

## **NHSE Midlands, Children and Young People Autism in Schools Project.**

This is a collaborative project partnership involving Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Authorities to promote better outcomes for autistic children and young people.

### **In Year 1 (2021-22) the projects agreed aims included:**

- Identification of two secondary schools in Solihull to be involved in the project.
- Establishing parent / carer and children and young people's reference groups in each of the schools.
- Undertaking a baseline survey to capture the current experiences of children and young people
- Building upon research of existing materials and in collaboration with children, young people and their parents / carers, develop a training package for schools
- Developing a package that included resources that contribute to identity development – supporting children and young people to consider how autism forms their identity including the use of one- page profiles.
- Producing an Autism-Empowered Environment Framework, principles and values, which includes the use of sensory audits and low arousal techniques
- Undertaking training with schools on the Autism Empowered Environment Framework and enabling children and young people with autism to understand their autism identity
- Delivering the package to children and young people
- Promoting a person-centred approach to working with autistic young people in mainstream schools.
- Raising awareness with families and peers of autism.
- Enhancing working relationships between families and schools creating school-based support groups and peer networks.
- Supporting autistic children and young people develop confidence in their self-identity as autistic through positive self-worth, social confidence and peer relationships.
- Facilitating change of culture for long term improvements and beyond the life of the project.
- Enabling schools to embed an autism enabling environment for future children and young people.

**In Year 2 (2022-23) the project aims to:**

- Identify two primary schools to follow the same project outline as year 1, with an adapted and refined delivery framework/package.
- Enable access for school leaders to the following AET leadership focused courses -

**1) Understanding Good Autism Practice and the AET Frameworks.**

- To provide leaders, from across the three phases, with an overview of the AET and the Professional Development Programme.
- To provide an overview of the Good Autism Practice (GAP) Report (Gulberg et al 2019).
- To inform leaders of how the 8 Principles of GAP and the 8 Inclusion Promises emerged and why these are so important.
- To introduce a set of case studies that illustrate how the GAP principles have been implemented through adapting practice.
- To provide an overview of the AET Frameworks and how they can be used across settings to embed GAP.

**2) Leadership, Inclusion and Structural Reasonable Adjustments.**

- To look at how inclusive provision and structural reasonable adjustments can help a school to be outstanding.
- To consider what is needed to lead culture change in a setting.
- To know about AET resources and guidance that can support leaders to provide inclusive environments through structural reasonable adjustments.
- To consider different ways of making structural reasonable adjustments to ensure autistic pupils are fully supported.