



## Communication and Autism Team (CAT) – Parent Information

### Who are the Communication and Autism Team?

- The Communication and Autism Team (CAT for short) is part of Access to Education who are a group of services supporting children and young people with additional needs in schools in Birmingham.
- Every mainstream school and academy has a Communication and Autism Team professional assigned to the setting.

### How does the Communication and Autism Team support schools?

- We work together with schools to build their knowledge, understanding and skills to support children/young people with autism or significant social communication differences.
- We support schools through the delivery of a package of training including Autism Education Trust Training; and through a School Partnership Plan based upon the Autism Education Trust Autism Standards. <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/>
- We work with schools to ensure improved outcomes for autistic children and young people throughout their school.

### How does the Communication and Autism Team support individual children/young people?

- We work in partnership with the school to embed good autism practice within the school community.
- We may look at your child's access to their classroom environment; their relationships with teachers and peers; their communication skills; their access to the curriculum; and sensory differences.
- We may observe and/or work one to one with pupils in school. The work we do is dependent upon the child/young person needs.
- We may use tools that we have developed such as our "All About Me" tool and our "Anxiety Tool" to gather your child/young person's view of their experience in school.
- We suggest strategies and model ways of working with children/young people to support them within their classrooms. Sometimes these do not work straight away so we will monitor with schools to help support your child/young person.
- We support the child/young person to have their say about their school experience.

### How is my child registered with CAT?

- We support children and young people with a diagnosis of autism and those on the pathway towards a potential diagnosis of autism. We also support children with significant communication and interaction differences.
- The SENCo within the school or setting will ask you if you are happy for your child to be registered with our team.
- Your child will only be known to our service following receipt of your signed consent.

### How do I contact my child's Communication and Autism Team professional?

- Email [CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk) with your child's name and school.
- A message will be sent to your CAT professional who will contact you as soon as they are able to.



## Do the Communication and Autism Team give support to parents?

### *CAT PAC (Parent Awareness Course):*

- We have developed a 6-week course for parents/carers called CAT PAC to support understanding around autism as well as giving parents/carers a chance to talk with others.
- The course looks at different aspects of autism such as: communication and interaction; sensory differences; eating, sleeping and toileting differences; and supporting anxiety and emotional distress.
- CAT PAC courses are delivered each term and invitations are sent to SENCOs to pass onto you if you are interested in attending a course.
- Courses are delivered remotely via Microsoft Teams or face to face at a school.
- CAT also run coffee mornings within schools and across the city for parents to meet up and discuss experiences.

### *Webinars:*

- We deliver webinars and sessions around specific issues in addition to the CAT PAC. Information will be sent via your school SENCO and can be found on the Local Offer website:  
<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk>
- Previous webinars which you can watch and listen to can be found via this link:  
<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/webinars/>

## Will I meet my Communication and Autism Team professional?

- Sometimes you will meet your Communication and Autism Team professional in school.
- You are the expert on your child, and it is important that we work together to support your child/young person to reach their goals.
- Sometimes contact will be via email, phone call or Microsoft Teams. We will try to keep in touch with you.

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*Communication and Autism Team*

*Access To Education*

*Education and Skills Directorate*

*Birmingham City Council*

*Office: PO Box 17843, Birmingham, B2 2JR*

*Birmingham Local Offer: [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk)*

*Access to Education: <http://accesstoeducation.birmingham.gov.uk>*

*Birmingham Local Offer: [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk)*

*To contact CAT: [CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk)*

Please note: Provision and support may change due to COVID restrictions.

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