

From: [Foi Enquiries](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI-17-0390 - Additional Support
Date: 29 March 2017 10:47:53
Attachments: [Further Information - Right to Review & Appeal.pdf](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your information request of 6 March 2017. Aberdeen City Council (ACC) has completed the necessary search for the information requested.

I am writing on behalf of a constituent who recently approached me regarding teacher training for additional support needs pupils in particular those with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Her concerns were focused primarily on Cults Academy.

I would be grateful if you would answer my constituent's questions as outlined below:

What provisions, adjustments, and supports have been put in place at Cults Academy to ensure pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions are provided with adequate support to take full advantage of their school education?

Personalised timetables, adjustments re assessments, ASD protocol for Assessments, ring-fenced 1:1 time with identified adult support (Pupil Support Pastoral & Curricular), time out facility, safe haven access when required, teaching staff informed and advice given on meeting the pupil's needs, regular formal and informal meetings with parents/guardians, enhanced transitions at all stages, liaison with Autism Outreach, in classroom teachers adapt strategies for pupils including expectations and outcomes. Homework tasks differentiated to take account of pupil's learning style. Enhanced post-school transition opportunities, with supported UCAS applications, college visits and interviews.

Has the school carried out a sensory audit to ensure that it is 'Autism friendly' and if so what actions were taken as a result?

PARTIAL AUDIT

Good Practice and Evidence to look for

Sounds from classroom equipment are kept to a minimum. Televisions, videos, audio systems, lights and computers are switched off when not in use to avoid a mains hum.	No
There are strategies in place to reduce noise when rooms are in use.	NO
Classrooms are carpeted to lessen noise created by the movement of people, chairs and desks.	YES
The acoustics of the gym, dining hall and hall are checked and modified to lessen echo	NO
Hallways are carpeted to lessen the noise created by movement through the corridors.	NO
Sounds from outside the classroom do not cause problems within classrooms.	YES
Windows are suitably soundproofed so that the noise of passing traffic is not a nuisance	YES
There are agreed strategies in place when noise becomes too much for individual pupils.	YES
There is a quiet room available which provides a calm place for pupils to relax.	YES

Pupils are warned if a loud noise or bell is going to sound.	NO
Strategies are put in place to support pupils who find loud noises or fire bells very difficult to tolerate.	YES

Smell

Smells within the classroom are kept to a minimum.	YES
The smell of paints, glue, clay and cleaning fluids is minimal.	YES
Staff are aware that the smell of perfumes and deodorants may be distressing.	YES
Staff are aware that pupils may react to the smell of others.	NO
Smells from outside the classroom are monitored and reduced, where possible	NO
Alternative toileting arrangements are allowed (e.g. possible use of staff or disabled toilets).	YES
The smell of cooking from the cafeteria or food technology rooms is reduced.	NO

Touch and Feel

Uncomfortable clothing (seams, inflexible or itchy fabrics) is avoided, where possible, unless there are safety issues.	YES
Variations of the school uniform offer enough flexibility to enable pupils to be able to wear clothing they find comfortable.	YES
Willingness of the school to adapt the school uniform (e.g. wear a sweatshirt, a necktie loosely or one that pins on).	YES
Alternative arrangements are made for pupils who find writing to be physically painful or difficult.	YES
Willingness of the school to allow some work or homework to be typed.	YES
Possible use of an 'Alpha Smart', iPad or laptop for written work	YES
Seating is comfortable.	YES
Padding is used to make hard chairs more comfortable.	NO
Pupils are allowed to sit on carpet squares if the floor is not carpeted.	Not Sure
Pupils are encouraged to let others know if they are finding a sensory aspect of the environment distressing.	YES

General Sensory Issues

Pupils know that they can speak to someone about concerns.	YES
Pupils have a designated person or mentor to talk to.	YES
Pupils are relaxed when moving through corridors. (Pupils can become anxious in busy corridors due to noise, dislike of crowds and worry about being touched).	YES
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.	YES
Classroom organisation and individual seating plan takes into consideration individual sensory concerns (e.g. A pupil with a fascination with light reflection does not sit by the window).	YES
Pupils who become anxious by the close proximity of others are allowed ample space around their seat.	YES
Dinner halls and queuing systems do not cause distress (due to the noise levels, smells and crowds).	NO
Pupils are allowed to enter the dinner hall before or after peers to avoid queuing and crowds.	YES
An adult or buddy may escort a pupil to and within the dinner hall. A system of	YES

support is available for pupils experiencing sensory overload.	
Learning breaks are allowed when necessary	YES
There is a designated place and a clear system/routine for pupils to follow if they feel they need to withdraw due to sensory overload to 'chill out.	YES

How many pupils attending Cults Academy require additional support and how many of those have needs arising from Autistic Spectrum Conditions?

180 pupils are identified with additional support need. 12 pupils have been diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Conditions

How many members of teaching staff are at Cults Academy and what numbers have been given training to teach pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions?

80 teaching staff. All have been provided with guidance on supporting pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions and access to OIL training resource: 'An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder'. In-service courses have been delivered to staff by Autism Outreach teachers. 1 teacher supported Transitions project (9 month project funded by The National Autistic Society and Inspire 2014-15) with a view to sharing practice with staff.

What is the nature of the training provided and how many hours of training is required? To what level are teachers trained as per the National Training Framework for Additional Support Needs and are they then deemed adequately qualified to teach pupils with Autism?

This is dependent on course being referred to OIL. All teachers are expected to take and refresh OIL (online training on Autism) & also take certificated courses.

Are only those teachers with training expected to teach pupils who are on the spectrum?

No.

Is support given to teachers who have received no training, but still have contact with pupils on the spectrum to ensure they understand how to effectively meet the needs of their pupils?

Yes.

At Cults Academy is there a Support for Learning team and how many staff members does it comprise? Are all the Support for Learning teachers qualified and have they received any specific training in Autistic Spectrum Conditions? At what level have they been trained in accordance with the National Framework for Additional Support Needs?

The Support for Learning Team consists of 2 permanent full-time teachers & 1 temporary full-time teacher who was appointed to increase support for pupil with Autism. There are also 4.0 FTE – Pupil Support Assistants.

All SfL teachers are qualified and all SfL teachers have undertaken courses in supporting pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. There is also a P/ T SfL; MEd in Inclusive Practice; DIPSEN

On what basis are the staffing levels of the Support for Learning team allocated to schools in the local authority?

A support for learning element is included in the secondary teaching staffing formula. All secondary schools have a core allocation of two full-time equivalent teachers (fte) plus an additional element based on the number of pupils on the roll in deciles 1 and 2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The low incidence of deprivation in the school means that only a further 0.02 fte is allocated by this

deprivation element of the staffing formula.

There is moreover an allocation of 0.7 fte for pupils with additional support needs and the service has also provided an additional one fte teacher for pupils on the autistic spectrum -see answer at question 4

Are there any initiative within Cults Academy to promote peer awareness, tolerance and support of those with Autistic Spectrum Conditions? More specifically is there anything in the Social Curriculum in relation to bullying and emotional wellbeing of peers with Autism and additional support needs?

Transitions Project (Rf. Q4): This was an initiative where a specialist teacher in Autism worked with a group of pupils. A teacher was also in the group so that she could recreate the sessions with other groups and also help teachers.

Autism Awareness Week – information to be disseminated and workshops to be organised.

Autism Outreach – speakers to Personal and Social Education classes.

We hope this helps with your request.

Yours sincerely,

Grant Webster
Information Compliance Officer

INFORMATION ABOUT THE HANDLING OF YOUR REQUEST

ACC handled your request for information in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Please refer to the attached PDF for more information about your rights under FOISA.

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