

SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES

BRADFORD AND SITES ACROSS THE YORKSHIRE REGION



Specialist Autism Services (formally known as Sacar) was first established in October 1999 in Bradford with a District wide remit due to increasing demands from parents and carers of people with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome. **We are currently the *only Community Interest Company (CIC) in the UK to work for and with individuals with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome.***

Specialist Autism Services' mission is to support adults with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome by the provision of health, education, training, sports, creative art and counselling activities, which promote their social inclusion, training opportunities and ultimately employability. Our highly trained staff team provide essential information, training and support to carers, parents, health professionals and also contribute to research in this specialist field.



What do we offer?

ASC Specific Learning Programme – A structured programme of creative, vocational and life skills courses tailored to the specific needs of the participants, centred around essential social skills training.

Outreach Support - Our Outreach Service provides a bespoke package of support through the implementation of ASC specific strategies which enable adults with an ASC to function on a day to day basis both within the individual's own environment and within the community.

Employment Programme – Includes a 'Preparing for Work' workshop which incorporates practical aspects such as how to write a CV or complete an application form but also has a strong social skills element

which is essential for this client group. We address the specific areas of difficulty which prevent our client group from obtaining and maintaining employment.

ASC Awareness Training – We offer **individually tailored** Autism Awareness Training to organisations, agencies and professionals working with individuals on the Autistic Spectrum, combining theory with methods of best working practice based upon our thirteen years experience of working for and with adults with an ASC.

Our referral process

We have a **formal referral process** and all new referrals must complete a referral form, which should be completed by a health care professional such as, **social worker, mental health worker or GP** or where this is not possible we may on occasion consider **self referrals**. As a specialist service provider we can only accept referrals of adults with a **diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Condition**.

If you would like to find out more about our service, arrange a visit or make a referral, please contact : Janet Bean at Specialist Autism Services – Queen Anne Chambers 41 – 43 Sunbridge Road, Bradford, BD1 2AS,

Tel 01274 789789 or 778888, **E- mail:** info@specialistautismservices.org

Specialist Autism Services
Community Interest Company Registration No. 07030897

SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES IN KIRKLEES



Specialist Autism Services is a Community Interest Company with **13 years experience** of working for and with adults on the Autism Spectrum. We have been operating in Kirklees since June 2009 (previously at the Huddersfield Mission) and have recently received funding through Kirklees Council with which to deliver an **ASC Specific Learning Programme** centred around essential **social skills** training. Our **person centred** provision examines closely the impact of Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASCs) upon the individual and devises strategies with them, providing the opportunity to engage with **employment, education or independent living**.

Our Autism specific approach is highly successful and it has made a real difference to the lives of those attending our service. Our Kirklees members have reflected on the service they have received and provided the following feedback:



“SAS have helped me get together with other people on the spectrum”.

“I have gained greater **confidence** socially and have got a job”.

“I have a better **understanding** of my condition”.

“I have become more **independent**”.

“I have made friends and I am less isolated”.

It is our intention to further develop the services we offer in Huddersfield. Our aim is to establish a robust ASC specific service that mirrors our other provisions across the Yorkshire Region extending our range of services including ASC Specific Learning programme, Outreach Support, our Employment Programme and ASC Awareness Training. We aim to do this by:

- **Involving** those with ASC throughout the service development process
- Maintaining an empowering culture in an **autism friendly environment**
- Enabling **progression** through an Autism specific approach
- **Being creative** and imaginative in service delivery
- Recruiting, training and retaining a **skilled** and **experienced** multi -disciplinary staff team
- Placing **service excellence** above all other considerations
- Recognising, respecting and **promoting the rights** of adults with an ASC
- **Increasing** awareness of ASC throughout the community

Where to find Specialist Autism Services in Kirklees:

102, Fenay Bridge Road,
Fenay Bridge,
Huddersfield
HD8 0AY
Tel No. 0113 2775656

Our referral process - We have a **formal** referral process and all new referrals must complete a **referral form**, which should be completed by a health care professional such as, **social worker, mental health worker** or **GP** or where this is not possible we may on occasion consider **self referrals**. As a specialist service provider we can only accept referrals of adults with a **diagnosis** of an Autism Spectrum Condition. If you would like to find out more about our service, arrange a visit or make a referral, please contact: Linda Langstaff or Ann Maclennan at Specialist Autism Services on 0113 2775656, alternatively e-mail linda.langstaff@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES 'AUTISM FIRST'



Autism First is a unique project for people who have an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) but who also have additional support needs. We provide the highest quality of support whilst offering the person an individually tailored support package which meets their identified needs through an **Autism specific approach**.

In our thirteen years experience of working with adults on the Autism Spectrum we have found that those of our client group who have **additional support needs** have previously received support within a learning disability environment which has usually resulted in their Autistic needs being disregarded. It is for this reason that we are currently delivering the Autism First project, as we feel that the service we deliver should be accessible to all individuals with an Autistic Spectrum Condition.



Our aim is to make a **positive difference** to the lives of the people we support, by providing an **Autism person-centred service**. We pledge to continually improve through ongoing feedback and consultation. We provide a structured programme of creative, vocational and life skills courses tailored to the specific needs of the participants, centred around essential social skills training.

The **aims** of the Autism First Project are:

- Helping people reach their goals and **increase their independence**
- **Assessing individuals'** learning styles and ASC needs and developing a service which is personalised to them
- **Developing services** in consultation with the people we support and their networks
- Maintaining an empowering culture in an **Autism friendly environment**
- Recognising, respecting and **promoting the rights** of the people we support
- Recruiting, training and retaining a multi -disciplinary staff team

Where to find "Autism First"

102, Fenay Bridge Road,
Fenay Bridge,
Huddersfield
HD8 0AY

Westgate House,
Westgate,
Otley,
Leeds
LS21 3DT

If you would like to find out more about Autism First in Kirklees please contact Linda Langstaff on **Tel** 0113 2775656 alternatively **E-mail** linda.langstaff@specialistautismservices.org and for Otley contact Mickela Lee on **Tel** 0791225403 alternatively Mickela.lee@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES' EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME



Our **Autism specific** Employment Programme has evolved over the last 13 years in response to the difficulties individuals with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASCs) face when **accessing** and **maintaining employment**. This is a rolling programme allowing individuals to access it at any time and offers **tailored** support according to individual strengths, needs and career aspirations.

A major component of the Employment Programme are the '**Preparing for Work**' workshop and the '**Working Towards Work**' workshop. These workshops not only incorporate practical aspects such as how to write a **CV** or complete an **application form** but they also have a **strong social skills** element which is essential for this client group. We address the specific areas of difficulty which prevent our client group from **obtaining** and **maintaining** employment such as morning **routines, independent travel, planning, organising, the social environment** and **communication** and provide strategies based upon each individual's needs to enable them to pursue their chosen career path.



During workshops individuals are encouraged to discuss their thoughts, feelings and experience of employment whilst exploring the impact of their ASC upon their career opportunities. We have also developed the '**Specialist Autism Services Passport**' which is a document unique to each individual highlights how ASC affects them so that **strategies** can be implemented in the workplace to ensure that the steps to employment are positive for all involved.



Work Orientation Visits and **work placements** provide a clearer view of the potential workplace and enable individuals to gain a better understanding of potential working environments and the expectations of potential employers. Both Work Orientation Visits and work placements are fully supported to promote a **smooth transition** into employment.

For those individuals already in employment, our Employment Programme can offer tailored support according to individual needs and also assist with any '**reasonable adjustments**' required. The support provided can be off-site, if requested, to facilitate the resolution of any potential concerns.

The final component of the Employment Programme is **Autism Awareness Training** together with the **provision of advice and guidance** for potential employers. Whilst it is essential to support the individual with an ASC we

have found that supporting the organisation they are volunteering or working for is equally as important.

By **addressing the various barriers** to employment for individuals with an ASC, we are able to support those individuals who would like work (in whatever capacity that may be) into vocational placements and eventually sustained employment. Once individuals with ASCs are given the opportunity and support to find employment, they can begin to lead more **independent** lives, both **socially and economically**.

If you would like to find out more about our Employment Programme please contact **Mercie Kennedy** at Specialist Autism Services on **Tel** 01274 789789 or 07907228026 alternatively
E-mail mercie.kennedy@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES' SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME



Although social skills development **underpins** every aspect of our work and is central to every workshop, we also deliver **formal** social skills sessions to specifically **target** areas of difficulty, support members to **identify** how important social skills are in their day-to-day life and how the development of these skills can help them overcome this barriers to their **inclusion** within the **local community**.

Knowing how to behave in all kinds of social situation enables us to **interact** with others and **build relationships**. Individuals **naturally** learn social skills from an early age through **reinforcement** from parents, **experience** gained through contacts with other people and by receiving **verbal** and **non-verbal** feedback in differing situations and circumstances. This natural development is impaired for someone with an ASC and they consequently find any type of **social interaction** very difficult. There are so many **social rules** that people without an ASC learn instinctively, whereas individuals with an ASC often have to work at learning these rules. This can be confusing and cause anxiety as many social rules are **unwritten** and not spoken about. We therefore have to ensure that this client group are provided with the **opportunity** to acquire the **necessary social skills** or learn social rules in order to compensate for what does not come naturally to them.

Our formal Social Skills workshops aim to enhance **personal – social capacity** and **community participation** through the use of specific **social skills exercises**. We adopt a **cognitive problem solving** approach allowing the use of a structured but flexible behaviour modification programme to overcome limitations in a person's social skills development with the aim of **increasing skills** essential for social interaction.

A social skill is any skill which facilitates **interaction** and **communication** with others.

Our Social Skills workshops focus on:

- Cognitive activities
- Emotional expressions
- Assertive behaviour
- Overcoming shyness
- Building and developing friendship
- Empathy learning
- Social communication
- Anger management
- Relaxation
- Social stories



If you would like to find out more about our Social Skills Programme please contact Helen Hall at Specialist Autism Services on **Tel** 01274 789789 or 778888 alternatively
E-mail Helen.hall@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES' OUTREACH SERVICE



How can we help you?

Our Outreach Service teaches skills in an ASC specific way and covers the following areas; identifying and **copng with emotions**, understanding, developing and **maintaining friendships** and relationships, learning or re-learning **communication skills** and conversation skills, **social skills** and training in **social understanding**.

We know that coping with change and dealing with the **motivation** to engage with the wider community whilst managing associated anxieties, can be debilitating or de-motivating to a person with an ASC. This Service addresses these areas, providing strategies which **build confidence and self esteem** so that life's opportunities can still be accessed.

Where can we support you?

Our Outreach Service provides a **bespoke package** of support through the implementation of **ASC specific strategies** which enable adults with an ASC to function on a day to day basis both within the individual's **own environment** and within the **community**.



Why we offer this type of service?

We provide a tailor made service and it is our intention that through this type of support, individuals with ASCs will be in a better position to effectively overcome the difficulties they are facing, thereby **enhancing personal** and **social capacity** and **social inclusion**. Our proven, successful working practices reduce isolation and build on people's skills to maximise their **potential**.

What you can expect from our Outreach Service?



We will carry out an initial **assessment** which identifies an individual's Autistic needs from which we will compile a **bespoke package** of support to enable the individual to learn and develop the skills they require to **achieve** their identified personal **goals**.

We feel it is essential that we adopt a **multi-agency approach** in order to share **methods of best practice** with the individual's support network thereby ensuring a **holistic, consistent and co-ordinated support** programme for the individual.

Who will support you?

Our Outreach Service is delivered by some of the most **experienced** members of our staff team, due to the intensive, **skilled** nature of this lone worker support. It is essential that staff have a good **knowledge** of how to implement **ASC specific strategies** and **working practices** whilst also being aware of how the condition affects the particular individual. In order to maintain our high level of **specialised** support, the outreach team have access to a **multi-disciplinary team** for any additional guidance and support required.

If you would like to find out more about our Outreach Service please contact Jan Bean at Specialist Autism Services on tel 01274 789789 or 07907228026 alternatively
E-mail janet.bean@specialistautismservices.org

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AUTISM AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAMME



Having worked with adults with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) for over 13 years, we have established a range of strategies of support and evolved effective working practices through ongoing evaluation and consultation with our members. From this extensive experience we have developed a comprehensive ASC Training Programme which not only details theory but more importantly includes methods of best practice when working with this client group. We have delivered to organisations and agencies across the country and offer a range of training packages which can be tailored to suit the recipients. Topics include:

Diagnosis & History – Outlining history and background to the condition, establish current criteria and diagnosis methods in the region. Statistics, facts and figures relating to prevalence and dual diagnosis. Right up to date with the Autism Act and current National Autism Strategy.

The Spectrum – (Practical Exercises) Looking at the language based around the condition and what might be the symptoms associated with each aspect.

First Contact Protocols – Advice about working with someone who has a diagnosis of ASC for the first time. How to work more effectively with them. Continued support methods.



Behaviours – What might we expect? How can they be managed and why do they occur? Strategies for the outside world.

Educational Support – Examining and advising on current support methods for people with ASC within higher or further education. Non-lecture support and discreet support.

Reasonable Adjustment – People with ASC within the workplace, ideas around support, case histories and practical guidance.

Role Play – How we might deal as individuals or a team with presented challenging behaviours.

Progress – Delivering changes and assessment methods for progression.

Outreach – Working with adults with ASC in their own environments.

If you would like to find out more about our training programme, please contact : David Newell or Stella Cammarata at Specialist Autism Services, Queen Anne Chambers, 41-43 Sunbridge Road, Bradford, BD1 2AS Tel 01274 789789 or 778888, E- mail:david.newell@specialistautismservices.org or stella.cammarata@specialistautismservices.org

SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES' ASC SPECIFIC COUNSELLING SERVICE



Adults with an Autistic Spectrum Condition can have great difficulties coping with everyday living and social situations. Circumstances relating to **bereavement, depression, relationship or family** difficulties can be extremely challenging. Regardless of intelligence or linguistic ability adults with an ASC may have difficulty **recognising, expressing and acknowledging** their **emotions** due to their difficulties around verbal and non-verbal communication, inflexibility of thought and interpretation of a situation.



Counselling sessions which are **ASC specific** are **structured** to ensure that the client's ASC needs are considered and met during the session. Having an **understanding** of an individual's condition may eliminate the need for the client to explain their behaviours and communication methods, therefore allowing the client and the counsellor to focus on the **route** of their issues.

Counselling can offer **adults on the spectrum** or their **family members** a **safe** and **confidential** place to explore and come to terms with **diagnosis** of ASC, **life events** and social situations through a variety of communication methods adapted to meet the individual's needs. These may include the use of art, visual aids such as photos or pictures, mind-mapping or through discussion. Through the exploration of the client's issues, **strategies** can be introduced to help **cope** with life events and everyday social situations.



If you would like to find out more about our Counselling Service please contact **Carol Gardner** at Specialist Autism Services on **Tel** 01274 789789 or 778888, alternatively **E-mail** info@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES' SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY



An Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) is a life-long developmental disability affecting communication and social skills. People with an ASC may also have accompanying learning disabilities but, whatever the level of intelligence, everyone with the condition shares a difficulty in making sense of the world.

Speech and Language Therapists have a **unique** role in identifying the **social communication** characteristics which are important for diagnosis, identifying optimum service provision and the development of appropriate continued support.

Difficulties with social communication are a predominant feature in reducing access to education, employment, recreation, **social interaction** including **forming relationships** and **expressing personality**.

With ASC specific Speech and Language Therapy support, **improved communication** can positively impact upon behaviour, **social skills**, **peer relationships** and **self confidence**. It can also impact upon increased attention and concentration, numeracy, literacy and other skills for learning.



Speech and Language Therapy at Specialist Autism Services:-

- Works as part of a **multidisciplinary team**, working with an interagency approach, to identify needs and priorities for and with the individuals.
- Utilising **ASC specific working practices** enables individuals to make informed choices and express their thoughts and feelings.
- Aims to provide the means for individuals to **engage, learn** and **increase their independence**.
- Supports and adapts an individual's environment which **maximises opportunities** for a person to develop **their receptive** and **expressive** communication skills.
- Provides **carers and educators** with the means to support individuals through training and information sharing.
- Aims to **reduce social isolation**, anxiety and encourage the use of strategies to **promote** social and emotional well-being.

At Specialist Autism Services, Speech and Language Therapy consists of assessment, evidence-based intervention planning, monitoring and training/advice to reduce communication barriers enabling individuals to **reach their potential**.

If you would like to find out more about our Speech and Language Programme please contact **Sarah Hastilow** at Specialist Autism Services on **tel** 01274 789789 or 778888 alternatively
E-mail sarah.hastilow@specialistautismservices.org

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SPECIALIST AUTISM SERVICES EVALUATION AND PROGRESSION



BASELINE OBSERVATIONAL TOOL

We consider Specialist Autism Services' Baseline Observational Tool to be an essential part of our referral process when introducing new individuals to our service, whilst also enabling our experienced staff team to monitor and evidence the progression our members make through the support of an Autism Specific provision.

Using this tool we can highlight the areas of development in relation to the individual's Autistic needs such as social interaction, use of imagination/flexibility of thought, and communication skills, also taking into account sensory issues, environmental issues, external influences and an individual's learning skills and styles.

This tool has been carefully devised utilising our extensive experience of working for and with adults on the Autistic Spectrum. The baseline observation enables us to identify the main areas of difficulty facing the individual and we can then implement the appropriate personalised support strategies to promote independence and progression in all aspects of the individual's life.

Specialist Autism Services' Facilitators relate the content of their workshops to the identified development needs of every member within their particular workshop. Our Social Skills Co-ordinator works closely alongside the Facilitator and Skills Mentors working within each workshop in order to support each member within that workshop to meet their identified goals.

Our unique working practices ensure that our highly trained and experienced staff team can use the observation tool to monitor, address and review identified development areas. We recognise that unstructured times such as lunch times and breaks can be the most problematic time of the day for this client group and we therefore ensure that our staff team continue our specific approach during these periods also.

The Baseline Observational Tool enables us to evaluate a member's progress, the sustainability and development of that progress and continue to identify new goals with the member. For an individual with an Autistic Spectrum Condition this document will formulate a personal portfolio which they can successfully transfer into all aspects of their lives. This person centred approach has proved extremely successful for those members we are/have been working with.

If you would like to find out more about our service, arrange a visit or make a referral, please contact : Jan Bean at Specialist Autism Services, Queen Anne Chambers, 41-43 Sunbridge Road, Bradford, BD1 2AS **Tel** 01274 789789 or 778888, **E- mail:**janet.bean@specialistautismservices.org

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STAFF TRAINING & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



Specialist Autism Services is committed to providing quality training in Autistic Spectrum Conditions to all of our staff team. Our extensive experience of working with this client group over the past 13 years has provided us with the opportunity to develop a unique training programme which is delivered to everyone working within the organisation. We are proud that the ethos, values and beliefs of our organisation have contributed to our high staff retention rate and our staff team have demonstrated a commitment to continually expand their knowledge of ASCs which enables them to develop personalised support strategies to promote the progression of the individuals we are working with.

Induction - Our intensive induction programme is delivered over a 12 week period. During this period we provide new staff with the information and resources they require to perform their role efficiently and effectively. We support them to gain a full understanding of their role within the organisation and to gain an understanding of our policies, processes and procedures, structures and standards. We provide a full programme of induction training around ASCs which includes ASC theory, differentiation of High Functioning Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, first contact protocols, diagnostic criteria, associated criteria, areas of impairment (social interaction, communication and rigidity of thought), sensory issues/stimuli/environment, barriers to communication, verbal and non-verbal communication and effective communication. This theory is then related to working practice and the Common Induction Standards for the Caring Industry.

ASC Staff Training Programme - The induction process is then followed by a series of full staff team training days which are delivered throughout the year covering issues/areas such as Social Skills, Autism and Mental Health Issues, Planning and Delivering Workshops, Dealing with Challenging Behaviour, Strategic Planning, The Autism Bill, Effective one-one strategies for individuals with an ASC, Case studies, Team Building and Leadership and Management.

Informal training/mentoring/shared experiences - In addition to the more formal training that we offer, Specialist Autism Services promotes good team communication through our *daily* team meetings. These provide us not only with an opportunity to share information about the individuals we are working with, but also to share our experience and discuss strategies which we have adopted or may wish to adopt to support a particular individual. These meetings involve staff from all levels of the organisation ranging from volunteers to Directors. This has proven to be an excellent platform upon which to base our training days as it has enabled our Management Team to identify areas of training our staff team themselves feel they would benefit from.

Continued Personal Development – Ongoing personal development is a key factor to ensuring our staff team have the support and opportunity for development which they require. Our aim is to provide staff with the relevant and inspirational learning experiences to focus their development in line with their aspirations and potential. Psychological principles, models and tools are fundamental to developing learning and development opportunities that bring together Specialist Autism Services strategic objectives and our talent pool.

Specialist Autism Services heavily invests both time and money in our staff team as we believe that in order to provide a quality service to our client group it is essential that we employ a quality staff team.

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