



# Devon Autism Assessment Pathway

## What happens next

This leaflet is to help guide you through the next steps to help identify your child or young person's needs. They have been referred to us to consider whether or not they meet the criteria for an autistic spectrum diagnosis.

Many children who exhibit autistic spectrum conditions may also have specific language disorders, sensory processing difficulties, emotional or mental health difficulties alongside of this. We will be carrying out a detailed assessment using evidence-based standards to help you and those who work with your child or young person to best support them as they grow up. 30% of children who go through this process (known as 'the pathway') are not diagnosed with autism however the assessment process will help provide information and advice which will assist you in the future. We know you may have been on a journey just to get to this point but please bear with us as you go through the pathway as each stage is designed to ensure that we get the best outcome for your child and young person.

## In your request for assessment, have you included?

Request for services form

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Information Sharing Consent Form

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Home and school screeners

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Other assessment reports completed recently.g Educational Psychology or Devon AssessmentFramework



# STEP 1

## Step 1 – Request for an assessment

Ideally, your request will arrive with us on a Request for services form, and contain as much information as possible about your child or young person.

We would normally expect that an educational psychology report completed by your child or young person's school would be sent to us with your request, and a 'Devon Assessment Framework' (DAF) document too. You should also send any other assessment reports completed recently. This might include Paediatrician Reports, Speech and Language Therapy Assessments and so on.

You should also send us a completed consent form, as this allows us to gather further information from other health, education and social care providers as we need to - without asking you for permission each time.

Finally, please also complete our Autism Home and School Screeners before making your request. This provides us with essential information. You can download everything you need to make a request from our website at

<http://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk>



## STEP 2

## STEP 3

### Step 2 – Review of all information received

Once your request has been received by us we will check if any information is missing and request this from you or other agencies. We will also check what information we have already from any previous or ongoing support from the other services we provide. This information is then screened by one of our Specialist Practitioners to ensure it is an appropriate referral for our service. If it is not appropriate then we will let you, and the professional who referred you to us, know why.

### Step 3 – Request for paediatric assessment

If you have not had any recent involvement with a paediatrician the next step is for us to request this from your local hospital. This is to ensure there are no underlying physical health issues that may be impacting on your child's behaviour. Your local hospital is likely to have its own waiting list for this assessment. We will copy you into this request to keep you informed of the progress of your referral. When the paediatric assessment is returned to us we will make a final decision regarding accepting you for the next stage. Very few children and young people will be rejected at this stage.



# STEP 4

## Step 4 – Specialist assessment

Once we have received the paediatric assessment, you will be informed in writing that your child has been placed on the waiting list for an autistic spectrum assessment. You will then be contacted by the autistic spectrum team offering a date for you and your child/young person to attend an autistic spectrum assessment clinic. You will receive written confirmation detailing the date time and venue of clinic.

The clinic will include a parent interview and a separate child/ young person assessment. Further information about these assessments will be sent to you ahead of the meeting. This appointment will last upto two hours including some feedback from the assessment.

If the assessments give a clear indication that your son/ daughter is on the Autism Spectrum then you will be given a provisional diagnosis at the end of the clinic where you will be able to ask further questions.

Although you have a provisional diagnosis your child's/young person's assessment will still need to be discussed at a Multiagency team meeting before it is finalised.



# STEP 5

## Step 5 – MDT (Multi-agency discussion)

This meeting discusses the results of assessments; confirming/ declining a diagnosis or requesting further specialist assessment to support the assessment process. These could be a Speech and Language assessment, a Developmental Assessment or a Cognitive Assessment.

The team will only request further assessments where they feel that they do not have enough information to make a diagnosis. We'll inform you if this happens.

Once the extra assessments have been completed your son's/ daughter's case will be discussed at MDT again and a final decision will be taken.



## STEP 6

## STEP 7

### Step 6 – Final report

This report will be written following the multi-agency team meeting. The report will summarise the results of the assessments along with diagnosis if appropriate, along with some broad recommendations. Once you have agreed the final draft report with us then we will then send it out to all those professionals involved with your child/ young person.

### Step 7 – Feedback

Following our Final report we can have a further meeting with yourself to discuss the final recommendations. This could be a face to face meeting, a telephone call or will be within a Team Around the Child meeting.

## Additional resources

While your child may or may not have autism or any associated sensory processing difficulties or language disorder the following resources may be of assistance in helping you understand and support your child while you are waiting.

### Resources relating to Autism

The National Autistic Society (NAS)

The NAS website has some useful resources written for young people, their siblings and families.

**w:** [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

### Autism Education Trust (AET)

The AET website supports effective education practice. It has advice on choosing an ASD friendly school. Advice on how parents and school can work together and strategies everyone can use for supporting children with a diagnosis of ASD.

**w:** [www.aetraininghubs.org.uk/parent-guide/](http://www.aetraininghubs.org.uk/parent-guide/)

### Resources relating to language impairment

Raising Awareness of Language and Learning Impairment (RALLI) A YouTube website where professionals and young people talk about Language Impairment, their thoughts, feelings and the impact it has had, together with supportive strategies.

**w:** [www.youtube.com/user/RALLIcampaign](http://www.youtube.com/user/RALLIcampaign)

### Babcock LDP

Run the Devon Communication & Interaction Team they have useful information on their website

**w:** [www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp/autism](http://www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp/autism)

### ICAN

Information about language impairment can also be found on the ICAN communication charity website and The Communication Trust website. Particularly the sections re 'Don't get me wrong',

**w:** [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/174/dontgetmewrong.pdf](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/174/dontgetmewrong.pdf)

### Resources relating to sensory difficulties

Sensory Differences – Making Sense of Sensory Behaviour A booklet produced by Falkirk Council discusses sensory behaviour and management strategies for parents and carers, is available online at

**w:** [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/social-care/disabilities/docs/young-people/Making%20Sense%20of%20Sensory%20Behaviour.pdf?v=201507131117](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/social-care/disabilities/docs/young-people/Making%20Sense%20of%20Sensory%20Behaviour.pdf?v=201507131117)

### Sensory Integration Network

**w:** [www.sensoryintegration.org.uk](http://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk)

### Additional support resources in relation to education

Devon Information Advice and Support Provide confidential and impartial information, support and training for parents who have children aged 0-25 years with additional educational needs. Further information/contact details can be located at:

**w:** [www.devonias.org.uk](http://www.devonias.org.uk)



