



Hendon School

Believe, Achieve, Lead, Belong

Hendon Autism Resourced Provision

HARP



Our Rooms



Comprising of a suite of rooms in the heart of Hendon Secondary School, HARP is a safe space and base for students with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC). Here, they can learn, rehearse new skills, and spend leisure time. From HARP, they go to mainstream classes with their peers, supported by Specialist Teaching Assistants.



Named after famous people with autism, each of the rooms in HARP are small and designed to offer 2:1 or small group working space.

We have a large, fully-equipped kitchen where students undertake aspects of individualised life skills. Beyond this we have a small, enclosed roof top garden.



The HARP Environment

Our philosophy and practice are guided by the SPELL approach, designed & developed by the National Autistic Society over many years, which provides a framework for understanding and responding to the needs of individuals with an ASC.

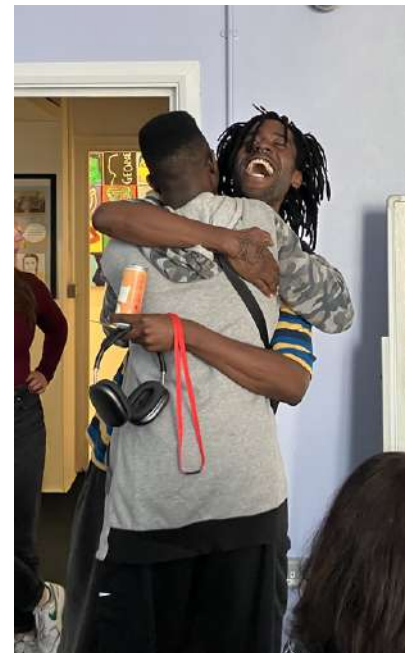


SPELL

Structure
Positive Approaches
Empathy
Low Arousal
Links

We undertake to:

- Tailor each student's learning to meet his or her individual, educational, emotional and social needs.
- Develop an autism friendly environment, providing structure to make HARP a predictable and safe place, to reduce levels of anxiety.
- Support students to develop social understanding.
- Help students to develop a positive and realistic self-image, self-esteem, independence, confidence and resilience to cope in a neurotypical world.
- Help students to gain understanding of people and how they think, feel and operate; to form positive relationships with others.
- Develop, via staff training, autism friendly teaching and interactions throughout the school.
- Develop positive relationships with parents, carers and other professionals.
- Offer to each individual 'the best of both worlds': a balance between inclusive education and separate, autism specific, teaching and support.
- Focus and build on the positive actions, interactions, interests and achievements of our students.
- Give specific and detailed feedback and praise to ensure individuals fully understand expectations and the effect of their behaviour on other people.



We aim to ensure students feel safe, understood, content and valued whilst simultaneously developing the desire, skills and resilience to be part of a neurotypical world.

We strive to provide for each individual the appropriate level of 'scaffolding' to enable him / her to thrive at Hendon and in the wider community.

EHCPs

Each HARP student has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) outlining how their emotional, social, health and educational needs are to be met. This plan is reviewed annually, attended by parent/carers, student and relevant professionals.



HARP Support

We recognise the pervasiveness of an Autism Spectrum Condition in respect of how individuals perceive and understand the world; how they interact and communicate with others, eat, dress, work and spend leisure time.

The role of the teacher/supporter of an individual with autism has been likened to that of a cross-cultural interpreter; someone who understands both cultures and can convey information effectively in an accessible manner and to translate to students the expectations of a neurotypical (non-autistic) environment. We aim to bridge the divide between the perceptions, cognitive style, motivation and experiences of our students and the demands of school and wider society.

HARP staff are skilled in listening intently and gaining insight into how an individual perceives situations. In addition to qualifications and experience in being and working with young people with autism and/or additional needs, staff are recruited to HARP for their flexibility, initiative, excellent communication and interpersonal skills, commitment to education and the ability to work as part of a team.

Teaching and Learning

HARP students receive a broad and balanced curriculum comprising of both the National Curriculum and the HARP Personal, Social, and Relationships Education Curriculum. The latter is autism specific and is taught individually or in smaller groups.

HARP students study academic subjects both within mainstream classes alongside their peers and within HARP. We offer pre and post-tutoring and extra practice to ensure understanding of concepts or topics studied in a mainstream class.



Within HARP, students are taught 1:2 or in small groups; within mainstream classes they are also generally supported 1:2. As students develop greater independence, academic, social and emotional support is withdrawn gradually and as appropriate.

Meeting Individual Needs

As the old adage goes:

‘When you have met one person with autism, you have met one person with autism.’

Everyone with an ASC diagnoses is, of course, different and manifests the common features they share variously. In HARP, we see it as crucial to understand the nature of each student’s strengths, interests and difficulties and the impact of these on the individual’s functioning and interactions with the world.

The HARP Personal, Social and Relationship Education Curriculum

Students are helped to develop independent and co-operative work as well as interactions such as listening, sharing and turn taking. Students are supported to develop an awareness of themselves in relation to families and people within school and the wider community. They are helped to notice other people's actions and responses and to have a greater awareness of others and what they may be experiencing, feeling and thinking. They are helped to practise and develop friendships as well as interacting with others in a socially appropriate way.



Personal Growth

Students are helped to develop self-care and personal hygiene, self-awareness and an insight positive and realistic self-esteem. They are supported in their understanding of the nature and impact of an ASC diagnosis and study the achievements of other people – historical and contemporary – with autism. They develop the language, receptive and expressive, to label and recognise their own and others motives and emotions. They learn strategies to alleviate and control anxiety as well as aspects of self-control to maintain appropriate responses in different situations.

Moral Development

Students are helped to develop resilience to situations they find anxiety provoking or difficult and to develop tolerance of others, of difference and of change. They are helped to recognise right and wrong (and shades of grey in between); understanding truth and untruth, lies and 'white lies' and the appropriateness of telling the truth (or not) in different situations.

Peer Supporters

Volunteers from mainstream receive autism specific training enabling understand of our students' perceptions, strengths and difficulties where appropriate. Volunteers are invited to HARP at break & Lunch to support our students socially.

External Partners – Professionals

We have speech and language therapists who visit HARP regularly and who work individually and in small groups with HARP students. They advise colleagues regarding strategies for the students and ensure language employed is autism friendly and accessible. We collaborate closely with staff from other schools, particularly those with resourced provisions and with feeder primary schools. We welcome input from therapists, health professionals, social services and other professionals to promote the necessary holistic approach and consistency required to implement students' EHCP's and their Individual Educational Plans.



Students have individual timetables and will study in HARP and in their mainstream classes in the appropriate ratio, according to their assessed personal, social and educational needs.

Within the HARP-based Personal Social and Relationships curriculum, all students are encouraged to explore their own strengths and interests within the context of studying autism and the achievements of other autistic people, both historically and contemporary: scientists, artists, writers. We help students develop a positive and realistic self-image, and help them in their reflections on everyday events and personal memory of events, known to be a key difficulty for autistic people.



Partnership with Parents

Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in HARP and the education of their sons and daughters. In addition to formal meetings, we have an 'open-door' policy; regular and frequent contact is maintained via telephone, email and home-school books in order to share and gain a thorough understanding of the individual's experiences and perceptions.



What is a HARP Student

HARP caters for students with a primary diagnosis of autism, whose educational, personal and social needs are felt to be best met in a mainstream secondary school. Students must also have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). In order to access the mainstream curriculum HARP students are usually working at no less than two years behind their mainstream peers. We welcome enquiries and visits from prospective parents and their families to discuss their individual needs.



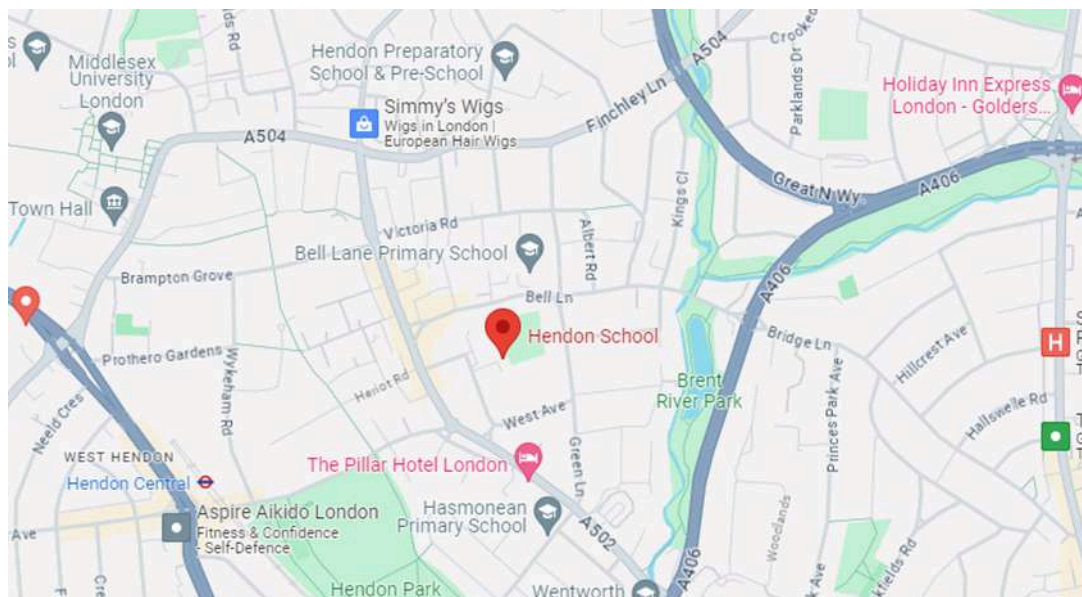
Transition and Induction

All students joining HARP will be invited to visit and spend time with us during Year 6, accompanied by a familiar adult, so they feel comfortable at Hendon prior to Transition Day when they will meet their new form group and friends.

Students are given a Transition Book with information and photographs and are invited to personalise these with their own photographs and comments gleaned on visits. Care is taken to ensure that HARP students be placed with named friends from their primary school and with form tutors with an interest and expertise in autism. Close contact between HARP staff and primary schools, and prior communication with parents ensure we have relevant information for a smooth transition.



Where to find us:



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