



Robert Ogden  
School

Welcome to my  
school. Welcome  
to **MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>



The National  
Autistic Society



Enjoying my  
school is part of  
**MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>



**Lorraine Dormand, Acting Principal**



**Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith,  
Executive Director of Education**

# Welcome to Robert Ogden School

At Robert Ogden School we provide a caring and friendly environment, where your child will be safe and supported. We have a very dedicated team, who are specialists in working with young people with autism. Within our Inclusive Learning Hub, we also have a highly skilled group of staff who work with those pupils who may have very complex needs and require a non-confrontational and non-directive approach. These pupils follow a totally individualised curriculum.

Our school buildings are large, bright and modern. Our spaces are low arousal and we have highly-trained staff who are responsive to the needs of each individual pupil.

As well as taking great pride in the academic achievements of our pupils, we are also very committed to making sure they are emotionally secure and confident. We place great emphasis on preparing our pupils for adulthood and strive to give them transferrable skills which will be useful in their leisure pursuits and, for some, in employment.

Everyone who visits our school tells us how friendly the atmosphere is. Do come and visit us. We are confident that you and your child will both feel relaxed and at home here.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorraine Dormand'.

**Lorraine Dormand  
Acting Principal**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacqui Ashton Smith'.

**Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith  
Executive Director of Education  
and Executive Principal**

# We're autism specialists



## A friendly, accepting environment

At Robert Ogden School we specialise in autism. Our aim is to teach your child the skills they need to learn confidently and live as independently as possible in the future.

Our ethos is to help them enjoy their learning, whatever their capability. We know that this always allows children to make the best progress. We offer a wide range of qualifications, from entry-level literacy to post-16 vocational certificates.

There are some children, such as those with a diagnosis of Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), who need the dedicated support of a one-to-one relationship, away from the distractions of daily school life and other students. This is offered in our Inclusive Learning Hub.

Find out more about our Inclusive Learning Hub at [www.robertogdenschool.co.uk](http://www.robertogdenschool.co.uk).

## Small, flexible classes

We keep to very small class sizes because this is what is best for your child. Most of our classrooms have attached tutorial rooms or break-out areas, so that, if your child wants to work individually, with support, they can.

We are extremely flexible about the way your child attends Robert Ogden School. Perhaps they need to get used to school slowly and attend part-time, or they need a term out of their usual school to learn new skills and strategies with us. We will get to know your child before they start, so that we understand exactly what care and

support we need to provide.

## Key facts about Robert Ogden School:

- our service has Autism Accreditation
- primary, secondary, post-16 and Inclusive Learning Hub
- ages 5 to 19
- girls and boys
- 80+ day places
- term-time weekly residential places, ages 7 to 19
- 52-week residential care
- flexible boarding during evenings, weekends and school holidays
- on-site psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist
- minimum staff to student ratio 1:2 though many have 1:1
- inclusive Learning Hub areas for pupils with complex difficulties
- minimum one-to-one support in our Inclusive Learning Hub
- teaching and caring for children with autism since 1977.

**“...a remarkable and heart-warming environment... we saw a lot of patience, kindness and friendliness during our visit...”**

Good Schools Guide

**“I would like to say how good this school is. If I was anywhere else I would not be at the level which I am now. The school has done a lot for me not just the education but making me into the person I am today.”**

**James, school leaver**

Understanding  
my autism  
is part of  
**MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>



## How we help your child

### Our approach to assessment, recording and reporting

**MyProgress®** is The National Autistic Society's overall strategy for working with your child. With **MyProgress®**, your child will have the best start in life because every aspect of their care and education is tailor-made for them. **MyProgress®** guarantees that your child will use approaches that The National Autistic Society has tried and tested over many years: we know that they make a difference.

### Preparing for life

Education is about preparing for life, which is why our ethos is that every pupil learns skills that will help them live fulfilling adult lives and participate fully in their community. Alongside our academic curriculum, we work with your child to build their confidence in using social, communication and behavioural skills, and we apply everything we do to real life situations.

Our pupils run a small shop where their fellow pupils can learn to shop in a safe and relaxed environment. Here students sell their ceramics and home-grown produce. Our sixth-form students run the school café using a specially designed kitchen. They decide on the menu, and cook and serve food to other children, staff and parents. We also have a special kitchen where they make Robert Ogden fudge to sell.

### Our Inclusive Learning Hub

Our Inclusive Learning Hub caters for children with extremely challenging behaviour and pathological demand avoidance (PDA). PDA is a part of autism that leads to oppositional and defiant behaviour.

In the hub areas we teach children individually, using a highly personalised timetable. Our specialised teachers and teaching assistants know that progress depends on building a relationship that develops your child's trust and confidence. They are able to offer you and your child a great deal of specialist experience, understanding and encouragement.

Some children will move from the hub into the main school. Other children will use the hub for all of their time with us.

### We look to the future

An important outcome of **MyProgress®** is ensuring that your child is ready to move on to the next stage in their life. We work closely with you, your child and our transition co-ordinator to create a **My Transitions Passport**. This document describes your child's skills, interests, aspirations and other key information to provide a clear plan for his or her future and lifelong learning.

“The curriculum and how it is adapted to the needs of students is a strength. It provides a good range of subjects including expressive arts, geography and history. It rightly places strong emphasis on promoting students' communication skills, including using signs and symbols, and personal development.”

Ofsted 2015

### MyProgress®

My teacher works with speech therapists, psychologists and, of course, my parents to assess all areas of my development. This helps everyone understand my strengths and needs.



## Every term

**My ability profile** demonstrates the unique way autism impacts on me and my learning style.

**MyProgress® meeting** identifies what my school and my family can do to build on my strengths and interests and support me in the things I find difficult.

**MyProgress® plans** set out my academic, social and independence targets and says how the curriculum and timetable are going to be tailored to meet my needs.

**MyProgress® curriculum** puts significant emphasis on social communication skills, community-based learning and enterprise. The curriculum is delivered using the NAS SPELL philosophy that includes a blend of autism-specific interventions.

**MyProgress® file** provides evidence of my achievements across academic (eg literacy), social (eg turn-taking), emotional (eg managing my emotions), and independence (eg caring for myself) aspects of learning.

**MyProgress® report** measures how I am doing against my targets by rating progress red, amber or green. My achievements in green are celebrated and my teacher develops an action plan to help me improve in those areas rated red.

# We're a team



## A highly qualified multi-disciplinary team

At Robert Ogden School every member of staff is fully trained in working with children with autism, including the taxi driver who brings your child to school. At every moment of the day, your child will be supported by people who understand autism, value your child, and are committed to their care and education.

Teachers, teaching support staff, psychologist and therapists work closely together to share their knowledge of your child. They bring their individual skills and expertise to bear on the challenges they face, and create powerful and effective learning support that is tailored to your child's needs and wants.

## How our personalised support team helps your child

The team is based in the school and works side by side with the teaching and teaching support staff.

In school and at our residential homes, your child always has the support of our personalised support team, who will monitor their progress carefully. The job of the team is to create an individual support plan for each child. This means that your child can rely on consistency and understanding, which we know results in greater trust, confidence and ability to learn key social, behavioural and communication skills.

## The Centre for Autism

In addition to our own staff's expertise, we draw on the specialist knowledge of The National Autistic Society's Centre for Autism. The Centre gathers and shares research evidence about autism and is an extremely valuable resource as we develop our programmes and extend our work.

## Our personalised support team:

- senior educational psychologist
- behaviour co-ordinator
- speech and language therapist
- speech and language therapy assistant
- occupational therapist.



“One of the primary children ran into the communication room when he saw the symbol. He is really enjoying the sessions and making progress.”

Lillias, Speech Therapy Assistant





Striving to  
make every day  
positive is part  
of **MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>

Growing in  
confidence and  
independence  
is part of  
**MyProgress<sup>®</sup>**



# Ambitious, individual learning



## Using your child's strengths

Our curriculum includes the key stages of the National Curriculum. This will be adapted for your child according to their abilities and preferred way of working, because we always structure our teaching around your child's personal strengths.

Class groups are small with high staff ratios and we often work on a one-to-one basis. Your child's progress is constantly tracked, and reviewed at least every term, to make sure that the correct specialist help is made available.

## Education from 5 to 16 years

In our primary department, children are taught by their own class teacher. Our communication methods include speech, symbols, photographs, objects and signing, chosen according to your child's level of understanding.

In our secondary department, children have a class tutor for English, maths and PSHCE, and specialists for other subjects. We offer numeracy, literacy, science, history, geography and modern languages. All children at key stage 4 can take externally accredited courses including ASDAN (a range of life skills and academic courses), AQA units and GCSEs.

## Post-16 education

The pathway our young people follow in our sixth form prepares them for the next stage in their lives and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We focus on developing a range of functional skills from communication and IT to leisure and vocational activities, learning both at school and in our local community, with the opportunity to obtain vocational awards.

## Enterprise

Children and young people with autism learn best when activities are functional and meaningful, and so our enterprise programme enables them to gain skills they can take forward into adult life. They can work in the café, shop, garden or in the enterprise "back office". Cookery lessons and pottery sessions also feed into this area of school life, with pupils making a wide range of items to sell in the shop.

In 2015, the programme won the award for Inspirational Education Provision – Secondary and over 16 at the UK-wide Autism Professionals Awards.

"Work in the café and attached kitchen is used very effectively to promote students' social skills and also their mathematical and communication skills, both written and verbal. Work is well planned and organised, with a good balance between supervision and independence, and students can appreciate the purpose of their learning."

Ofsted 2015

# Our learning and living environment



## Our school

Here at Robert Ogden our buildings and facilities are autism-friendly and we have plenty of space. This means that we're completely set up to help your child feel understood and welcomed no matter how they like to learn and live.

We have a bright, modern, purpose-built primary unit within our main building. Younger children will feel secure but still a part of the community of the whole school.

Our secondary classrooms have one-to-one rooms for children who need time alone, and we have specialist rooms for art, music, design and technology, science, pottery, and cooking. Our sports facilities are excellent: we have a large sports hall, a fitness suite, a football pitch and a basketball court. Our pupils enjoy our 4D sensory rooms, messy room and soft play area, and they can relax in our large playgrounds and sensory garden. Our older students have their own sixth form unit, including an IT network room and a teaching flat.

## Residential care

We have three welcoming, secure residential homes at Robert Ogden. Clayton Croft Children's Home is on the school site and offers care for up to 52 weeks of the year. Thurnscoe Studios, also on the school site, offer semi-independent living for young people during term time. Thurnscoe House is in Thurnscoe village, just over a mile away from the school. This offers 38-week residential facilities and flexible boarding during term time and during the school holidays.

You will find a warm environment in both homes, where children are supported to relax and learn key self-help life skills. Residential staff also support our children's learning by following targets and working on activities which help towards ASDAN and AQA Unit Award qualifications.

“Good leadership and management ensure that students' needs are well met both in the school and the residential provision. Students, who often enter the school with negative experiences of education or who lack confidence, are welcomed into the school and benefit from a staff team who understand autism and provide a positive experience for students.”



Learning,  
socialising, and  
communicating  
at school is part of  
**MyProgress<sup>®</sup>**

Building trusting,  
long-term  
relationships is part  
of **MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>



# Our rigorous approach



## Systematic and thorough

When we work with your child at Robert Ogden, we use approaches that have been tried and tested. We know they're effective and will help your child because they're based on sound research and evidence.

We tailor every child's learning to their needs, and with **MyProgress®**, we will assess your child regularly, plan the approaches and strategies that will work best for them, deliver them, and monitor your child's progress. We're systematic and thorough, and every day we'll be doing the best for your child.

“All groups of students make equally good progress from their starting points... Teachers have a good understanding of students' individual needs and abilities, and ensure that they make good progress in lessons. Students' greatest gains tend to be in their personal, social skills and communication skills.”

Ofsted, 2015

## Research

The Robert Ogden School is active in its links with Birmingham University, Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University. Research findings from projects in which we've been partners have been presented at the Pathological Demand Avoidance Conference and our work helps drive excellence both in our school and beyond.

“The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its students with particular strengths in social and cultural development. Students' spiritual development is promoted through assemblies and lessons which give them the opportunity to think about other people.”

Ofsted, 2015

# Supporting families and young people



## Flexible boarding

Our flexible boarding is based at Thurnscoe House, a modern five-bedroom home registered with Ofsted. It is just over a mile away from Robert Ogden School.

Flexible boarding will allow your child to explore and experience new and different ways of having fun. There are lots of outdoor activities in the local area to take part in, all of which allow your child to exercise and be entertained. We know that while your child is having fun and relaxing, their behaviour, independence, life skills and communications skills are being developed.

Pupils at the school between the ages of 7 to 19 can benefit from our flexible boarding, and we will carry out a comprehensive assessment so we can give each child the support they need while they are with us.

Your child may come for daytime activities only, for a few hours, for occasional overnight stays, or for up to two weeks.

We run our flexible boarding service during the working week or at the weekend during the school term, and for specific weeks during the school holidays.

## Family support

When your child joins Robert Ogden, you will find that we're here to help you too. We'll keep in regular contact with you so you always know what and how your child is doing, and we'll consult you about your child's progress and how you'd like us to support them.

Our therapists and teachers are happy to talk to you and to share their knowledge and expertise. We also offer training in autism awareness to help you support challenging behaviour at home, and to offer ideas about making your home autism-friendly.

“Effective links with parents and school means students are making good progress as a result of their experiences in residence. This provides seamless transitions between school and residence. Parents say the students ‘love staying with you’ and comment that they value the high quality of support they receive from staff. “

Ofsted, 2015





Always being included is part of **MyProgress**<sup>®</sup>

# Applying to Robert Ogden



“I have done a lot of sport volunteering for Rotherham Council so they put me on the FA Level 1 course. I had to do First Aid and Safeguarding Children. On the football side of things I had to do session planning, a session on disability football and what you needed to run and coach a football team.”

James, post-16 leaver

## Find out more about us

We offer education to young people aged 5 to 19 with autism who have been referred by their local authority.

If you think our school might be the right place for your child to progress, we suggest you contact us to find out more about what we provide, or to arrange to visit us to see what we do.

We host regular parents' mornings during term time. If you cannot attend one, we can arrange for you to visit at a convenient day and time for you.

## Making an application

If you decide you would like to apply, you need to discuss your child's needs with your local authority, and make a joint application. Once you have made your application, we will assess your child.

There are several steps to the application process. We can explain them to you and there is a chart showing the process on our website – [www.robertogdenschool.org.uk](http://www.robertogdenschool.org.uk).

The National Autistic Society is the UK's leading charity for people affected by autism.

We were founded in 1962 by a group of parents who were passionate about ensuring a better future for their children. Today, our UK-wide network of specialist schools and education services gives hundreds of children and young people the opportunity to grow and learn in a reassuring environment, with teachers and support staff who understand their needs.

For over 50 years, we've built our success on the principle that every child that passes through our doors is unique. Each student has their own support programme based around their needs and ambitions. Together with them and their families, we're building the better future that our founders hoped for.

The National Autistic Society  
393 City Road  
London EC1V 1NG  
Switchboard: 020 7833 2299  
Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk)  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**You can get help from the following telephone services:**

Autism Helpline: 0808 800 4104

Education Rights Service:  
0808 800 4102  
(leave a message)

Parent to Parent Service:  
0808 800 4106  
(leave a message)



# Robert Ogden School



If you have any questions or want to find out more about our school, please feel free to contact us.

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**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**