

The Autism Family Support Team (AFST)

Strategic Purpose/Aims

The Autism Family Support Team aims to inform and upskill parents and young people around Autism through the provision of resources and information. This is delivered in the format of workshops and advice sessions and liaison and training for practitioners.

Activity Summary

Delivered over 18/19 and 19/20

KPI contacts discussing parents needs following receipt of diagnosis, these were made by phone and workshops were offered to meet need as well as advice around specific areas that were identified during these discussions. Advice sessions were also offered where appropriate, including home visits to discuss the contents of the 'Green Book'. The 'Green Book' is entitled 'Basic strategies to support children with Autism and other social communication difficulties.'

A number of referrals were received for/from parents/ carers of children and young people with a historic diagnosis of autism. These were addressed by offering workshops, advice sessions and attending meetings where requested by practitioners and parents.

A range of workshops have been delivered termly:

The Sensory World

The Basics

Teen Life programme

Foundations for Communication

With introduction of

Managing Anger x 2 sessions

What working well?

- Training/Workshops – Positive feedback from attendees/other service about content.
- Teen Life Workshop has good retention rates.
- There is a range of support/ advice/ resources to support other practitioners.
- Following the training for Autism ambassadors the number of referrals reduced.

What are we worried about?

Generally workshop retention rates are a worry – families sign up but then don't turn up.

The autism ambassadors – following EH restructure, these are now placed in different areas.

The recent survey and feedback from other teams and services indicates that the role and function is not fully understood. The team name could be misleading?

Referrals from CDC are completed at point of discharge – this can be up to a year after diagnosis is given.

Inappropriate referrals being made to the team from CAMHS – families are advised to call in a crisis, meaning families are then redirected again.

There is a lot of time and resource currently being spent on recording and passing on of information.

What needs to happen next / ambitions for 20/21?

One pathway for all involvement with families within one electronic recording system (EHM) and to include consent for feedback.

Change of team name to – Autism Information and Advice Service and the use of clear and consistent boundaries of roles. This needs to be communicated to services and families.

Wider workforce development to be explored – Linking ambassadors, all staff awareness raising and workforce manager role.

Outcomes and Outputs

In 2018-20 there were 128 KPI referrals received in total;

A further 72 formal referrals were received for/from parents/ carers of children and young people with a historic diagnosis of autism.

Regular termly delivery of the following workshops

	<u>Total Attendance</u>
The Sensory World	55
The Basics	15
Teen Life programme	25
Foundations for Communication	9
With introduction of	
Managing Anger x 2 sessions	22

Co-production/engagement/consultation with CYP and families

The team used feedback to a survey provided by Rotherham Parent Carers Forum and NAS Rotherham branch to formulate practice They continue to take note of

comments from parents pertaining to advice sessions and training evaluations and responds with changes where appropriate.

The service works closely with the Rotherham Parent Carers Forum and have a Memorandum of Understanding regarding working practices.

They also work with the National Autistic Society Rotherham Branch around joint training.