# Fair Ways Schools
# Autistic Education Policy

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## Contents


1 Fair Ways Education Autistic Education – Good Practice ..... 3

2 Our Vision for Fair Ways Education ..... 5

3 School Environment ..... 6

4 Specialist Health Practitioners ..... 6

5 Working with Parents and Carers ..... 7

6 Core principles of GOOD practice in autism education ..... 7

7 Interventions for student with Autistic Spectrum conditions ..... 8

8 Associated Documentation & legislation ..... 9

## Fair Ways Vision, Mission and Values

**Our vision**
To build a community that changes lives, makes a difference to society and leaves a legacy greater than us.
**Our mission**
To grow a compassionate, resilient, and trauma-informed community, that embraces learning, so that we improve the lives and outcomes of individuals.

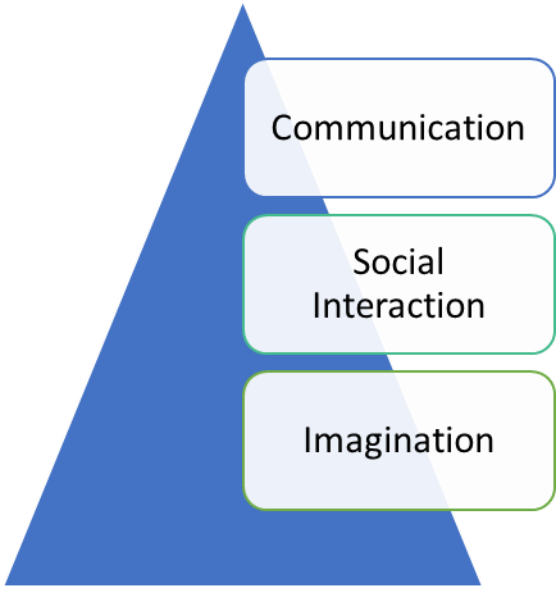
**Our values**
Our values form the heart of the work we do, defined by Fair Ways people, for Fair Ways people. These are the values by which we operate, by which we are governed, and to which we are held accountable.

We therefore expect every individual within Fair Ways to *play their part*:

| **P**ROFESSIONAL | **A**CCEPTING | **R**EFLECTIVE | **T**RANSPARENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| · We do what we say we will.<br>· We approach challenges with optimism and enthusiasm.<br>· We don't judge, we notice.<br>· We put the needs of the service before our own personal gains. | · We don't give up on people.<br>· We value all individuals and are willing to challenge them.<br>· We embrace each other's differences as much as our similarities.<br>· We accept responsibility for our actions. | · We give feedback, we invite feedback, we listen to feedback.<br>· We look inward before we look outward.<br>· We learn as much from our mistakes as from our successes.<br>· We listen to each other, learn from each other and grow together. | · We are always willing to explain why.<br>· We have the courage to be open and honest.<br>· We earn trust through our transparency.<br>· We live by our values even when no-one is watching. |

## 1 Fair Ways Education Autistic Education – Good Practice

1.1 Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) is the term used to describe the range of neurodevelopmental conditions that are characterised by qualitative difficulties in social interaction and communication and rigid repetitive ways of thinking and behaving. Core behaviours are thought to be underpinned by fundamental difficulties in both flexible generation of ideas and the understanding of, and thinking about, other people and other situations (Autism Education Trust , 2011). Common sensory needs, include either hyposensitivity or hypersensitivity, and unusual interests in some sensations (e.g. the feel of clothes), as are mental health disorders, especially anxiety and attentional difficulties. These major impairments can be often referred to as the 'triad of impairments' (National Autistic Society, 2013) which strongly affect social interaction, imagination and communication. This can cause children with autism to have a number of difficulties with forming friendships, understanding spoken language, taking what is said literally, unpredictable emotional responses, maintaining attention, sensory overload, poor comprehension and difficulty in picking up social cues.




Triad of Impairment (National Autistic Society, 2013)

1.2 However, there is much variation in the way children and student manifest these different behaviours. A large proportion of children with autism have other learning disabilities, with a degree of intellectual ability. Difficulties in receptive and expressive language also vary enormously. For some children, spoken language is limited or absent all together, while other children speech can be fluent.

Stereotyped and inflexible Behaviours range from hand flapping and finger twisting to idiosyncratic special interests (e.g. prime numbers, trains).

1.3 The full spectrum therefore includes children and student with very different presentations and symptoms, usually classed as mild, moderate or severe, including other diagnostic terms such as Asperger's syndrome, atypical autism and pervasive developmental disorder.

1.4 Here at Fair Ways Education we have high ambitions and aspirations for our student with autism and always striving for them to reach their full potential and be included in all aspects of school life and society. We seek to provide an inclusive education for all student with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and in particular student with autistic spectrum conditions as per the school's vision.

## 2 Our Vision for Fair Ways Education

2.1 Fair Ways Education provides education for student with social and emotional behavioural difficulties with additional complex needs such as ADHD, ASC, MLD and student in full time residential care and Foster care in accordance with the documents The 'Children Act, 2004' and 'Education of Student in Public Care, 2000' and the 'Equality Act, 2010'.

2.2 Fair Ways Education will ensure that:

- No student is disadvantaged educationally and that education provision is a continuous process.
- Student either continue their education in the maintained sector or within our own educational organisation with all of the necessary support and provision required.
- Students are encouraged to achieve, whatever their abilities, and are confident in their abilities and those achievements.
- Those students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have those needs met as part of a continuous educational process.
- Those concerned with the education of student in care constantly strive to deliver high standards in all aspects of education.
- The student's needs (including those with Autistic spectrum conditions) are catered for and we provide an educational experience in which they can learn without fear or anxiety.
- Student receive constant encouragement to be able to succeed.
- All students are treated of equal value, whatever their disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, belief, faith or sexual orientation.

- The requirements of the National Curriculum are taken into consideration as far as possible and that student proceed through the examination system appropriate to their abilities and needs.

- Have the highest expectations of all student, and all student see the celebration of achievement.

2.3 We recognise the importance of helping student with autistic spectrum conditions to develop problem solving skills to promote independence both in school and into adult life. Fair Ways Education strongly believes in creating an individualised curriculum to meet each young person's needs adapting a unique 'autistic curriculum'. This not only captures the young person's learning needs but also addresses social, emotional and communication needs of children and student with autism and nurtures their independence and well-being. The schools can offer a variety of academic qualifications including GCSE and Entry Level depending on the student's needs. Where possible the school will always look to support learning through the National Curriculum as well as looking at a variety of independent life skill awards. However, the curriculum will always be based around the young person's needs and specified support as stated in their EHCP or Statement of Education.

## 3 School Environment

3.1 Fair Ways Education has a specialised ASC provision that is based in Totton which provides a nurturing and dedicated 'autistic curriculum' providing ASC student with a highly ambitious and inclusive education, mostly delivered on a 1:1 or 2:1 basis.

Fair Ways Education adopts the TEACCH (Schopler & Mesibov, 2012) programme in providing an educational intervention for student with autism. The key principles of TEACCH is to provide an inclusive education program, emphasis on independence, individualised programmes, communication systems and incorporating choice and encouraging flexibility for the student we educate. The school uses a number of TEACCH concepts such as regular daily schedules, work systems, learning pods, task structure, visual communications, teaching styles and a variety of learning resources.

The school has a sensory room to support student with autism whereby they can have access to this daily with individualised programmes supplied by the school's therapy team. The school also uses other behaviour management and educational interventions specific to supporting student with autism.

## 4 Specialist Health Practitioners

4.1 School staff are both highly trained and highly motivated in educating children and student with autism. Staff are regularly trained in various courses and techniques to

enable effective practice in supporting student to make good progress both academically and socially. The school promote joint working with specialist health practitioners and have their own therapy team, which includes a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, music therapist, ABA therapist and play therapist. The school continues to work closely with mental health teams and other social care professionals to support the needs of the students.

## 5 Working with Parents and Carers

5.1 Fair Ways Education feel it is extremely important that there is good communication between school and parents / carers. Parental involvement is mutually beneficial as the exchange of information about how a young person communicates and behaves promotes a better understanding about what may happen in different settings. School staff can learn from parents / carers about their experience living with their young person. Likewise, parents / carers can learn about strategies used in the school for their child. This can promote a consistent approach that is required to address the difficulties of learning that is typical for student with autism.

5.2 Despite the diverse range of needs for student with autism Fair Ways Education will always look to provide high expectations, multiple assessments of needs and adapt a bespoke curriculum to support student's independence to ensure each child can succeed. The priority is always the child and Fair Ways Education base their methods around the Core Principles of good practice (Autism Education Trust, 2011).

## 6 Core principles of GOOD practice in autism education

6.1 At Fair Ways Education the following core principles of good practice in autism education are followed:

- Have high ambitions for student with autism to reach their full potential.
- Embed specialist, evident-informed approaches in quality-first teaching practice to remove barriers for student on the autism spectrum.
- Increase the range of learning opportunities for developing independent living skills.
- Celebrate and value achievements of student and staff.
- Use multiple systems for recording progress of academic attainment in addition to behaviour and social outcomes.
- Use innovative and individualised methods of adapting the curriculum, utilising student's strengths and interests, to make it accessible and rewarding for student with autism.

- Encourage joint planning and working with health and education professionals to support language and communication, emotional well-being, and an environment conducive to learning.
- Select and value motivated, enthusiastic, and empathetic staff.
- Build and consolidate autism expertise at a consistently high level by maintaining an ongoing programme of training and CPD on autism for all staff.
- Disseminate practice and share expertise with schools and professionals in the local community, and with parents.
- Develop a close working relationship with parents, which recognise their key role, expertise and joint decision making.
- Seek to build and maintain strong connections with student and ensure that they are active participants in choices about curricular and extra-curricular activities and how the school is run.
- Recognise parents' need for support so that learning continues outside of school.
- Act as a focal point for raising awareness about autism in the broader community, ensuring that student with autism have meaningful, visible participation in the local community.
- Strong leadership and a clear vision to implement all of the above.

## 7 Interventions for student with Autistic Spectrum conditions

7.1 The ASC provision provides the following:

- 2:1 or 1:1 staff at all times
- Individualised curriculum timetable and education targets (IEP)
- Life skills development (ASDAN and AQA qualifications)
- Access to national curriculum - Key Stage 3
- Access to GCSE's ,Functional skills and Entry Level– Key Stage 4 / Post 16
- Key Stage 4 / Post 16 – access to work experience
- Key Stage 4 / Post 16 – access to college placements
- TEACCH trained staff supporting the programme (specific to ASC)
- Makaton / PECS – communication systems
- RiiSE trained staff
- Sensory diet
- Access to the school occupational therapist (OT) and assessments
- Access to the school speech and language therapist (SALT) and assessments
- Access to the school Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) therapist and assessments
- Access to music therapy
- Project leader overseeing and assessing this young person's needs regularly
- Close liaison with parents/carers

- 6 – 8 weekly reports
- Therapeutic interventions
- Support until 19 years
- Transition to further education, training, day services or employment

## 8 Associated Documentation & legislation


- Autism Education Trust (2011). What is good practice in Autism education. London: Leading Education and Social research
- Department for Education (2009). Inclusion Development programme primary and secondary - supporting autism. Department for Education
- Department of Education (2011). Autistic Spectrum Disorder - a guide to classroom practice. Department for Education
- Hampshire County Council (2010) The Autistic Spectrum - Approaches to facilitate inculsin in mainstream school. Hampshire County Council
- National Autistic Society (2013). TEACCH. National Autistic Society.