

Graduated Approach When Considering a Neuro-Development Assessment

The Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway focuses on considering significant social communication and concentration difficulties resulting in children being at risk of significant harm to themselves and/or their significant mental health needs that are impacting on their daily lives. To access the assessment, a collaborative decision will be made with parents and carers and the SENDCO team at school, considering the significant and complex needs of the child, how this impacts on their lives at school and at home and if these complex needs meet the high threshold required.

This means that when a referral is made children and young people may go on to receive a diagnosis of Autism or ADHD. Whilst neurodevelopmental needs may cover a wider area of needs such as learning, motor skills or speech, language and communication skills these needs should be supported via other routes such as direct referrals to the relevant service.

Where to start to identify if a child's needs meet the high threshold required?

Help and support for parents or carers

Being a parent or carer brings many joys and wonderful experiences as you watch your child try new things, develop their skills and become more independent. These moments can be particularly poignant for a parent or carer when their child has needed extra support to achieve some of the milestones.

Supporting a child or young person with additional needs is not always easy, so having the opportunity to discuss different experiences with others can help. Being able to ask questions and seek advice from other parents or carers who understand can be key to supporting each other.

Below are some of the local support groups and sessions parents or carers can access if and when they may feel the need to do so. We know that this is a difficult time for parents and carers and schools will always be a source of help and support. Below are some additional agencies who can help.

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/salfords-neurodevelopmental-offer/overview-of-support-offer/>

<https://autismgm.org.uk/my-area/Salford/support-peer-support-groups/>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/343520603224408/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ukaspsg/#>

<https://www.42ndstreet.org.uk/>

<https://www.kooth.com/>

<https://mft.nhs.uk/camhs/>

GPs are a good source of help and support for medical needs. However, it is unusual for GPs to direct families to the support below. Evidence of the support below is crucial when initiating this process.

Neurodiversity and Learning Event

Hour and a half session on Microsoft Teams

To help parents and carers understand why their Children and Young People (CYP) might be struggling with learning and to help them to understand how to support their CYP, at home.

About the event

The event is for 1.5 hours (with question and answer session). Overview of some of the factors that neurodiverse CYP may experience with opportunities to consider the ways in which to support them.

What you will achieve

To help parents and carers understand why their Children and Young People (CYP) might be struggling with learning and to help them to understand how to support their CYP, at home.

Who should attend

Parent/Carers at the beginning of their journey, facing difficulties.

How to book

Follow the link below and register for this and all future events.

<https://salford.zipporah.co.uk/Events.Live/account>

When on the booking system use the drop down for Neurodevelopmental training and support offer to see all courses associated with this area.

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/salfords-neurodevelopmental-offer/how-to-get-help/guide-for-event-booking-system/>

Help with self care, sleep and toileting

Sleep is important for everyone. We need good quality sleep to complete our everyday tasks. We also need good quality sleep as this influences how we feel. For children and young people it is particularly important to help them to learn, concentrate, interact with others and join in with activities each day.

Short or distributed sleep can be common in children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs. They may therefore be at a greater risk of experiencing the negative consequences of poor sleep. These web pages provide some advice and support to help with sleep where a child or young person may need some extra help.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

- 0-19 Team South - call 0161 206 3819 or email South0-19@nca.nhs.uk

<https://cerebra.org.uk/download/sleep-a-guide-for-parents/>

<https://sleepaction.org/>

<https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/children-with-send/>

<https://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sleep-services>

https://eric.org.uk/children-with-additional-needs/toileting-support-for-autistic-children/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIIPz_w4_miQMV6JdQBh0fXACgEAAYASAAEgJ9L_D_BwE

Help for emotional wellbeing and mental health

Emotional wellbeing is our ability to produce positive emotions, moods, thoughts and feelings. It helps us to adapt when we are confronted with a stressful, unpleasant or unexpected situation. It can be linked to how we feel about ourselves and which activities we choose to take part in.

For children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs we sometimes see a preference for things to be on their own terms or to be completed in a certain way. At some points during the day this may cause no problem. We all need to engage in activities we enjoy. For children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs moving away from these preferred activities, finding it difficult to concentrate on something for a long period of time or not understanding what is expected can have an impact on their emotional wellbeing. We may see this in how they respond to the situation or some of the behaviours they use to show us this distress.

These resources aim to support adults in understanding some of these responses as well as provide advice and tips that can be used every day to support a child or young person's emotional wellbeing.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://mft.nhs.uk/camhs/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/>

<https://hub.gmintegratedcare.org.uk/mental-health/whats-new/two-new-silvercloud-programmes-are-available-for-parents-and-carers/>

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/info-for-parents-students-and-teachers/special-educational-needs/learning-support-service/learning-support-service-webinars/>

<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/child-development-and-neurodisability/autism-home/autism-support/emotional-wellbeing/>

<https://autismgm.org.uk/events/>

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/info-for-parents-students-and-teachers/special-educational-needs/learning-support-service/learning-support-service-webinars/>

Help in understanding and responding to behaviours

Behaviour is the way in which we act or respond to a situation or event that occurs. We can all respond to something positively. For example, smiling and laughing to show our enjoyment and pleasure. Equally we can show that we may be feeling less enjoyment for something, even feeling slightly anxious or distressed. We may then show behaviours such as avoidance, annoyance or sometimes anger. As adults we have had much more practice than children and young people in managing our responses and regulating ourselves.

Behaviour is not a neurodevelopmental presentation. It is often a symptom of something else. For example, feeling anxious about a change to a routine or a transition to something new, people missing communication attempts that may be subtle or being overwhelmed by sensory information.

As adults we often notice behaviours such as distressed, passive or unexpected behaviour as we can sometimes find these more challenging to manage. It is important to understand why this type of behaviour occurs and what may trigger it. It is equally important to notice the calm, settled and engaged behaviours that children show as this helps us to create environments and interact with children and young people in ways to encourage these responses.

The resources on this page are to try and help adults supporting a child or young person to understand the reasons for their behaviours. The resources include leaflets, video clips, webinars and courses that you are able to attend. They all provide support and can be accessed when they may be needed.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

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

<https://autismgm.org.uk/events/>

Help in creating positive environments, supporting transitions and making friends

Routines form an important part of all of our daily lives. Think about when you eat your lunch, do your food shop or visit a family member. We generally stick to similar routines each day and each week. The people around us and the places we go to support these routines but they also are an important part of helping us to thrive. They often provide stability, security and consistency. We can all find unexpected events unsettling at times.

For children and young people with a neurodevelopmental need they may need these routines and rules to be clear. They may also need more preparation to be given to support changes or transitions between activities.

The resources on this page are aimed at things adults can do each day to support with these routines and how we can create environments that support children and young people.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/communication-tools/visual-supports>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/communication-tools/social-stories-and-comic-strip-conversations>

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/info-for-parents-students-and-teachers/special-educational-needs/learning-support-service/learning-support-service-webinars/>

Help with speech, language and communication

Our communication skills are one of the most important set of skills we have. They help us to form friendships and relationships as well as help us to learn, develop and think. Our ability to understand conversations and express our own thoughts, ideas and feelings all use our speech, language and communication skills. We connect with other people through our interactions and conversations.

For children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs speech, language and communication can be an area they need adults to help with. This may be to understand a situation or a question that has been asked, to support a conversation with a friend or for the adult to respond to non-verbal communication skills such as a facial movement.

The resources on this page aim to help adults in supporting children and young people's speech, language and communication skills in everyday situations so that they can engage in these important interactions and connect with others.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://www.speakupsalford.nhs.uk/>

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

<https://www.dldandme.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/send>

<https://www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/toddler/learning-to-talk/learning-conversations-and-telling-stories-3-to-5-years/>

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

<https://autismgm.org.uk/events/>

Help with sensory skills

Sensory skills involve the senses of smell, touch, vision, hearing, balance and proprioception (where your body is in space) and taste. Our sensory skills constantly work together alongside our motor skills to understand and process the world around us.

Children often develop their sensory skills during their early life experiences. For example, being involved in messy play and feeling the different materials, splashing in the bath to make bubbles as well as squashing items of food before they eat it. As adults we continue to see the impact of our sensory preferences each day. For example, we all will have some preferences such as liking smells such as cut grass or petrol, preferring hot or cold weather or eating spicy verses non-spicy foods. We all use our senses every day and this helps us to seek out things we like as well as avoid things we are less keen on.

For children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs we are beginning to understand more and more how they may make sense of the world around them and organise all of the sensory information they receive each day. Like the examples above of adult preferences, we may see children and young people seeking out certain sensations. For example, spinning to get movement feedback or covering their ears when something is loud or unpleasant sounding to them. Children and young people, like adults can be under or over sensitive to a range of stimuli. Unlike adults they may not be able to remove themselves from a situation as easily so they may benefit from adjustments being made.

The resources on this page are to try and help adults supporting a child or young person's sensory skills. The resources include leaflets, video clips, webinars and courses that you are able to attend. They all provide support and can be accessed when they may be needed.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://cerebra.org.uk/download/sensory-processing/>

<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/child-development-and-neurodisability/autism-home/autism-support/>

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/info-for-parents-students-and-teachers/special-educational-needs/learning-support-service/learning-support-service-webinars/>

Occupational Therapy Call 0161 206 7750

Help with learning

Learning is a key part of our lives. It is how we develop as individuals, trying new things as well as developing the skills we already have. We all have our own learning preferences and styles. Some people like to watch others before trying something, some like to read instructions following them step by step whilst others will just give things a go. We all have different strengths when it comes to learning styles.

Children with neurodevelopmental needs may show a particular learning style preference. Understanding what this may be as well as the ways to support this but also introduce new learning styles helps to ensure they develop their skills in the most effective way.

The resources on this page are to try and help adults in supporting a child or young person's learning. The resources include useful websites, webinars and courses that you may find useful.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://www.partnersinsalford.org/salford-0-25-advisory-board/salford-thrive-ehwb/reducing-barriers-to-education-rbte-attendance-support/>

Help with concentration

Our ability to concentrate on something is a key part of us being able to join in conversations, learn new things or complete daily tasks such as getting dressed. Our concentration skills include being able to focus on a task but also tune out things in the environment that are not important or may become distracting to us.

For children and young people with neurodevelopmental needs concentrating can be an area they need adult help with. This might be due to a child having a preference for a particular activity and wanting to concentrate on this or knowing what the most important thing in the environment is to concentrate on. For some children they may need to regulate themselves by moving around or playing with something like a fidget item to help them to concentrate.

The resources on this page are aimed at some things adults can do each day to support with concentration skills and what to do where a child may need some additional support to help them to concentrate.

Information, Courses, Webinars, etc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av-uAZOM24I>

<https://vimeo.com/540571434>

What Next?

If parents and carers consider that, despite accessing all of the above help and support, their child is at risk of significant harm to themselves and/or their significant mental health needs are impacting on their daily lives, then school can be approached about accessing the Neuro Development Pathway.

Schools can make a referral after discussing with parents and carers the following evidence:

1. Diary containing information regarding the daily challenges that each child faces over a significant period of time
2. Evidence of all of the support sought (see above) and any outcomes or impact

It is highly unlikely that the assessment will be accepted without the above evidence from home, as sometimes patterns of behaviours exhibited at home are not displayed in school.

Parents and carers are invited to make an appointment to meet with one of the SENDCO team and discuss evidence from both home and school. At this meeting, a collaborative decision will be made considering the significant and complex needs of the child, how this impacts on their lives at school and at home and if these complex needs meet the high threshold required to access an assessment.

SENDCO Team: Mrs Bladen-Kay, Mrs Bradford