

Speech, Language, Communication & Autism Specialist Advisory Service Referrals Guidance

Autism & SLCN

Required Information to Support Referral

- Clear detail about the needs of the child or young person, including diagnosed and undiagnosed needs
- Clear detail about the impact of these needs on the child or young person's:
 - Engagement with learning
 - Access to the school environment
 - Attendance (where relevant)
 - Wellbeing
 - Emotional regulation
 - Relationships with peers/adults
- Detail of sustained interventions used by the setting to support the areas of need identified (APDR or similar)
- Detail of the impact of these interventions (APDR or similar)
- Detail of referrals/advice sought and implemented from external agencies (e.g. outreach, SaLT, Ask SALI, Educational Psychologists)
- Referrals made for support outside of education where appropriate (e.g. PALMS, FSW, Social Care, CAMHS)
- Detail of any attendance at/support from behaviour outreach provisions
- Detail of in-school support from the SENCo/Autism Lead
- Detail of other factors which may impact on the young person (e.g. ACEs, recent change in circumstances)
- Detail of any recent suspensions/exclusions
- Completed VSEND profile where available

- Is the child aware of their diagnosis?
- What is their preferred use of language when referring to their diagnosis? (e.g. autistic, ...has autism, no preference)

Additional Useful Information

- Details of the ways in which the school have referred to, and implemented, guidance from the EBSA Guidance
- Detail of the implementation, an impact, of Hertfordshire Autism Training strategies
- Detail of the implementation, an impact, of Hertfordshire SLCN Training strategies
- Details of the implementation, and impact, of Hertfordshire Steps/Therapeutic Thinking approaches

Referrals will be individually triaged based on a holistic appraisal of the child and young person's needs and how their needs impact on the child or young person's ability to access education and their emotional well-being. Evidence of limited progress despite sustained interventions will be required.

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Typical Impact of Needs

Referral documentation needs to show that these needs remain despite sustained intervention/support

Social Interaction/Communication

- The child or young person may be socially withdrawn/isolated from their peers on a daily basis despite their wish to socialise
- The child or young person might experience difficulties in social interactions which lead to distress/upset on a regular (daily/weekly) basis
- They may experience long term difficulties in developing healthy/positive friendships despite significant support
- There might be an over-reliance on adult support to manage social interactions
- The child or young person may have stopped speaking or have very limited speech during the school day (and possibly also at home) due to high levels of anxiety
- The child or young person may present with frequent social behaviours which may cause challenges with peers (e.g sexualised language/behaviour, offensive language/topics of discussion, overly intense friendships etc.)
- The child or young person experiences difficulties in communication, to the extent that they are not able to communicate in school when there is a serious problem

Engagement

- There may be significant difficulties with attendance despite sustained interventions and support from school and home (including reluctance to leave parent/carer at the start of the day)
- The child or young person is experiencing significant difficulties in engaging with learning activities, despite a range of interventions (e.g. in-class interventions, small group work, TA support)
- The child or young person is experiencing significant difficulties in accessing the wider school environment (e.g. break times, assemblies, unstructured activities, transitions between lessons) despite a range of interventions
- The CYP has a significant need to adhere to personal specific routines, repetitive behaviours or preferred activities which are difficult to redirect to learning tasks on a regular basis (daily)

Emotional Regulation

- The child or young person may experience regular (daily/weekly) periods of emotional dysregulation/distress
- The child or young person might experience prolonged periods of dysregulation and struggle to self-regulate/recover
- School might receive frequent reports from parents/carers about concerns at home caused by the impact of school attendance (e.g. dysregulation/distress, anxiety, reluctance to attend school, frequent illness, sleep disturbance)
- They may present with challenging/anti-social/dangerous behaviours on a regular basis and be at risk of suspension/ exclusion
- They may engage in risk-taking behaviours on a regular basis (e.g. absconding, unsafe use of social media/internet)

Other

- The child or young person may present with self-harming/self-injurious behaviours*
- The child or young person may present with high levels of anxiety which significantly impact on attendance, engagement with lessons, relationships with peers/adults or wellbeing*
- The child or young person might present with concerns relating to eating disorders or body dysmorphia*
- The child or young person might exhibit sustained avoidance/overly seeking/extreme responses to sensory stimuli on a regular basis

** Note: our team are unable to provide health support/advice and can only support in the context of SLCN and communication & autism needs which might relate to presenting mental health/general health needs. Advice should be sought from Health colleagues in relation to needs relating to health (e.g. GP, CAMHS, PALMS).*