

Supporting Children with Autism and Social and Communication Difficulties

At Whitby Heath Primary School we ensure staff have the knowledge and understanding to support children in school who present with social and communication difficulties.

In school, staff use the following strategies to support:

- The use of visuals to aid communication
- The use of visuals on a whole class and school level, i.e. visual timetables for all
- Bespoke visuals for pupils who need them
- Positive communication channels between home and school.
- Use of now and next strategies for engagement
- Use of task lists.
- Use of a range of sensory supports both in whole class and small group/individual basis
- A bespoke approach to meeting individual needs where necessary
- The use of social stories where required
- Consistent routines

School may request the support of special schools through the Local Authority outreach service or may refer to the Autism Service at Cheshire west and Chester. Parents will always be consulted if school wishes to request support. School have accessed further staff training through the Autism Service.

If you have concerns around your child having traits of social communication difficulties associated with autism firstly, speak with your child's class teacher. Your class teacher will talk to the SENCO who will identify if there is a need to refer to community paediatrician. This will involve parents/carers, teachers and the SENCO completing some paperwork. If accepted, the paediatrician will arrange an appointment to meet with parents/carers and your child, and may investigate the possibility of social communication difficulties further. There can be a waiting time for appointment. After an assessment period, your child may be given a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition or other needs and further advice will be given.

Some helpful websites are:

<https://www.cheshireautism.org.uk>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/>

<https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/>

<https://www.pcfcheshirewest.org/>