

Autism Support @ Workington Academy



Students with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) may experience differences in communication, social interaction, sensory processing, and flexibility of thinking. These differences can influence how they engage with learning, respond to change, and interact with others. Autism is not a measure of ability. Many autistic students demonstrate strong attention to detail, deep focus on areas of interest, honesty, and unique ways of thinking. With the right support, they can thrive in a school environment.

Research and guidance from organisations such as National Autistic Society, Autism Education Trust, and Ambitious about Autism emphasise the importance of predictability, clear communication, and sensory awareness. In school, the following approaches are used:

Structured routines

Clear, consistent routines help reduce anxiety and support understanding of expectations. Visual timetables and predictable lesson structures enable students to feel more secure and prepared for learning.

Preparation for change

Advance warning of changes to routines, staffing, or environments helps students manage transitions. Where possible, changes are explained clearly and supported with visual or written prompts.

Clear and explicit communication

Instructions are broken down into manageable steps and delivered in a clear, literal way. Staff avoid ambiguity and check for understanding, recognising that some students may interpret language very precisely.

Sensory support

Adjustments such as quiet spaces, movement breaks, or access to sensory tools help students manage sensory sensitivities. Reducing overwhelming stimuli can improve focus and wellbeing.

Regulation strategies

Support is provided to help students recognise and manage their emotions. This may include the use of calm spaces, structured regulation activities, or trusted adults who can provide reassurance when needed.

ADHD Support at Workington Academy

Support for social understanding

Opportunities are provided to develop social communication skills in a structured and supportive way. This might include modelling interactions, guided group work, or explicit teaching of social expectations.

Task scaffolding and processing time

Tasks are carefully structured and broken into smaller steps. Additional processing time is given to allow students to fully understand and respond without feeling rushed.

Collaboration with parents and carers

Strong communication between school and home ensures consistency of support. Families provide valuable insight into what works best for each student, helping staff to tailor approaches effectively.

Autism Additional Needs Passport

This personalised document outlines individual strengths, needs, and successful strategies. It ensures consistency across staff and places the student's voice at the centre of their support, promoting understanding and inclusion.

By combining these approaches with high-quality teaching, we aim to create a calm, predictable, and inclusive environment where autistic students feel understood, supported, and able to succeed.