Policy Document for Autism
Gosberton House Academy and Working Together Team Outreach March 2021

Unicef Children's Rights
Article 23: children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support so they can lead full and independent lives.

Service Aim
The teaching philosophy of the Gosberton House Academy and WTT embodies the rationale of the SPELL approach developed by The National Autistic Society.
The framework addresses the desire of many young people with an autistic spectrum to have continuity and order in their life; to be able to predict events; to have access to an environment sufficiently modified to reduce anxiety and at the same time to be stimulating and promote learning.

The approach has been developed to overcome or reduce the potentially disabling effects of autism by providing a broad and balanced curriculum, giving extra help in each of the areas of impairment.

SPELL

The SPELL framework recognises the individual and unique needs of each young person and emphasises that all planning and intervention need to be organised on this basis. Our philosophy is that of building on the existing strengths of the individual and reducing the potential difficulties.

SPELL FRAMEWORK

Structure

The importance of structure has long been recognised. It makes the world a more predictable, accessible and safer place. Structure can aid personal autonomy and independence by reducing dependence on prompting from others. The environment and processes are modified to ensure individuals know what is going to happen and what is expected of them. This can also aid the development of flexibility by reducing dependence on rigid routines. Structure plays to the strengths of a sense of order and preference for visual organisation commonly associated with an autistic spectrum disorder.

Positive (approaches and expectations)

A programme of sensitive but persistent intervention in place to engage the individual child and develop his/her full potential. Having high but realistic expectations based on careful assessment which includes identification of the strengths and individual needs of the person, his/her level of functioning and an assessment of the support he/she will need. Aiming to support educational setting to seek to establish and reinforce self-confidence and self esteem by building on natural strengths, interest and abilities.

Empathy

To see the world from the standpoint of the young person with an autistic spectrum is the key to the development of the art of working with young people with an autistic spectrum disorder. Starting from the position or perspective of the individual and gathering insights about how he/she sees and experiences the world, knowing what it is that motivates or interests him/her and also frightens, preoccupies or otherwise distresses him/her. Getting inside and respecting the experience underpins any successful approach, develops communication and reduces anxiety. In this, the quality of the relationship between the child, the child's family and staff is of vital importance.

Low arousal

Aiming for approaches and the environment to be calm and ordered in such a way as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration. There should be as few distractions as possible. As appropriate, particular attention is paid to potentially aversive or distracting stimuli, for example noise levels, colour schemes, odours, lighting and clutter. Low arousal should not be confused with 'no arousal'. It is desirable that individuals are exposed to a wide range of experiences.

Links

Strong links between the various components of the child/young person's life promotes and sustain essential consistency. Open links and communication between people (e.g. parents, teachers and outside agencies) provides an holistic approach and reduce the possibility of unhelpful misunderstanding or confusion or the adoption of fragmented, piecemeal approaches.

We work within the AET Best Practice Principles namely:-

1.Understanding the strengths, interests and challenges of the autistic child and young person
2. Enabling the voice of the autistic child and young person to contribute to and influence decisions
3. Collaboration with parents and carers of autistic children and young people
4. Workforce development to support autistic children and young people on the autism spectrum
5. Leadership and management that promotes and embeds good autism practice
6. An ethos and environment that fosters social inclusion for children and young people on the autism spectrum
7. Targeted support and measuring progress of children and young people on the autism spectrum
8. Adapting the curriculum, teaching and learning to promote well-being and success for autistic children and young people.

All pupils at Gosberton House Academy have an Education, Health, Care Plan . Many pupils have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition (ASC), the primary characteristics of which are : difficulties in non-verbal and verbal communication, difficulties in social understanding and social behaviour, and rigidity of thought. Pupils with ASC may also experience unusual sensitivity to sound, touch, movement and visual stimuli. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils are able to access an inclusive, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum

Article 29: education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents and their own and other cultures.

Rational

In order to meet the needs of all pupils we use an eclectic mix of established and researched approaches and interventions; drawing on best practice and continuously monitoring and evaluating their use. Our child centred approach, with emphasis on personalised learning, addresses the specific needs of each individual child.

One size does not fit all! "Personalised learning is all about shaping teaching around the different ways children learn" (DfES 2005). For example, although visual strategies are considered the learning style of choice for pupils with Autism this is not always the case. Staff seek to identify pupils' preferred mode of learning as well as ways to ensure meaningful engagement in tasks. A 'learning by doing' approach is encouraged.

Many pupils are easily distracted by what they hear, see, feel or smell. We need to recognise that pupils display varying degrees of tolerance of visual and auditory stimuli at different times and we need to adapt these according to individual needs. We provide calm classroom environments, which also have additional 'chill out' areas where pupils may take themselves when their levels of anxiety become raised Pupils may need a work area or work station which faces away from many visual or auditory distractions (individualised learning) for **some** activities.

We therefore adjust our approach when sensory stimuli are obstacles to learning and gradually work on desensitising the children and teaching them the necessary skills to begin to manage them e.g. use of ear plugs; sitting on the perifery. We aim to reduce these barriers to learning and work towards the children spending increasing amounts of time in a more inclusive learning environment.

Curriculum

The school and WTT are committed to accessing a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The school and WTT do, however, recognise that pupils on the autistic spectrum have additional challenges which necessitate the adaption of the courses of study. This may mean a greater emphasis on certain areas of need for these children e.g. communication, social development

Therefore, pupils access a full differentiated curriculum delivered in a way that recognises primary, core needs. Underpinning all teaching and learning is an emphasis on the development of independence, social interaction, social understanding and social communication. Lessons are planned to facilitate development in these areas but specific teaching, for example in social skills, life skills and sensory desensitisation are also included. We provide many 'real life' opportunities, for example, at least weekly cookery; Forest School; Learning outside the Classroom: educational visits are used to help reduce rigidity and develop appropriate social skills.

We develop skills through our creative thematic curriculum, which follows a different theme each half term. The curriculum is learner led and delivered through a very sensory, hands on approach. Each theme begins with a concept map approach- what we already know; what we want to learn. Within our fully inclusive approach pupils are encouraged to be involved in a range of exciting experiences to support the topics. These include whole school experiences e.g. theatre groups, live music, re-enactments.

Article 31: every child has the right to relax, play and join in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Approaches and Interventions

At Gosberton House Academy and WTT we use a child-centred approach which addresses the specific needs of the individual child. Different children may need a different 'mix' of the best known approaches to meet their needs. R Jordan (2001): 'in terms of an ethical approach to a child, an eclectic mix may offer the best opportunity'. We have a range of compensatory strategies which take account of the pupils difficulties and seek to minimise them, enabling the pupil to feel calmers and thus more able to learn.

Our eclectic approach includes:

1. The development of Language and communication
2. A range of Therapy interventions
3. TEACCH
4. Behavioural Approaches
5. Social Scripts and Stories
6. Physical activity
7. Sensory approach

1.The development of language and communication

The development of interactive communication skills [verbal, gesture,body language, facial expression, picture exchange; pointing; eye gaze etc.]is a priority at Gosberton House Academy . The school ethos is one of creating a communication enriched environment . We are supported by Speech and Language Services. Individual programmes are delivered by staff as an integral part of daily school life.

We use a range of communication systems with the children. This includes: PECS (Picture exchange system) Communicate in Print and intensive interaction [see Communications Policy]. The development of functional and meaningful communication is our long-term aim for all pupils. All pupils are assessed on an individual basis to ascertain the best method or methods to facilitate communication.

Intensive interaction

Intensive interaction is used with pupils who have a limited repertoire of positive communicative behaviours. Here, the aims are to develop skills of early social behaviour e.g. turn-taking, contingent action and eventually to the initiation and leading of interactive 'games'.

Parent support

We offer workshops and 'drop in' consultations with a range of staff and visiting professionals. We are also able to offer programmes such as Healthy Minds, EarlyBirds and Family Seminars.

TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children)

The key principles of TEACCH e.g structure and visual information, are practised throughout the school to enable pupils to know what they are doing next, when it will be finished and what will happen when it is finished. Individual

and class timetables are used to support pupils. Aspects of this approach involve the use of minimum distraction work areas which have minimal visual or auditory distractions, where pupils can systematically work on skills. Implementation of TEACCH varies across the school according to the needs of classes or individuals. Some classrooms are clearly organised along TEACCH principles with individual timetables, workstations. In other classes individuals may use timetables for some elements of their learning e.g. making choices during unstructured times, specific transitions

Behavioural Approaches
The school and WTT operate within a Rights Respecting, Emotional Literate approach. Behaviour is a means of communication and we endeavour to understand what the child is aiming 'to say' through their behaviour. Specific strategies are used to reduce anxiety and promote feelings of well being. An applied behaviour analysis approach helps to modify unwanted behaviours and promote more appropriate ones. This stimulus – response – reward programme, which involves the use of strong motivators ensure the child learns basic work behaviour e.g. sitting on a chair. The same principles are used when dealing with behavioural issues. We consistently aim to reinforce positive behaviour and to reinforce positive responses.
All pupils have Risk assessments: some pupils may have individual support plans.

Physical Activity
Physical activity is encouraged within structured PE lessons as well as Sensory Circuits, Activate, Resistance exercise sessions and movement breaks. The school has extensive outdoor play areas including a Bike Track, Sensory garden, trim Trail, Climbing Frame, Basket ball and trampoline. The school operates within Forest School principles and holds the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Mark. These physical activities reflect elements of Higashi Daily Life Therapy.

Social Scripts and Stories
These aim to prepare pupils and therefore reduce anxiety in unfamiliar situations or when preparing for a certain event. They also inform the child about social expectations and the benefits of conforming to these.

Sensory Approach
A sensory approach is used to engage pupils in their learning, through adapting the environment, seating, as well as the activities to support individual learner needs.

Assessment

All pupils are comprehensively assessed using Autism Progress, Sensory Profiles, B squared on entry to school [Beery; Diagnostic curriculum assessments; Kays;]Challenging, but realistic, targets are set with pupils' learning styles and pace of learning in mind. Pupil progress is tracked and recorded each term and Assessment outcomes are reported at Annual Review. The school uses CASPA to track individual and group progress and to compare progress against national norms. IEP targets are set each term . These aim to reduce barriers to learning. The school operates within a Metacognitive philosophy.

Continuity of Approach

We recognise the importance of generalising the skills that pupils learn both across school and within a range of settings. Multi-disciplinary teams liaison with parents and carers is carefully supported to ensure continuity of approaches in and out of school.

The school operates within a highly successful Family Learning ethos.

Training

Staff iare trained in autism specific practices and interventions such as; AET, PECS, TEACCH, Social Stories, Team Teach. All staff have

attended AEt training modules and many have externally accredited additional qualifications. School staff are kept up to date with current research relating to the education and well being of pupils with autism through regular updates, training opportunities and access to elearning. The school is an Investors in People Platinum Award winner. This evidences the quality of professional learning opportunities afforded to the staff team.

We have high but realistic expectations for all our pupils. We endeavour to provide the very best learning experiences through a personalised approach. To achieve this our provision for pupils on the autistic spectrum is continuously monitored, evaluated and adapted as part of the self-evaluation process.

What does this look like a GHA? – an autism friendly environment

Areas of potential Difficulty	Impact	Strategies
• Communication and language skills.	• Difficulty in understanding, processing and following verbal information. • Difficulty in 'reading' and interpreting facial expressions, gesture, body language	• Get the attention of the child before giving instructions. • Use simple language with visual prompts. • Provide time to process the information. • Use of colourful semantics • Use activities, demonstrations, modelling, role play, rehearsing, over-learning and pictures. • Technology support • Avoid or plan and explain the use of idioms and metaphorical language. • Practice of telling and listening to jokes.

	• Difficulty understanding non-literal language.	• Saying of the week to build up a library of expressions
• Communication and language skills.	• Difficulty in expressing needs or answering a question. • Difficulty in retelling / recalling /retrieving information. • Inference	• Using the child's name [pause] to gain his/her attention. • Some pupils are prompted through gentle touch to gain attention. • Providing visual supports to help in communication and recollection of personal experiences. • Use closed questions rather than open ended questions. • Scaffolding request • Options to write/draw 'problems' • Use of 3D mind-maps; objects of reference; mind mapping
• Social skills.	• Difficulties with the concept of personal belongings/ personal space	• Spend time in developing understanding of the concepts of private and public –social stories; SULP characters. • Use of visual boundaries • Use visual prompts to support this. • Labelled pencil cases etc • Consistent seating
• Social skills and flexible thinking.	• Difficulty in following social 'rules', and socially appropriate behaviour. • Difficulty understanding and recognising emotions	• Have consistent, explicit routines for individuals. • Use Social Stories to explain the social rules and expected behaviour. • Specific social communication teaching, supported by resources such as Social Use of Language Programme, Talkabout and Blob tree and cards. • Self-esteem charts

	in themselves and others. • Difficulty in maintaining friendships.	• Role play of situations –explore opportunities to possible solutions • Use of favourite characters from TV, books, films to explore feelings

Areas of Potential Difficulty	Impact	Strategies
• Social skills and flexible thinking.	• Can find it difficult to deal with sudden changes, leading to anxiety.	• Give advance notice of any changes. • Regularly using 'surprise' cards on timetable • Using visual timetables. • Give clear guidance, self-management strategies [access to calmers; distractors; self-regulation strategies etc.] and consequences . • Access to quiet rooms/areas. • Individually clear and relevant consequences to non-compliance • First/then boards • Use of planned 'surprises • Use of red/green anger, actions, words

• Flexible thinking.	• Difficulty in understanding the feelings of other people and the effect of their own behaviours on other people.	• Work on understanding emotions. • Role play • Emotional literacy work-individual and group • Use of song [supported visually/ 3D] • Use strategies such as comic strip conversations, and mind reading etc. • Rights Respecting School • Identification and support to use strategies for 'next time' • Use of high quality relevant , meaningful resources • Learn in real-life situs • Whole child approach- learning for life and lifelong learning ethos • Role play • Use of film/visual prompts to cue and reinforce learning
• Flexible thinking.	• Difficulty in relating to a story or topic that requires imagination.	• Teach a new concept from concrete to abstract. • Use 3D concept maps • Use 'What I want to Know' boards • Relate to the child's experiences / interests.
• Flexible thinking.	• Difficulty in using a learnt skill out of the learnt situation.	• Teach each skill in all the possible contexts and in different ways. • Include generalisation as part of teaching every topic/concept. • Learn in a wide variety of environments • Visitors in classroom/ in school e.g. theatre groups; musicians; re- enactors
• Sensory perception	• Resistance to certain	• Preparation- movement breaks; activate, sensory circuits; wide

and flexible thinking.	activities or situations.	variety of outdoor activities e.g. trampoline; trim trail, bikes, climbing frame • Introduce to sensation gradually. • Provision of alternative options • Access to quiet outdoor areas. • Proximity working • Access to e.g. ear defenders, weighted animals, lap mats, hokki stools, quiet dividers, writing slopes etc. • Access to specialist assessment e.g. Kays • Weekly cookery- planting, growing, harvesting • Sensory enriched environment- kinaesthetic learning • Individual sensory programmes • Lycra resistance activities • Learning/ skills practice in 'real life' environments

Areas of Potential Difficulty	Impact	Strategies
• Sensory perception and social skills.	• Finds it difficult to concentrate/focus on task.	• Give a distraction free learning environment. • Realistic pictures, avoid complicated or very visually busy pictures. • Reduce the social demands while learning. • Permit time out if child is becoming over-stimulated.

• Sensory perception - Visual	• Flickering lights- distraction, discomfort	• Classroom illumination is suitable for pupils with autism. • Fluorescent lights are regularly checked and changed. The effects of light coming into the room through blinds and creating distracting patterns are minimised • • Light reflecting on objects such as metal or shiny surfaces in the classroom is minimised. • The classroom is orderly and not cluttered so that pupils can make sense of the environment. • The impact of wall displays is considered. • Designated areas for specific activities to give clarity to the classroom organisation. • Pupils have the opportunity to work at a workstation to focus their attention, if necessary
	• Ability to self-organise / self-structure	
• Sensory – noise/sound	• Distraction; discomfort; inability to focus on designated activity	• Sounds from classroom equipment are kept to a minimum. • Screens, audio systems, lights and computers are switched off when not in use [to avoid a mains hum.] • There are strategies in place to reduce noise when rooms

		are in use - Classrooms are carpeted to lessen noise created by the movement of people, chairs and desks; use of noise softening dividers • The acoustics of the gym, dining hall and hall are checked and modified to lessen echo • Hallways are carpeted to lessen the noise created by movement through the corridors. • Awareness of need to reduce sounds from outside the classroom • Windows are suitably soundproofed / film applied to reduce glare • There are agreed strategies in place when noise becomes too much for individual pupils e.g. use ear defenders.; movement away from the noise source • There are quiet rooms available which provides a calm place for pupils to relax. • Pupils are warned if a loud noise or bell is going to sound. • Strategies are put in place to support pupils who find loud noises or fire bells very difficult to tolerate.
• Sensory -smell	• Difficulty tolerating aromas; distraction /hyper sensitivity	• Smells within the classroom are kept to a minimum. • The smell of paints, glue, clay and cleaning fluids is minimal. • Staff are aware that the smell of perfumes and deodorants may be distressing. • Staff are aware that pupils may react to the smell of others. Smells from outside the classroom are monitored and

		reduced, where possible • The smell of cooking is reduced. [de-sensitisation programme in operation for individuals]
• Sensory –touch and feel	• Distraction/discomfort	• Uncomfortable clothing (seams, inflexible or itchy fabrics) is avoided, where possible, unless there are safety issues • Variations of the school uniform offer enough flexibility to enable pupils to be able to wear clothing they find comfortable. • Alternative arrangements are made for pupils who find writing to be physically painful or difficult – word processing; voice recording; writing wedges;OT exercises. • Seating is comfortable –hokki stools, captains chairs; wedges
• Social skills, flexible thinking and communication.	• Difficulty in developing play skills, and following game rules.	• Identify and focus on teaching necessary play skills such as turn-taking, negotiating etc. • Simplify the game rules. • Introduce a circle of friends or buddy system to help the child in building relationships. • Collaboration with local schools e.g. sporting activities • Scouting Schools for all pupils • Forest School • Lunch Clubs
• General	• Heightened anxiety; challenging behaviours; non-engagement	We believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development. Ready to learn approaches are used- including e.g. finger

		exercises before fine motor activities; squashing; access to ergonomic and weighted equipment
		• Pupils are supported to let staff know if they are finding an aspect of the environment distressing.
		• Pupils are relaxed when moving through corridors – movement is controlled, ordered, corridors are light, de-cluttered
		• Pupils are allowed to leave the classroom slightly earlier or later than peers to avoid noisy corridors/ crowds.
		• Classroom organisation takes into account the individual needs of pupils.
		• Classroom organisation and individual seating plan takes into consideration individual concerns
		• Pupils who become anxious by the close proximity of others are allowed ample space around their seat
		• Dinner halls system is carefully regulate to reduce stress – some pupils eat in different rooms] [some pupils sit on the periphery of a group or on their own table]
		• Pupils are allowed to enter the dinner hall before or after peers to avoid crowds.
		• A system of support is available for pupils experiencing sensory overload.
		• Learning and movement breaks are planned
		• There is a designated place and a clear system/routine for pupils to follow if they feel they need to withdraw [use of Quiet/Relax rms]

Autism Progress level descriptors

COMMUNICATION DESCRIPTORS

Level 1 The individual encounters activities and experiences involving communication. • They may show minor physiological responses. • They may be passive or resistant. • They are fully prompted in any participation.

Level 2 The individual shows an emerging awareness of experiences involving communication. • They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, voices or gesture. • They may give intermittent reactions.

Level 3 The individual begins to respond consistently to well-cued communication in familiar situations. • They react to new activities and experiences. • They accept and engage in co-active exploration.

Level 4 The individual demonstrates an awareness of the direction of others' attention and begins to be proactive with their communication. • They tolerate shared exploration and supported participation. • They recognise some people and may respond in specific ways to familiar individuals. • They perform actions by trial and improvement remembering learned responses over short periods of time. • They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses through vocalisation or gesturing.

Level 5 The individual begins to communicate intentionally. • They seek attention through gesture or action and request events or activities. • They remember learned responses over more extended periods. • They participate in shared activities with less support and sustain concentration for short periods. • They observe the results of their own actions with interest, remembering learned responses over more extended periods. • They explore materials in increasingly complex ways.

Level 6 The individual uses emerging conventional communication. • They respond to options and choices with actions or gestures. • They remember learned responses over increasing periods and may anticipate known events. •

They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities. • They apply potential solutions systematically to problems. • They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods.

Level 7 The individual repeats, copies and imitates the communication of others and demonstrates an understanding of a wider vocabulary. • They use single words, signs and symbols for familiar objects and can communicate about events and feelings. • They respond appropriately to simple requests which contain one key word, sign or symbol in familiar situations. • They begin to understand that marks and symbols convey meaning.

Level 8 The individual combines two key ideas or concepts and can respond to questions about familiar or immediate events or experiences. • They respond to simple questions by vocalising, using gestures, symbols or signing. • They make attempts to repair misunderstandings without changing the words used. • They follow requests and instructions containing at least two key words, signs or symbols. • They develop their expressive vocabulary. • They combine single words, signs or symbols to communicate meaning to a range of listeners.

Level 9 The individual initiates and maintains short spontaneous interactions and responds to others in group situations. • They use prepositions and pronouns correctly. • They follow requests and instructions with three key words, signs or symbols. • They ask simple questions to obtain information.

Level 10 The individual spontaneously communicates phrases with up to three key words, signs or symbols and follows the spontaneous communication of others for short stretches of time. • They link ideas or add new information beyond what is asked. • They follow requests and instructions with four key words, signs or symbols. • They contribute appropriately one-to-one and in small group discussions. • They communicate ideas about temporal events and experiences, using simple phrases and statements and respond to questions about them. • They attend to, and respond to, questions from adults and their peers about experiences, events and stories.

Level 11 The individual spontaneously communicates phrases by linking up to four key words, signs or symbols and responds confidently to others both in groups and one-to-one. • They use conjunctions that suggest cause. • They listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions about why or how. • They follow multi-step instructions. • They communicate about their own experiences using an extensive vocabulary to convey meaning to the listener. • They can use possessives.

Level 12 The individual spontaneously communicates about matters of immediate interest. • They receive information from others and usually respond appropriately. • They convey simple meanings clearly to a range of listeners and begin to extend their ideas or accounts by providing some detail.

Level 13 The individual begins to show confidence when producing and responding to spontaneous communication particularly where the topics interest them. • They usually attend to others carefully and respond with increasing appropriateness to what others say. • They show awareness that a more formal vocabulary and tone of voice are used in some situations. • They communicate clearly with a growing vocabulary showing awareness of the needs of the listener by including relevant detail to develop and explain their ideas.

Level 14 The individual confidently produces spontaneous communication and responds to others when exploring and communicating ideas. • They begin to adapt what they say to the needs of the listener, varying the use of vocabulary and the level of detail. • They attend to the spontaneous communication of others carefully and show understanding of the main points through relevant comments and questions.

Level 15 The individual produces and responds to spontaneous communication with confidence in an increasing range of contexts. • They attend carefully to the communication of others, making contributions and asking questions that are responsive to others' ideas and views. • They adapt their spontaneous communication to its purpose by developing ideas thoughtfully, describing events and conveying their opinions clearly.

Level 16 The individual produces and responds to spontaneous communication in a range of formal and informal contexts. • They pay close attention to what others say, ask questions to develop ideas and make contributions that take account of others' views. • They follow Standard English rules in formal situations. • They engage the interest of the 'listener' by occasionally varying their expression and vocabulary.

Level 17 The individual spontaneously adapts their communication to the demands of different contexts with increasing confidence. • They take an active part in discussions, taking different roles and showing understanding of ideas and sensitivity to others. • They engage the interest of the listener through the variety and liveliness of both their vocabulary and expression. • They demonstrate their knowledge of language variety and usage

effectively and use Standard English fluently in formal situations. • They naturally adapt elements of their speech or actions to keep an audience from losing interest.

APPENDIX II: SOCIAL INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS

Level 1 The individual encounters activities and experiences involving other people. • They may show minor physiological responses. • They may be passive or resistant. • They are fully prompted in any participation.

Level 2 The individual shows an emerging awareness of other people. • They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on people and events. • They begin to tolerate some social interactions more than others.

Level 3 The individual begins to respond consistently to familiar people. • They react to new activities and experiences. • They can be motivated by interacting with familiar people, events and objects. • They accept and engage in co-active exploration.

Level 4 The individual demonstrates an awareness of the direction of others' attention and begins to be proactive with their interactions. • They tolerate shared exploration and supported participation. • They seek interaction to meet their basic needs. • They perform actions by trial and improvement remembering learned responses over short periods of time. • They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses through vocalisation or gesturing. • They begin to recognise people, actions and objects by name.

Level 5 The individual begins to interact intentionally, engaging others through gesture or action. • They request events or activities through gesture or action. • They remember learned responses over more extended periods. • They participate in shared activities with less support and sustain concentration for short periods. • They observe the results of their own actions with interest, remembering learned responses over more extended periods. • They explore their immediate environment in increasingly complex ways.

Level 6 The individual greets known people and may initiate interactions and activities. • They remember learned responses over increasing periods and may anticipate known events. • They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures. • They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods.

Level 7 The individual is becoming aware of appropriate social behaviours: they are able to express their response through single elements of communication. • They show an understanding of "Yes." and "No." showing assertiveness and responding to animated praise. • They engage in parallel activity with several others. • They engage in familiar care routines, tasks or activities with support.

Level 8 The individual will interact with two or three others in work and play situations. • They seek help when needed. • They maintain interactions for short periods of time and are becoming aware of turn-taking in small groups with support. • They become aware of social routines and responsibilities.

Level 9 The individual responds to others in group situations, playing or working in small groups co-operatively. • They use some social conventions when greeting people. • They use facial expression or intonation to enhance meanings. • They carry out routine activities in a familiar context and with some independence, though may need a staff presence.

Level 10 The individual contributes in one-to-one and small group situations, listening to others and sharing feelings. • They start to accept the constraints of social actions. • They show an awareness of the consequences of their actions and show some consideration of the needs and feelings of other living things. • They make purposeful relationships with others in group activities and attempt to compromise with them in a variety of situations. • They begin to understand the concept of public and private and know how to use the toilet independently.

Level 11 The individual selects, initiates and follows through with a range of activities in one-to-one situations and in small or large groups. • They use appropriate language to ask for the toilet. • They understand the need for rules in games showing awareness of how to join in with different situations. • They understand some agreed codes of behaviour, state basic rules and identify right and wrong in familiar situations. • They treat living things and their environment with care and concern. • They can be sensitive to the feelings of others and show respect for them.

Level 12 The individual communicates about the experiences and feelings of others, what they might find interesting or puzzling and what might be of value and concern to them. • They recognise some similarities and differences between people and are aware that people have an effect on the world around them. • They identify

some of the groups that they belong to and identify rules that differ between these groups. • They begin to recognise that all people have needs and wants, showing some theory of mind.

Level 13 The individual asks, questions about others' experiences and feelings. • They recognise the values of others in matters of right and wrong. • They recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. • They discuss what is fair and unfair in different situations and identify the difference between people's needs and wants.

Level 14 The individual identifies how their actions affect the world around them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. • They make links between national or global values and their own attitudes and behaviour. • They know how to make friends, including how to repair damaged relationships.

Level 15 The individual raises questions of other people's identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. • They make assumptions about how others may feel in complex and unfamiliar situations. • They identify why specific laws are needed and can debate moral issues, taking a balanced point of view. • They describe what may inspire and influence others.

Level 16 The individual asks and suggests answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. • They explain how their actions can inspire or influence others to improve their own lives. • They discuss things that they should take responsibility for and the effect this might have on them, their intimate relationships, their close groups and the world.

Level 17 The individual is increasingly confident and accepting of their own identity, beliefs and purpose. • They understand and welcome a wide range of the beliefs, values and intentions of others. • They evaluate the motivations of their own actions after an emotional situation and can rationalise the behaviour of others. • They are able to integrate themselves in a variety of roles/situations.

APPENDIX III: FLEXIBILITY OF THOUGHT DESCRIPTORS

Level 1 The individual encounters a range of activities and experiences. • They may show minor physiological responses. • They may be passive or resistant. • They are fully prompted in any participation.

Level 2 The individual shows an emerging awareness of routine activities. • They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain events, objects or parts of objects. • They may give intermittent reactions.

Level 3 The individual begins to respond consistently to familiar events and situations. • They react to new activities and experiences. • They begin to show interest in activities, events and objects. • They accept and engage in co-active exploration.

Level 4 The individual demonstrates an awareness of the direction of others' attention and begins to be proactive in their actions. • They tolerate shared exploration and supported participation. • They recognise familiar activities, events and objects. • They perform actions by trial and improvement remembering learned responses over short periods of time. • They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses through vocalisation or gesturing.

Level 5 The individual's interest can be engaged through joint attention and they begin to make intentional responses. • They request events or activities through gesture or action. • They participate in shared activities with less support and sustain concentration for short periods and explore materials in increasingly complex ways. • They observe the results of their own actions with interest, remembering learned responses over more extended periods. • They demonstrating the beginning of object permanence.

Level 6 The individual uses emerging conventional communication to initiate interactions and familiar activities. • They respond to options and choices with actions or gestures. • They remember learned responses over increasing periods and may anticipate known events. • They apply potential solutions systematically to problems. • They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods.

Level 7 The individual demonstrates a developing awareness of more complex cause and effect, predicting and prompting particular responses. • They follow familiar routines are aware of starting and stopping a process and accept some changes to planned activity when supported by familiar strategies. • They can be motivated to participate in tasks when offered items they persistently favour. • They anticipate, follow and join in familiar activities when given a contextual clue.

Level 8 The individual begins to make connections between regular events and the actions that follow. • They sort or match objects and pictures by recognising similarities. • They solve simple problems practically. • They show preferences for specific activities and begins to carry out simple decision making processes. • They accept alternatives to current activities or items when they are provided by a member of staff.

Level 9 The individual shows an awareness of other people's intentions or goals making links between visual and auditory clues and consequent events. • They will undertake short tasks independently for a known reward. • They watch others using a basic tool, copy the actions and show an intention to create. • They carry out routine activities in a familiar context and show and awareness of the results of their own actions. • They begin to generalise and make predictions from prior knowledge.

Level 10 The individual shows temporal awareness by communicating about yesterday and tomorrow and basing their decisions on the consequences of previous actions. • They follow repetitive patterns, making predictions about next steps. • They compare differences between similar objects or events. • They can be incentivised to follow a longer structure of activities and accept some forewarned changes to their routine. • They attempt to negotiate with others to achieve positive results.

Level 11 The individual acknowledges other people's opinions; adding to others' ideas but accepting that these may differ from their own. • They understand how certain things can seem silly in the wrong situation and are developing a sense of humour. • They modify their communication to clear up misunderstandings. • They identify the differences between sections of a day and begin to regulate their own routines with some prompting from members of staff. • They begin to reduce repetitive physical behaviours.

 Level 12 The individual shows theory of mind by demonstrating that they understand that all people have different needs and wants. • They structure their own routine with some prompting from members of staff. • They sequence a few events, showing an understanding of the concept of past and future events. • They communicate about matters of immediate interest, justifying their opinion when questioned. • They approach problems differently and begin to adapt their thinking.

Level 13 The individual considers a variety of approaches, generates ideas based on their own investigations and identifies what they need to do to achieve their goals. • They vary skills, actions, ideas and their deployment in different situations. • They relate their own experience to the world around them allowing them to describe how others might be feeling and to make predictions about future events. • They plan what to do next, demonstrating an ability to organise their work. • They learn by trial and error and make decisions based on their experiences.

Level 14 The individual begins to accept that some things in life are imperfect, that people get things wrong, that mistake help us learn and that events do not always follow previously understood patterns. • They manage their own timings and schedules with little to no support. • They break problems into smaller, more manageable tasks. • They begin to recognise risks with help. • They begin to read between the lines and can infer meaning implied within text or speech.

Level 15 The individual identifies some causes of difference between people and can engage in discussions about the feelings of others with some sensitivity. • They use implied information as well explicit information to make predictions about future events. • They initiate creative processes and can consider the needs of the viewer, reader or user whilst developing their work. • They evaluate sources of information and other people's viewpoints to help form their own opinion. • They comprehend aspects of figurative language, common colloquialisms and irony.

Level 16 The individual is able to make judgements. • They understand that feelings, including their own, can change quickly and can consider how to help others manage their expectations. • They distinguish between tangible and abstract concepts in real life and fiction. • They can identify aspects which make some sources more reliable than others. • They account for differences in perspective and understand that different people have different versions of events.

Level 17 The individual can help others to make judgements about what is acceptable and unacceptable. • They understand the necessity of using a range of sources and present information taking into account their usefulness/reliability. • They review their own processes and set themselves challenging goals for improvement. • They react in an adaptable manner to a range of changes of plan. • They automatically identify mistakes they make and attempt to correct them. • They are flexible with their approach to problem-solving.

APPENDIX IV: EMOTIONAL REGULATION DESCRIPTORS

Level 1 The individual encounters a range of new and familiar experiences. • They may show minor physiological responses. • They may be emotionally passive or resistant .

Level 2 The individual shows an emerging awareness of new or pleasurable experiences. • They may have periods when they appear to show heightened expressive responses to specific sensations. • They may give intermittent reactions.

Level 3 The individual begins to respond consistently to favoured events and objects. • They react to new activities and experiences. • They demonstrate emotive responses to new activities and experiences. • They begin to show emotional reactions to specific people, events and objects. • They accept and engage in co-active exploration.

Level 4 The individual demonstrates an awareness of the direction of others' attention and begins to be proactive in their demands/ requests. • They tolerate shared exploration and supported participation. • They perform actions by trial and improvement remembering learned responses over short periods of time. • They express their immediate needs and feelings. • They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses through vocalisation or gesturing.

Level 5 The individual begins to indicate their needs and intentions. • They seek stimulation and interaction through gesture or action and request desired events or activities. • They remember learned responses over more extended periods. • They participate in shared activities with more confidence. • They observe the results of their own actions with interest, remembering learned responses over more extended periods.

Level 6 The individual may initiate interactions. • They respond to options and choices with actions or gestures. • They remember learned responses over increasing periods and may anticipate known events. • They apply potential solutions systematically to problems. • They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods.

Level 7 The individual can express their feelings, needs and preferences using single elements of communication. • They engage in parallel activity with several others. • They begin to react to the feelings of others. • They begin to accept "No!" in some situations and respond positively to animated praise. • They accept and follow some simple activity/reward structures with support.

Level 8 The individual is able to tolerate interacting with two or three peers during work and play situations. • They show pride in their accomplishments. • They enjoy playful interactions for short periods of time. • They begin to accept turn-taking in small groups with support. • They ask for help to overcome frustrating tasks.

Level 9 The individual reacts to working with others. • They show concern or sympathy for others in distress and subsequently might attempt to offer them comfort or consolation. • They return to a task after a brief interruption. • They can be encouraged to try new or unfamiliar tasks. • The individual demonstrates an emotional response to working co-operatively with peers.

Level 10 The individual communicates their thoughts and feelings in simple phrases. • They sometimes seek out familiar peers to interact with. • They show some consideration of the needs and feelings of other people and other living things. • They have an emerging sense of what is right or wrong based on their sense of what is fair and unfair and the consequences they have previously experienced. • They accept that their feelings and expectations may not always be met when working with others.

Level 11 The individual wishes to join in a wide range of one-to-one, small and large group activities. • They sometimes express upsetting emotions in a productive manner. • They moderate their behaviour in unfamiliar situations. • They choose to initiate and then follow through with new tasks and activities for prolonged periods of time. • They are aware of their needs and feelings and show respect for themselves.

Level 12 The individual communicates about their own experiences and feelings, what they find interesting or puzzling and what is of value or concern to them. • They understand the purpose of an apology. • They remember and describe how certain events made them feel. • They identify things which make them special. • They begin to identify ways to calm down.

Level 13 The individual calmly responds to questions about their own experiences and feelings. • They recognise their own values. • They identify what they can do to make a situation better. • They identify how some similar situation may make them feel differently. • They are assertive with their opinions in matters of right and wrong.

Level 14 The individual identifies how the world around them affects their feelings, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. • They take steps to avoid conflict. • They make connections between their

own attitudes, behaviour and their values and commitments. • They cope with disagreements and can consider alternative points of view.

Level 15 The individual raises questions of their own identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. • They make predictions about how complex and unfamiliar situations might affect them. • They identify some of their responsibilities and some consequence that could affect others if they fail to meet them. • They describe what inspires and influences them.

Level 16 The individual asks and suggests answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. • They explain what inspires them and how it influences them to improve themselves. • They communicate about how political, religious, economic and environmental decisions can affect themselves, their intimate relationships, their close groups and the world around them.

Level 17 The individual is increasingly confident and accepting of their own identity, beliefs and purpose. • They understand and welcome a wide range of the beliefs, values and intentions of others. • They evaluate the motivations of their own actions after an emotion: