

Date: 24/09/2025

Dear colleague,

**Reference:** Grange Park School – Application for Beacon Award

**The Beacon Status and Appeal Panel Decision:** - Award given

I am delighted to inform you that Grange Park School has been awarded the prestigious Beacon Award. This recognition is a testament to your exceptional work in supporting autistic pupils, their families, and the wider community.

Your commitment to viewing parents and carers as autism experts through lived experience is truly commendable. The robust lines of communication you maintain, including daily contact books, termly newsletters, and various social events, ensure that parents are consistently informed and involved in their child's education. This collaborative approach is a key strength that sets you apart.

The panel was particularly impressed with your comprehensive transition process for new starters, which includes baseline meetings with parents, the head of year, and a senior therapist. This process not only helps in understanding the families' knowledge and aspirations but also introduces the SCERTS framework, ensuring a consistent and informed approach to supporting each pupil.

Your multidisciplinary therapy team, which offers bespoke neuroaffirmative support, is another standout feature. The team's dedication to managing anxieties and supporting sensory differences from the very beginning is exemplary.

As a Gold Rights Respecting School, your efforts to educate pupils and parents about their rights and how they are supported at school are highly valued. The inclusion of rights information in newsletters and on your website, as well as discussions in parent groups, highlights your commitment to promoting understanding and participation in the wider community.

The varied training programmes you offer, including workshops and the NAS Teen Life programme, are practical, relaxed, and interactive, encouraging discussion and idea sharing. The use of visuals to support verbal information, considering that some parents may be autistic, is a thoughtful and inclusive approach.

Your ethos of autistic acceptance and celebration is evident in the way you empower pupils to develop a positive autistic identity and share this information with parents. The bespoke provision offered by your therapy team to those who need additional support further demonstrates your dedication to each pupil's well-being.

Your exceptional work in sharing exemplary practice with other professionals has had a significant impact on how they understand and respond to autistic people. The longstanding relationships you have built with various settings across Kent and beyond, and your proactive approach in hosting training sessions, delivering bespoke training packages, and acting as independent advisors, are truly commendable. The involvement of guest speakers, the hosting of trainee teachers and SALT students, and the active participation of pupils in educating other professionals further highlight your commitment to shaping the autism narrative.

Grange Park School's pivotal role in shaping the new localities model in Kent and advocating for autistic pupils is highly commendable. The strong pupil leadership team, including the Rights Respecting and Community Engagement Leads, actively engages with the local community through various public realm projects. The longstanding relationships with external organisations, such as the National Gallery, local police, and various community groups, further demonstrate your commitment to fostering understanding and acceptance of autism in the wider community.

The impact of your work is clear from the overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents, carers, and professionals. The high ratings for your transition process, workshops, and the proactive creation of opportunities for parents to feel supported and connected are all indicators of the significant positive impact you have on your community. The success of your post-16 pupils, with no NEETS for the last five years and 100% of post-16 students moving on to positive destinations in 2024, is a testament to the effectiveness of your approach.

Congratulations once again on achieving Beacon Status. Your school is a shining example of excellence in the field of autism support, and your contributions are making a meaningful difference in the lives of autistic pupils, their families, and the wider community.

Sincerely,

Yours Sincerely



Louise Stanton  
Commendation and Appeal Panel Chairperson