

18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Amy,

I am writing to inform you of the Autism Accreditation Award Committee decision agreed on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

The Award Committee consider that the school has achieved the standard required by Autism Accreditation and therefore award the status of **Accredited** to Birch Wood School.

Accredited status is awarded to provisions where staff have a good working knowledge of methods and approaches which produce positive outcomes for autistic people. Support is largely effective and person centered, overall reaching the standard expected by Autism Accreditation. The quality of practice is reflected in the majority of feedback from autistic people and/or their families.

The committee found evidence from the assessment report that the school provides personalised support based on a knowledge and understanding of good practice in working with autistic pupils. The ENABLE vision and ethos is well established across the school creating a positive, solution focused culture. The Committee also wish to highlight the reflective practice achieved through the 'Lesson Research Groups'. Staff are enthusiastic about the change in culture and the commitment to create an inclusive learning community. Pupils make progress in maintaining their well-being, increasing their confidence and self-esteem and managing their anxiety and regulating their behaviour. Ofsted also confirm that pupils make good academic gains.

Staff adapt the pace and context of their speech in order to facilitate understanding and where appropriate provide bespoke communication techniques, including the consistent use of Makaton. The calm, well-structured environment of the school creates an environment for autistic pupils which enables them to become independent learners. Pupils develop skills in decision-making and problem-solving and are provided with tools and strategies to help them self-regulate sensory input. Pupil Voice is strong across the school and the evidence shows that pupils' suggestions are actioned which gives pupils a sense of pride and ownership of their school. Response to

the Autism Accreditation survey confirm that the school is overall highly regarded by families.

The report highlights some areas of development for the school to address, such as the further implementation of sensory integration techniques into classroom practice and ensuring that targets are made accessible to pupils. However it is very clear to the committee that the school is meeting the high standards set for a specialist day school

Your feedback on the process is of great value to us, and if you have not done so already, and are able, please complete our brief feedback survey using the following link:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AccreditationEvaluation19-20/>

Congratulations again on this achievement, the committee look forward to your continued success and development.

Yours Sincerely

*Stephen Dedridge*

Stephen Dedridge  
Head of Autism Accreditation (South)