



Neurodiversity Update

February 2025

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SEND, Neurodevelopmental & Wellbeing Offer

We have been working hard at both a Greater Manchester and local level to improve the support offer for you and your children and young people. These changes aim to support children and young people from identification of need, to do this we want services to work together to provide effective support and avoid duplication.

Neurodevelopmental Team

In September 2024, the Autism Team became Stockport's Neurodevelopmental Team. Building on the skills and expertise of our Autism Team, this new service will take a lead role in developing a needs-led approach to support your children and young people with neurodevelopmental differences, including those diagnosed as autistic and/ or ADHD.

The Neurodevelopmental Team will support a new system, where access to information, advice, help, and support is more readily available to support those children with and without a diagnosis.

The Neurodevelopmental Team's new offer includes:

- Exploring Neurodiversity course for parent/carers (no diagnosis required)
- Exploring Autism course for parent/carers (if your child has received a formal diagnosis)
- Neurodiversity Assemblies for schools (the team can support with delivery or provide resources)
- Neurodiversity in Education Project (12 schools so far, with learning shared with all schools)
- Riding the Rapids course for parents/ carers to support with implementing strategies to respond to distressed behaviour (No diagnosis needed)

The team's new email address is:
ndteam@stockport.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Working

We are introducing a phased approach to bring teams together, providing a joint response to identification of need. The initial phase includes the following services:

Neurodevelopmental Team

The Jigsaw Team

Educational Psychology Service

We intend to expand this offer to incorporate other essential services such as Early Help, Childrens Therapy Services, School Nurses and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

The teams will be working across 3 localities:

- Heatons, Reddish, Werneth and Brinnington
- Offerton, Hazel Grove and Marple
- Cheadle, Edgeley and Bramhall

As part of this model, we will be running monthly information and advice sessions (Coffee & Connect), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator consultation sessions, parent/ carer consultation sessions, and multi-agency triage meetings.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) directory

Stockport Local Offer helps children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25 and their parents/carers understand what services and support they can expect in Stockport. This includes your statutory entitlements which are required by law.

This directory provides details of statutory services, local and national organisations and community groups in Stockport who support children and young people with SEND. [Visit the directory here.](#)

Information and Advice sessions (Coffee & Connect)

We want to be more accessible and visible in the local community, so we are hosting monthly information and advice sessions from our One Stockport Family Hubs. We have representatives from Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Neurodevelopmental Team, Jigsaw Team and Early Help. The staff will be on hand to give you advice and signpost you to sources of support.

Drop In to one of our

Coffee & Connect Sessions

at our One Stockport Family Hubs



Are you a parent or carer of a neurodivergent child or young person, or are you a parent or carer of a child with SEND looking for information or advice?

Come along and have a chat with colleagues from our multi-disciplinary team which includes representatives from Educational Psychology, Primary Jigsaw, Secondary Jigsaw, Neurodevelopmental Team, Children's Therapy Services, and Hearing and Vision Service

No formal diagnosis required

UPCOMING DATES

THURSDAY 27TH MARCH 09:30-12:30

ABINGDON ROAD FAMILY HUB
3 ABINGDON ROAD, REDDISH, SK5 7EU
what3words forta.nolice.school

WEDNESDAY 30TH APRIL 10:00-12:00

WESTMORELAND DRIVE FAMILY HUB
1-11 WESTMORLAND DRIVE, BRINNINGTON, SK5 8HH
what3words sleep.cost.minute

FRIDAY 23D MAY 10:00-12:00

WESTMORELAND DRIVE FAMILY HUB
1-11 WESTMORLAND DRIVE, BRINNINGTON, SK5 8HH
what3words sleep.cost.minute



Refreshments will be provided

If you would like further information about the sessions, please contact:
ndteam@stockport.gov.uk

We have created a Padlet for each of the below age ranges:

- [Visit our Early years \(0-5\) Padlet](#)
- [Visit our Children & Young People \(5-16\) Padlet](#)
- [Visit our Adults \(16+\) Padlet](#)

Staff will be on hand at the Information and Advice sessions to offer support with navigating these platforms, they will also be handing out cards with QR codes to access these Padlets.



Feedback on our Information and Advice Sessions

"Thank you I felt so alone and down I was unsure about coming today but I feel more positive and hopeful."

"It was brilliant being able to access so much support and advice (in person!!) in one place. Easily the most helpful event we've been to. Thanks!"

Neurodevelopmental Support Padlets

We are using a platform called Padlet to showcase our local and wider Greater Manchester training and support offer.

Feedback on our Neurodevelopmental Support Padlets

"This is really informative and helpful, so much great and needed information. I have already booked on to some on the events here. Thankyou!"

"I love the Padlet, it is so helpful to be shown all of the available training and resources in

Live webinars for Parents and Carers

We previously wrote to parents and carers of children and young people on the autism assessment waiting list and asked them what training webinar topics they would find helpful.

We are pleased to share the information below regarding our upcoming webinars which we will be running alongside key colleagues.

Understanding Anxiety Webinar

Understanding Anxiety is a one-off session delivered by Stockport Neurodevelopmental Team. It is designed for parents/carers and family members of neurodivergent children, whether they have a formal diagnosis, are awaiting assessment or have suspected neurodevelopmental differences.

During the session, we will consider the signs of anxiety and explore strategies that you can implement at home. This training is suitable for parents and carers of school-aged children.

29th April 6:00pm-7:30pm [Join the webinar on Microsoft TEAMS here.](#)

This session will be recorded for access via our Local Offer and neurodevelopmental support Padlets.

Navigating the Local Offer Webinar

This workshop aims to show you how to access and navigate Stockport's revised Special Educational Needs and Disability Local Offer website. You will be given the opportunity to use your own device to follow along the navigation process where you can.

10th April 2025 6:00pm-7.30pm [Join the webinar of Microsoft TEAMS here.](#)

This session will be recorded for access via our Local Offer and neurodevelopmental support Padlets.

Sleep Webinar

Join us for a session dedicated to understanding sleep for autistic and neurodivergent children and young adults. In this session, we will explore the unique challenges and barriers that can affect sleep for neurodivergent people, including sensory sensitivities, routines, and environmental factors, and discuss some general strategies to improve sleep. This session is run by Joe Booker, a Sleep Practitioner at Seashell Trust.

30th April 2025 6:00pm-7.30pm [Join the webinar on Microsoft TEAMS here.](#)

This session will be recorded for access via our Local Offer and neurodevelopmental support Padlets.

Exploring Neurodiversity Webinar

Exploring Neurodiversity is a one-off session delivered by our Neurodevelopmental Team. It is designed for parents/carers and family members of neurodivergent children, whether they have a formal diagnosis, are awaiting assessment or have suspected neurodevelopmental differences.

During the session, we will introduce the term neurodiversity and talk about what it means; we will cover a range of neurodevelopmental conditions including autism, ADHD and dyslexia; and we will identify some general strategies of support that can be used at home. The session includes time for questions.

The session uses a mix of presentation and discussion, and we welcome parent input. We recognise that some parents joining us will have their own neurodevelopmental needs and we provide the opportunity for you to let us know about any accessibility needs you have prior to the session.

To be eligible to book onto this session, parents/ carers must:

- Live in Stockport
- Have a child who attends a Stockport school
- Have a child who is school age (Reception - Year 11)

Upcoming sessions:

- 12th March 2025 10:00am-12:30pm (Online session) [Book here](#)
- 13th March 2025 10:00am-12:30pm (In-person session) [Book here](#)

These sessions are will be ran every month, for future dates please contact ndteam@stockport.gov.uk

Understanding Distressed Behaviour Webinar

Understanding Distressed Behaviour is a one-off session delivered by Stockport Neurodevelopmental Team. It is designed for parents/carers and family members of neurodivergent children, whether they have a formal diagnosis, are awaiting assessment or have suspected neurodevelopmental differences.

During the session, we will consider the signs of distressed behavior and burnout and explore strategies that you can implement at home. This training is suitable for parents and carers of school-aged children.

25th March 6:00pm-7:30pm [Join the webinar on Microsoft TEAMS here.](#)

This session will be recorded for access via our Local Offer and neurodevelopmental support Padlets.

Recorded webinars for Parents and Carers

Some recent webinars have been recorded and are accessible via our Local Offer and neurodevelopmental support Padlets.



PDA (Demand Avoidance) Webinar

Katie Trowse, an experienced educator and neurodiversity expert with her own lived experience of PDA, and a PDA parent too, held a webinar to help parents and carers understand more about PDA and autonomy needs, to best support the needs of PDA'ers in their life.

- Discover how to look below the surface of 'demand avoidance' and understand your child's unique needs more confidently
- Develop personalised methods for building trust, with real-world examples
- Acquire tools to manage situations effectively and foster a positive relationship with your child.

[Access the recording here.](#)

Understanding Sensory Processing Webinar

This training has been developed by the Stockport NHS Occupational Therapy team. It aims to provide parents or carers and professionals with the knowledge and strategies to help them support the development of their child or young person's sensory processing.

The training provides an introduction to our 7 sensory systems and will discuss how our sensory systems develop and how important they are in our early years and childhood. In addition, you will be provided with ideas and strategies to try yourselves in order to help you support your child or young person's sensory processing needs.

[Access the recording here.](#)

Sensory Needs Seminar

These videos have been recorded by our parent facilitators and are split into approximately 25-minute sections. These Sensory Needs videos are approximately 100 minutes in total.

[Access the recordings here.](#)

Future Webinars

Based on parent/ carer feedback, we are planning to run the following sessions which will be available later this year.

- Exploring Neurodiversity for teens
- Exploring Autistic Burnout for teens
- Exploring Neurodiversity for siblings



Sensory Advice

We know that lots of people are discussing sensory profiles, so we have linked up with our Specialist Occupational Therapists for further advice and support.

Understanding a bit about what our senses are and how they can affect your child or young person's concentration, behaviour and anxiety levels can be extremely useful and we strongly recommend that you access the Sensory Needs Seminar recording advertised above.

A 'sensory profile' is often a very detailed but over-complicated report for parents/carers and educational staff to understand and only a snapshot of that child/young person at the moment they are assessed. It is very dependent on the answers to questions given by parents/carers and educational staff, for these reasons a sensory profile is therefore not recommended.

For more detailed information about sensory support, [please visit our Padlet.](#)

Accessing NHS Autism or ADHD Assessments

As you can see from the information above we are working hard to create an early help offer and would prompt you to utilise this support. We have restructured our teams so that you do not have to access a formal diagnosis before accessing appropriate support.

In the first instance we would invite you to attend one of our monthly Information and Advice sessions (Coffee & Connect) to find out about all local sources of support. We will also signpost you to training events that we run which will also be listed on the Local Offer and on our neurodevelopmental Padlets.

If you require further help we will arrange a parent/carer consultation session where we will discuss the next steps with you.

If, despite accessing the resources and training above, you still have concerns about possible Autism/ADHD and how these may be impacting your child, please talk to your child's class teacher/ form tutor in the first instance.

They may then arrange a meeting with your school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who will be able to discuss the approaches school can take (or may already be taking) to support your child.

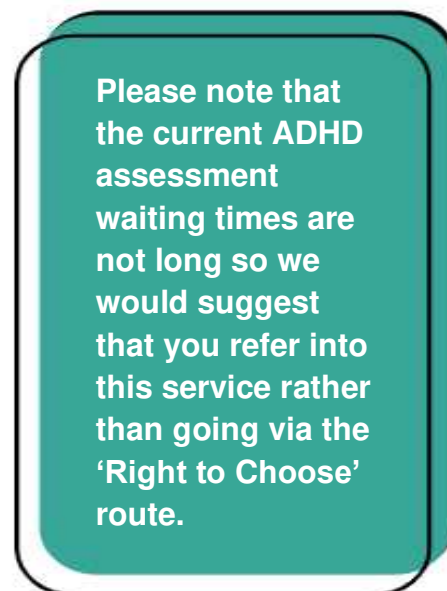
This may include creating a one-page profile or pupil passport together, to capture the approaches that work well for your child and carrying out an assess, plan, do, review period, to trial and monitor the impact of these strategies. [You can find some guidance on creating a one-page profile here.](#)

Following this, if it is agreed in discussion with your child's school that a referral for a formal Autism/ADHD assessment is appropriate, the SENCO will complete the referral paperwork with you and submit any recent reports from services such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychology etc.

Please note that the criteria states that your child's school will need to provide evidence that they have put in place strategies relating to autism/ADHD concerns for at least one full term before making the referral. Please note, it is ok to refer if your young person presents differently at home to school.

The referral will then be sent to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) who will screen the referral information for any safeguarding concerns and then pass the referral on to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to the appropriate lead who may request additional information at the point of being assessed or when they screen for suitability.

If your child is home educated and not enrolled in a school, you can make a referral direct to the MASSH, preferably with the support of any professionals who are involved with your child (where applicable). When making a referral please provide as much supporting information as possible, including any relevant reports.



Please note that the current ADHD assessment waiting times are not long so we would suggest that you refer into this service rather than going via the 'Right to Choose' route.

Parents can also access the 'Invest in Play' course via the parenting team. This course is designed to empower parents. Referrals to the team can be made via a Professional Referral. This can be someone who is currently supporting you such as your Health Visitor, School Nurse, Special Educational needs Co-ordinator, GP or Social Worker.

[The Solihul Approach](#) offers fantastic training courses which are free to Stockport residents on supporting children and young people with their emotional wellbeing using the password: **REDROCK**.

Right to Choose

NHS Right to Choose applies when a GP or other clinical professionals agree that a clinical assessment warrants further specialist assessments and meets the following criteria:

- The referral is for a **first** out-patient appointment
- The person is referred by a general practitioner (GP) or other clinical professional as they believe it is appropriate based on need
- The chosen provider and the team chosen to deliver the assessment are led by a consultant or a healthcare professional
- The chosen provider has a commissioning/NHS contract with at least one commissioning organisation for the required service
- A National Framework to deliver improved outcomes in all-age autism assessment pathways: guidance for Integrated Care Boards (April 2023) advise that the clinical quality of a service should be assessed, for example compliance with NICE clinical guidelines, review of Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports, on that basis Greater Manchester ICB advise that any chosen provider is registered with the CQC

Autism and Right to Choose

We will continue to encourage GPs and schools to ensure that families are referred via the normal route (as outlined above) to enable families to access our early help offer.

If the Early Help Pathway consider that a referral for an autism assessment is clinically appropriate, then families may be advised to exercise their Right to Choose via their GP.

ADHD and Right to Choose

With specific reference to ADHD, the waiting times in Stockport children and young people local services are such that the locality would strongly recommend using the current NHS provision, rather than another external provider. This means we will encourage GPs to advise families that a referral to the local service is preferential rather than exercising the Right to Choose an independent provider. The reasons for this are:

- local services are better linked to schools and wider support services, such as parenting advice and support
- if medication is indicated following a completed assessment, entering shared care arrangements with local GPs is easier

- local services undertake regular medication reviews on an ongoing basis and follow-up review appointments

There are instances where families have selected the Right to Choose with another provider and have experienced challenges in receiving ongoing care as some external providers are not delivering the complete pathway.

Should families exercise their right to choose we would also suggest that GPs or clinicians making the referral support families to select providers

that deliver the whole diagnostic and treatment pathway, consistent with our local commissioned offer as there will be instances where they would have to access the local pathway for ongoing prescribing.

As the Greater Manchester position is developing, we will work locally with our GPs to support them to refer, whilst Greater Manchester builds the process of assuring the providers that receive the referral and provide the service.

We also strongly advocate for early support to meet the needs of children and young people irrespective of diagnosis so we will continue our work to further develop the early help pathways.

Neurodiversity Sensory Kits

We know that accessing appointments can be very challenging for neurodivergent people due to their sensory differences. We have placed Neurodiversity Sensory Kits at 15 locations across Stockport for neurodivergent children and adults to borrow while accessing services. These kits can be used whilst in the waiting room, or by taking them into the appointment.

Please note there are cleaning wipes and sanitiser within each kit to clean the items before/after use.



The infographic features the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council logo at the top left and the Neurodiversity Sensory Kit logo at the top right. The main title is 'Neurodiversity Sensory Kits'. It is divided into two main sections: 'Sensory Kit Locations' and 'Inside our Sensory Kits'. The locations list includes 15 various sites across Stockport. The 'Inside our Sensory Kits' section lists various items included in each kit, such as sunglasses, sanitiser, fidget items, ear defenders, a weighted lap blanket, a notepad and pen, and a bespoke checklist. At the bottom right, there is a photograph of a sensory kit bag and its contents, including a weighted blanket, fidget toys, and other sensory aids.

Sensory Kit Locations

- Stockport Homes
- Stepping Hill Hospital (A&E & Paediatrics)
- Stockport CAMHS
- Disability Stockport
- Stockport Jobcentre
- Family Hubs (Reddish, Adwood & Brinnington)
- Cheadle Medical Practice
- Cheadle Heath Custody Suite
- Child Development Unit (CDU)
- Stockport Advocacy/ Healthwatch
- Adult Autism/ ADHD Assessment Team
- Children's Therapy Services - Beckwith House

Inside our Sensory Kits

- Sunglasses
- Sanitiser/ wipes
- Various fidget items
- Ear Defenders
- Weighted lap blanket
- Notepad & Pen
- Bespoke reasonable adjustment checklist which can be requested during appointments

World Autism Acceptance Month

As part of World Autism Acceptance month we will be hosting a stall event to showcase our local offer for autistic people in Stockport. Come along to find out about available support, training and activities as well as the fantastic work of our all-age Autism Strategy.

Refreshments will be available to purchase on the day, and there will also be a raffle draw with some fantastic prizes!

Wednesday 2nd April 1:30-3:30pm at Ladybridge Connect SK8 5NZ



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

World Autism Acceptance Month 2025 Stall Event

As part of World Autism Acceptance month we will be hosting a stall event to showcase our local offer for autistic people in Stockport. Come along to find out about available support, training and activities as well as the fantastic work on our all-age Autism Strategy.

Stall holders include
 Stockport Neurodevelopmental Team
 Jigsaw Team
 Disability Stockport
 Healthwatch
 Rise with Katie
 Jump Space
 Parents and Carers together Stockport
 Great Minds Together & More!

Where
 Ladybridge Connect Ivy Cafe
 Cheadle Hulme
 SK8 5NZ
 ///plates.green.only

When
 Wednesday 2nd April
 1:30pm-3:30pm

Refreshments will be available to purchase on the day, and there will also be a raffle draw with some fantastic prizes!

What's coming soon

Neuro-profiling tool

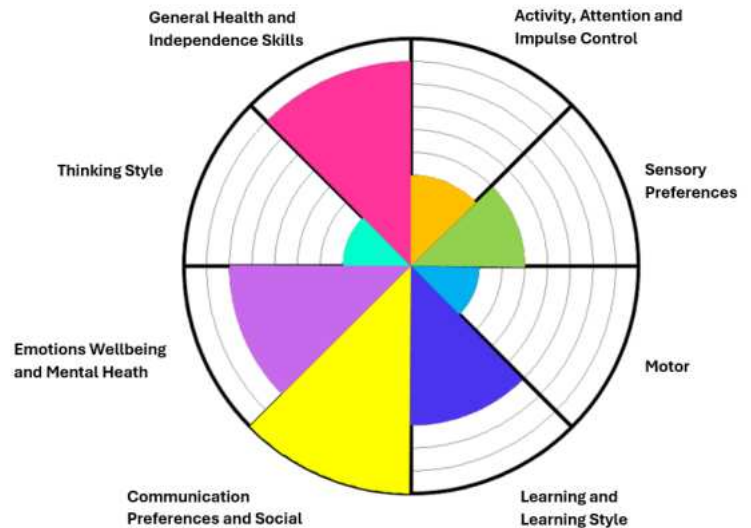
We have been working with our Greater Manchester colleagues to further develop the Neuro-profiling tool.

Neuro-profiling is a way of considering individuals strengths and needs. The tool consists of 8 areas:

- Wellbeing
- Attention, Activity & Impulse control
- Sensory Processing
- Motor Skills
- Communication & Social preferences
- Thinking Styles
- Learning & Learning Styles
- General Health & Independence

After a successful pilot here in Stockport we intend to utilize the neuro-profiling tool as part of our multi-agency intervention offer. Following a parent/.carer consultation or a SENCo consultation it may be agreed that the neuro-profiling tool would be helpful to further understand the young person’s needs. A member of the Neurodevelopmental Team would arrange a meeting in school with you, the parent/carers and a school staff member that knows your child/young person well to go through the checklist and capture your child/young person’s views as part of the assessment.

Once we have completed the checklist we would create an action plan with links to sources of advice, support and resources.



Community Training

You told us that at times you find it difficult to access local activities and venues across Stockport. We are pleased to share with you that we have been working with two lived experienced experts to create and deliver training that local businesses can access to help them gain a greater understanding of neurodivergence and give them tips in making their venue more accessible and inclusive.



If you wish to share any feedback regarding these updates or have any topics that you wish us to explore, please email the Autism Programme at:

autism.programme@stockport.gov.uk

Cheryl Knupfer,

Strategic Lead for Autism, Stockport Council

