Spring 2025

ENFIELD ADVISORY SERVICE FOR AUTISM

EASA TERMLY NEWSLETTER

for Families, Educational Settings, Professionals and Partners

WELCOME

Happy World Autism Acceptance Month - April 2025!

In this edition of our newsletter, you'll find details of resources for celebrating WAAW and developing awareness and acceptance in schools. You can also find information about all the events and training we are offering over the next few months.

We are continuing our Top tips for Secondary Schools series which started in our Autumn Newsletter.

Best wishes,

Dr Rachel Walker, Head of Service

*"Our mission is to empower the education workforce, parents and autistic young people to **work together**, **share understanding** and **create opportunities** to **enhance the education, wellbeing and success** of all autistic children and young people in Enfield."*

In the Autumn Term 2024..

167
Parent referrals received

5
Settings in the Borough requested bespoke training delivery for their staff

33
Individual Case Study Consultations took place

79
staff and parents attended AET training modules at EASA. Bell Lane

World Autism Acceptance Month

Our partners at the National Autistic Society and Autism Education Trust have developed some brilliant free resources for schools to help educate our children, young people and school communities about autism.

National Autistic Society

Autism Education Trust

Find out more and register for your pack: https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/world-autism-acceptance-month-2025

Come and learn about autism with EASA and the AET!

Upcoming for Parents and Carers

see our website for details and booking

Upcoming for Educational Setting Staff

See our website for details and booking

New!

Free access to the AET's updated Progression Framework for those who attend training

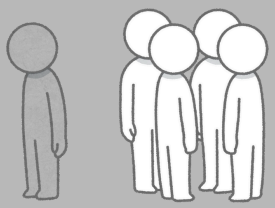
Top Tips for Secondary Schools

by Linda Nevin-Drummond, Advisory Teacher

Understanding is important...

Extreme dysregulation and distress can lead to extreme behaviours. It will take some time to recover from distressing situations, so provide a safe person to support in a safe space. Later, most likely another day, the reasons behind the distressed behaviour can be looked at using visual strategies such as comic strip conversations or a scales of justice or restorative justice approach.

When things go wrong...



Rules, detentions, isolations...

Some students may not be aware of what they have done wrong. If they have broken a rule, it might be helpful to have the rule written in their planner with a clear explanation and positive instructions about what they should do (rather than what they should not do).

Any rule could be challenged if it doesn't allow for differences that the student couldn't help – for example, not wearing items of school clothing because the student has hypersensitivity to touch.

Sending a student to an isolation booth could suit them, especially if they wanted to leave the class environment because it was overwhelming for them. However, it is better for them to go to another space that has already been agreed. For some students, detention can be traumatic, and it can lead to 'emotionally based school non-attendance ' (EBSNA) because the student no longer sees the school as a safe, inclusive space.

Things that can go wrong in lessons...

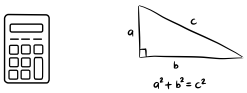
A student may not begin work because...

- Their name was not used specifically so they did not realise the instruction applied to them
- They don't attend to the body language of the other students and so don't copy them.
- They cannot visualise the steps they need to accomplish the task they are asked to do so they 'freeze' and do nothing.

The student doesn't ask for help in the lesson because...

- They may not know there is something to be asked, or they may think they already know the answer.
- They may fear being told off for asking too many questions.
- They may have asked in the past and not got the answer they wanted so are now used to figuring things out by themselves.
- They may not know the right time to ask a question or be able to find the right words or terminology to ask the question.
- They may be overwhelmed by the subject and finding it too difficult so they have tuned out from it
- They may not be interested in that subject or the issue being discussed
- They might want to ask but can't seem to make their vocal chords work

Things that can go wrong in lessons



Example

A student in year 11 says he only likes certain subjects such as maths and doesn't see the point of other subjects. He will only ask questions in maths if he is sitting in the front, otherwise he doesn't think his voice will carry to the front to the teacher. "It will get stopped by the other students."

What you can do to help

Reasonable Adjustments in the Classroom

- Seating position should be adjusted for the individual pupil, e.g., they may prefer to be away from windows and heaters or be at the side instead of the middle.
- Many autistic students also have ADHD and may be physically restless in class. They can be allowed fidget objects, e.g. something to twiddle at the top of a pen; a bracelet /string of beads could double as a counting aid for those struggling in Maths.
- Find opportunities for students to move in lessons – giving out books, coming to the front to show something etc.
- Don't assume that the student will attend to group instructions or will think that these are meant for them unless they are prefaced by their name or separate instructions are given to them. Noise in classrooms is often an issue so it may help to allow Loop Earplugs to soften the sound or even to play 'white noise' to help concentration on the task.
- Adjust communication for the student and explain vocabulary. English has many words with multiple meanings, e.g lead, current, minute and novel. Students may focus on one meaning only and misunderstand when the word has another meaning. Explain figurative language.
- Don't put the students 'on the spot'. Prepare them beforehand if possible and give time to answer. Indicate clearly whether or not the answer was correct.
- Check for understanding. The student could be asked to indicate on a 1-5 scale how much they have understood.
- Use a prompt (this is also an exam access arrangement). This could be a prearranged touch or a verbal phrase – e.g. 'time to move on'
- Differentiate the work- present it in shorter steps, allow more time, reduce the demand and keep to key concepts and, above all, use visuals, even for students who seem verbally fluent. It is extremely likely that they will learn much more effectively if you use visuals. These can include the written word, as well as pictures, diagrams and symbols.
- It can help to have a preferred character to motivate the student, e.g. a written rule to follow with a picture of Sonic the Hedgehog for a Yr 9 student. He said, "I know Sonic isn't really speaking to me but when I see the picture it makes me want to do it much more than if you told me!"
- It can help to have a pad next to the student in class where they can 'doodle ' ideas or they can be helped with a visual drawn by staff.
- Mind mapping and concept maps can help to see the 'bigger picture.
- Students may respond better to numbers than words and scales can help, e.g. on a scale of 1 to 10 , how much do you think that the American economy was built on slavery at the time of the Civil War?

EASA's new website

We are upgrading our website to make it more user-friendly and compatible with mobile devices. Our web address will remain the same.
There will be some changes to our current website while the upgrade work is being done. Please bear with us!
If something is not in its usual place and you can't find what you are looking for, please get in touch with Beatrice, our administrator, and she will be pleased to help.

Follow

Like

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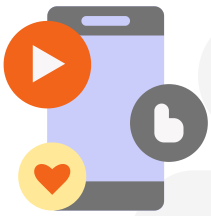

We love hearing how our service has impacted the community from small to big changes! So we invite you to tag EASA and share social media posts so we can all reach the wider community.

If you're not following us already, you can search for our Facebook Page.

www.facebook.com/EnfieldASA

Coffee Mornings in Schools

EASA continues to be invited to schools in the borough to present at their coffee mornings. These are a great opportunity for community building. All parents can be invited, giving autism families a chance to get together as well as helping others learn more about autism and creating a stronger autism friendly community. In 2024, members of the EASA Team visited **15** school coffee mornings.

If you would like us to attend a Coffee Morning at your school please email admin@enfieldasa.org.uk

Let EASA hear your thoughts!

Have you worked with EASA in the last year?
Attended a Cuppa & Chat session or been to AET training?
Have you spoken with a member of the team?

Then we would love to hear from you!

We always like to receive feedback from parents and professionals, as we believe this contributes to developing and improving our services further.
Please take a minute to scan the QR code below to leave us a google review.

If you can't find the help you need or if you would like more information on our services, please get in touch.

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