



Support for autistic adults

“A world where autistic people are universally understood and accepted as equal citizens”

autism
west midlands

We are the leading charity in the West Midlands for people on the autism spectrum. We use our passion and expertise to enrich the lives of autistic people and those who love and care for them.

Our passionate, expert staff and volunteers work across all age groups and abilities, providing direct support to autistic people.

Our mission...

To provide specialist support and advice to autistic people of all ages and their families, living in the West Midlands, enabling them to meet their full potential.



We are passionate and committed
doing the best we can for people and families

We are creative and flexible
finding the best solutions, innovating and embracing change

We are supportive
making sure we look after one another, and respect others views

We are fair, transparent and open
in all that we deal with and each other

We are specialists
we understand people with autism and their families and put this understanding into practice

What we do

We have been providing support services to families and autistic people for over 30 years including residential homes, supported living and community based supported living, support to individuals in their own homes.

Extensive experience and knowledge

We have extensive experience in providing holistic and person focused support. As an autism specialist we place great importance on understanding an individual's autism and ensuring the support we provide is co-produced; person centred and reflective of the individual's choices, aspirations and increased independence.

Autism specialist

Our induction programme offers specialist courses that provide theoretical and practical aspects of autism, enabling new starters to consider how to adapt their practice with useful strategies. We also offer an enhanced developmental training framework a practical application of putting theory into practice, providing an opportunity for staff to further their practice.

Our Behaviour Specialist - Autism Trainer and Quality and Autism Practice Manager take an active role in providing direct specialist support, advice and guidance to individuals, services and their staff

Our commitment

As an Autism Specialist charity we are proud of our values and our commitment to person centred support this is an integral part of all that we do. Our commitment means that our staff are trained in the principles of personalisation and a team of personalisation champions work across the organisation to ensure that person centred support is at the forefront of our service delivery.

How do we support?

Our assessment process looks at the life of the individual and details areas around autism specific needs, sensory needs, communication, positive behaviour support, relationships and mental health and wellbeing.

We have extensive experience of supporting people to gain, maintain and develop greater independence. We have supported people in our residential homes to move to more independent living models and supported living. This has always been delivered through a multi-agency approach involving the person and key people throughout the process with a focus on reducing dependency on paid support and always focuses on achieving the person's goals.

Our organisation prides itself on successful transition for individuals which involves all the key people in their life and includes pre-visits and regular dialogue regarding the process as it happens to ensure the persons needs are being met.



We work closely and flexibly with individuals, their families and commissioners to ensure that the support delivered promotes choice, independence and is reflective of their needs and goals.

Luke's Story

A stepping stone to independence

“Luke now lives independently in his own flat and continues to receive support that is tailored around his needs and aspirations”.

Luke was 17 years old and lived in a children's home. Following a detailed assessment involving Luke, key professionals and his family it was identified that a residential placement with Autism West Midlands would be suitable and would meet Luke's needs and aspirations to live independently.

It was really important to Luke that a gradual transition was planned which included pre-visits by staff to his current home and school in order for his new staff team to gain greater knowledge of his needs and begin to develop their relationship with Luke. The transition was planned at Luke's pace and social stories were developed to help Luke understand and adjust throughout the transition process. Regular reviews of the transition process were held to ensure that Luke was happy and coping with his transition. Luke made several visits to his new home and met with his new neighbours.

Luke successfully moved to his new home and settled in well. Regular reviews were held and Luke began to gain greater confidence and independence. With the support from Autism West Midlands he began to plan his own meals and shopping independently.

Through regular discussion with Luke around his support and aspirations for the future it was identified that he would like to move to his own home. Luke was enabled to identify a flat within a supported living scheme and was supported to plan his transition to his own home. Luke now lives in his own flat where he continues to be regularly involved in reviewing his support and he makes decisions about when and how he wants to be supported. Luke's staff team continue to support Luke to be an active part of his community and encourage him to develop his life skills. Luke has recently started going to local a disco and regularly plans day trips to visit new places of interest with his support staff. Luke likes to plan these trips independently by researching the train times, platforms and ticket prices.

Janet's story

Building trusting relationships & developing communication

"Staff were overwhelmed when Janet began to speak for the first time in many of years".

Janet had been sectioned under the mental health act due to self neglect, depression and an eating disorder leaving her severely under weight. Janet had been non verbal for a number of years and spent 6 months in a hospital placement. When Janet first came to live in her residential home she still showed no interest in food and would only communicate with staff through written questions where she would only respond with a tick or nodding.

Specialist support was provided at Janet's pace, continuing to encourage choice and independence at all times with all aspects of her support and care. This included a gradual process from washing to eventually accessing the bath/shower. Autism West Midlands have worked consistently and supportively to develop Janet's confidence and self esteem. Ongoing encouragement of communication has recently lead to identifying personal interests, likes and dislikes through written questions and validating these responses over a period of time. Recently Janet shared she would like to go Horse Riding which she was supported to access.

Following this activity staff were overwhelmed when Janet began to speak. This began with 1-2 words leading to full sentences and sharing with staff some of her past experiences and life story. Janet now takes more pride in her appearance and has requested to have her nails and hair cut. Staff continue to encourage Janet to communicate her needs, wishes and aspirations and are working to further develop her skills and independence. Janet has now established positive, trusting relationships with staff and her confidence continues to grow.

Joe's Story

Independence within the community

“Joe now accesses the community independently and he is able to confidently use his coping strategies and safety hub”

Joe found developing relationship with support workers difficult and was very anxious about accessing the community independently which had led him to feeling isolated.

Joe began receiving support from Autism West Midlands in March 2011. Over time Joe has increased his confidence and developed positive relationships with staff. Alongside support staff Joe began to develop relationships with local community facilities and shops. Emergency strategies were developed and rehearsed and a designated safety hub which is a local Café was also established to provide a place of safety for Joe if he became anxious or distressed.

Joe now accesses the community independently and he is able to confidently use his coping strategies and safety hub if required. Local businesses look out for Joe and will contact his support staff if Joe appears anxious or distressed.

More recently a new shopping complex has opened local to Joe where the staff have supported him to build relationships with the local business and community members. This has enabled Joe to extend his opportunities for community access and have greater independence.

To protect anonymity all names have been changed

We are the leading charity for autism in the West Midlands

We have extensive experience and knowledge of supporting individuals with autism and their families. We are an experienced provider with a strong value base and pride ourselves on ensuring the best outcomes for those we support.

We have extensive experience providing holistic and person focussed support.

We have a proven track record and reputation.

We have been providing care and support services in the local area to families and individuals with autism for over 30 years.

We are an autism specialist.

We believe in creating greater independence.

If you would like to make a referral or enquire about how to access our services please contact us on the below email address:

referrals@autismwestmidlands.org.uk

To find out more about Autism West Midlands and the services we offer please visit:

**www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk
or call 0121 450 7582**