



**Autism
Education
Trust**



**National
Autistic
Society**

Improving autism practice in college to support placement sustainability and to avoid escalation of need

A proactive approach

This resource was produced by The National Autistic Society for The Autism Education Trust with funding from The Department for Education.
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Young
Experts**

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Autism Acceptance Week 2024**

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Introduction

The government has set out its vision for autistic children and young people in the National Strategy¹. This includes the following:

- a special educational needs and disability (SEND) system that enables autistic students to access better and more inclusive support so that they are better able to achieve their potential
- more teachers and educational staff to understand the specific needs of their autistic students.

This guide intends to address both of these points to help improve autism practice in colleges² in order to support placement sustainability and to avoid escalation of need. The aim is to minimise exclusion or student removal, where possible. Although this includes a guide to the law, interpretation of legislation is ultimately a matter for the Courts. If in doubt, colleges should take their own legal advice and not rely solely on this guide.

Autistic students may require support from college to prevent disruptive behaviour, which might otherwise impact on their academic achievement and behaviour. Therefore, rather than adopting a reactive, disciplinary approach, it is likely to benefit all members of the college community to instead embrace a proactive, inclusive culture that seeks to understand the individual and to put in place the support they require and the reasonable adjustments they are entitled to in order to overcome the barriers to their learning.



¹ HM Government; The national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026 (21 July 2021)

² Throughout this resource the term 'college' is used to refer to a sixth-form or a further education college, a 16-19 academy, and an independent specialist college approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014

What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world. One in 100 people are on the autism spectrum and there are now 160,000 autistic pupils in state-funded schools in England, many of whom will move into colleges³.

Autism is a spectrum condition and it affects people in different ways. Below is a list of differences all autistic people may share.

Social communication

Autistic people often have difficulties with interpreting both verbal and non-verbal language like gestures or tone of voice. Some autistic people are unable to speak or have limited speech while other autistic people have very good language skills but struggle to understand sarcasm or tone of voice. Other challenges include:

- taking things literally and not understanding abstract concepts
- needing extra time to process information or answer questions
- repeating what others say to them (this is called echolalia).

Social interaction

Autistic people often have difficulty 'reading' other people - recognising or understanding others' feelings and intentions - and expressing their own emotions. This can make it very hard to navigate the social world. Autistic people may:

- appear to be insensitive
- seek out time alone when overloaded by other people
- appear to behave 'strangely' or in a way thought to be socially inappropriate
- find it hard to form friendships.

Over- or under-sensitivity to light, sound, taste or touch

Autistic people may experience over- or under-sensitivity to sounds, touch, tastes, smells, light, colours, temperatures or pain. For example, they may find certain background sounds, which other people ignore or block out, unbearably loud or distracting. This can cause anxiety or even physical pain. Many autistic people avoid everyday situations because of their sensitivity issues.

³ Department for Education (DfE). Statistics on special educational needs in England 2020-21

Highly focused interests or hobbies

Many autistic people have intense and highly focused interests, often from a fairly young age. These can change over time or be lifelong. Autistic people can become experts in their special interests and often like to share their knowledge. Greta Thunberg's intense interest, for example, is protecting the environment; Chris Packham's is wildlife.

Many autistic people gain huge amounts of pleasure from pursuing their interests and see them as fundamental to their wellbeing and happiness.

Being highly focused helps many autistic people do well academically and in the workplace but they can also become so engrossed in particular topics or activities that they neglect other aspects of their lives.

These autistic differences should be respected, valued and celebrated, as they make autistic people who they are. Given the right support, understanding and empathy autistic people can, not only contribute to society, but enrich it for all.

Later in this guide, **Table 1** shows common difficulties that autistic students face in college together with suggested reasonable adjustments that might avoid that disadvantage. It is important to remember that autism impacts every individual differently and therefore a one-size-fits-all approach to reasonable adjustments is inappropriate.

Extreme anxiety

Anxiety is a real difficulty for many autistic people, particularly in social situations or when facing change. It can affect a person psychologically and physically and impact the quality of life for autistic people and their families.

It is very important that autistic people and those supporting them learn to recognise their triggers and find coping mechanisms to help reduce their anxiety. However, many autistic people have difficulty recognising and regulating their emotions. A 2019 survey found 76% of autistic adults report reaching out for mental health support in the last five years⁴ and research shows that autistic people are significantly more likely to think about, attempt, and die by suicide than the general population^{5 6}.

4 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Autism. (2019). Autism Act: 10 years on

5 Kølves, K. et al (2021). Assessment of suicidal behaviors among individuals with autism spectrum disorder in Denmark. JAMA Network Open, 4(1).

6 Conner, C. et al (2020). A comparative study of suicidality and its association with emotion regulation impairment in large ASD and US census-matched samples. Journal of autism and developmental disorders, 50(10), pp3545-3560.

Distressed behaviour

Distressed behaviour includes what would normally be considered physically aggressive behaviour, such as slapping, biting, spitting or hair pulling.

There could be a number of reasons for instances of distressed behaviour. These may include difficulty in processing information, unstructured time, sensory differences, a change in routine, transition between activities, or physical reasons like feeling unwell, tired or hungry. Not being able to communicate these difficulties can lead to anxiety, anger and frustration, and then to a, sometimes prolonged, **outburst of distressed behaviour**. However, this is not the only way an autistic person may express feeling overwhelmed. They may also refuse to interact, withdrawing from situations they find challenging or avoiding them altogether.

If an autistic student is displaying distressed behaviour, it is important to give them some time and space - it can take a while to recover from information or sensory overload.

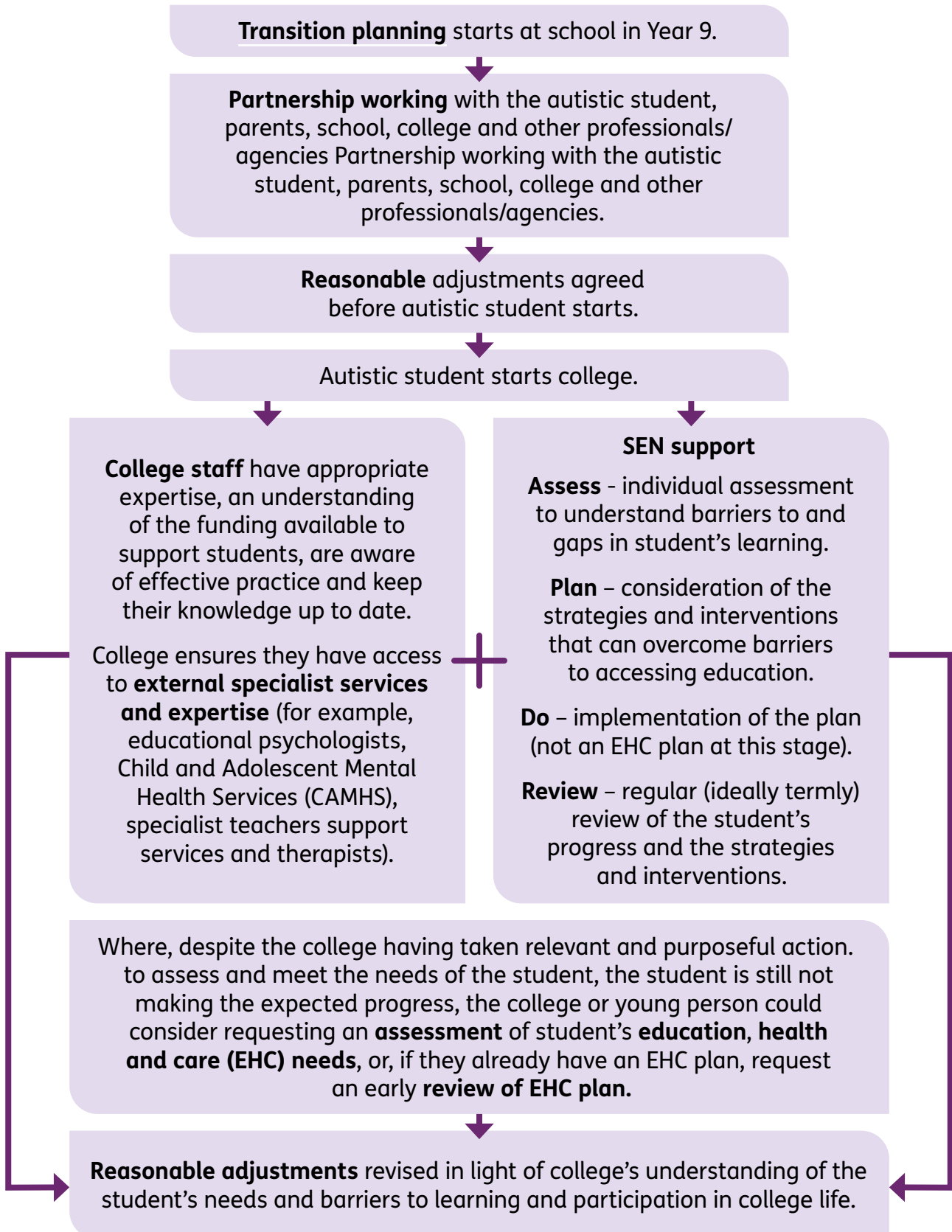


Avoiding escalation of need

Assessing, planning and meeting autistic students' needs

Diagram 1

Assessing, planning and meeting autistic students' needs



Transition from school to college

Many autistic people experience difficulty with change, for example a change in routine, which can lead to anxiety and distress. The transition from school to college represents a huge change in any young person's life, but some autistic students will need that change to be carefully planned and well managed, with ongoing support provided.

At first, they will be unfamiliar with the new sensory environment and layout of the college buildings. Typically, colleges have at least twice the number of students on roll as secondary schools. An autistic student may find it difficult to navigate the social world of college, particularly during the unstructured times of day, and to form new relationships. There will be new rules to contend with: no uniform; new timetables to learn, but with less time spent in lessons. In general, the expectations of a college on its students will differ from those at school, with more emphasis on independent study, self-motivation and organisation.

Furthermore, some autistic students mask their difficulties, giving college staff the false impression that they are coping. When autistic students do show signs of difficulty (such as behavioural incidents, falling attendance or limited academic progress), college staff may consider that the student is not meeting the college's fitness to study requirements. However, where a student has been identified as autistic, the college might consider whether all their needs are being met, or whether a reasonable adjustment, a review of the current support arrangements or an education, health and care (EHC) plan may be required.

It is important to remember that autism impacts every individual differently, and therefore not all autistic students will face the same difficulties or find similar situations challenging. A one-size-fits-all approach towards autism is unlikely to be effective and may not be lawful. Knowledge of the individual is key. Consulting with the young person and those involved in their education, health and care, as well as family members can help achieve this. An early, robust, collaborative and person-centred transition planning process is vital.

Expectations of colleges to assess need, plan and provide support for young people with special educational needs (SEN)

Mainstream colleges have duties to use 'best endeavours' to make the provision required to meet the SEN of young people⁷. They must fulfil this duty for students with SEN whether or not the students have EHC plans. This duty applies in respect of students with SEN up to the age of 25 in further education.

Colleges should ensure that there is a named person in the college with oversight of SEN provision to ensure co-ordination of support, similar to the role of the SEN Co-ordinator in schools.

⁷ The SEND Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations for organisations that work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The **Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years** says that colleges should ensure that all staff interact appropriately and inclusively with students who have SEN or a disability and should ensure that they have appropriate expertise within their workforce. They should also ensure that curriculum staff are able to develop their skills, are aware of effective practice and keep their knowledge up to date.⁸ The Autism Education Trust provide **training for schools and colleges and have resources available to support settings with this.**

If a student has an EHC plan there is a prescribed transition process in place. The student is automatically brought to the attention of the college. From at least Year 9 onwards, local authorities, schools, colleges and other agencies will be involved in the planning for their transition to adult life⁹.

If the student does not have an EHC plan, then it's different. Colleges may not be immediately aware of their needs. It is vital that information is shared from one setting to the next during a transition phase, including a college doing all it can to find out about prospective students' SEN or disabilities. The NAS information on **Leaving school** and **Transition tips for teachers** may be helpful.

In cases where a student requires special educational provision over and above what the college is able to provide from its existing funding, the college, or the young person themselves, should consider requesting an assessment of the student's education, health and care (EHC) needs, or, if they already have an EHC plan, request an early review of EHC plan.

Diagram 1, previously shown, provides an outline of the transition process and the ongoing cycle of assessing, planning and meeting autistic students' needs.

Reasonable adjustments

Alongside duties arising from the Children and Families Act 2014, colleges also have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to students' protected characteristics, such as disability.

Autism is generally considered to be a disability for the purposes of the **Equality Act 2010, section 6**, but an individual does not necessarily need a diagnosis to be considered disabled: what matters is the effect of their impairment rather than its cause.

⁸ Department for Education and Department of Health. SEND Code of Practice. (Jan 2015). paragraph 7.22

⁹ Ibid para 1.9

One of the duties under the Act is the reasonable adjustments duty that relates to:

- **Provisions, criteria and practices** (the way in which a college operates on a daily basis, including its decisions and actions, e.g. the application of its behaviour and academic engagement policies)
- **Auxiliary aids and services** (anything that constitutes additional support or assistance for a disabled student, such as a piece of equipment, support from a member of staff, or assistive technology, such as phone apps)
- **Physical features** (such as removing the physical feature in question, altering it, or providing a reasonable means of avoiding it).

Table 1 on the following page shows common difficulties that autistic students face in college together with examples of reasonable adjustments that might avoid that disadvantage. However, reasonable adjustments must be tailored to individual needs.

It is not possible for a college to justify a failure to make a reasonable adjustment; the question is only whether the adjustment is reasonable. Many reasonable adjustments can be inexpensive and involve a change in practice and a combination of creative thinking, knowledge of a student's autism and good communication with families. The duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory one, which means that colleges must think in advance about what changes a disabled student might need. A proactive, rather than a reactive approach is required towards the difficulties that an autistic student might potentially face when starting college.

Many disabled students may already receive support in college through the SEN framework. In some cases, the substantial disadvantage that they experience may be overcome by support received through an EHC plan under the Children and Families Act 2014. However, in other cases, a disabled student may need reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 to be made in addition to any special educational provision that he or she is receiving¹⁰.

¹⁰ Adapted from Equality and Human Rights Commission. Technical guidance for schools (England) (2014)

The disadvantages which an autistic student might suffer due to the difficulties they face and the reasonable adjustments that might avoid those disadvantages

The reasonable adjustments listed in Table 1 below are just suggestions. A one-size fits all approach is inappropriate for autistic students, as each individual will have their own set of needs and difficulties. All reasonable adjustments must be suitable for the individual.

Difficulty	Substantial disadvantage due to the difficulty	Reasonable adjustment to avoid the disadvantage
High levels of anxiety linked to unpredictability	A student may be so anxious that they are unable to attend, or to focus on learning when they do attend. This puts their achievement at risk.	As part of the transition arrangements, in advance, provide timetables, curriculum information and clear and detailed written information about each aspect of the course, together with practical arrangements, deadlines and assessment requirements. Visual information may be processed more effectively than verbal information. Provide a map of the college site with floor plans showing rooms. Arrange extra induction visits with meetings with key members of staff (personal tutor; mentor; learning support).
Uncertainty about what is expected	A student may become so overwhelmed with anxiety that they are unable to process the information and they do not achieve their potential.	Before lessons, print out and/or email handouts and presentation slides to student to enable them to prepare and revisit the lesson. Provide clear, concise written instructions for lessons and bulleted lists of success criteria and the main points to encourage the student to focus on the relevant information.
During online lessons difficulties participating and asking for clarification	Teachers may view a student's lack of engagement as a lack of motivation. Student may lose confidence and not achieve lesson objective.	Use 'breakout rooms' - sessions that are split off from the main online lesson to allow peer support, encourage discussion and collaboration. This approach could also be suitable for class-based lessons.

Difficulty	Substantial disadvantage due to the difficulty	Reasonable adjustment to avoid the disadvantage
Difficulties in prioritising, organising and planning workload effectively	Student may not know how much time they should spend studying in their own time; may miss tutorials and important appointments raising concerns about the student's fitness to study.	Encourage use of a diary/ calendar and wall chart with details of tutorials and deadlines. Tutor/mentor to explain how to plan and organise student's independent study time, including factoring in times to rest, eat and drink. Offer personal supportive strategies, which may include ways of reducing stress, exercise and practising self-care. For example, self-help apps can help individuals to understand, manage anxiety and monitor anxious thoughts and behaviour over time.
Easily distracted (for example by sensory stimuli or social anxiety).	Student may miss important information during a lesson and not achieve lesson objectives.	Teacher records a lesson with slides and audio and shares it with student using software; allow student to use other forms of assistive technology, such as apps for phones, including speech to text; student takes photo of a paragraph – converts to text. Teacher makes time soon after lesson to check student has understood content. Pair the student with a buddy: swap notes after lessons to discuss and agree what the main points of the lesson were. Provide print outs/electronic copies of presentation and main points.
Difficulties in structuring work and tendency to focus on irrelevant details.	A student submits coursework and assignments that do not address the question posed and do not reflect the student's ability.	Help student to break down tasks into smaller, more manageable chunks and discuss key points. Use phone apps to help with organising ideas, such as mind mapping and brainstorming software to help student to prioritise points, structure an essay, clarify thinking and manage complex information.

Difficulty	Substantial disadvantage due to the difficulty	Reasonable adjustment to avoid the disadvantage
Feeling overwhelmed, which could lead to distressed behaviour.	College may consider distressed behaviour as misbehaviour and apply exclusion policy.	Create a 'grab sheet' listing contacts in college who can offer support and/or strategies on 'What to do if?'. Could be stored on phone using a relevant app. Allow student access to a safe space – a quiet room to self-regulate.
Difficulties with social interaction.	Student may not ask teachers for help and guidance leading to under-performance.	Allow the student to communicate with teachers via email rather than face-to-face if preferred and vice versa. Provide a nominated person/point of contact who can coordinate and deal with student's concerns. Anticipate need by allowing time for teachers to discuss one-to-one with the student what is required in writing essays/assignments to ensure the student has understood what's required. Show exemplars of past students' work to highlight good practice.
Difficulties with exams.	A student not fulfilling their potential.	Consider the difficulties with exams and revision that autistic students may face e.g. anxiety, motivation, interpretation, focus. Implement appropriate support strategies and special arrangements e.g. extra time, prompter, assistive software, supervised rest breaks. Please see Exams – a guide for teachers for further information and suggestions.
Literal interpretation of language, metaphors, clichés and jokes.	A student may misunderstand what a teacher means, causing confusion and under achievement.	Ensure all instructions are clear and unambiguous; avoid idioms etc.

Difficulty	Substantial disadvantage due to the difficulty	Reasonable adjustment to avoid the disadvantage
Difficulties in understanding the boundaries of social interaction and in forming and maintaining friendships.	A student may feel isolated from peers and become depressed. This could adversely affect their achievement.	Access to College Mental Health/Wellbeing team (ideally not just as a crisis service, but to offer support during early stages of transition; reduce support as self-esteem increases); Provide a Nominated person (pastoral role; counsellor); Provide a Learning Support Assistant, mentor or 'buddy', in addition to tutor support, who can give advice on social skills. Provide alternative ways of completing group work (e.g. designating a chair for group discussions and/or clearly defined roles in team work). Member of staff act as mediator for disagreements.
Reliance on routine and dislike of sudden change.	Revised exam or timetable changes, for example, may cause a feeling of panic and negatively affect the student's performance.	To help with making decisions, coping with anxiety, and dealing with unexpected situations apps can be used.

It is important to remember that autistic students may experience problems that are not directly related to their education, but which can have an adverse impact on their achievement. For example, difficulties with **sleeping, eating** and keeping hydrated can put students at a substantial disadvantage, because they are unable to focus on their coursework and underachieve as a result. Therefore, to avoid this disadvantage, reasonable adjustments might focus on providing rest breaks and adjustments to eating arrangements. For some autistic students, their **anxiety** might lead to low attendance. Although relating more to school-age children, resources like **What can I do if my child won't go to school?** and **School stress** may be useful.

Some autistic students may have developed their own resilience and coping strategies and may just need help with processing information and understanding questions and text.

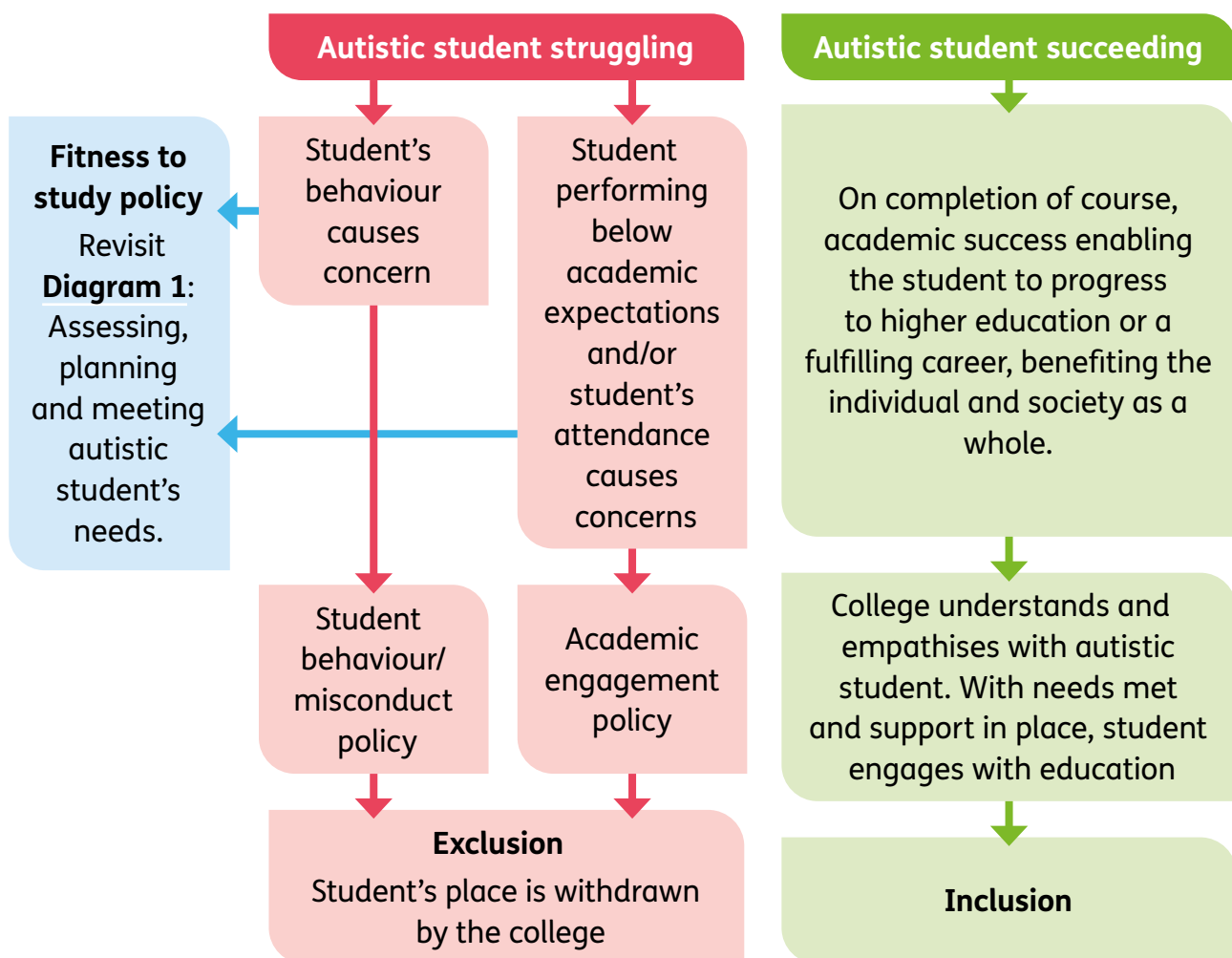
Avoiding escalation of need

Alternatives to applying college disciplinary procedures

Even when a college is providing support and making reasonable adjustments, an autistic student may still struggle. Due to their social communication challenges, the student may not voice their difficulties, but changes in behaviour can indicate that they are under emotional stress. The student may begin to miss lessons, fall behind in their studies, or exhibit **distressed behaviour**.

Diagram 2:

Taking an inclusive approach when an autistic student is struggling



Applying the college's behaviour¹¹, attendance or academic engagement policies may appear to be the right thing to do. However, when there is a cause for concern relating to an autistic student, it may be more appropriate to apply a Fitness to Study policy (see table on next page), with a view to reassessing an autistic student's needs and revising support and reasonable adjustments to avoid exclusion or student withdrawal.

¹¹ This guide refers to behaviour policies, but some colleges use the terms Misconduct, Disciplinary, Care and control, Climate for learning, Behaviour for learning, Positive behaviour management policies

Cause for concern pathways

Fitness to Study	Behaviour	Academic Engagement
Mental or physical health concerns which impact on the viability of a full-time, on-site study programme.	Procedures for one-off incidents that contravene the Student Contract and Code of Conduct.	Concerns related to participation in class, submission of work, punctuality and attendance

Adapted from Esher College's Policies and Procedures

Autism is not a mental health condition, but autistic people are more likely to develop **mental health** problems than the general population. Applying a Fitness to Study policy would be appropriate in these cases.

However, it may be found that the barriers to a student's participation in their course may not be due to mental health issues, but instead the result of difficulties they face that are intrinsically linked to their autism. In such cases, changes to the student's support and reasonable adjustments may be necessary (revisit the process shown in the previous **Diagram 1: Assessing, planning and meeting autistic students' needs**).

There are difficulties that some autistic students face in college that mean that a rigid application of a college's behaviour, attendance or academic engagement policies might be inappropriate. Reasonable adjustments may be needed to disciplinary policies if breaches of college rules arise from disability, otherwise the college may be discriminating. Similarly, reasonable adjustments may be necessary to the college's attendance and academic engagement policies. It is not direct discrimination against a non-disabled student to treat a disabled student more favourably¹².

The Public Sector Equality Duty

As public bodies, colleges must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010¹³. Colleges must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

¹² Equality Act 2010, s13(3)

¹³ Equality Act 2010, s149(1), (3)

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the PSED as part of the process of decision-making. The PSED encourages colleges to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs.

Example: In an attempt to make the college environment livelier and to attract prospective students, a college considers playing pop music in the main entrance foyer. However, if the college does not consult with students with neurodiverse conditions to seek their views before making this decision, it may have failed in their PSED.

On the other hand, if the college does consult with students with neurodiverse conditions and had given weight to their views, but ultimately decides that the only way to attract more students to the college would be to play music in the foyer, then the PSED may have been satisfied in relation to that policy.

The college might suggest that a reasonable adjustment could be made for one particular autistic student of allowing her to access the college building via an alternative entrance, to avoid the loud, overwhelming music.

Example: Having compared the college's data with national and local statistics, a college is concerned to find that there is a disproportionately low number of disabled students on roll. The college considers the following steps it could take:

- *contacting the SEN coordinators in its feeder schools to outline the college offer, in terms of resources, facilities and staff expertise*
- *arranging a coffee morning for local disability parent groups and charities to engage in a dialogue about how the college might accommodate the varying needs of disabled students better*
- *survey the opinions of prospective disabled students with the aim of setting up extra-curricular clubs based on disabled students' special interests*

Assessing the impact on equality of a college's decision-making, policies and practices is an important part of complying with the PSED, although, in England, there is no legal requirement to conduct an equality impact assessment.

Regulations¹⁴ require public bodies to:

- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the PSED, at least annually; *and*
- set equality objectives, at least every four years

Further information on the public sector equality duty is provided by the **Equality and Human Rights Commission**.

¹⁴ The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

Behaviour

Disruptive, distressed, or withdrawn behaviour might indicate that an autistic student needs extra help. The college should consider whether the behaviour is:

- a direct consequence of the student's diagnosis of autism?
- triggered by difficulties that the student faces that are associated with autism?
- as a result of a lack of reasonable adjustments made to accommodate their disability?

Where a student is presenting challenging behaviours as a result of a disability, colleges owe duties in law both to the disabled student who is behaving in this way and to other students and staff, if they are at risk as a consequence. Colleges have to make careful judgements as to how to respond, weighing up all the factors about whether to sanction a disabled student.

The fact that a student has a disability does not mean they should never be given a sanction, but rather the college's behaviour policy should reflect the need to pay extra attention to the underlying causes of their difficulties to reflect the additional barriers they may face in college and the reasonable adjustments required in relation to these (including in relation to any disciplinary measure that is needed).

Example: An autistic student was suspended after lashing out at a teacher. There had been a sudden unexpected change to the student's course: the class was being held in a different room and the young woman had been asked to join in a group discussion. When she refused and put her head on her desk, the teacher leant on the student's desk. It was at this point that the student lashed out. However, by suspending the student, the college had treated her unfavourably because of something which arises in consequence of her disability. Characteristics of autism¹⁵ include the following:

- *Reduced or absent awareness of personal space, or unusually intolerant of people entering their personal space*
- *Lack of awareness and understanding of socially expected behaviour*
- *Unusually negative response to the requests of others (demand avoidant behaviour)*
- *Excessive emotional distress at what seems trivial to others, for example change in routine*
- *Dislike of change, which often leads to anxiety or other forms of distress including aggression*

This suspension would be unlawful discrimination arising from disability¹⁶ unless the college could show that the treatment was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim¹⁷.

15 **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE): Autism spectrum disorder in under 19s: recognition, referral and diagnosis.**

16 Equality Act 2010, section 15

17 See Equality and Human Rights Commission. Technical guidance on further and higher education for detail on the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and disability discrimination.

In the example above, the college's legitimate aim might be to ensure the safety of staff, but a suspension is unlikely to be justified in circumstances in which a college has failed to make relevant reasonable adjustments.

Attendance and academic engagement

Difficulties with organising and prioritising their workload and striving for perfection can mean that autistic students miss deadlines. They may also struggle to navigate the social and sensory world of college, which can add to their anxiety and result in missing lessons, compounding the problem.

Example: An autistic student has been feeling overwhelmed with the demands of college and the college environment, leading to her missing lessons. Rather than apply the college's academic engagement policy, the student's form tutor arranges for the student to access lessons virtually on a short-term basis and helps her to prioritise and organise her workload, scheduling regular mentor meetings. As a result, she submits assignments where deadlines had been missed, her predicted grades increase and a plan is arranged for her to return to face-to-face lessons.

Setting non-negotiable expectations for academic progression and attendance can be, not only unrealistic, but also potentially amount to indirect disability discrimination¹⁸.

Conclusion

To improve autism practice in college, understanding of an individual's needs is key. Autistic students and their families should be involved in decisions affecting their college education.

To support placement sustainability and to avoid escalation of need, a proactive, rather than a reactive approach is needed. The duty to make reasonable adjustments is an anticipatory one and therefore colleges need to think in advance about the adjustments that may be required to college policies and practices.

To be successful, the transition from school to college needs to be carefully planned and well managed. For autistic students, a package of support may be necessary to remove or reduce barriers to their learning and achievement. Mainstream colleges have duties to use their best endeavours to make the provision required to meet the SEN of young people.

By tailoring education to individual needs, providing a caring environment and promoting inclusivity and tolerance, colleges can enable autistic students to experience success, thrive and achieve their potential.

¹⁸ Equality Act 2010, section 19

Useful resources

Autism Education Trust:

- [Supporting learners with autism during transition](#)
- [Post 16 competency framework](#)
- [Post 16 Professional Development Programme](#)

National Autistic Society:

- [Leaving school](#)
- [Transition tips for teachers](#)
- [Transition Support Helpline](#)
- [Education professionals](#)
- [Autism practice – education newsletter](#)





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**National
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Join the National Autistic Society for a colourful week of fundraising!

World Autism Acceptance Week is back from 2 - 8 April 2024

The colour theme is back for 2024 and there are lots of different and creative ways to get involved including attending a Spectrum Colour Walk in person, taking part in a Do Your Own Spectrum Colour Walk or just fundraising in your own way. Find out more about the campaign [here](#)

For more information on autism and education, visit:
www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

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**Autistic
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