



Tips for parents of students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder

What is ASD?

- ASD is a lifelong condition that affects social skills in three key areas:
 - Communication
 - Interaction
 - Imagination
- Autism is a spectrum condition meaning that individuals will share certain difficulties, but their condition will affect them in different ways.
- One child with autism will be able to manage with little or no support, whilst another will have severe disabilities and require full-time care.
- As a parent you will be best placed to know how ASD affects your child. Remember you are their expert.
- Sometimes, especially with girls who have ASD, they may be able to mask much of their discomfort at school. Your son/daughter may then seemingly 'explode' or 'melt-down' when they get home. This is because home is their safe space and where they can be themselves. At school they may be trying their best to follow the rules and fit in with their peers, which can lead young people with ASD being physically and mentally exhausted by the time they get home in the evening.

Practical tips to help pupils with ASD:

- Try to create a schedule and as far as possible stick to it. Children and Young People with ASD tend to like to know in advance what they are doing.
- Liaise with us at the school. Let us know if there is anything happening at home and we will let you know if there is anything happening at school. By keeping in contact we can work together to support your son/daughter.
- Try to be consistent. All children and young people need boundaries and consistency, but this is even more important for those with ASD.
- Use positive reinforcement and rewards. Most young people with ASD respond really well to praise and rewards. This doesn't have to be expensive, it could be extra time on their technology, or a sticker chart.
- Keep an eye on any sensory sensitivities. If your son/daughter seems to be finding things tricky and you can't straight away pinpoint why, it could be a sensory issue. Is it too noisy? Are they wearing something that feels too tight? Is there too much going on, causing them to become over stimulated? If you can find out what is triggering their discomfort then you can find strategies to help them overcome this.

Where to find more help and guidance:

- National Autistic Society - <https://www.autism.org.uk/>
- NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/>
- Ambitious about Autism - <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/>