



DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT

Promoting Independence

November 2019

Reviewed & updated: November 2019 (Frances Sutherland)

Next review date: November 2022

Promoting Independence

An important goal for all students is the ability to function independently throughout the school day: Moving from one location to the next, organizing required materials, completing necessary tasks, and applying skills learned in one setting to other settings when appropriate.

Whilst we recognise that it is important for all pupils to develop independent skills we should recognise the extra priority for pupils with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). Pupils with ASC may have grown up needing extra adult support for their daily living and care needs. Learning independence skills could reduce the need for this support into their adult life improving their self-esteem, leaving them less open to abuse and reducing care costs. Developing independence skills can also help them to be included in society and may lead to future employment opportunities. Having established that the development of independent skills is an essential curricular goal for students with ASC; it is also essential that staff who support students with ASC understand the complex skills required for independent performance.

In addition, it is helpful to understand what challenges students with ASC may face when developing and demonstrating the skills necessary to complete an activity on their own. Work systems, are an important element of structured teaching designed to promote understanding and clarity for individuals with ASC. Work systems rely on predictability and clarity to promote understanding of the environment and expectations, and offer a tool for assisting students with ASC in focusing on important details, maintaining attention to tasks, and generalizing skills learned in one setting to new environments. The goal of a work system is to organize tasks and activities in ways that are comprehensible to students with ASC. By using structured work systems, staff at Durants are addressing the unique learning styles and challenges experienced by these students. Such systems provide concrete and meaningful information, increasing engagement and independence, decreasing anxiety and ultimately helping students experience more success across settings.