

# Anxiety: How we support your child in school



## School's Ethos

At Manor Park, we make reasonable adjustments to support children with autistic characteristics. These adjustments support all learners. We believe our job is to support your child to develop appropriate strategies that they can build on to manage their needs independently.

## What is autism?

Every person who is autistic is different. Some people with autism may:

- find it hard to communicate and interact with others
- find it hard to understand how other people think or feel
- find things like bright lights or loud noises overwhelming, stressful or uncomfortable
- get anxious or upset about unfamiliar situations and social events
- take longer to understand information
- do or think the same things over and over.

## I believe my child might be autistic, but they don't have a diagnosis. Does this matter?

- We always aim to meet the need of the child, whether or not there is a diagnosis in place.
- We can support with a referral to Dorset County Hospital if this is a route you choose to take.

## What do I do if I am worried about my child's progress or wellbeing?

- Communication between parents and school is key for any child to achieve their best and this is especially important for children with special educational needs.
- We operate an open-door policy so teaching staff are able to keep you updated on your child's progress in an informal way.
- Your child's class teacher is the first person to speak to if you have concerns as they know your child best (SEND COP, 6.36).
- It is also possible to meet with the school SENDCo to discuss any concerns you may have. The SENDCo can be contacted via the school office.
- We invite families to book an appointment with the class teacher and SENDCo on a monthly basis if you wish to discuss early SEN concerns.

## Will my child be on the school's SEND Register?

- We monitor the needs of children with autism. They may need to be added to the school's SEND register, but not necessarily.
- We follow a graduated approach in determining the additional provision needed, and monitor on an assess, plan, do, review approach (SEND COP, 6.44).
- This step will be made in consultation with the family.



# Anxiety: How we support your child in school - Quality First Teaching

## Environment

- quiet and purposeful classrooms
- mindful of unnecessary distractions (visual, auditory)
- quiet area to work in the classroom
- organisation for equipment- clearly labelled

## Sensory

- timetabled sensory breaks
- active approach to learning
- information on sensory difficulties and activities shared with relevant staff

## Social communication skills

- all staff aware of targets and strategies for social communication development
- adults name own emotions and internal states
- language scripts
- prompts and visuals to support speaking and listening
- support for unstructured times

## Attendance: my child is anxious about coming to school every day.

- Many children with autism display anxious or dysregulated behaviour, but this can be masked in school.
- Low attendance can increase this, as the child is then worried about returning after a break, missed lessons, or friendship worries.
- Please talk to us about how we can ensure your child maintains a good attendance record.

## What happens when my child moves to the next stage in their learning?

- Transitions can be particularly difficult for children with autism, whether it is a small change in routine, a significant time of year (eg Christmas), a school trip, or a move to a new school.
- We ensure children are well-prepared for these changes, using strategies including social stories, pre-visits, meeting staff, pastoral groups.
- We liaise closely with past or future schools to share or gather information.
- Year 4 is supported by the Transition Lead based at St Osmund's Middle School.
- Reception staff visit local preschools and nurseries.

## Routines

- visual timetable for whole class
- consistent approach to all lessons
- end of session warnings given
- clear system for unexpected changes

## Visuals

- break down of the session
- tasks scaffolded
- reward system
- equipment that relates to the lesson content
- checking in for emotional regulation
- expectations for behaviours in class
- universal visuals
- visuals to scaffold tasks

## Language skills

- Clear and unambiguous.
- Idioms etc explained as necessary
- Pre-teaching of vocabulary
- Additional processing time allowed
- Useful and clear feedback
- Regular check in with student for understanding

## Adult support

- use visuals during input to aid understanding
- make links between past learning and current input
- give processing time for the student to solve problems or complete activities at own pace
- recognise when the student is becoming dysregulated and offer appropriate support
- support the student's strategies to regulate arousal level
- offer breaks from interaction or activity as needed
- use interests to motivate
- know what the priority targets are being worked on within that lesson (including support staff)
- seek advice where appropriate

## Parenting support

Our SENDCo or Family Support Worker is available to talk through your concerns and may be able to signpost you to support. Some links to useful organisations are belows:

[Action for Children](#)

[AS Divas and Dudes](#)

[Dorset Education Advice Line](#)

[Dorset Educational Psychologist Advice](#)

[Early Bird programme](#)

[National Autistic Society](#)

[NHS advice](#)

[SENDIASS](#)

