

# AUTISM

**“A lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to the people around them”**

Autistic Spectrum Disorder – including **Aspergers Syndrome** – is a complex disorder affecting:

- **Social interaction skills** – difficulty in developing relationship with one’s peers
- **Social communication skills** – difficulty with verbal and nonverbal communication
- **Imagination or flexible thinking skills** – difficulty with
  - planning and organisation
  - problem solving
  - seeing things from another perspective
  - abstract ideas

**Aspergers Syndrome** is a form of autism at the so-called “high functioning” end of the spectrum. Children with Asperger’s do **not** have learning disabilities and have average or **above average** intelligence. They often speak fluently, though their words can sound formal or **stilted**.

Each child is unique but some features which influence learning are;

- Tend to take language literally (e.g. “pull up your socks!”)
- Dislike change –like routines
- Easily upset
- An obsessive interest or hobby
- Poor organisational skills
- Poor concentration skills – will switch off if not interested
- Difficulty with motor skills – large amounts of handwriting a problem
- Poor co-ordination –PE a problem

- Difficulty in transferring skills from one area to another
- Poor concept of timing
- Difficulty in condensing information – tend to write too much

**NOTE:**

“**Education** remains the one treatment with the best track record for dealing with the difficulties associated with autism...and improving the quality of life for individuals”