

How to make a referral to Autism Outreach

2017/18

Advice for Schools and Settings

Autism Outreach

Autism Outreach in Derbyshire is provided jointly by The Holbrook School for Autism and by Peak School at Chinley. Two full-time equivalent teachers are based at each special school and offer a range of services in order to promote the inclusion of pupils with autism in mainstream settings.

The aim of the service is to increase the capacity of staff in schools and maintained early years providers to make appropriate adjustments for children with autism. More and more schools and early years settings now have experience of working with children with autism and have received advice and training.

It may not always be necessary to refer a pupil with autism. This will depend on skill levels within the school, including the prior experience and training of staff, and on the needs profile of the individual child.

It will not usually be appropriate to refer pupils who attend an Enhanced Resource provision, or to refer mainstream pupils in schools that include an autism specific Enhanced Resource. In these cases, the expertise of staff within the setting should be utilised.

Referral to autism outreach may be appropriate when:-

- The child has a medical diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition
- There has been an appropriate, graduated response within the setting
- The case is complex and the child with autism is experiencing a high level of stress, the placement is in jeopardy or there is a high level of parental anxiety
- The school or setting has very limited or no experience of working with a child with autism.

Please note that autism is a medical diagnosis and Autism Outreach teachers are not able to diagnose. If the child does not have a diagnosis of autism and you are concerned, Derbyshire LA and NHS have developed an Autism Referral Pathway, which is available on-line.

Services - can include:

- Observation of pupils.
- Advice to staff, including recommending strategies, materials and resources.
- Attendance at meetings.
- Liaison with parents and with other professionals involved with the pupil.
- Advice and support at key stage transfers.
- Facilitation of liaison between settings to observe good practice and to provide peer support.
- School based training on INSET days or at staff meetings.

The role of the outreach teachers is advisory and does not include direct teaching of pupils.

The Referral Process

Prior to referral to Autism Outreach, schools or settings should have explored and used strategies from publications such as The Derbyshire File for Autism Friendly Schools or other relevant resources. Schools may get in contact with their Autism Outreach teacher for further advice.

Please discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carer. Parents must be informed of any referral and must have given their permission for Autism Outreach involvement, so it is essential that they are kept informed throughout the pre-referral stage.

If your concerns remain significant despite intervention over a period of time (in most cases two Derbyshire terms), a referral to Autism Outreach may be appropriate.

Pre-referral action

Children with autism typically have difficulties in the following areas:

- Social communication and interaction
- Restricted or repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests or activities
- Sensory processing

Identify your initial concerns and include detail about what you have tried to meet the child's needs. This information should be submitted as part of your referral. In the referral form, schools will be expected to show that they have acted on the advice given by other professionals and/or consulted appropriate resources in order to develop a graduated response.

Each school in Derbyshire should have access to all of the resources listed below which are available on <https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk> and/or www.derbyshire.gov.uk/autism.

Resources

- The Derbyshire File for Autism Friendly Schools
- The Autism Education Trust www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk
- The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) - Supporting pupils on the autism spectrum on www.aet-idp.org.uk
- A child or young person with autism in my setting
Available electronically Schoolsnet website
- Helping students with Asperger Syndrome in mainstream classes
A booklet available on the Derbyshire Extranet with information for staff working within Y5 to Y11. Available electronically on Schoolsnet website
- Transfer to secondary school for pupils with autism spectrum disorder
Practical ideas and activities to help a smooth transition within settings or across settings especially between Key Stage 2 to 3. Available on Schoolsnet website

Consideration of Requests

To make a referral to Autism Outreach, an appropriate person within the setting (e.g. the headteacher or SENCO) should complete the form below, Schools are advised to attach further information, for example, evaluated IEPs, weekly diaries, behaviour logs, relevant reports from professionals, on additional sheets. Forms should be sent directly to Autism Outreach teachers (see contacts).

Requests will be considered once a Derbyshire term by a group consisting of:-

- the Headteacher of one of the schools at which Autism Outreach is based
- an Educational Psychologist
- two Autism Outreach teachers (one from each school)

REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOLS BY THE FOLLOWING DATES

Tuesday 3rd October 2017

Tuesday 28th November 2017

Tuesday 6th February 2018

Tuesday 13th March 2018

Tuesday 8th May 2018

Tuesday 3rd July 2018

Contacts

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