



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Wokingham Borough Council

Award of Excellence

ASSIST

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practice**

2019

ASSIST

(Autism Spectrum Service for Information, Support & Training)

The ASSIST team, Wokingham Borough Council Children with Disability Services,
The Woodley Airfield Centre, Hurricane Way, Woodley, Berks RG5 4UX
01189 088553 (answerphone)

To contact the team email & request a call back: assist@wokingham.gov.uk

Team members:- Pam Breslin, Vicki Round, Hazel Clayton & Ami Martin

[Visit the ASSIST web page here](#)

The aim of the ASSIST service is to work in a proactive, supportive and preventative way with families and providers so that autistic children and young people living in the Wokingham Borough can be the best they can be.

The approach to intervention is holistic, creative and directed by the needs of the individual and those around them. The service provides information, support and training, especially supporting families pre- and post-diagnosis.

A key factor for the service is to build capacity – always looking at ways to work with many, sharing knowledge, skills and understanding of autism.

Eligibility: Support for those living with, caring for or working with a child/young person diagnosed with autism, up to their 18th birthday, who live in the Wokingham Borough. Parent programmes and parent/carer sessions are also available to parents whose child or young person is on the pathway for an autism assessment, and workshops are available to anyone who has an interest in autism or feels that the strategies shared might be useful.

No Referral required

All autistic people and their families can access universal services, information and support in relation to the condition of autism, e.g., health and education services for all, post diagnostic information, support groups, autism specific parent programmes and workshops.

Some autistic people and their families may like more in depth support to understand and manage autism within their family, e.g., support groups, autism specific parent programmes and workshops, 1 to 1 autism advice via email, arranged telephone call and parent/carer sessions.

Referral required

A few autistic people and their families will want and/or need focused work and intervention to enable the autistic child or young person to access and manage in the different environments where they live, learn and play.

Where identified through a formal assessment provided by the referrer, ASSIST will use an autism perspective framework based on the social model of disability i.e., **why**, might there be challenges for the autistic individual and **how** might adults implement autism friendly approaches to promote and support positive outcomes for the child/young person and their families. **This work requires a Multi-agency referral – please discuss with a member of the team.**

***No diagnosis* – you can access these ASSIST services without a referral, please contact us directly at assist@wokingham.gov.uk**

Provide information and signposting in relation to autism

Autism Specific workshops for parents/carers, practitioners and those with an interest in autism

Speaker events for families and others interested in autism

Join ASSIST mailing list for dates of parent/carer sessions, autism specific workshops, and autism related information - email assist@wokingham.gov.uk with your permission for ASSIST to hold your email address for GDPR purposes.

**A variety of autism specific workshops for anyone who has an interest in autism!
Opportunities to explore different areas/subjects and gain a deeper understanding from an autism perspective**

The workshops are suitable for adult learning. Daytime workshops usually run 9.30 to 12 from the Woodley airfield centre, RG5 4UX with free parking and refreshments.

Evening workshops are usually online via Microsoft Teams'

Cost of each workshop, per adult: Parents, Carers, Autistic individuals £10
Others £40

Group bookings of 5 or more people, contact ASSIST for discounted rate; we also offer some FREE places to WBC children's services employees.

For workshop information: email ASSISTworkshops@wokingham.gov.uk

***No diagnosis, but on pathway for an autism assessment* – you can access these ASSIST services in addition to those above, please contact us directly at assist@wokingham.gov.uk**

ASSIST parent/carer sessions including 1-1 booked appointments with member of team

National Autistic Society EarlyBird, EarlyBird plus and Teen Life parent programmes

National Autistic Society EarlyBird; EarlyBird Plus & Teen Life parent programmes are offered termly with a mix of daytime face to face programmes and evening online programmes:

- For parent/carers of pre-school (EarlyBird); primary school (EarlyBird Plus); and 10-16 (Teen Life) age groups.
- Child/young person should have an **autism diagnosis** or be on the **pathway for an autism assessment**.
- 8 weekly group sessions (Teen Life – 6 sessions) – dates and times are sent for the next programmes once parent/carers express an interest in attending.
- Supports understanding of autism, build knowledge, skills and increases confidence. Parents/carers will learn how to develop strategies to manage problem behaviours and recognise possible trigger points, plus meet other families that include an autistic child/young person.
- Parents/carers can be supported in the sessions by another person involved with their child/young person e.g. TA; teacher; grandparent; support worker

There is a charge for the NAS workbooks. We do not want anyone to be unable to access the NAS parent programmes because finance is an issue and would ask that you talk to us.

**Must have a
diagnosis, and
referral required**

Focused support

➡ **A few autistic people** and their families will want and/or need focused work and intervention to enable the child or young person to access and manage in the different environments where they live, learn and play. Where identified through a formal assessment provided by the referrer, ASSIST will use an autism perspective framework based on the social model of disability i.e., **WHY**, might there be challenges for the autistic individual and **HOW** might adults implement autism friendly approaches to promote and support positive outcomes for the child or young person and their families.

A referral will be required – via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH Team)

Referrals for ASSIST to work as part of a team that includes family members and practitioners (TAF), advising and guiding from an autism perspective **must** be made.

Professionals should complete a [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#) and email to:

triage@wokingham.gov.uk

Phone: [0118 908 8002](tel:01189088002)

Agencies can email ASSIST **assist@wokingham.gov.uk** for a discussion with a member of the team about possible referral.

➡ ASSIST may be asked to be involved within a team around the family (TAF) after a multi-agency discussion within the Early Help Hub and **will require details outlining presenting issues in relation to autism, and what specific work is being requested.**

➡ **Clubs and opportunities for autistic children and young people –**

To join an ASSIST club the child or young person **must** have an autism diagnosis. An ASSIST club referral form should be completed, and there may be a waiting list - contact the ASSIST team at **ASSISTclubs@wokingham.gov.uk** for more information.

HOW we will work:

Our primary focus is to work with parents/carers. We may also request to meet with the young person to gain their voice to ensure we see it from an autism perspective.

It may be that ASSIST attends meetings that include other practitioners and providers, supporting those involved to consider the child/young person's needs arising through autism. We will look at issues which may have contributed to the difficult situation, analyse possible **WHYS**, and support solution finding, the **HOW** to address the issues (strategies) – working towards solutions with specific goals.

We will review and monitor, and once the goal/s have been achieved, we will close our involvement. The family will still be able to access support and advice through support groups and workshops.

ASSIST will look at and consider the requirements of the whole environment at home, at school and at play with regard to autism awareness, skills and knowledge.