Together for Families fact sheet

Autism in Schools Team Mainstream Setting Offer

This offer provides schools with flexible, tailored support to develop inclusive practice in relation to Autism and Neurodiversity. The offer recognises that each setting has different priorities and enables leaders and staff to use allocated time in ways that best meet their needs across the academic year.

Allocation of Time

Each school setting is allocated a set number of hours to use with our team each year.

The offer is designed to be responsive, collaborative, and led by the setting's needs.

Time can be used flexibly and spread across the year to support ongoing development.

Systemic and Additional Hours

Each school receives 6 hours of systemic time and a set number of additional hours based on their school population.

Joining your Hours

You can merge your hours together with other schools e.g. if multiple schools share a SENCO. If you would like to find out more about this, please contact our team.



Contact us

Email: autismteam@cornwall.gov.uk
Call: 01579 341132

If you would like this information in another format please contact:
Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY
Email: **equality@cornwall.gov.uk** Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

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Together for Families

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How can schools use their systemic hours?

Systemic hours can be used to build neuro-affirming practices within settings, upskilling staff and offering support to families.

Training

These can focus on autism, neurodiversity-affirming practice, sensory needs, communication, reactions as communication, or you are welcome to discuss setting-specific priorities with your link advisor.

Training can be delivered in short sessions (1.5 hours) or combined for deeper input.

Setting Development Discussions

Strategic discussions with leaders and SEN staff.

Focuses on whole-setting development and embedding neuro-affirming practice.

Includes consideration of policies, systems, and setting culture.

Provides space for discussion of group or cohort-level considerations.

Provides an opportunity for staff questions or concerns related to autism and neurodiversity.



Family Cafes

Informal sessions to support parents and carers.

Focus on understanding autism, sharing strategies, and building confidence.

Environment Walks

Structured walkthroughs of the setting environment.

Focuses on sensory considerations, accessibility, predictability, and inclusion.

Includes a follow-up discussion to identify strengths and practical adjustments.

Group Work

A choice of different structured groups led by an autism in schools team advisor or worker.

Topics include Anxiety and Wellbeing, Navigating the Social World, Siblings Group, Transition and Preparation for Adulthood. Please note these need to be booked at least a term in advance.

Staff Surgeries

Structured conversations to discuss questions around neuro-affirming practice and anonymous discussions regarding strategies for young people.

How can schools use their additional hours?

Additional hours can be used to support individual children and young people through consultation which may lead to further referral work.

Consultations

An initial conversation about a specific child, with or without a confirmed diagnosis (but with presenting needs in line with autism).

May include a parent or carer as well as a key member of school staff. The child may want to attend or ask questions.

There is no written report. Any notes are written and held by the school.

Referrals

Individual support for a specific child, with signed consent from parents and children age 13+.

Includes an initial meeting to agree goals and agreed actions and support. May include 1:1 casework and attendance at multi-agency meetings where appropriate.

Includes a follow-up review to evaluate progress and discuss any further adaptations needed.

How can we support each other?

What you can expect from us:

- All team members are fully DBS checked and will wear visible ID badges at all times while on site.
- Team members will communicate clearly and promptly to support effective planning and delivery.
- Staff will plan ahead and arrive prepared for agreed sessions and meetings.
- To ensure support is spread evenly across the year, up to one-third of your allocated hours will be delivered each term when planned in advance.
- If sessions are cancelled due to staff sickness, these will be rescheduled where possible, and any changes will be communicated.
- Team members work in line with neuro-affirming principles, modelling best practice and supporting schools to embed these approaches.

What we expect from you:

- Contact us regularly to support planning and coordination.
- Give sufficient notice to ensure effective support delivery.
- Inform us as early as possible of any changes to group sessions, 1:1 work, or meetings. Any cancellations made within 3 days will result in the loss of allocated hours unless due to sickness.
- Provide suitable, quiet rooms for effective and confidential work.
- Keep parents and carers informed about work with the team, ensuring they are involved and supported.
- Be open to and actively implement neuro-affirming approaches within policies and everyday practice.
- Make sure children are aware of any planned individual or group sessions in advance.