



Autism Advice and Support Recommendations for Referrers

Health, Social Care and Education professionals can refer children and young people between the ages of 5 up until 18th birthday, and who are registered with a GP in Shropshire or Telford. [Under 5's should be referred to the Child Development Centre, and over 18 to the adult pathway (via GP)].

Please ensure any parents with parental responsibility are aware of and in agreement with the referral, and provide all contact details. Young people over 16 years need to consent to the referral. Referrals will not be accepted where consent is not evidenced.

The following information is helpful in considering whether a neurodevelopmental assessment or alternative support or advice would be more suitable. Prior to referral please consider the following (and provide all available information relating to:

- Social communication difficulties (e.g. differences with using or understanding non-verbal communication such as eye contact, facial expression and gesture; difficulties with back and forth conversation)
- Interaction difficulties that impact upon functioning (e.g. Difficulties making and maintaining friendships with peers, understanding others' emotions. Difficulties adapting behaviour/communication to different settings)
- Restrictive patterns of behaviour (such as adherence to routine, difficulties with transitions or change. Difficulties considering alternative perspectives)
- Intense interests and hyper focus on interests that impacts upon functioning (e.g. finding it difficult to move on from interests or to engage in activities / topics that are not related to interests)
- Sensory sensitivities or sensory seeking that make everyday activities difficult
- Repetitive play, behaviour, movements or language/sounds

Examples provided should be across multiple settings (e.g. home, school, clubs, community), although they may present differently in different settings. Please ensure you provide your own observations, as well as parent concerns.

Consider and confirm that difficulties with social interaction, communication and restrictive behaviours pre-date secondary school and have been present since early childhood.

Provide any relevant contextual information, e.g. medical issues, social care involvement, trauma history.

Please outline what support has been put in place, and how helpful it has been. If there has been any involvement from support agencies such as Educational Psychology Service, Learning Support Advisory Service or Behaviour Support Service, please provide reports – these then form part of the assessment process.