

Sharing the impact of

The Nest



June 2013

The Impact of The Nest

Vision for the project

- To respond to the all-party report of May 2012 highlighting the need for early intervention
- To respond to the all-party audit of provision for England and Wales - 2011 - highlighting the lack of provision for high functioning children on the ASC spectrum
- To increase the continuum of need in Oxfordshire
- To increase capacity in primary special schools in Oxfordshire
- To increase the capacity of the school to re-integrate pupils back into mainstream
- To decrease the number of children being home educated or educated ‘out of county’
- To provide life changing opportunities for children and their families.

Introduction

The Nest was completed in October 2012 and the first two pupils joined shortly after. A further four pupils joined in January 2013. Two more pupils joined in April and May 2013 respectively. A breakdown of the year groups is given below.

Year group	Number
3	1
4	1
5	3
6	3

Two children have come from another special school, one pupil was a school refuser and the remainder came from mainstream primary schools and were either on reduced timetables, educated away from their class by a learning support assistant (LSA) or were supported one-to-one in the classroom by an LSA.

To assess the impact that The Nest has had on children and parents and carers we undertook two different research tasks:

- A questionnaire with parents and carers
- An analysis of national curriculum levels on arrival and at the end of the academic year

Analysis of National Curriculum Levels

The table below shows the average increase in national curriculum (NC) levels for numeracy and literacy. It includes data for seven pupils (the eighth pupil has been with us for just three weeks).

The data shows that the average increase in NC sub-levels is currently standing at 3 sub-levels. This figure has not been corrected to allow for the amount of time pupils

have been in The Nest (two pupils have been with us for 5 terms, four pupils for 4 terms and two pupils for 2 terms or less).

	Numeracy	Literacy
Average increase in NC sub-levels (per pupil)	3	2.9

It is therefore reasonable to assume that the average number of sub-levels achieved over the course of a whole academic year would be in excess of 3 sub-levels for both numeracy and literacy.

Survey findings

The strongest levels of agreement (100% strongly agreeing) were for the statements:

- I am kept informed about how my child is getting on
- There are sufficient opportunities for my child to develop socially
- I would recommend The Nest to another parent of a child facing similar challenges to my child

One-hundred percent of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements:

- The Nest has had a positive impact on my child
- The staff in The Nest understand the needs of my child
- There are sufficient opportunities for my child to develop emotionally
- The Nest meets my child's particular needs
- My child is making good progress in The Nest
- The Nest has helped my child to become more independent
- There are sufficient opportunities for my child to develop academically
- My child enjoys school
- The Nest has had a positive impact on our family

The only negative responses were for the statement:

- I have noticed the behaviour of my child has improved at home since joining the Nest

Forty-three percent of respondents disagreed with this statement while 57% either strongly agreed (28%) or agreed (29%).

In the pages that follow we provide individual responses for each question. Where comments were included by parents, these have been included in full.

Is there anything you think we do particularly well?

“O told a friend of ours that he loves school now because ‘They understand me there, I belong.’”

“(You) show an extreme amount of care and understanding and value towards the children. (You) give them amazing opportunities to learn independence To trust them and treat them with respect and kindness.”

“The most important thing is that your child enjoys school – that they have the best chance to succeed. This is clearly the result in The Nest The provision is excellent in all respects.”

“The nurturing environment is second to none. Kindness abounds. Worries of parents are taken seriously. Opportunities for children who are limited in what they can do in everyday life are many (I am still amazed by these!) The physical environment with so much space and animals is healthy and therapeutic. Teaching is very good and well thought out.”

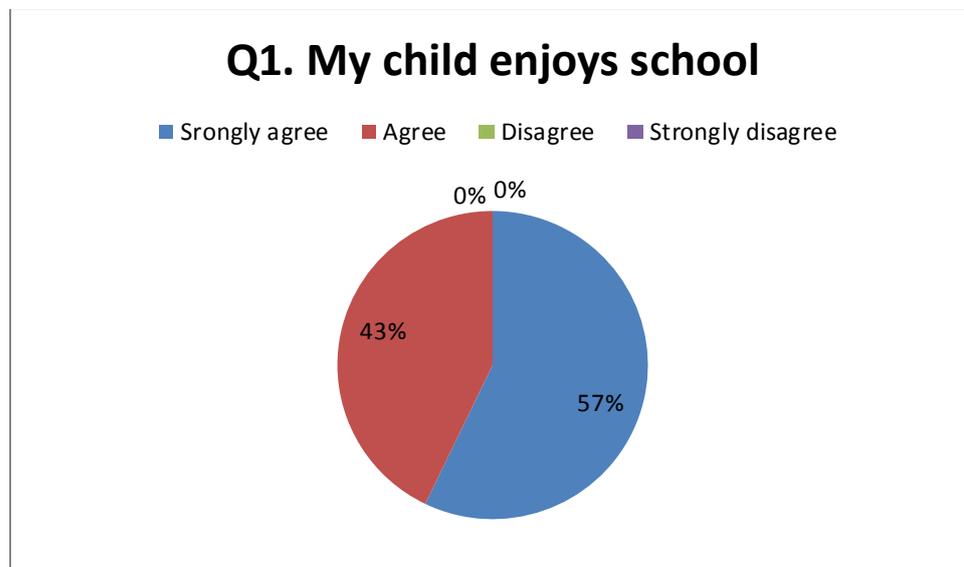
“The way you keep on going; the broad curriculum; fab trips; The Nest has a fantastic, happy and calm atmosphere. You can feel it as soon as you walk in. Happy children, learning the life skills that are so crucial. Eating healthily in a group; feedback; thank you for going the extra mile. Your hard work is really, seriously appreciated. Thank you so much for everything that you do.”

“Meeting children’s individual needs; communication with parents; providing a rich and varied access to the curriculum.”

“Providing an understanding atmosphere and an inspiring education.”

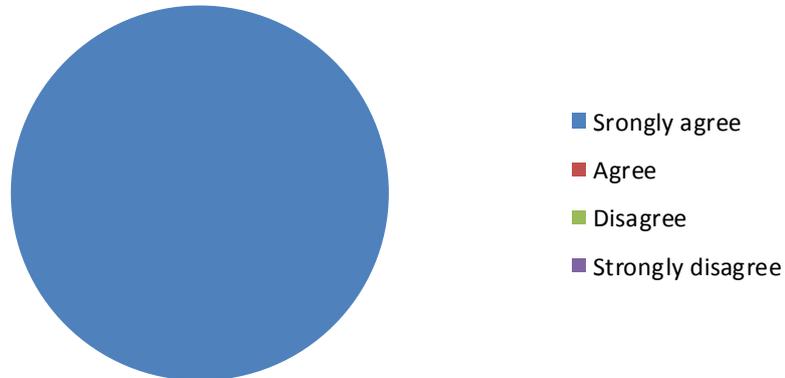
“You show an extreme amount of care and understanding and value towards the children. You give them amazing opportunities to learn independence, i.e. holidays, residence and days out. You trust them and treat them with respect and kindness. You listen to them.”

Survey Results



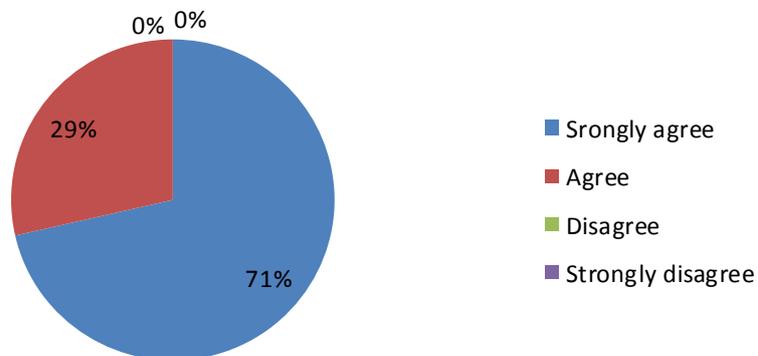
- “Thank you for helping with low self-esteem and anxiety”
- “My child has never liked going to school. For a child like this she is in the best possible place and often comes back pleased with the day”
- “R has developed a positive attitude towards school/education since starting at The Nest”
- “S is ready to go to school an hour before his taxi arrives. He happily talks about what they do in The Nest. It is such a breakthrough”
- “O is happy (and eager!) to go to school now and misses school during the holidays – especially Mr Bishop!”
- “Agree, he tends to have some difficult times at school, which he finds difficult to understand.”

Q2. I am kept informed about how my child is getting on.



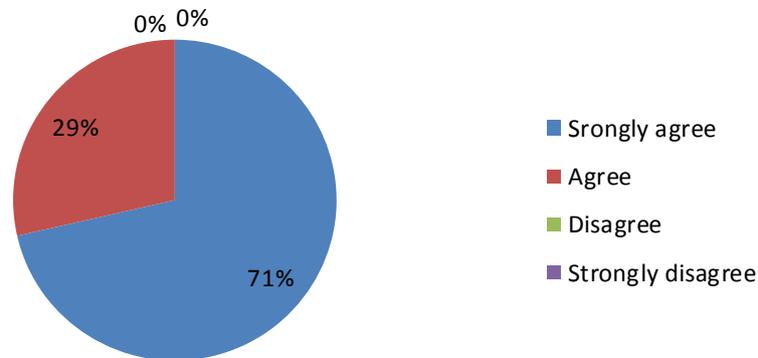
- “Mr Bishop rings every Friday which is very reassuring”
- “Weekly phone calls”
- “Really useful.”

Q3. The Nest meets my child's particular needs



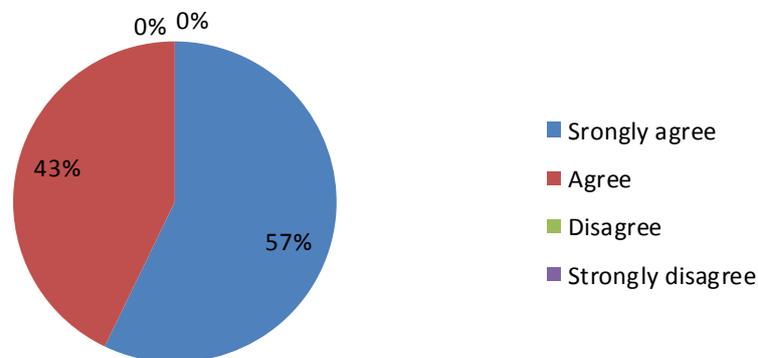
- “R was made to feel really welcome and has any anxieties met sensitively”
- “Strongly agree without a doubt.”

Q4. My child is making good progress in The Nest

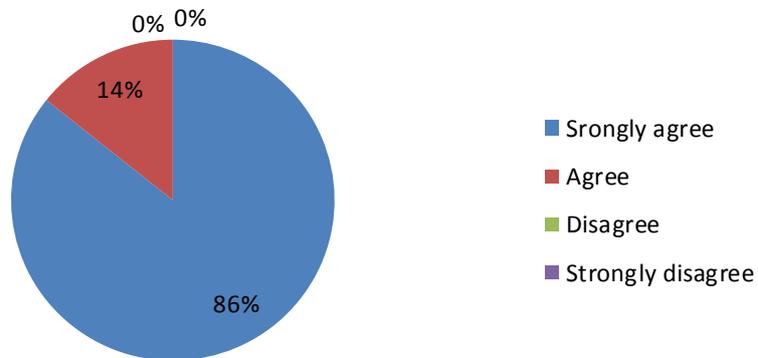


- “We are really pleased with how O has rediscovered schooling – he has even started to write stories at home again – something he hasn’t done since he was about five”
- “In the short time R has been in The Nest he has made significant social and emotional progress.”

Q5. There are sufficient opportunities for my child to progress academically

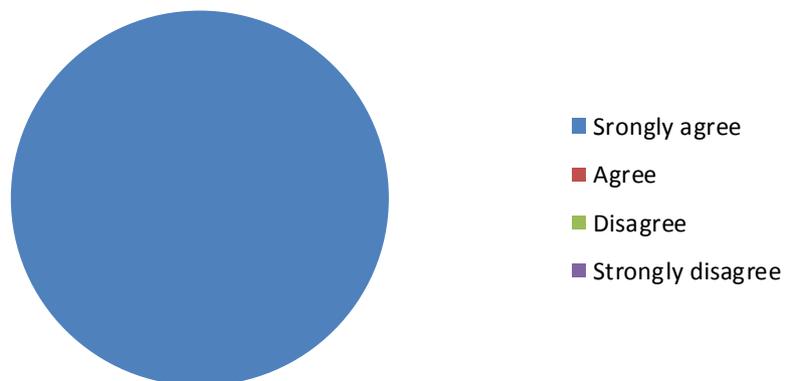


Q6. There are sufficient opportunities for my child to develop emotionally



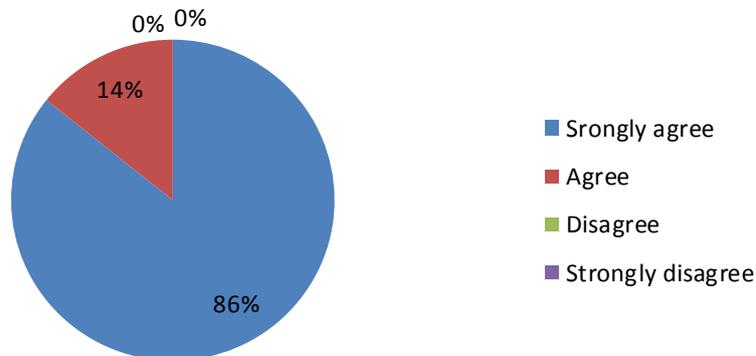
- “Strongly agree, yet it’s an on-going process.”

Q7. There are sufficient opportunities for my child to develop socially

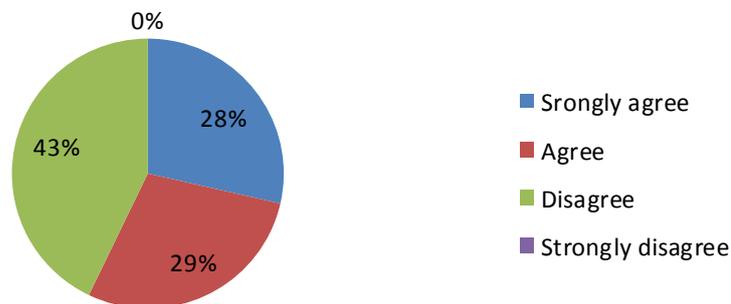


- “S seems to have developed friendships with pupils of all ages.”

Q8. The staff in The Nest understand the needs of my child

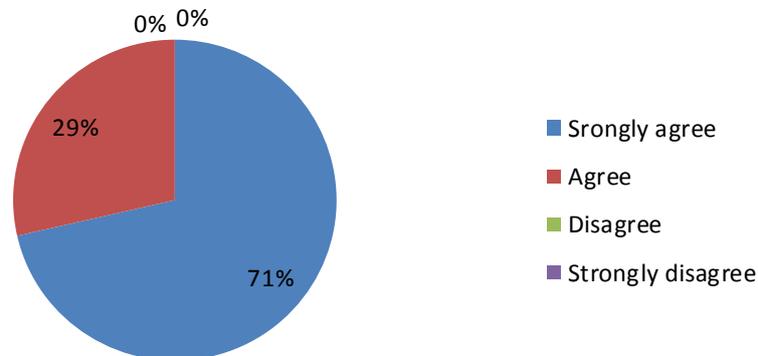


Q9. I have noticed the behaviour of my child has improved at home since joining The Nest



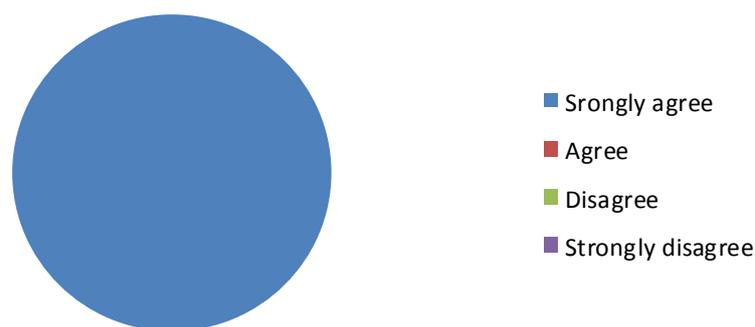
- “We are expecting this to improve as B has been at the school longer and gains confidence”
- “In the short time R has been at The Nest he has been much happier at home resulting in more positive behaviour”
- “S has become much more communicative and independent since joining the school”
- “O clearly puts strategies he has learnt at school into practice at home. There is a lot less tension as he is, on the whole, able to express himself better”
- “Disagree to some extent, K’s autistic tendency are more extreme if he has had a few upsets at school. Tears are more prevalent especially at weekends.”

Q10. The Nest has helped my child to become more independent



- “O thrives on being independent and The Nest has given him the confidence to believe in his abilities a lot more”
- “S acts less like a younger child and more like a child of his own age. He speaks to adults he doesn’t know, dresses independently and takes responsibility for himself – all things he could not do previously”
- “I have noticed a marked improvement in the likeliness of R completing a task independently.”

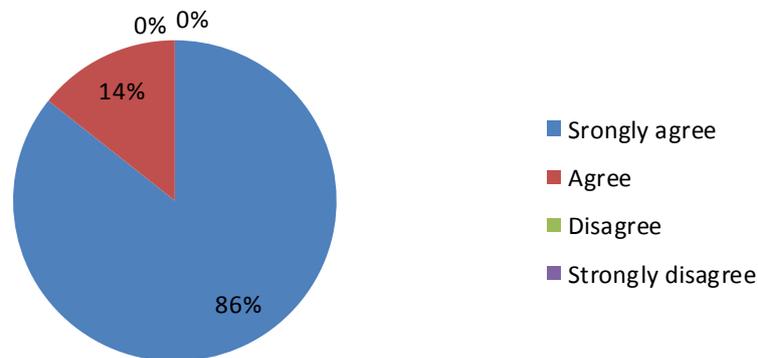
Q11. I would recommend The Nest to another parent of a child facing similar similar challenges to my child



- “The school is there specifically to help children who cannot blossom in a mainstream environment. They (the staff) are obviously keen to help in any way they can to help the children feel safe and succeed”
- “Absolutely. The constraints of mainstream school in our experience can lead to exclusion rather than inclusion. It is so nice to be part of a school where you don’t have to explain and keep explaining the basics all the time which means that everyone can actually concentrate on the child’s development both academically and socially”

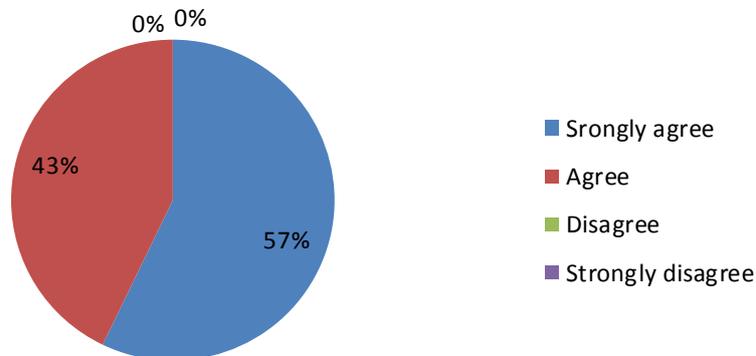
- “The Nest has helped R enjoy learning again, he wants to go to school. This never happened in mainstream”
- “S has become a much happier boy since joining the school. Where we once felt let down we now feel he is where he is supposed to be and this makes a huge difference”
- “Being able to see that school is a ‘good place’ at a younger age can only bring positives for the future. O no longer feels on his own or isolated but part of a peer group and able to succeed within that group and as an individual. They all have a sense of belonging”
- “The Nest offers a safe, nurturing, family atmosphere, where each child is valued and is encouraged to express feelings and emotions. The children are encouraged to socialise with each other even though it can be very anxious time for them, and to learn independence and confidence.”

Q12. The Nest has had a positive impact on my child



- “My child is finding it easier to express how he feels. To be given time to interact socially with his peers I think he is becoming less of an anxiety for him. His confidence seems to be growing too”
- “O has embraced that being different is not a bad thing. Just being surrounded by people like him – and seeing the older children thriving, has helped him an awful lot in such a short space of time. Knowing there will be no judgements if he has a crisis – and that everyone, staff and students, are there to help, has help reduce his anxieties. School is now recognised as a positive environment – even on bad days”
- “S now has friends in a similar position to him. His overall demeanour has changed and he feels more positive about himself”
- “R has become happier and more confident since he started at The Nest”
- “Feeling part of a group where she ‘belongs’; lots of positive role models; a happy child who has a proper chance to reach her potential; growing self-confidence and catching up academically”
- “I have seen my child sit in a circle of children and focus when being addressed by an adult. This is a big achievement. There are lots of opportunities to develop self-esteem.”

Q13. The Nest has had a positive impact on our family



- “The relief for all of us knowing our child has a secure, safe and understanding (long term) environment to learn in was immense”
- “J is in school and is, on the whole, doing really well. We feel part of a team with proper backup and support which is fab. Thank you!”
- “The Nest has removed a lot of stress. I can go to work knowing that R is safe and happy”
- “S has become very helpful member of the family as his confidence has improved. He is happier and more communicative”
- “Family life is ‘normal’. Children go off to school and will be there all day, we don’t have to take him home because of a crisis – he knows everything is okay and that has reduced both his and our anxieties about the school day. O being able to express himself better, so we all have a greater understanding of his fears and anxieties. Life is just calmer in general”
- “Knowing that your child is valued, listened to, cared and nurtured, gives us great peace of mind, the help he is given to become more independent and more sociable with certain family members, makes our life easier, which enables us to really enjoy our time together at home and out and about.”

Is there anything we could do to improve?

- “Maybe provide a playmobile?”