

North Hill House School Local Offer

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1. What does your service do? (USP)

The school is passionate about enabling pupils with AS, ASD and associated conditions to thrive and succeed both academically and socially.

We provide a nurturing environment conducive to teaching children with AS and ASD, founded on a range of specific models which are adapted and reviewed as a result of collective staff experiences/skills.

Our Mission Statement is: 'Caring and preparing for an independent, successful future through individual pathways of education and learning, promoting self-worth and well-being in a safe, positive environment'.

2. How are decisions made about who can use your service?

North Hill House admits children and young people aged 6-19 years with autistic spectrum disorders; primarily our students have Asperger's Syndrome. Our students are generally high functioning but we have an array of pupils with very complex academic and social needs and a very flexible service to accommodate these needs. We are increasingly seeing pupils who have very varied academic and social profiles that can also be very 'fragmented'. These pupils may need a very linear timetable that has bespoke elements to it.

Prior to placement, all students have the opportunity to come to the school and have a visit. Should they wish to spend any time in the classroom they are more than welcome. We also welcome visits from parents and commissioning officers. Our assessment officer will also collate information from parents and the pupil's current or most recent academic placement.

This information will be audited by the referral and assessment officers, then members of the senior leadership team and teaching and therapy teams if required. From here, we can outline whether we can meet the needs of a prospective pupil and put this in writing to their local authority. This process can occur within a few days should a rapid response be required.

3. How will school staff support the child/young person?

A highly skilled and specialised team of Teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) manage the broad spectrum of abilities within our class groups. Their work is founded upon high quality planning, targeting and systems, alongside rigorous documentation of procedures, individual plans and highly creative ways to enable pupils to succeed, make progress and ultimately thrive.

North Hill House School follows the principles and concepts that guide the TEACCH system, which are incorporated into the school to help improve and build on the outcomes experienced by our pupils.

All staff are provided with specific Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) training as part of their induction into working at North Hill House. This training is revisited on a regular basis. Staff attend at least 5 training days a year, where further training in a range of associated subjects is

delivered to ensure staff are equipped to manage pupils effectively and with a high level of understanding.

We also have high levels of support to key pupils and highly flexible packages of support that can adapt to the individual needs of pupils.

Some pupils have 1:1 teaching in order to enable them to access the curriculum and succeed. Periodically, pupils may be unable to attend school and we have arranged for staff to visit them on a regular basis to provide educational input.

We have therapeutic input that works within the classroom and also outside of the classroom within the residential area. The team works both directly with pupils but also offers consultation, advice and training for the whole school.

Literacy is supported within the classroom; there is a specialist teacher who supports aspects of this. Pupils are tested termly whilst they remain below expected levels and the results from these assist teachers in their planning. Levels are discussed within the review process until pupils reach or exceed the expected levels.

4. How will the curriculum be matched to the child or young person's needs?

The nature of children with AS or ASD creates an uneven academic profile both within the individual child and within the year groups. This presents particular demands to ensure each pupil has the opportunity to grow academically and socially, whilst less able students do not feel stigmatised within the class. Our task is further complicated by the poor educational experiences some students have experienced as a result of previous placements being unable to meet the complex demands of the child.

Our pupils spread across the band of ability from less able to very able children. Heightened anxiety and school phobia are frequent traits within our client group and the school seeks to counter this with empathy, understanding and structure, all within a small supportive class group, with a flexible timetable and reward system.

In Key Stage 3 and for all of Key Stage 4, our curricular model is based upon a traditional mainstream delivery, with class groups following a timetable and moving from subject to subject during the day. Depending on the needs of each year group, adjustments can be made to make their timetable more primary based (or personalised), when necessary.

We actively make ourselves aware of initiatives within mainstream curriculum development and balance these with the specific needs of each student, expectations of parents and of funding Local Authorities. This often entails formulation and revision of individual timetables to balance curriculum issues, communication needs and complexities of individual students within practical day-to-day demands of a small school.

The school can cater for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 and post 16 students. Within North Hill House School our students are divided into main classes of usually no more than eight children, grouped within Key Stage (according to social dynamics and ability); this is within year groups where possible. Each class has an assigned academic tutor responsible for supporting the students, co-ordinating learning plans and collating academic reports which are sent home to parents on a termly basis.

We can offer a bespoke service that is specifically for pupils who require education that is more highly individualised to support them to better achieve.

The curriculum will include a greater level of therapeutic input and individualised learning, with the aims of both: more actively engaging pupils in learning; and developing the qualities and skills that they will need to achieve throughout their life. Whilst these aims are critical for all students, we have identified that some pupils require a much more intensive and bespoke package.

We have access to the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), allowing any pupil who requires it, a method to easily communicate their wants and needs.

5. Do you offer any therapeutic services?

North Hill House School provides its young people with access to an experienced therapy team by means of:

- Two full time Occupational Therapists
- A full time Speech, Language and Communication Therapist
- A part time Counsellor
- A part time Educational Psychologist

The exact nature and duration of formal therapeutic input is in the first instance depicted by the Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). Regular assessment of a young person's progress is carried out and adjustment to provision is discussed within annual review meetings.

Our therapists are trained in and are able to deliver a range of supportive measures, including social stories, sensory integration therapy and communication training. We also have a room specifically designed for the delivery of sensory integration therapy.

6. How does the school celebrate the success of children with SEND?

We celebrate the children's success with SEND by:

- Vivo rewards system, where pupils are awarded points that can be converted into prizes
- Certificates
- Praise used around the whole school
- 'Steps for Success' target setting, allowing pupils to see the success in achieving their goals
- Positive assemblies
- Local press
- Review meetings, where the pupil is encouraged to attend and complete a 'Pupil's' view
- End of term reports
- Regular communication with parents
- Academic open days
- Various event days where participation and success are celebrated
- Work displayed around the school
- Positive feedback marking within books/folders
- Additional trips and visits
- End of year 11 trips

7. How will the parent/carer know how their child/young person is doing and how will you help the parent/carer to support their child's learning?

Each young person is allocated a pastoral and academic tutor. Regular contact is made with the parent/carer, including a weekly phone call from the pastoral tutor. Detailed academic reports are provided on a termly basis, which provide an overview of progress, including current progress/ GCSE levels and targets.

Close working relationships with parents assist with enabling our pupils to make good progress. We have provided workshops for parents to ensure they receive information and feel supported. We run academic open days where parents can attend school and seek information, guidance and support from a variety of staff that come into contact with their child.

Staff have provided support to the home in the form of meetings, plans, which can even be implemented in the home environment, if needed. Many parents will routinely contact the school or come in to meet key staff when they feel it is necessary.

We enjoy very close working relationships with placing authorities and social services departments, for pupils who have particular challenges within the home environment.

8. What support will there be for the child's overall well-being?

1. All students have a Pastoral Tutor. The Pastoral Tutor is available to support a young person in settling into life at North Hill House and for day-to-day aspects of their life. The Pastoral Tutor liaises with parents, Local Authorities and all those involved and advocates for the young person as and when requested. The Pastoral Tutor listens to the young person, supports them and guides them during their social time. They also support the student to grow and develop appropriately and encourage the student to be empowered in decisions about their life.

2. All North Hill House School senior staff manage medication according to individual needs. Each medication is administered with two post probation members of staff. The school also has access to the local GP surgery and emergency services as appropriate. Pastoral Tutors support the students with their personal care needs. If it has been identified that a student requires personal care needs, this is discussed with parents and cascaded to staff who need to know. This information is added to their Health and Placement Plan and all involved agree to support the young person's needs appropriately.

3. All students also have individual behaviour plans within their first three months. Within this time period, the staff who work closely with the student, support them to manage their behaviours appropriately, whereby working towards progressing and developing in positive behaviours that are conducive and supportive to meeting their individual needs, and to avoid an increase in inappropriate behaviours.

There may be times when the behaviour of a student requires physical intervention, however, this is always considered to be a last resort, and may only ever be considered when there is a significant risk of injury to any person or significant damage to property and there is no alternative method of mitigating these risks. Physical intervention, where used, would always be proportionate and use no more force than is necessary. North Hill House uses the Team Teach approach to physical intervention, and only the agreed techniques taught can be used. All staff are trained to the appropriate level and provided with refresher courses at least once a year.

To support students to increase their attendance, the school provides a transitional plan that encourages students to integrate into North Hill House life, on a gradual and phased introduction to school life. If it is not appropriate for students to be in North Hill House, the decision for exclusion is made by the Operations Director and Head Teacher only. Students are seldom excluded as North Hill House is a Special Educational Needs School and as such we recognise the need to support all students individually.

4. North Hill House follows National Minimum Standards. As such we encourage all students to be a part of their Annual Review and promote their self-awareness. This gives the students confidence in themselves and knowledge on how to progress and develop in their own future and how they can be involved in decisions about themselves.

All students are given formal documentation to complete, which gives them the opportunity to provide their personal views within the formal setting. They are also invited to join the meeting at an appropriate time.

5. The school supports all students individually. All students have both a Pastoral Tutor and an Academic Tutor. They meet regularly and engage in team meetings across all domains to ensure there is a supportive network within school.

9. What specialist services, training and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

We offer a range of specialist services, training and expertise at our school including:

- Educational psychologist support
- Well balanced career support through PSE lessons in partnership with Careers South West – People Developers (CSW)
- Occupational therapists
- Speech and language therapist
- Counsellor
- All staff receive training in autistic spectrum disorders

- All staff receive at least 5 days training each year, covering all aspects of working with the young people within our provision
- We use the Team Teach approach to positive behaviour management and all staff are trained to the appropriate level
- Utilisation of an online system of training in a range of relevant topics, which are reviewed on a regular basis
- Specialist training is provided when the need is identified
- Open door policy within all departments, to ensure best practice is shared between all staff
- Priory supports the utilisation of external training providers to support professional development
- System of appraisal for all staff (performance management for teachers), to support the development of staff expertise and skills
- Support for the moderation of work from other schools
- A literacy coordinator who provides literacy support programmes including dyslexia

10. How will children/young people be included in activities outside the classroom and how does the school ensure that children with SEND are able to access leisure and residential activities?

We are mindful that the young people who attend North Hill House School find social and unfamiliar situations challenging. We endeavour to plan activities and trips outside of the school that enable the students to experience a range of social situations and unfamiliar surroundings. This enables the young people to gain confidence, whilst experiencing activities that complement the normal curriculum and social time that they have within the school.

As part of this planning process, parents/carers are consulted to ensure that we are fully aware of previous experiences, both positive and negative. Other teams within the school are fully involved in the planning, such as our therapy team, who can assist with strategies like social stories to help make these events a positive and productive experience.

Recent events have included: an Easter Fayre, a Christmas Show, Comic Relief activities, 'Run a Mile' event, World Environment Day, trips to museums, art galleries and the theatre.

11. Does your school offer any outreach?

We are able to develop bespoke packages for individual students, where support can be provided within the home environment.

Where a pupil is unable to attend for shorter periods of time, educational packages are formulated to help the student remain on course and up-to-date within a range of subjects.

12. How accessible is the school environment?

We are currently unable to take any young people with physical disabilities. However, we have accessible facilities, such as toilets, meeting rooms, dining room and conference facilities on the ground floor of the main building.

13. How will the school prepare and support the child for transition or the next stage of education and life?

Before an offer is made, a taster session is arranged, which for a residential student would involve an overnight stay. This provides the young person with experience of a range of activities, including lessons, break times, lunch and clubs. A single member of staff is allocated to the young person for the whole day.

On successful completion of the taster, an offer is made to the Local Authority.

On accepting an offer, arrangements are made for the young person to transition into North Hill House in a considered manner, that reduces anxiety and maximises the success of the placement. All aspects of the young person are taken into consideration to tailor a transition package. The

plan normally consists of starting with one or two days a week, building up to full time within a four to five-week period.

14. Do you have a children's/young person's council?

The school has a School Council that meets at least once a term. A representative from each class group and residential area is elected by their peers. They are allocated a budget and make decisions about how this is spent within the school.

15. Does the school provide any specialist equipment (eg Sensory)?

North Hill House is equipped with a range of specialist equipment that complements the services provided by the therapy departments. We have a fully equipped OT room and sensory room, providing support for those students needing sensory integration support and with occupational therapy needs.

The speech and language therapist and literacy co-ordinator have access to a range of specialist resources, to complement the delivery of the support required.

16. Where do young people go when they leave your service?

There are a range of options that the young person can take once they leave our service and this will depend upon the point within their education at which they are currently functioning.

Pupils leaving at Year 11 (aged 16) have normally moved into local further education provisions or into employment. Communication from parents/carers relating to young people who have completed their further education studies, has indicated a variety of destinations including: University, vocational courses, time out to travel and employment.

Some of those leaving North Hill House after attending further education have moved on to prestigious higher education institutes, including: Oxford and Birmingham; additional further studies; and employment.

Get in touch

To make the process of referring a young person into Priory Education Services as seamless as possible, or for further information about North Hill House School, please contact our dedicated enquiries office today on **0845 277 4679**.