

## Preparing for a child or young person's autism assessment

At your child's autism assessment, the specialist team will ask questions and request information to find out more about them. You may find this resource helpful to prepare for the assessment.

Please note that this resource cannot determine whether your child will receive a diagnosis and is not an exhaustive list of everything the specialist team may request information about. It can help you to prepare for the types of questions they may ask and the types of information they may request.

The left column has some questions to consider and some examples of evidence that may help you to explain your child's experience. The right column has space for notes, to give examples and detail any evidence you may have to help explain your answers.

Questions to consider	Your answers, examples and evidence
<p><b>How was the child's birth mother's pregnancy and birth?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Were there any identified concerns or medical conditions (for the baby) during the pregnancy or shortly after birth?</li><li>• Did your child require any special or intensive care after birth? Were there any concerns about their development in the first two years?</li></ul>	
<p><b>Is there anything to note in the family medical history?</b></p> <p>Consider any health conditions or diagnoses for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• either parent</li><li>• siblings or cousins</li><li>• grandparents.</li></ul>	

**Does your child have any existing health conditions or diagnoses?**

Consider evidence like:

- assessment and/or diagnosis reports or letters
- early/baby health record books.

**What would you like to share about your child's personality and development?**

- What are their strengths?
- What are their interests?
- What have you noticed about their development compared to other children of a similar age?
- Do you have any concerns about their development, learning or behaviour?
- Do they face any challenges?
- Do they need any support or adjustments at home or in school?

**What is your child's communication like?**

- Are there any differences with how they communicate compared to other children?
- Are there any differences in how they talk (eg their accent or tone, or the speed or volume of their speech)?
- What are their preferred forms of communication?
- Describe their ability to follow conversations and instructions.
- Do you feel your child may misunderstand things when talking with others?
- Does your child feel, or tell you, that others don't understand them?

**Does your child have sensory sensitivities or seek out sensory experiences?**

- Are they sensitive to smells, sounds, touch, tastes and/or visual stimuli? Do they avoid any sources of these or often seek them out?
- Are there sources of sensory discomfort in your child's environment (eg bright lights, noises or smells) that cause them distress?
- Do they often appear overwhelmed or are they easily distracted in certain environments, particularly when there are lots of things going on around them all at once?

**Does your child have focused and dedicated interests?**

- What hobbies and interests do they have now, or have they had in the past?
- How often do they engage in these interests or related activities or talk to others about them?
- Are these hobbies or interests a comfort to them and do they have a calming effect?
- Are their hobbies so intense that they can distract them from everyday tasks?

**Does your child engage in routines, repetitive actions or movements?**

- How important is routine to them and how difficult is it for them if plans change?
- How important are rules and guidelines to them?
- How do they manage change or uncertainty?
- How do they manage with switching from one task to the next?
- Are there any physical movements or actions they like to repeatedly and/or for long periods of time?

**How does your child interact socially with other children?**

- How do they react in a group or social situation with other children?
- How do they react in a group or social situation with older children or adults?
- Do they have any preferred social situations or social situations they find very challenging?
- Are they able to form and maintain friendships with other children their age?
- Are they able to resolve or work through conflicts with other children their age?

**Have any health professionals expressed any concerns about your child's development?  
Consider things like:**

- health visitors
- GP
- dentist
- speech and language therapists
- audiologists
- occupational therapists
- specialist doctors
- psychologists
- CAMHS practitioners
- any previous reports or referral letters.

Providing copies of any letters or reports may help the clinicians carrying out your assessment.

**Have any childcare or education professionals expressed any concerns about your child's development?  
Consider things like:**

- child minders
- playgroup leaders
- club or activity leaders
- social workers
- school staff, including support staff
- progress reports
- educational plans or reports - including speech and language and occupational therapy reports
- correspondence with school or nursery (letters, emails, texts, diaries or meeting notes).

Providing copies of any letters or reports may help the clinicians carrying out your assessment.

Is there any other information you think is relevant to share about your child?

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