

What is ASD ?

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others.

Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you are autistic, you are autistic for life; autism is not an illness or disease and cannot be 'cured'.

Often people feel being autistic is a fundamental aspect of their identity.

Autism is a spectrum condition. All autistic people share certain difficulties, but being autistic will affect them in different ways.

Some autistic people also have learning disabilities, mental health issues or other conditions, meaning people need different levels of support. All people on the autism spectrum learn and develop. With the right sort of support, all can be helped to live a more fulfilling life of their own choosing.



In School

Strategies in school can help, these can include:

Consistent and relevant rewards, timed activities, Workstations (TEACCH approach), task management boards, Visual Timetables, resources such as weighted toys, fiddle toys and mindful monster strategy cards can also be used.

Strategies such as 5 point scales, using concentrated, clear and specific instructions (i.e. when the sand has run out) will also help, the instructions need to be repeated and / or broken down. The tone of voice used is important, as are the consistency of any consequences.

Each child is different, work will be differentiated and adapted to the child's needs. School will promote independence to help ensure the child reaches their potential and grows in confidence.

We are a Forest School which will help to promote sensory and alternative ways of learning. We also have visits and involvement from the Specialist Teaching Service, including Percy the dog.

Advice and feedback from Parents:

- By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.
- Consistency—“stick to your guns”.
- Balance between independence and safety / supervision.
- They can make good choices. Give independence to them to do that.
- If a task is too big, break it down.
- Work your way backwards, e.g. shoes and socks.
- You want the best for your children—stay strong— you know your child.
- Make sure instructions are specific.
- Senses—heightening senses—use a blindfold for example to heighten a child’s hearing.
- Say their name first to get their attention.
- Emotion cards.
- What may work one week will not always work the next week.



Useful websites / organisations:

- ◆ Kent Autistic Society—sign up to email group.
- ◆ National Autistic Society
- ◆ **4US2** is a group for parents every two weeks with: Half term activities, DLA forms advice, General advice, Family support worker.
- ◆ **IASK**
- ◆ MIDAS—sign up to get notification emails of lists of new courses.
Midas@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk

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