

**Town Field Primary School Awarded First Autism Charter Mark**

Town Field Primary School has been celebrating after being the first school in Doncaster to be awarded the Autism Charter Mark by Doncaster Council.

The Autism Charter Mark challenges school to meet 35 quality standards which are based on the nationally recognised Autism Education Trust standards. These standards ask schools and other educational settings to evaluate how they work to address the needs of students on the autism spectrum.

The standards include:

* the individual student – obtaining information both directly from the student and their parents or carers to find out what motivates, engages and encourages them in a meaningful way
* Building relationships between staff and students and to actively listen to them and their parents and carers to promote opportunities for the exchange of information and ideas. By having a strong relationship this will enable the staff and families to have open discussion
* Curriculum and learning – having a curriculum that addresses not only the learning needs of students but also addresses their social, emotional ell-being and communication and life skill needs
* Enabling environments – speaking to students with autism about what they do with their free tie both indoors and outdoors. This would enable the schools to provide sensory activities and structure play that suits the individual student

Schools are asked to self-evaluate against these standards providing a portfolio of evidence to the council. That evidence is then assessed and verified by the council’s Aut6ism and Social Communication outreach service. Currently the team are in the process of assessing almost 50 schools across Doncaster.

Cllr Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, said: ‘Congratulations to Town Field Primary on being the first school in Doncaster to receive this mark. We are working with other schools across Doncaster to ensure that they are also striving to achieve the Autism Charter Mark. We are committed to ensuring that all young people have access to the best education and support to help them have the best start in life.

In our consultations with young people to help us develop the Children and Young People Plan 2017-2020, young people overwhelming said that they wanted a broad and balanced curriculum equipping them with the life skills they needed to be independent, successful adults. One of the criteria for achieving this mark is just that and this is also shared across the whole school’.

Helena Honeybone, Headteacher at Town Field Primary school, said: ‘All the staff and children at Town Field Primary are so proud to have achieved this Autism Charter Mark. It is important to us that all children enjoy their time at school whilst also providing them with the best education. If we, as teachers can work to understand each child better and build strong relationships with them and their parents and carers, then we can ensure that each child achieves their full potential’.