

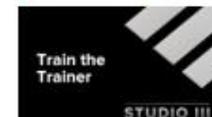


Autism Social Communication Education Training Service (ASCETS) Service Offer 2026

ASCETS is council-run service to support autistic children/young people (or those with significant social communication barriers) thrive within Mainstream Education. We support children and young people aged 5 to 25 where there are concerns with significant social communication needs with and without a diagnosis of autism.



We take a graduated approach to ensure the right support is provided at the right time. Our philosophy is centred on bridging the neuro-divide within schools, with the overarching goal of empowering staff to meet the needs of their neurodiverse pupils so that every child can thrive in a mainstream setting. To achieve this, we have implemented a graduated, system of support.



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Universal Support Offer

Our universal approach (**available to all Sheffield Schools/Settings supporting pupils aged 5 to 25**) is the first step in collaboratively working alongside schools/settings, families and pupils to ensure the right support at the right time.



Who we are, what we do and access to free resources can be found on our SEND Local Offer page:

<https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/ASCETS>



Phone Line – families and professionals. This is to speak with an Advisory Teacher who will offer verbal support, advice, guidance, and signposting: (0114) 2506800



Service Email Address – this is always monitored by an Advisory Teacher:

autism.educationteam@sheffield.gov.uk



Each school or setting is assigned a Specialist Advisory Teacher, known as the ‘Link Teacher’, who provides consultations offering general advice on creating enabling and communication-rich environments, managing signs of pupil stress, and implementing ordinarily available strategies for pupils with social communication differences. In collaboration, the Link Teacher and SENCo will review progress over time and determine whether a pupil should be stepped down or moved up to targeted support.



We are an Autism Education Trust (AET) www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk and **Studio 3** www.studio3.org.uk training partner. An Advisory Teacher within our service will be able to direct schools to our central training programme. The following link holds all our central accredited training for Early Years to Post-16: <https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/ASCETSTrainingSchedule/>. Bespoke training internally for schools is arranged and booked via the school SENCo with the Link Teacher.



All schools will be encouraged to have an AET ‘Train the Trainer’ (TTT) colleague, who will be invited termly to attend ASCETS Team / TTT joint network meeting. This is to ensure all schools have an ‘expert from within’ and will be able to influence autism understanding in their schools. For further information please email Lucy.cooper@sheffield.gov.uk.



We will update and share yearly a Graduated Response Toolkit. This offers tiered support from basic classroom provision to the involvement of a specialist teacher.



We have written the 1B section of the Sheffield Support Grid. We update links and strategies termly.

<https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Partners/Inclusion-Task-Force/Documents-Advice-Guidance/Systems-and-Processes/Assessment>



Targeted Support Offer

A focused level of support is available for individual pupils, once it is agreed all our Universal avenues (Graduated Response) have been explored and the pupil meets the threshold for more specialist support.

The threshold for targeted support is:



The child or young person is presenting with needs identified at levels 4 or 5 on the Sheffield Support Grid within Area 1B (Communication and Interaction), despite sustained planned and reviewed Ordinarily Available provision in place.



Priority will always be given to pupils who are at risk of exclusion, are looked-after children (LAC), have safeguarding concerns, are in a transition year, or are involved with CAMHS or Educational Psychology services. Pupils known to PIP/SIP, or those for whom a relevant professional within Sheffield City Council's SEND Advisory Services has identified a significant social communication difference and recommended targeted support, will also be prioritised.



School will need to have evidence readily available that they have followed a robust Graduated Response; for example, 2 x Cycles of reviewed SEN Support, for the pupil prior to escalating to the targeted part of our service.

Please note

- **Any new referral must be discussed and agreed with our Advisory Teachers.** Short term outcomes will be set. They help give a clear aim from the outset on what the involvement from our team will look like. This also allows us to complete an 'impact' visit – RAG Rating the impact of strategies recommended and how well they have been implemented.
- Parental Permission must be sought prior to any focused work commencing and a report with opportunities for parent voice will be written (this is on the Referral form. See sample: <https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/media/d1iimlze/ascets-referral-form-2025-sample.pdf>)
- The Link Teacher will provide the SENCO/education setting with the referral form.
- Once a referral is accepted, a range of support and advice will be offered including (but not exhaustive of) an observation, modelling of pertinent interventions, discussion of schools training needs, recommended interventions, written reports, modelling of possible strategies, short term weekly support from our specialist advisory team and (at our discretion) ASCETS Outreach service (Delivered by Rowan School) if we feel the pupil requires longer term support.
- All training/support will be followed up for impact within settings. We will be looking closely at what impact the training has had on pupils, staff and wider school. Schools are asked to complete an IMPACT report, against Outcomes.
- We value the idea of co-production and any written reports. We encourage they are shared with parents/carers (and depending on circumstance the Child or Young Person themselves). A QR code at the bottom of the report allows for their family 'voice'.



Specialist Support Offer

In addition to our standard offer we now offer specialist support in the following areas

We are proud to partner with PINS (Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity) working alongside Sheffield Parent Carer Forum and wider agencies to implement inclusive practices across the entire school environment.



-  Low Arousal Coaching (Managing Signs of Pupil Stress). The Low Arousal Approach effectively reduces stress for pupils by using calm, non-confrontational strategies that promote safety and positive engagement. We deliver this as trained www.studio3.org Trainers. Book through <https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/ASCETSTrainingSchedule/>.
Teacher Lead Colette Taylor/Laura Chambers Colette.taylor@sheffield.gov.uk / Laura.Chambers@sheffield.gov.uk
-  Specialist Resourced Provisions/HUBS/Au/DHD Awards – Teacher Lead Alicea Shepherd Alicea.shepherd@sheffield.gov.uk
-  Secondary Engagement – Teacher Lead Lucy Cooper lucy.cooper@sheffield.gov.uk
-  Post-16 Training/Guidance and Support Please contact Joy.Sykes@sheffield.gov.uk

 If you are interested in any of the above, please speak with your Link Teacher in the first instance.

Impact Gathering



For all our pupil and school support, it is essential that we monitor and evidence progress. To achieve this, we request that QR codes are completed following training sessions, and we include QR codes on reports to gather parental feedback. Additionally, we will review the outcomes set in the Visit Notes (using the Progression Framework) in a timely manner to ensure that even the smallest steps of progress are captured.





ASCETS Graduated Approach

Universal

- Phone Line managed by Specialist Teachers: 0114 250 6800
- Email monitored by Specialist Teachers autism.educationteam@sheffield.gov.uk
- Centralised Training offer: <https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/ASCETSTrainingSchedule/>
- Consultations for all Primary/Secondary Schools which consist of pupil discussion, neuro-affirmative practice across school
- Post-16 Training and Consultation Offer

Targeted

- Direct pupil work for children displaying differences in Social Communication levelled at Stage 4 or 5 on the Sheffield Support Grid, despite evidence of effective and sustained school provision.
- Targeted support could consist of observations, reports, outcomes, weekly visits from specialist Teaching Assistants, ASCETS Outreach – delivered by Rowan School. Referrals MUST be discussed with your Link Teacher.

Specialist

- **We have specialist offers within the team**
- 1) Low Arousal Coaching (Managing Signs of Pupil Stress) – Teacher Lead Colette Taylor/Laura Chambers
Colette.taylor@sheffield.gov.uk / Laura.Chambers@sheffield.gov.uk
- 2) Specialist Resourced Provisions/HUBS – Teacher Lead Alicea Shepherd Alicea.shepherd@sheffield.gov.uk
- 3) Secondary Engagement – Teacher Lead Lucy Cooper lucy.cooper@sheffield.gov.uk
- 4) Post-16 Training/Guidance and Support Please contact Joy.Sykes@sheffield.gov.uk

