

Autism Accreditation Assessment

The Holmewood School

Assessment dates	10-12 March 2020
Lead Assessor	Stephen Dedridge
External Moderator	Jean Mockford
Status prior to the assessment	Accredited
Advanced status applied for	Yes

Section 1: Context

About the Provision

Brief description of the provision made for autistic people:

- The Holmewood School is an independent specialist school located over two sites.
- Students are taught in small classes with a high staff to student ratio.
- The curriculum is personalised, with an emphasis on core subjects and key skills with teachers using flexible teaching strategies and assessments that take the needs and strengths of individuals into account.
- The school focuses on both an academic curriculum as well as a social and life skills curriculum which is tailored to the needs of each student. These needs are further acknowledged and planned for in an Individual Education Plan which is reviewed and updated termly.
- Students access a range of bespoke therapeutic interventions which are delivered either through withdrawal sessions or within the classroom setting.

Number of autistic people supported by the provision:

- 58 students are currently on roll all of whom have a diagnosis of autism except one who shows autistic traits and is undergoing an assessment.

Range of autistic people supported by the provision:

- The school caters for autistic young people who are described as 'academically able' and 'verbal' but who 'would otherwise be at risk of exclusion or out of education'.
- Approximately 70 - 80% of the students have additional diagnoses such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, mental health diagnoses, or moderate learning needs.

Outcome of last statutory assessment (Body; date, outcome):

- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2018 and was rated as overall good with three areas rated as outstanding:

-Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
-Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
-Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
-Outcomes for pupils	Good
-Sixth form provision	Outstanding

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2753995>

About the Assessment

- The assessment took place over 3 days.
- The school's adviser assumed the role of lead assessor with support from an external moderator on the first two day of the assessment.
- A presentation was delivered by the school's Head Teacher and the Lead Autism Teacher on how provision is made for autistic students. A student then gave the assessment team a tour of the school.
- A range of sessions were observed in both the main school and the nearby Sixth Form Provision. This included lessons in Maths, English, Science, IT, Drama, Art and Cooking and also Well-Being activities and Lunchtime Clubs. Speech and Language Therapy sessions were also observed.
- Focus groups were held with staff on the themes of Behaviour and Zones of Regulation; Autism Training and Professional Development; SMSC and Life-skills and on Occupational Therapy Provision. Focus groups were also held with both students and with parents.
- Policy and procedure documents relevant to the provision for autistic students were reviewed, in particular The Holmewood School Autism Practice Guide and policies on Student Well-Being, Behaviour and Assessment.
- Personal files were sampled from across the service, these included Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs); Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and One Page Profiles.
- The results of surveys carried out with students and their parents were also considered and are found in the appendix to this report.
- The assessment concluded with the Lead Assessor presenting a verbal summary of key findings.

Professional Development and Support for Staff

Main approaches or methods employed by the provision in supporting autistic people:

- The school has produced general guidance for staff on educating autistic students entitled 'The Holmewood School Autism Practice Guide'.
- This guidance describes how staff are expected to maintain learning environments which are low arousal, predictable and well-organised according to 'structured teaching' principles. It recognises the need to provide tools and strategies to help students regulate sensory input (such as sensory toys and movement breaks), to adapt verbal language and use visual supports.
- As well as accessing a curriculum which mirrors that offered in mainstream schools, students also access a Life Skills Curriculum and a bespoke Well-Being programme.
- The school provides onsite speech and language therapy provision, occupational therapy and psychodynamic therapies (psychotherapy, music therapy, dramatherapy, art therapy) as well as reflexology. The school also has a therapy

- dog.
- Staff are trained in Team Teach positive behaviour management. The Zones of Regulation curriculum is well established as a whole school approach in helping students gain skills in consciously regulating their actions.
- A range of other approaches are employed on a person-centred basis including Restorative Justice, Social Thinking, Social Stories and Comic Script Conversations.

Training and professional development staff receive in these approaches and in their understanding of autism

- All new staff access an 8 weeks autism specific induction programme (including introduction to autism; autism and communication; OT provision/ Sensory processing; Understanding and supporting behaviour).
- Weekly CPD is offered to all staff including the option to attend workshops covering a range of issues. Recent examples include: Race issues in autism; Zones of Regulation; Eating and Feeding issues; Play; Careers; Functional Skills; Reward Systems; Restorative Justice; Handwriting issues in autism.
- External speakers are regularly invited into the school, including autistic people.
- A large budget is allocated to CPD each year. This allows staff at all levels to attend external training and events and to work towards achieving autism specific qualifications. According to information provided by the school, 100% of Senior leaders, 100% of therapists, 60% of Teachers and 25 % of Teaching Assistants have an Autism Specific Qualification.
- A transdisciplinary approach is taken to the delivery of continuous professional training with therapists working closely with academic staff in delivering the professional development programme.

On-going support available to staff in working with autistic individuals

- The Holmewood School has a strong philosophy and ethos summarised by the slogan 'Think Differently'. It benefits from a strong leadership team which was recognised with a TES award in 2019 for 'Senior Leadership Team of the Year'
- A transdisciplinary team of therapists and teaching staff work closely together to develop and regularly update programmes of support. Where students are experiencing challenges, a problem-solving team approach is taken in which every effort is made to find a solution and the insight of all members of staff is taken into account.
- The overall impression the assessment team gained from interviews and observations was of a stable, well-motivated, confident and competent staff team. The on-going professional development of staff is exemplary and described by one member of staff as 'second to none'. They feel that they are provided with the tools to do the job and are reflective practitioners who are keen to learn from each other. They consider themselves well-supported and that their skills and talents are recognised and are made best use of. They speak with passion and enthusiasm about the progress made by autistic students. They have clearly 'bought into' and understand the ethos and aims of the school.
- Although there is much good work being done within the school there is no complacency. Rather the school shows a commitment to contributing to and staying ahead of the game in terms of current knowledge about autism including valuing and seeking to utilize the expertise of autistic people themselves by inviting them to contribute to the professional development programme.

Section 2: Findings from Assessment

NOTE: In this section, the real names of autistic students have been replaced by pseudonyms

Personal Centred Planning

Brief description of how individual support is planned, implemented and evaluated:

- The process for creating and reviewing individual education plans is outlined in the school's Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. This describes what is referred to as a 'unique approach to recording and assessing the progress of our unique students'.
- Students attending The Holmewood School all have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which details their specific strengths, needs and attainments following their statutory assessment. EHCPs are reviewed on an annual basis and goals revised as required.
- Assessments of cognitive functioning and development, intellectual abilities, adaptive behaviour and emotional wellbeing are used at baseline and at other times in the student's life at the school as appropriate (e.g. in preparation for a transition or to assess the effectiveness of a specific intervention).
- The school's Therapy team also employ a range of specific assessments before admission and during the first term as a baseline. These then continue throughout the student's education.
- Following baseline assessment, an Individual Educational Plan will be drawn up for each child and reviewed on a termly basis.
- Progress Meetings are held with each class teacher to analyse and evaluate the progress of individuals further.
- As a tool to monitor progress, the school employs a modified version of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) model having developed its own unique grading system.
- If a student is not making expected progress this will trigger a multidisciplinary Action Planning' which seeks to identify and address any barriers to learning in areas such as the environment or emotional well-being.

Differences in Social Communication

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

- The Holmewood School Autism Practice Guide provides guidance on what is expected from all staff working in the school. It states:
Effective communication and an understanding of how autism affects communication is central to providing a suitable education for students with autism. Paying attention to individual students' needs and abilities and making

adjustments accordingly will have a significant impact on students' wellbeing and ability to learn.

- The guidance includes a list of strategies for staff to follow in terms of adapting and structuring verbal language and using visual supports.
- Speech language and communication assessments are carried out by the SALTs on an annual basis to provide up-to date information for Annual Review reports. New students participate in initial assessment which will be completed within the first half term where possible.
- Following assessment, the findings are summarised in an accessible report which is shared with the student's family, school staff and multidisciplinary team (MDT). Strategies for supporting the student's communication and social skills are included.
- SALT assessment also provides a baseline for termly IEP targets which are chosen in collaboration with the students, staff and parents/carers where possible.
- There is a strong focus within the school to provide opportunities for students to develop their social skills in a range of settings.
- Individual plans reviewed by the assessment team identify how each autistic person prefers to communicate and what strategies staff should employ to support their communication and social understanding e.g.
 - *Visuals support Jacob to process verbal information.*
 - *Ensure you give Kate enough time to process spoken information,*
 - *Write down key information to help Karl focus on the topic being discussed and understand the information*
 - *Clear instructions in short sentences are helpful and I should use it. Breaks help me concentrate and regain my focus*
 - *I should be given time to process instructions and questions and people should speak slowly to give me time to think.*
 - *Please explain things to me especially around social situations as I sometimes misread them*
- Documents presented to the assessment team including case-studies provide clear examples of progress made in social communication and interaction. For example:
 - *Ramesh has made visible progress with comprehension skills.*
 - *William is coming into school and greeting everyone he comes across and will often ask what we are up to over the weekend. This is lovely to see his communication skills developing. He has a wonderful relationship with the adults and students in his class and will start a conversation with them on any topic.*
 - *Lloyd has a firm friendship group...he is much more open and inclusive to other peers...*
 - *Karen had limited conversations that were rigid in nature. Karen could only talk about things of immediate interest. Karen now has varied conversations with lots of different people.*
- In interviews, staff described the ways they have supported students, in their communication and social engagement. They were also able to describe positive outcomes achieved by students related to their communication and social engagement.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

- During all observations staff communicated with students verbally. Explanations and instructions were clear and reinforced by visual information on white boards.
- Each student was individually promoted to express views and answer questions.
- Staff allowed students time to think and process information.
- Staff differentiated their language when working with individual students and personalised visual supports were made available when necessary.
- Staff regularly checked for understanding. ...
- Most observed lessons started with a teacher led whole class introduction and discussion before the students carried out a task independently with adult support or had a 1:1 discussion about the topic with a teaching assistant. It was concluded with a whole class plenary. This highly structured approach is beneficial for autistic students. However, consideration should be given to including more activities which require students to work together as a pair or in a small group rather than with an adult. Whilst this can be challenging it is important the students develop skills in working as a team often required in the world of work.
- Outside of lesson-time, peer to peer social interaction is pro-actively facilitated and encouraged. Indeed, this is a defining characteristic of the school culture with autistic students seen to regularly enjoy each other's company, look out for each other and develop social skills within a naturalistic context.

Problem Solving and Self-reliance**Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions**

- Life-skills is described as an essential component of the curriculum with the aim of giving students the tools required to lead happy confident and independent lives.
- Each student receives a minimum of 2 periods of life-skills each week with the 6th form receiving additional periods as part of a bespoke model.
- Life Skills units include basic cooking, budgeting, travel training and 'my autism/self-advocacy'.
- There are two clear primary aims:
 - *To foster the development of each student's independence (doing things for themselves)*
 - *To show self-control (learning how to behave positively and proactively without having an adult nearby).*
- According to guidance provided in The Holmewood School Autism Practice Guide in addition to the explicit teaching of life-skills, staff are expected 'to provide opportunities throughout the day for students to work independently and to solve problems by themselves'. Planned sabotage activities are also recommended.
- Each student has an independence target. For example, one young person has difficulties with taking care of their belongings. Identified strategies include providing them with a checklist. Another student is being helped to develop an understanding of the value of money through on-line games and tabletop activities.

- Individual plans also identify approaches and tools for supporting autistic people in carrying out activities and in managing transitions. For example:
 - *Faith can have difficulties attending to individual group and whole class activities which are not related to a topic of interest. Using a topic of interest can be motivating.*
 - *Break up tasks and use writing frames with key words.*
 - *Encourage Abdul to use his visual timetable to help him stay organised. Provide pre-warnings about any change in the schedule.*
 - *Taking 5 min regulation breaks helps Brian to refresh and improve his focus.*
- Documents presented to the assessment team including case-studies provide clear examples of progress made in life-skills. For example, one young person has worked on developing money skills and was able to put these skills into practice by serving customers in their class tuckshop: 'Using a script Mark is able to serve customers and with some support give them the correct change'. Another student can now travel independently from home to school. This is described as a 'huge step' for them which they were very keen to achieve. One student is described as getting upset and anxious by change and requiring regular adult prompting to move for one task to another. They are now more accepting of change and sometimes welcome it if they get to do something different and interesting.
- In interviews, staff described the ways they have supported students, in developing life-skills and independence and the progress that has resulted.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

- In all observations, students understood what they had to do to complete a task.
- The learning environment is maintained as well structured and predictable in order to encourage students to be organised and independent.
- Students are provided with opportunities to develop daily functional skills including literacy and numeracy. They benefit from accessing a life-skills curriculum.
- Students are provided with regular opportunity to make choices and problem-solve. Where best practice was observed staff encouraged reflective thinking rather than just providing an answer.
- Students are encouraged to carry out tasks by themselves. However, although on the whole teaching assistants avoided over-prompting students, they often sat very close to a student for most of the lesson, providing an immediate and consistent presence. This may create a level of reassurance and dependency which is not a realistic preparation for what support young people are likely to access in adulthood. There is therefore scope for rethinking how 'additional' adults can be best employed within classes as students move through the school and hopefully become increasingly more self-reliant and resilient.

Sensory Experiences

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

- The Holmewood School Autism Practice Guide provides guidance on how to maintain classrooms as low arousal and organised. Reference is also made to

providing access to sensory toys and other items to help 'students remain calm and focussed'.

- The Occupational Therapy team implement individualised programmes to help students desensitise or to improve their sensory processing issues.
- Plans identify what challenges each student may experience in regulating sensory experiences and strategies to support them for example:
 - *Sensory activities embedded throughout the day to calm him.*
 - *Ensure that Joe is given learning breaks when needed or sensory toys to keep him focussed on the task in hand*
 - *Allow Andrew time to regulate in a quiet space*
- When interviewed the Occupational Therapy team were able to describe how they supported autistic students both in class and through 1:1 and small group sessions and the success of these interventions.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

- The main school is housed in a converted Victorian house with limited space and flexibility. However, there is a consistency of approach throughout the whole school with careful consideration given to décor, furniture and displays and the way staff interact with students in order to create a calm, low arousal learning environment.
- Staff show an awareness of the need for students to sensory regulate by offering regular Movement breaks and on-going access to sensory items and activities.
- Students were supported to access sensory activities which they appeared to find relaxing and enjoyable.

Emotional Well-being

Key outcomes identified from personal support documents and staff discussions:

- According to the school website 'At the Holmewood School wellbeing comes first. We want all our students to be emotionally well in order to be ready to learn'.
- The school's expansive range of enrichment activities resulted in achieving a Commendation from Autism Accreditation. This includes lunchtime clubs, residential trips and varied outdoor education activities including Forest School, ice skating, archery and water-sports.
- The school also runs an Occupational Therapy Café which won the 2019 TES Special Needs Initiative. The café was introduced as a programme for a student with complex behaviour needs to build upon his interest in cooking. The project has been expanded to involve other students in activities to promote their well-being and social engagement.
- Therapists and teaching staff work closely together to develop and regularly update packages of support. These packages are imaginative and highly individualised with a strong focus on exploiting individual skills, strengths and interests. Therapeutic opportunities are expansive and diverse and fully integrated into everyday classroom practice. They include onsite speech and language therapy provision, occupational therapy and psychodynamic therapies

(psychotherapy, music therapy, dramatherapy, art therapy) as well as reflexology. The school also has a therapy dog.

- The school takes a positive approach to behaviour with Zones of regulation now embedded practice throughout the school with a high level of consistency with it being fully understood and followed by both staff and students. This has led to a 70 % reduction in physical interventions.
- When a student experiences challenges with their behaviour a problem-solving approach is taken with therapists and staff working closely together to implement, monitor and review programmes.
- Pen portraits identify activities which each autistic person finds enjoyable, relaxing or provides them with a sense of achievement and purpose. For example:
 - *I am highly motivated by trains and the London Underground. I like playing games around these and theming my work to this helps.*
 - *I like playing card and board games with my friends, holidays away, watching movies and carpentry. I would one day like to work in the design/carpentry industry and have done DT work related experience for this.*
- Throughout the school there is recognition of the value of building upon student interests. However, the bespoke development of interests into vocational pathways in the 6th form provision (which involves linking up with a range of providers and professionals) is especially note-worthy This was evidenced by an impressive collection of careers and Colleges case studies.
- There is a commitment within the school to empowering students to have the confidence and skills to express opinion and advocate for themselves and others. The school explicitly encourages students to value and celebrate difference; between themselves and others; to be tolerant and compassionate and to prepare them to be citizens in a very diverse society. This includes explicit teaching in understanding neurodiversity and the strengths and challenges of autism.
- The school was able to provide a range of qualitative and quantitative data to show positive outcomes for autistic students.
- In interviews staff universally spoke with passion, pride and commitment about the impact the school has had on the quality of lives of the students.

Key outcomes identified from observation/review of key activities:

- Staff consistently treat students with respect and positive regard. Consistent rules and boundaries are set but without confrontation or conflict but rather by encouraging the students to recognise the value of compromise and collaboration. When students need space and time, they are allowed it.
- The school has a calm positive and supportive atmosphere and staff were observed offering meaningful positive feedback to boost confidence and self-esteem.
- During all observation's students presented as feeling safe, happy and keen to engage in social interactions.
- Throughout all observations it was evident that staff have developed positive and trusting relationships.
- Throughout all observations it was evident that staff have developed positive and trusting relationships. Staff appeared to be in tune with the needs of the students

and worked proactively to support students to avoid anxiety, confusion or distress from occurring.

- The Zones of regulation were seen to be consistently employed to help students understand and regulate their emotions.
- Staff differentiated tasks to match students' likes/interests and academic level so that students had the opportunity to experience success and achievement.
- Students are fully focussed on purposeful learning activities which they find interesting and engaging.
- The assessment team was presented with compelling evidence that well-being is a significant strength of the school. The school takes autistic young people who have a high level of complex emotional and behaviour issues often coupled with negative experiences of education. The school's impact on these young people is transformative and greatly increases their potential to lead a happy and fulfilling life.

Consultation with Autistic People

- It is the school's policy for students to be given opportunities to develop self-advocacy skills to their fullest
- Annual questionnaires are sent out to students each year. July 2019 questionnaire results showed that 100 % of students felt that they learnt new things in their lessons and 97 % said they felt they get the help they needed.
- The Lead assessor held a focus group discussion with students from across the school. Key points from this session:
 - *Students were very positive about the staff at the school who they consider to care more than mainstream teachers and who 'talk to us individually'.*
 - *Students were able to name a range of activities they enjoyed doing.*
 - *Some students did not like it when teaching assistants were allocated to other classes and would prefer to have more notice.*
 - *Some students would like more tangible rewards for good work and behaviour like sweets or money.*
 - *One student felt that classrooms can be noisy with a particular issue around students coming into the English room to get books and 'hanging around'.*
 - *One student felt that stimming toys helped them to concentrate. Another student thought there needed to be more ear defenders. One student disliked the sound of the nearby trains and found the fire alarm too noisy.*
 - *Students came up with a range of ideas about equipment the school could buy- an AstroTurf; trampolines; ball pitch; a new microwave in the 6th form...*
- Four young people completed the Autism Accreditation confidential on-line survey, all of them rating the support they receive as good.

Consultation with families of Autistic People

- Annual questionnaires are sent out to parents/carers each year. July 2019 questionnaires results showed that between 97 and 100% of parents feel their child is well cared for; makes good progress; and that the school manages behaviour well. All parents said they would recommend the school to others.
- 40 parents/carers completed the Autism Accreditation on-line confidential survey of which over 82 % rated the support their child receives as always good and the rest as mostly good.
- Comments left on the survey which can be read in Appendix 1 are extremely complementary stressing the impact the school has had on their child and the difference they have seen.
- The Lead assessor held a focus group with some of the parents. They were all keen to stress the transformative effect the school had on their child and on their child's and their own lives. Below are some of their comments:
 - *They teach my child to cope with his anxiety- he rarely lashes out. He can now explain his behaviour and why he does certain things. Strategies he has learnt at school he now applies at home.*
 - *My child now travels independently to and from school.*
 - *They have worked on building my child's confidence.*
 - *My child is now more able to put up with others.*
 - *They know their stuff. They support me as well as my child. They excel at turning children around- don't focus on the academic.*
 - *Doesn't matter what the issue is they will understand it.*
 - *My child is now better at recognising danger.*
 - *There is now hope for the future- He thought he was hopeless.*
 - *He loves coming to school. My son feels listened to*
 - *The school has given my child and me hope. Now I can see him having a future and a happy life.*
 - *The school has been with me 'all the way'.*
 - *They are prepared and have the answer for everything.*
 - *It is not a school, it is a community, a family.*
 - *If a child is interested in something, they will bring it into the lessons.*
 - *They work with my child's challenges as well as boosting strengths.*
 - *Everybody works together.*
 - *They offer therapy which is not isolated or bolted on.*
 - *My child's self-esteem has risen.*
 - *The school has empowered my child.*
 - *They have helped my child to be proud of their autism.*
 - *It doesn't look or feel like a school, more like a home.*
 - *They try so hard to see how our children see things, finding out what makes them tick.*
 - *They have the people here that have the patience and skills to help my child.*
 - *I can see the difference in my child. They are so more relaxed even in their body.*

Section 3: Summary of assessment

What the provision does particularly well

What stood out as particular strengths:

- The school takes autistic young people who have a high level of complex emotional and behaviour issues often coupled with negative experiences of education. The school's impact on these young people is transformative and greatly increases their potential to lead a happy and fulfilling life.
- Key to the success of the school is a clear philosophy and ethos summarised by the slogan 'Think Differently'. The school benefits from a strong leadership team which achieved a TES award in 2019 and a staff team that fully understand and are committed to a shared vision.
- An effective balance is achieved between a strong focus on well-being and practical life skills and access to academic opportunities appropriate to the age and ability of the students. Indeed, progression within academic courses is often a tool by which the self-esteem and outlook of young people is enhanced.
- The Well-being and Life skills Curriculum taught both within specific sessions as well as through whole school approaches can be considered a strength of the school and have rightly been recognised with a TES Award TES Award for 'Wellbeing Initiative of the Year 2018' .
- A transdisciplinary team of therapists and teaching staff work closely together to develop and regularly update packages of support. These packages are imaginative and highly individualised with a strong focus on exploiting individual skills, strengths and interests. Therapeutic opportunities are expansive and diverse and fully integrated into everyday classroom practice. Where students are experiencing challenges, a problem-solving team approach is taken in which every effort is made to find a solution.
- There is a commitment within the school to empowering students to have the confidence and skills to express opinion and advocate for themselves and others. The school explicitly encourages students to value and celebrate difference; between themselves and others; to be tolerant and compassionate and to prepare them to be citizens in a very diverse society. This includes explicit teaching in understanding neurodiversity and the strengths and challenges of autism.
- The school is very much a community. Parents interviewed by the lead assessor explicitly refer to it as 'family'. Staff consistently treat students with respect and positive regard. Consistent rules and boundaries are set but without confrontation or conflict but rather by encouraging the students to recognise the value of compromise and collaboration. When students need space and time, they are allowed it.
- The Zones of regulation approach is embedded practice throughout the school with a high level of consistency with it being fully understood and followed by both staff and students.
- The bespoke development of interests into vocational pathways in the 6th form provision (which involves linking up with a range of providers and professionals) is impressive.
- Outside of the classroom, peer to peer social interaction is pro-actively facilitated and encouraged. Indeed, this is a defining characteristic of the school culture with autistic students seen to regularly enjoy each other's company, look out for each other and develop social skills within a naturalistic context.

What else the provision does well:

- Although the school accommodation is limited in space, a low arousal environment is established through a consistent approach to how learning spaces are maintained and in how staff interact with students.
- Staff show an awareness of the need for students to sensory regulate with lessons being broken down with regular Movement breaks as embedded practice throughout the school.
- The schools work in an effective partnership with parents who greatly value their support and advice.
- The school shows a commitment to contributing to and staying ahead of the game in terms of current knowledge about autism including valuing and seeking to utilize the expertise of autistic people themselves by inviting them to contribute to the professional development programme.
- The school has identified a need to make gender specific provision for the relatively small but increasing number of girls who attend the school.

What the provision could develop further

Areas to consider:

- There is scope for rethinking how teaching assistants can be best employed within classes to avoid students becoming over-reliant on them being 'always at hand'.
- Consideration should be given to a more systematic and consistent approach to teaching collaborative teamwork skills through structured peer pair and small group activities.