



Bromley Autism Referral pathway

Information for those seeking a diagnosis and their family

Understanding autism and waiting for a diagnosis can be a stressful time. This leaflet is designed to provide key information and where to get further support.

Understanding Autism

Autism is a spectrum condition meaning that all autistic people are different but share some similar traits. Like all people, autistic people have their own strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes.

Autism or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is dynamic and impacts how you think, communicate and experience sensory information. It is not an illness; there is no cure/medical treatment for autism, you may need to approach things differently and you can have support and reasonable adjustments to help you.

People are autistic all their lives; a diagnosis does not change who you are but may help you and others to understand you better.

Some differences that those with Autism may share: (note that older children or girls may have internalised their presentation called masking)

- Different approaches and responses to social communication and interaction
- Preference for routines and predictability that can be repetitive and restrictive
- Over or under sensitivity to light, sound, smell, taste or touch
- Highly focused interests or hobbies
- Extreme anxiety
- Withdrawing, meltdowns and shutdowns, often due to lack of effective strategies in place.

Referral and assessment process

Referrals for children and young people under 18 can be made by their school/preschool. If not in school or home schooled, screening questionnaires can be completed by any professional or person who knows your child well, for example a teacher, a tutor, SENCO, a therapist (speech and language, occupational or play therapist), childminder or nursery staff. Your GP will advise you to talk with these professionals for the referral as they will need to complete the questionnaire.



In Bromley the assessment process is delivered by the Community Paediatrics team at Bromley Healthcare and includes a conversation with parents/carers to understand all your concerns and the history of your child.

Once the first assessment is completed, it will be discussed by a panel of professionals – multidisciplinary team (MDT). This is the start of the autism assessment pathway.



More information on the process can be accessed on the Bromley Healthcare webpages: <https://qrco.de/BromleyHealthCareASD>

Early support without diagnosis

You can seek support while your assessment is being processed. Many services and organisations do not require a diagnosis for accessing their service.

Information for children and family support can be found at:



Bromley SEND local offer
<https://qrco.de/BromleySENDLocalOffer>



Do You Know...? A Guide for families with children and teenagers who have social communication difficulties including autism
<https://qrco.de/DoYouKnowGuide>



Social Communication Needs – Next Steps Guide
<https://qrco.de/SocialCommunicationNeedsGuide>



National Autistic Society
www.autism.org.uk



Ambitious About Autism
www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

