcraft, Music and Expressive Arts programmes.

Stages of development are taken into consideration with progression of content through the stages. There is a thematic approach to planning with each class covering a broad range of curriculum areas through experiences and outcomes appropriate to the individual.

The Curriculum Document includes a Transition Policy. The procedures for anxiety-free micro transitions between activities were observed in action with personal visual timetables and signed support, where appropriate.

In January 2012, inspectors from Education Scotland (the national education inspectorate) commented that

'A regular, diverse programme of activities allows children and young people to develop their skills effectively. Staff use of the outdoors to enrich learning is outstanding. Opportunities are planned coherently to build a depth and breadth of experience, build on the levels of challenge and allow children and young people the opportunity to make choices which are relevant to them'

and the school curriculum was judged to be *excellent*, the highest grade that can be given to curriculum by the inspectorate.

2. The programme/curriculum and the content of sessions reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and are informed by the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The Review Team saw a large range of activities offered to children and young people with autism which demonstrated that there is a shared and consistent knowledge and understanding of the needs associated with ASD.

Therapeutic activities were an element of the individual plans viewed by the Review team for most of the individuals with an ASD. These included therapeutic horse riding, oil dispersion bath therapy, speech and language therapy, music therapy, play therapy, massage therapy, colour-light, counselling, speech eurhythmy and exercise therapy. Swimming was also available on campus. Communication and social interaction are developed within appropriate contexts such as meals, assembly, group activities etc.

One therapist showed the progress made by individuals through their work and these showed the range of individualised approaches used in relation to drawing, painting, and clay work. Individual timetables, IEPs and Personal Plans incorporated an individualised range of therapeutic sessions within each young person's day.

One excellent example of this was Colour-Light therapy. This is an approach developed within Camphill establishments. The room used was designed by staff. It has a raised area with a floor-to-ceiling white curtain. Coloured sheets have been used on the windows, which allow the coloured light effects. The room is only lit by this natural light. It starts in silence with a stimulating colour but progresses through the range of individual colours. Set musical accompaniments match the different visual elements. Part of the session involves a therapist moving behind the curtain, which changes the patterns visible to the audience. The colour sequence is repeated for the end of the session. This is used as a weekly activity for a small group. The Review Team member who experienced the session, individually, found it very calming and the whole structure and rhythm led to a more relaxed breathing pattern.

The Review Team was shown evidence of a highly individualised programme to ease the transition to the school for a young person with a diagnosed ASD. He came to the school in a highly anxious state. Staff recognise this and are working as a team to help reduce his anxiety and help him to begin to participate in activities. Initially, he chose to remain in his room and have minimal contact with staff. He has been given time and space to build relationships with a small staff team and has reached the stage where he is able to take part in activities. The teacher and Art Therapist used his interests to engage and reassure him over a period of time. This included comic-strip stories, produced on a long sheet of paper

which was posted under the door, and humorous poems. He is now comfortable with these members of staff and can comment on his feelings about himself and how he would like his learning to develop.

Life skills are also important. One pupil was observed doing the class laundry. He walked independently from class to the Laundry, which is in another building. This had been built up over a period of time. The co-worker follows at a distance and only provides support at the washing machine/dryer. This progression to independence was recorded in the pupil's individual plan. It links to the Promoting Independence section of the Curriculum document which states

'We aim to give our pupils the knowledge and skills to enable them to lead as full and independent a life as possible.'

Two pupils were observed on a shopping trip. Both had pictorial shopping lists. Support was given for crossing roads. One of the pupils needed support in paying and this was done by appropriate use of prompts. The other student was observed at a distance and carried out the task independently. He had money and was able to pay for his shopping himself. He was able to work out that he had enough change to buy himself the crisps he wanted as well. The shop was part of the Newton Dee Adult Camphill Community's social enterprise which includes a gift shop, café and bakery as well as a shop.

The class lessons observed by the team provided evidence of the link between policy and practice. The team observed lessons in Physics, History, Maths, English and Geography.

Practical activities were another strong feature of the curriculum. The workshops where observations were carried out, were very calm work spaces. Small groups attended and these were 'mixed' groups of pupils from different classes. Pupils each had their own tasks. Some of these were very sensory activities such as the felting process, where soapy water was rubbed through a mesh into the felt. This took a sustained period of time but the pupil observed remained engaged in the activity. In the Weavery, pupils worked at individual looms. Pupils were able to work independently on familiar aspects of the tasks and make choices of materials. The Review Team experienced the calm, purposeful atmosphere of these sessions. A thorough assessment sheet was used for weaving which covered specific skills, the independence level and ASD specific aspects – including the ability to sustain the activity, ability to cope with the environment and the presence of others.

3. The programme/curriculum and the content of activities promote the independence, well-being and progress of the individuals with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

Annual Personal Plans for students with a diagnosed ASD cover Self-help skills, Eating Sleeping, Practical Skills, Mobility and Orientation, Speech and Communication and Emotional Well-Being. These gave a full picture of all aspects of the person’s care and education.

Class lessons observed by the Review Team were creatively delivered using visual supports, signifiers, music and songs to engage all students. Main lessons included a recap of previous work. References to individual interests were used to motivate pupils. Most tasks were set at an appropriate level with differentiated outcomes where appropriate.

Co-workers supported pupils to carry out their work as independently as possible – collecting equipment using visual supports, following a photographic strip of tasks, working alongside a co-worker who was modelling a process etc.

Some young people had SMART targets which were then evaluated with comments and photographic evidence. Achievements were observed being recognised and evaluated in a variety of contexts – within assembly, when the Swimming Gala medals were discussed, during work in the classroom and at mealtimes when the Musical Performance was discussed.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the programme/curriculum and the content of activities and maintain skills or make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The Review Team observed numerous positive examples of pupils being effectively engaged and involved in the curriculum of activities.

Overall the atmosphere throughout the campus was very calm and the extensive grounds ensure that young people requiring time away from others or outside physical activity are able to have this. The lessons observed were delivered in an enthusiastic and creative way – summarising knowledge and skills through a poster showing the elements of transferring visual information to a television set.

Geographical knowledge started with the known – the house – then Aberdeen – Scotland – UK – Europe – Earth. Music, songs, objects of reference, symbols and photos were all used to maintain students' interest. Lessons were clearly part of the curriculum as described with the Curriculum Document.

Most pupils were happy and took an active part in their learning. The assembly observed was an example of pupil engagement. This followed a set structure with music to start. After some discussion there was a photo matching activity which kept almost everyone actively participating. A short physical activity was thoroughly enjoyed, and then two pupils shared some successes at a swimming gala. A song ended the session. One pupil who wasn't coping was appropriately supported to move out for some time and space outwith the room.

There was a clear link between the policy, the work practice and content observed and the individual plans. Progression for each individual could be tracked through the termly evaluations. It was noted that a number of different IEP templates were being used. Each of the models had aspects to recommend them. However, the Review Team did find that this made comparison across plans a little time consuming. We would recommend that CSA review their plans and decide upon a common template.

Duke of Edinburgh Award activities are underway and some students have achieved their bronze level award. Photographs and IEPs provided evidence of the Expedition section of the programme and Volunteering is the next section. The School is now an SQA Centre and pupils are working on Access and National qualifications at a variety of levels. Access 1 units include Maths and Healthy Basic Cooking Units. Eight pupils are working on Access 3 in Maths, English or Computer studies. One pupil is working on Woodwork at Access 2. Four pupils are working for National 4 in English, and two are working on National 4 Lifeskills Maths. Pupils are encouraged to create their own photographic folders of evidence. One of the teachers has been appointed as the SQA coordinator and ensures that pupils are being entered for the awards.

Sources of Evidence

Written Documentation of:

St John's Curriculum policy

IEPs

Personal Plans

Education Scotland (previously hMIE) report January 2012

Annual review reports
Camphill website
Camphill leaflets
Interim Development Report

Interviews & Discussions with:

Education Co-Ordinator
Class Teachers
House Co-Ordinators
Art Therapist
Classroom Assistants
Therapeutic Practitioner
Craft Instructors
Co-workers
SQA coordinator

Observations:

Assembly
Main Lessons – Physics and geography
Listening Space
Weaving session
Feltmaking session
Shopping Outing
Lunch in a House
Dinner in a House
Baking session
Laundry session

Areas of Strength

**Teaching / Learning - Programme / Curriculum and Activity Content
(Specialist Standard 2)**

The strength of the curriculum lies in its holistic approach to the needs of each individual. The elements which combine to form the curriculum address the issues which can be part of an ASD – communication, social understanding. The curriculum, based on the *Scottish Curriculum for Excellence* and the *Waldorf Curriculum* is carefully considered and suited to the students' needs. The breadth of activities ensures that the children are valued as learners and as human beings. Activities provided take account of strengths and areas of special interest and provide access to appropriate qualifications and vocational opportunities. The underlying ethos of acceptance and respect that underpins practice within CSA nurtures social and emotional growth and the Review Team feel that the school deserves recognition in this regard. Therapies, creative

activities and an emphasis on practical learning for life are integrated within highly individualised programmes. The curriculum is rich and varied, and makes full use of the natural resources within which the campuses are based. The vocational content of activities, particularly in the workshop areas enhances a sense of achievement, wellbeing and self-esteem.

Training (Core Standard 3)

There is no doubt that the richness of the curriculum and the application of methods to practice comes from a wide knowledge and skills base on the part of the adults at CSA. CSA offers an excellent training and development scheme for co-workers which is supported by a supervision and mentoring system. This means that theory is put into practice and reflected upon, which in turn embeds that learning within practice. The school also has a team of highly experienced and qualified co-workers, teachers and therapists who provide outstanding role models and leadership for newer co-workers. Their commitment to looking at new methods and updating their knowledge base cannot be questioned.

Wellbeing – Developing Independence (Specialist Standard 10)

CSA provides the pupils with opportunities to develop their independence within every aspect of their lives and within every activity. Children are encouraged to appreciate and live as one with their environment. As they get older and are able to manage more, they become responsible for self-care and behaviour. The addition of semi-independent living unit for older students builds upon the skills developed within the school to encourage independent shopping, travelling and self-care within a homely setting. The Review Team see this progression as a real strength.

Areas for Development

Standardising Individual Education Plans (Core Standard 7)

It was noted that a variety of individual education plans were in use. While each of the plans had positive aspects, we recommend that the school should decide on one particular template reflecting the strengths of the existing IEPs. In some cases, targets identified were not as specific as they might be. Therefore, we also recommend that SMART principles should be applied more consistently to all targets.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 3

Teaching/Learning – Activity Organisation & Resources

There is a planned approach to the organisation of activities and resources that takes into account the needs of people with autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the organisation of activities and resources in relation to the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

A range of appropriate visual resources was seen throughout the review, these included visual timetables, PECS books, *Boardmaker* symbols, communication books, choosing boards, talkers, timers and Noise-o-Meters.

The School's Teaching and Learning Policy informs practice in relation to pupil's specific areas of needs unique to ASD. The Policy refers to such aspects as the need for visual timetables and consistent use of symbols across the pupil's day. It also outlines the need to focus on social and emotional development and to incorporate this in all aspects of life at CSA.

All pupils at CSA have a communication target which is written in consultation with the pupil and their family, their class teacher and co-workers. The targets are included within the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The Review Team saw many examples of IEPs which also highlighted the resources needed by the pupils for communication, and also to support them at times when the pupil may be experiencing sensory overload. Visual resources for the pupil's communication are made by the Communication Facilitator in consultation with the Speech and Language Therapist, and also by the class team.

The therapeutic element of the curriculum is seen as being very important at CSA. The Review Team recognise the environment to be used well as a resource for pupils to have sensory breaks or to use the outdoors to facilitate learning targets. An example of this was where one pupil received his maths lesson whilst rollerblading with his class teacher. During this activity, the pupil had to calculate distances and speed. By planning activities to suit the individual's

learning style, and using the pupils' interests, this has enabled learning and progress to take place for this individual.

The Behaviour Management Policy (BSS document) states that the school 'identifies and maintains good routines' and aims to 'create a peaceful and well-ordered social climate'. These aspects of policy inform the way in which activities are organised. The Statement of Aims and Purposes states that 'our main therapeutic purposes are the drive toward better self-understanding, (and) greater awareness of others' and that these aims are met through specific individualised care and education programmes'. The theme of consistency and close relationships to support pupils is echoed across all of the policies and across staff groups. Indeed the Statement of Aims and Purposes states that 'the traditional 'divide' between education and care staff has no place in our approach.' The policies mandate staff to work across traditional boundaries to maintain and enhance consistency. Also the importance of the role of house groups is emphasised in the Care Policy, which states that 'it is within the house groups that the degree of success in other planned areas of group therapy are to be judged and assessed.'

2. The organisation of activities and resources reflects policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and takes into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
	X		

Strategies that support and inform practice in relation to the needs of individuals with an ASD are documented within policy and guidance. For example the Communication Policy advocates the use of a communication system that best suits individual pupils. The policy further outlines the range of approaches and resources designed to best support the needs of pupils which include the TEACCH approach, PECS, intensive interaction, and MAKATON signing. The use of Social Stories and written reminders of rules and ways to behave in social situations are also mentioned within this policy. The Review Team observed the use of these various approaches being implemented within the majority of observations. One example was where a pupil used PECS across settings. He used PECS during his lesson in school, and was later observed within the house during lunch, where he used PECS to request his food choice. This demonstrated consistency of practice and promoted generalisation of communication skills. Intensive Interaction was observed to be used naturally on a number of occasions, across the school and in the residences, to support their communication and as way to calm and interact positively with pupils.

Other good practice was the use of visual timetables to aid micro transition. For example when transitioning from group to individual activities, in other observations a pupil used PECS to request a sensory break. However in a few observations, the Review Team felt there were missed opportunities to use visual support to enable independence and make transitions. In a gardening session the same pupil who had been observed enjoying autonomy using a visual system had to wait for verbal prompts for each step of his activity. While the Review Team recognised that co-workers are at different stages in their level of experience, we would still recommend that CSA develop and share good practice of when to use visual support to enable independence, and also to consider greater use of co-workers to demonstrate and therefore be the visual model to scaffold activities and make full use of the excellent adult-pupil ratio that is an asset at CSA.

Pupils are grouped in classes according to their age. To aid consistency and ensure predictability, pupils benefit from a high adult-pupil ratio, with most pupils being supported by an assigned co-worker. Good relationships and respect for all pupils is evident, and furthermore it is clear that at CSA the ethos of the value and uniqueness of each individual is promoted. The high adult-pupil ratio also enables a flexible and highly individualised approach to the pupil's personal curriculum.

All pupils at CSA belong to a house community; pupils eat lunch together in their home with co-workers and other pupils. The Review Team recognise that the organisation and routines within this welcoming and warm home environment is supportive to developing social skills and generalising communication across settings and also provides opportunities for flexibility of thought. The organisation of house routines emphasise clear structured and predictable routines which are again flexible and differentiated for the individual. In this setting the adults are a valuable resource to model skills and appropriate behaviour in a relaxed and supportive approach. Pupils respond positively and the Review Team consider these relationships to be a valuable resource and a model of good practice.

3. The organisation of activities and resources promotes the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

The well-being of the pupils at the school is given a high priority by

all staff. The academic, therapeutic and life skills elements of the curriculum are all emphasised and reflect the individual's needs. In the best examples, the Review Team observed pupils motivated and engaged in craft activities such as woodland work, metal, weaving, pottery and sculpture workshops. The Review Team consider that these experiential learning activities developed independence, communication, social understanding and flexibility. These unique activities also enhanced creativity and allowed appropriate risk-taking as a result of the pupils' motivation to take part. The Review Team recognise these resources and activities to be a strength at CSA.

In the classroom-based activities observed, lessons were well prepared and resources were ready to use. Lesson plans were also available, individualised to that lesson or pupil. There was a good balance between independent activities and supported activities, demonstrating good differentiation. In the houses, there was a clear structure to the evening, centred on mealtimes, leisure or evening activities and high levels of support from the regular co-worker for the child.

All staff and co-workers throughout the school demonstrate excellent practice in applying standards consistently. The parent who was interviewed, the older pupils and the co-workers all referred to how positive, warm and encouraging the school is.

The co-workers, teachers, therapists and craftmasters are extremely flexible, facilitating and mutually supportive. The heart of their work is the child, at all times. Most of the adults within CSA have made a lifestyle choice to live and work within the community and this has immeasurable benefits for the children, especially in terms of consistency and continuity. For example, it is likely that the same co-workers will be around to wake children up, accompany them at various times during the school day, eat with them and put them to bed at night. This helps children affected by ASD to understand that they are cared for, safe and educated at all times. There is no use of agency or supply staff. The importance of consistency, driven by a profound sense of care and compassion for the children was evident in every adult encountered during the review.

4. The people with autism respond positively to the activity and the resources used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The children and young people within this school are highly complex and challenging. Yet in all activities observed, there was a sense of calmness even when children were displaying challenging behaviour. There were also some instances of mutual support between the older more able pupils. For example in the ICT lesson, one pupil said he would be working on making a poster but was struggling with the content for the poster. Another pupil said 'I'll help you with that if you like' and proceeded to work with the pupil on what should go on a poster for an upcoming performance that was being arranged in the school. This behaviour of mutual support clearly comes from the staff who model this behaviour in all aspects of community life. In instances where it looked like a child was beginning to struggle behaviourally in class, the co-workers were on hand to give them time out and help them to process what was upsetting them. This allowed lessons to continue while the individual needs of those children requiring more support for a short time were addressed.

CSA carefully consider the individual needs of each child and ensure that each pupil has opportunities to embrace the varied and specialist resources and activities throughout the pupil's day. As a result of the organisation of staffing and school ethos, pupils have excellent relationships with co-workers, therapists and teachers. Throughout the review, pupils were seen to be engaged in lessons and responding positively to the resources presented to them. This was evident in classroom settings, craft workshops, and whilst pupils were using the exceptional outdoor play, recreational and learning areas. Behaviour is managed consistently and calmly ensuring a positive outcome for the pupil and peers. Furthermore the calm feeling within the school demonstrates that pupils with autism are responding positively to the excellent and varied activities and resources at CSA and as a result make good progress. One pupil was seen making a bowl in the metal workshop, and the evident growth in his self-esteem and confidence was clear as a result of this opportunity to be independent and achieve. Pupils are nurtured to achieve their full potential.

Sources of Evidence:

Written Documentation of:

Communication policy

Curriculum document

IEPs

Summary of Educational and Personal Plans

Risk assessments

Lesson plans
Behaviour Management Document (BSS policy)

Interviews & Discussions with:

SALT
Communication support facilitator
Class teachers

Areas of Strength (if any)

Consistency and Behaviour Support (Core Standards 8 and 12)

The Review Team observed co-workers supporting pupils in a very positive and consistent manner across all settings. Older pupils were also noted to be supportive of each other. The fact that co-workers and pupils live and work together mean that exceptional consistency is evident in the support is provided. This was seen to be an area of considerable strength. In addition, co-workers, teachers and therapists are trained in BSS (Behaviour Support Strategies) and this is applied consistently. CSA works with extremely challenging children and young people but at no time did we see behavioural issues causing any problems to staff or other pupils. The calmness and care with which all of the staff approach the children is commendable.

Areas for Development

Maximising Communication Support (Core Standard 10)

While a wide range of visual communication supports were evident, there were some instances where co-workers missed opportunities to provide alternatives to speech, when this was not working. By incorporating more alternatives, this would encourage independence and reduce the need for adult prompts. We recommend that co-workers become fully aware of all of the alternative visual methods of supporting communication, including use of self as model.

SPECIALIST STANDARD 4 Teaching/Learning – Methods

There is a range of methods and approaches used with people with autism that respond to their needs and are informed by a knowledge and understanding of autism.

INDICATORS

1. There are policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines that inform practice regarding the approaches and methods used with the people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		X	

CSA has an autism action plan and a communication policy which details the approaches and interventions to be used at the school. These include the use of visual timetable, social stories, comic strip conversations, sensory checklists and profiles, transition management, therapy sessions, and counselling.

All paperwork with regards to autism, including training materials and approaches show a clear and consistent understanding of Autism. The co-worker handbook contains specific sections on autism and this is helpful as a backup to the training and supervision. The review team are happy that this is in line with NAS Accreditation standards and meets the needs of the pupils in their care.

2. The approaches and methods used reflect policies, procedures, local protocol & guidelines and take into account the needs of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
		x	

The school and residential settings demonstrate a calm and low arousal environment for student to navigate. The SPELL approach was evident in that there were good levels of structure built into the foundations of routines across the pupils' day, low arousal approaches and sensory strategies were observed, there is a culture of positivity and support throughout and pupils are respected as individuals and cared for as children and young people.

The communication and consultation systems within CSA ensure that the needs of pupils are to the forefront of all practice. The staff

meet within their specialist groups. Hence, there is a teachers' college, a therapists' college and a house coordinator meeting. These groups are akin to traditional school departments and meet weekly. There are also house meetings in each of the houses, which include co-workers, coordinators and residents. There is a pupil council meeting at which representatives from all parts of the service are present. The coordinators' meeting is the key operational management group and the Council of Management is the strategic group. The groups are effective in ensuring consistency and continuity.

The Review Team saw excellent evidence of social stories to prepare young people for new events and provide clear and consistent rules to support transitions. The approaches and interventions outlined in the autism action plan were reflected in practice with strategies such as small class sizes, good levels of physical and visual structure, the provision of a range of quiet areas and outside active areas, and most crucially, a high level of appropriate and consistent co-worker support for pupils. The approaches and methods used were effective and contributed to the education and care of pupils on the autism spectrum.

3 The approaches and strategies promote the well-being and progress of people with autism.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The school's preferred approach which underpins all of their work is a therapeutic approach, underpinned by the principles of the Waldorf Curriculum. These two approaches support pupils extremely well from providing a calm, consistent environment to ensuring that all pupils feels safe and valued as individuals.

The school has a pupil council, which has a real influence of aspects of school life, and is not merely tokenistic. This reflects the consultative ethos of the whole community. The pupil council was observed in the process of devising a survey to consult on where new bike racks should be placed. The survey questions were good and they were also designed using *Boardmaker* symbols and pictures so as to be fully inclusive.

The approaches employed to support positive behaviour were seen as consistent, continuous and extremely positive. All pupils had an individual care plan and IEP which ensured that their individual needs were catered for. In addition, a 'pupil study' is carried out for each pupil twice a year. This is where teachers, co-workers and

therapists involved with the pupil have a meeting to look at how needs have been met over the past 6 months and how they can be progressed in the next 6 months. Targets are set and these are drawn into the working plans for the pupils. These documents all demonstrated understanding of autism, appropriate positive behavioural strategies, sensory preferences and strategies and low arousal approaches.

The Review Team observed all members of staff supporting pupils in a very positive and consistent manner across all settings. Pupils were also noted to be supportive of each other and were encouraged to develop the coping skills needed to take responsibility and manage their own behaviour. Co-workers provided exceptional support to individual students when it was required. The communication between staff and children was very good and showed understanding of the difficulties that pupils with autism can have with processing speed and concrete understanding. In addition, work was done to help pupils manage some of the aspects of their autism. For example, one young person had an overwhelming interest in musical theatre. During supper in the semi-independent flat, where he had prepared a meal for one of the review team members, he began talking about his interest. He then stopped and said 'but I need to be careful and not talk too much about musical theatre and also let other people talk.' This area of practice was seen to be an area of considerable strength.

The care practice at CSA is outstanding across all areas. The quality of planning and review is very high and strategies documented are consistently seen to be in practice. The relationships between co-workers and children, both within the school and the care settings are second to none. There is a sense of genuine care and respect for the children. This provides the children with honest, secure and consistent care, from a team of consistent and continuously present co-workers and role models.

4 The people with autism respond positively to the approaches and methods used and make progress.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Met & Exceeded
			X

The beautiful environment and high quality buildings and resources across the school and residential settings encourage a respect for property, and a homely environment that creates a calm and positive atmosphere. During discussion with members of the pupil council, it was noted that the pupils pointed out aspects of their environment which they particularly appreciated including art work,

therapy buildings, the beautiful grounds and gardens and their co-workers. The pupils were familiar with all staff and greeted them in a familiar but polite manner in and around the school and grounds.

The school is a low-tech environment. However, good appropriate use was made of technology to support learning. PCs, iPads and iPhones were accessed during some lessons to support visual learning preferences. Pictures taken by iPhone were also sent immediately to a central base for incorporation in home/school diaries or to provide evidence of achievement of targets.

All pupils appeared happy and secure both in the school and the residential areas. Their feedback in informal discussions over lunch and supper and after the pupil council was extremely positive.

The parent comments during the interview and on the questionnaires were extremely complementary to the school and in particular the understanding of their children's needs. They made lots of references to improved behaviour and happier children with some parents commenting about how the help school had provided, had prevented family breakdown. The parent questionnaires and an evaluation of parental views on respite provision were also very positive about the school. One parent who had who was interviewed said that 10 years ago she could not visualise any kind of future for her highly challenging and anxious son. Now she reports he is a changed young man, taking part in live performances, attending clubs outwith the school and looking forward to attending a further education college.

The overall view of the Review Team is that the pupils are happy and secure and benefit from the positive relationships they have with staff and co-workers. This is all built upon a community ethos which fully supports and values the pupils as equal members of the community, and which works in real partnership with families. The methods used are autism friendly and demonstrate a depth of understanding of autism. The Review Team feel that this is a strength of the school.

Sources of Evidence

Written Documentation of:

Autism action plan
Behaviour Support Strategies Document
Communication policy
Evaluation of respite provision
CSA website: guiding vision

Sensory checklists

Interviews & Discussions with:

Discussion with co-workers
Interview with house coordinators
Interview with parent
Interview with Bath and Massage therapist
Interview with Play therapist
Interview with Therapeutic movement therapist

Observations:

Class lesson in gym
Class lesson covering history, maths, English and ICT
Speech eurhythmy session
Therapeutic movement session
Lunch and supper in two residences
Sculpture and pottery workshop sessions
Tour of grounds and gardening activities in vegetable garden and sensory garden

Areas of Strength

Links with Families (Core Standard 13)

Parent questionnaires, evaluation of parent views on respite, and discussion with a parent representative demonstrated that the school maintains excellent links with families. Both house and school communication with families was praised. Communication takes many forms and this was deeply appreciated by families.

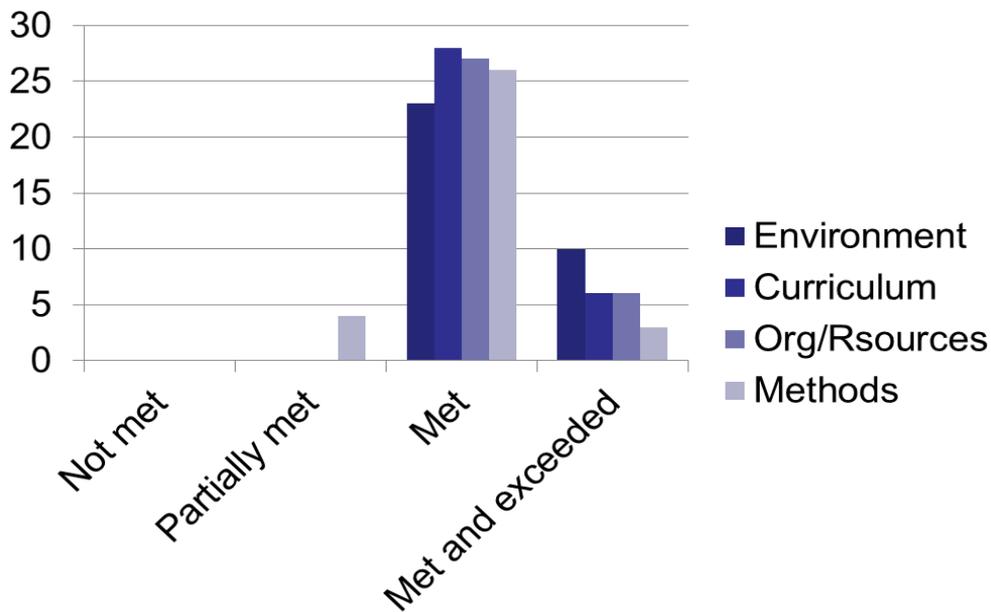
Care Practice (Specialist Standards 5 and 6)

The care practice at CSA is outstanding across all areas. The relationships between co-workers and between co-workers and pupils, both within the school and the care settings are excellent. There is a sense of absolute respect and genuine concern between co-workers and pupils. The Camphill philosophy and its practice of social pedagogy ensures that pupils develop to their fullest potential within a caring and supportive community.

SUMMARY

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATION SCORES				
Number of observations completed:				33
	NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET	MET	MET & EXCEEDED
Environment	0	0	23	10
Activity Content	0	0	28	5
Activity Organisation and Resources	0	0	27	6
Methods	0	4	26	3
TOTALS	0	4	104	24
PERCENTAGES	0%	4%	78%	18%



Comments:

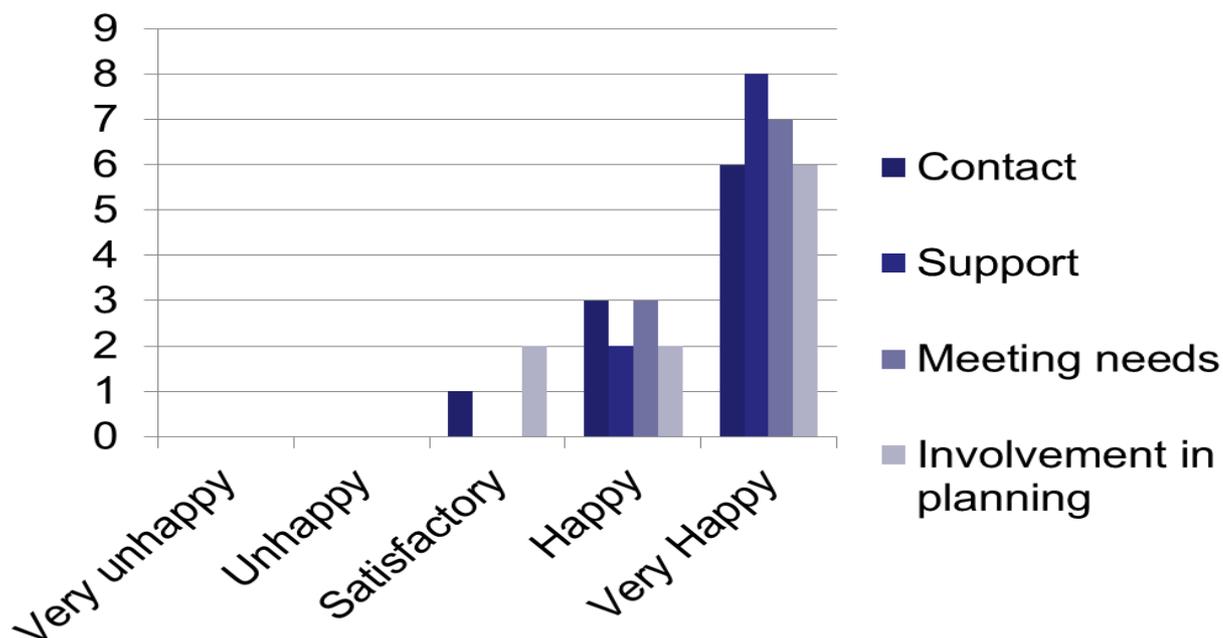
Most observations were rated as either 'met' or 'met and exceeded', with only four being 'partially met.'

The Review Team felt that the ethos of community which enhanced consistency and continuity is key to good autism practice and that CSA achieved many outstanding ratings as a result of this.

The over-all feeling of the Review Team is that CSA deserves recognition for going above and beyond in their care for pupils with Autism. They are truly a centre of excellence.

PARENT / CARER QUESTIONNAIRES

SCORES					
Number of Questionnaires sent out (information provided by the school):					30
Number of Questionnaires returned:					10
Number of sections not scored (figures only reflect sections scored):					0
	VERY UNHAPPY	UNHAPPY	SATISFIED	HAPPY	VERY HAPPY
Contact	0	0	1	3	6
Support	0	0	0	2	8
Advice	0	0	0	3	7
Involvement	0	0	2	2	6
TOTALS	0	0	3	10	27
PERCENTAGES	0%	0%	6%	25%	68%



Comments:

Of the ten parent questionnaires returned, nine had additional supporting comments. While all of the questionnaires contained positive comments, one questionnaire (while still positive) had some comments that may indicate that this family was perhaps going

through a period of crisis at home currently, because the comments implied that their child was doing well at school but not doing as well in the home setting.

Statements included:

Contact

- *Excellent. Couldn't imagine anything better*
- *Invitations to school festivals and other celebrations*
- *Daily diary/emails/reviews and parent meetings*
- *We are welcome to visit any time. Any issues are flagged up by email*
- *Regular meetings, emails, feedback, newsletter and weekly home/school diaries*

Support

- *Very much looked at as an individual*
- *EXCELLENT. Everyone treated as an individual, never any blame, always positive*
- *We couldn't wish for anything better. Our son is so very happy. His routine and needs are met*
- *Best placement for our son. The progress he has made has been fantastic*
- *Our son is flourishing*

Advice

- *We work as a team*
- *Excellent 2 way dialogue*
- *His house is fantastic and his house [coordinator] is a wonderful woman with huge knowledge and understanding of autism*
- *Fantastic holistic approach to support his needs and development*
- *Good support from the school*

Involvement

- *Parent's groups, daily diaries, assemblies, work sent home, meetings with house coordinators, pick up and drop off conversations with co-workers*
- *Regular feedback meetings. Our views are always considered. Regular meetings to discuss concerns. Keep up the good work*
- *[From the school] it could be better. It is there but you have to take the initiative. FAB support and understanding from the house*
- *Opinions and ideas are sought and valued*

In addition, a parent was interviewed and a selection of the quotes from this interview are as follows:

"It's above and beyond. They **want** to help my child to develop"

"Have you ever seen the performances? It's joint, with the child and the co-worker. It's so inclusive you have to see it to believe it"

"I feel that the people here **want** to work with the families. It's absolutely a partnership.....real partnership"

"The communication in person, by email, home/school diaries...it's fantastic"

"(House coordinator)....he's our guardian angel"

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Care Practice (Specialist Standards 5 and 6)

The care practice at CSA is outstanding across all areas. The relationships between co-workers, and between co-workers and pupils, both within the school and the care settings are excellent. There is a sense of absolute respect and genuine concern between co-workers and pupils. The Camphill philosophy and its practice of social pedagogy ensures that pupils develop to their fullest potential within a caring and supportive community.

Consistency and Behaviour Support (Core Standards 8 and 12)

The Review Team observed co-workers supporting pupils in a very positive and consistent manner across all settings. Older pupils were also noted to be supportive of each other. The fact that co-workers and pupils live and work together mean that exceptional consistency is evident in the support is provided. This was seen to be an area of considerable strength. In addition, co-workers, teachers and therapists are trained in BSS (Behaviour Support Strategies) and this is applied consistently. CSA works with extremely challenging children and young people but at no time did we see behavioural issues causing any problems to staff or other pupils. The calmness and care with which all of the staff approach the children is commendable.

Environment (Specialist Standard 1)

The review team consider the environment at CSA to be an area of considerable strength. The rural location, layout of the school and residences, and the well-designed outdoor spaces provide pupils with a safe, well respected and homely setting within which to live, learn and flourish. The two school campuses are based in areas of great natural beauty. This provides healthy living and learning environments which are used to the full. The therapy rooms, workshops and residences are warm, welcoming and calming environments which contribute well to the support of those children on the autism spectrum.

Curriculum and Activities (Specialist Standards 2 and 10)

The strength of the curriculum lies in its holistic approach to the needs of each individual. The elements which combine to form the curriculum address the issues which can be part of an ASD – communication, social understanding. The curriculum, based on the *Scottish Curriculum for Excellence* and the *Waldorf Curriculum* is

carefully considered and suited to the students' needs. The breadth of activities ensures that the children are valued as learners and as human beings. Activities provided take account of strengths and areas of special interest and provide access to appropriate qualifications and vocational opportunities. The underlying ethos of acceptance and respect that underpins practice within CSA nurtures social and emotional growth and the Review Team feel that the school deserves recognition in this regard. Therapies, creative activities and an emphasis on practical learning for life are integrated within highly individualised programmes. The curriculum is rich and varied, and makes full use of the natural resources within which the campuses are based. The vocational content of activities, particularly in the workshop areas enhances a sense of achievement, wellbeing and self-esteem.

Training (Core Standard 3)

There is no doubt that the richness of the curriculum and the application of methods to practice comes from a wide knowledge and skills base on the part of the adults at CSA. CSA offers an excellent training and development scheme for co-workers which is supported by a supervision and mentoring system. This means that theory is put into practice and reflected upon, which in turn embeds that learning within practice. The school also has a team of highly experienced and qualified co-workers, teachers and therapists who provide outstanding role models and leadership for newer co-workers. Their commitment to looking at new methods and updating their knowledge base cannot be questioned.

Links with Families (Core Standard 13)

Parent questionnaires, an evaluation of parent views on respite, and discussion with a parent representative demonstrated that the school maintains excellent links with families. Both house and school communication with families was praised. Communication takes many forms and this was deeply appreciated by families.

Wellbeing – Developing Independence (Specialist Standard 10)

CSA provides the pupils with opportunities to develop their independence within every aspect of their lives and within every activity. Children are encouraged to appreciate and live as one with their environment. As they get older and are able to manage more, they become responsible for self-care and behaviour. The addition of semi-independent living unit for older students builds upon the skills developed within the school to encourage independent

shopping, travelling and self-care within a homely setting. The Review Team see this progression as a real strength.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Maximising Communication Support (Core Standard 10)

While a wide range of visual communication supports were evident, there were some instances where co-workers missed opportunities to provide alternatives to speech, when this was not working. By incorporating more alternatives, this would encourage independence and reduce the need for adult prompts. We recommend that co-workers become fully aware of all of the alternative visual methods of supporting communication, including use of self as model.

Standardising Individual Education Plans (Core Standard 7)

It was noted that a variety of individual education plans were in use across the school. While each of the plans had positive aspects, we recommend that the school should decide on one particular template which should marry together the strengths of the existing IEPs. In some cases, targets identified were not as specific as they might be. Therefore, we also recommend that SMART principles should be applied more consistently to all targets.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL COMMENTS

Please note that comments must only pertain to the report and not to the performance of the review team. Any feedback on the performance of the review team must be sent separately to the Accreditation office on the Review Team Evaluation form at the end of your review.



PANEL REPORT

TERMINOLOGY

The Audit Programme may be applied to services for people with autism spectrum disorders. In this folder the word 'autism' is used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome, so that unwieldy phrasing is avoided. Similarly, to avoid repetition of alternative titles, generic terms have been used throughout the text.

To be consistent with the Care Standards ACT 2000 UK, this document refers the term Autism Spectrum Disorders, whilst recognising that some may refer to this as Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

Accredited: When a service/school has successfully completed their self audit, IDR and review and is awarded accredited status by the Accreditation Panel.

Advanced Documentation: Self-evaluation documents that include the pen picture describing the establishment, the Core Standards and the Specialist Standards. It is to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted in preparation for an Autism Accreditation review. It includes recommendations from the previous panel report (recorded under **Development Need**), the Core Standards, and the Specialist Standards (recorded under **Self Audit**).

Areas for Development: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR-summarised under further action to be taken) and Review Team (within review report) describing areas for improvement. To be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Recommendations.

Areas of Strength: Term used by the Advisor (within the IDR) and Review Team (within review report) describing aspects of strong practice within the service/school locally to be highlighted for the Panel to consider as Good Practice or Commendation.

Autism: Term used to apply to the whole spectrum, including Asperger syndrome.

Carer(s): Term used to refer to parents, guardians and other family members that are responsible and care for a person with autism.

Commendation: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength that reflects outstanding practice within the service/school.

Deferred: Status of service/school determined by the Panel. Neither not Accredited nor Accredited for a maximum of 6 months until recommendations from the panel have been addressed. A re-visit will be arranged in which a second report will be produced on these recommendations, no IDR required. This report will then be presented to the Panel to determine whether Accredited status can be granted or not.

Good Practice: Determined by the Panel from areas of strength within the service/school that reflects good practice within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Interim Development Report (IDR): Report completed by the Accreditation Advisor and service/school at the 18 month visit and includes further actions, key documents and areas of potential strength.

Key Documents: Is a binder/file that remains at the service/school as a reference tool. It includes proof of evidence that supports the self-audit and advanced documentation and includes items such as policies, procedures, local protocols, guidelines, brochures, handbooks, and manuals. The key documents file is maintained on a regularly basis at the service/school to be available if required by the Accreditation Advisor or the review team.



Not Accredited: Accredited status not granted or removed by the Panel after the service/school review. No IDR required, but there will be a minimum of 12 months before the next review.

Panel: Makes the judgement on whether there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate whether the service/school meets the criteria for accredited status. The Panel consists of a representative from the Accreditation department and a minimum of two individuals from a pool of professionals selected based on their expertise and qualification in the field of autism. Panel members are selected based on their area of expertise as it relates to the type of service/school being reviewed and any potential conflicts of interest with the specific service/school presented at the Panel meeting.

Pen Picture: A factual description/overview of the service/school(s) being reviewed that forms section B of the Advanced Documentation (see page 18). Accreditation Advisor agrees and completes at initial visit with the service/school and updated as necessary. This document is required as part of the final self audit submission.

Person with Autism: Any individual who is using a service/school, including pupil, student, client, customer, resident, or service user.

Policies, Procedures, Local Protocols and Guidelines: Documents which establish the groundwork for good practice and which refer to or evidence methodologies developed to successfully support the needs of people with autism e.g. Individual Plans, or Transition Policy.

Procedures Manual: Autism Accreditation programme's review process manual, describing mission statement, overview of the Department, Accreditation Advisor role and specifics of the review process.

Recommendations: Determined by the Panel from areas for development within the service/school that reflect areas of concern within the membership of Autism Accreditation.

Registered: When a service/school registers with Autism Accreditation and begins the process of completing the self audit in preparation for the IDR and review with the prospect of being awarded accredited status.

Self-Audit: Is the self-evaluation documents of Core Standards and Specialist Standards. They are to be completed and updated regularly by service/school and submitted for every IDR and review. As described in the Advanced Documentation above.

Service/School: Includes all types of organisations and schools that provide education, care or support for people with autism.

Service/School Manager: Any person who has the direct management responsibility for a service/school, including Principal, Head Teacher, Manager, General Manager and Home Manager.

Service/School Provider: Any organisation or individual that owns a service/school, including local/education authorities, health authorities, trusts, national charities, local charities and private organisations.

Specialist Standards: Separate Standards for areas of service/school provided, including:

- Playscheme
- Children's Home
- Day Schools
- Residential Schools
- Colleges and Continuing Education Services
- Adult Day Services
- Adult Residential Services
- Secure Residential
- NHS and Independent Hospitals
- Educational Outreach Support Services
- Community Outreach
- Fostering Agencies
- Employment
- Short Break and Shared Care
- Supported Living

Standards: A set of Core and Specialist requirements set by the Accreditation Standards Body. The Standards are the basis that:

- The service/school uses for their self-evaluation for the self-audit document;
- The IDR is compiled through the self audit and other key documents
- The review team makes their observations to compile their review report.

Standards Body: Establish and review the Standards annually. The Standards Body consists of individuals recognised for their high achievement, expertise and qualification in the field of autism research and practice. Their names are listed on our website www.autism.org.uk.

Statutory Requirements: These include all statutory and legislative bodies' requirements that must be met in order for care provision to be allowed in the United Kingdom. They include CQC, OFSTED, HMie, Health & Safety Executive Council etc.

The use of these terms avoids duplication of documents and also ensures consistency of terminology throughout the text.