



PERTH AUTISM SUPPORT SCIO
STRATEGIC APPROACH
2020-23

“For successful implementation, it is essential that there is strategic leadership, an intention to achieve best value for services, collaboration and involvement in decision-making, cross-agency working through stronger networks, high quality diagnosis, intervention and support ensuring improved quality of life and leading to wider opportunities including employment.”

- Scottish Strategy for Autism, Scottish Government, 2011

| Foreword

Welcome to the Perth Autism Support SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Strategy for 2020-23.

This Strategy has been developed by the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive, leadership team and colleagues at Perth Autism Support SCIO in consultation with our Children and Young People, their families and partner agencies both in the Third Sector and within local statutory services across Tayside.

We believe this Strategic Approach meets our ambitions to deliver relevant, high quality autism services to Autistic Children and Young People and their families at a time that is right for them. It also allows our partner agencies to be confident in our approach and to understand how we will add value to their service provision.

We have worked over the last 18 months to consult and evaluate with our Children and Young People and their families on each area of our services enabling us to develop a Strategic Plan that is relevant to them, with our young people at the heart of everything we do.

This Strategic Plan is about support. Not only to our Children and Young People but for their families, the other agencies that support them, and our wider community.



Angie Ferguson
Chief Executive Officer



Morag Gaskin
Chair of the Board of Trustees

| Introduction

Our Vision:

Supporting Autistic Children and Young People to reach their full potential.

Our Approach:

To ensure that Autistic Children, Young People and their families have access to quality services at a time that is right for them.

We will achieve this through four key areas:

1. Children, Young People and Families
2. Health, Education and Social Care
3. Employability and Community Engagement
4. Income Generation for Sustainability

Our service delivery at Perth Autism Support SCIO cannot solely be based on skills development of children, young people and their families. It should be recognised that although we want the same life opportunities for our children and young people as their peers, autism is a lifelong condition and there will inevitably be times throughout both child and adulthood that adjustments may need to be made to allow the strengths of individuals to be realised and supported.

This means we take a three strand approach to support within Perth Autism Support SCIO.

Strand 1 Support, skills development and increased social and life opportunities for our children and young people which will decrease social isolation, increase positive destinations following on from education and allow meaningful inclusion in all aspects of community life. It is also important that parents/carers, and all members of the wider family network have access to support to allow them to support their children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Strand 2 To ensure the best outcomes for all young people there needs to be a cohesive working partnership between health, education, social care and the community. At Perth Autism Support SCIO we cannot deliver effective services without working in partnership with health, education and social care. Equally, community groups who are required to support children and young people with a wide range of additional needs cannot deliver the autism specific approach provided by Perth Autism Support SCIO. Instead there needs to be a true multi agency approach to ensure the needs of each of our children and young people are met.

Strand 3 Whilst we can support our children and young people to develop confidence, resilience and skills, this needs to be met with the wider community developing knowledge, awareness and understanding. This means that not only are our children and young people ready to integrate more easily into the wider community, it means that the wider community is more able to support and encourage each individual, to offer them the same life chances as their peers and increase their ability to become active, responsible citizens within our community.

Perth Autism Support SCIO's Income Generation Strategy, included at the end of this document, sets out our budgetary considerations on how we will achieve the financial sustainability required to underpin the delivery of all Strategic Aims.

You can find each Strategic Area through the document as each is colour coded for ease of reference and to allow all stakeholders to go directly to the area that they are interested in.

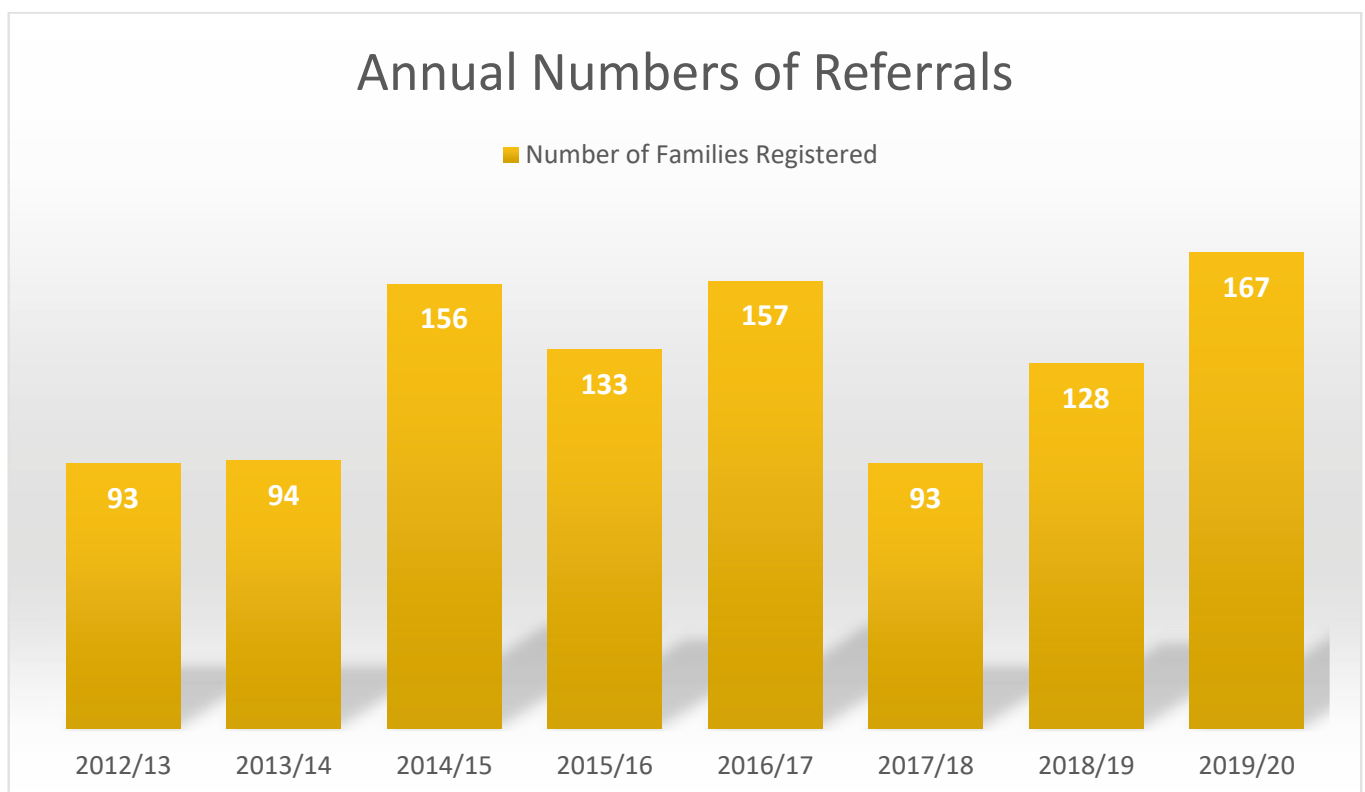
Context:

Information from the Scottish Government Pupil Census (March 2019) indicates that between 2012 and 2016 the prevalence of autistic children and young people identified in education has risen by 101%. Our children and young people will be accessing and visiting all areas of community in increased numbers and our referral rates indicate an increase in children and young people registered in Perth & Kinross having grown 20% 2017-2019. It is therefore vital that each individual is supported in all settings.

According to the NHS Tayside Child Health Report (March 2019) as at 31st March 2017, there were 27,954 children and young people aged 18 and under in Perth and Kinross. At the same date, Perth Autism Support SCIO had 631 families registered which was 2.3% of the population of children and young people.

By using the national prevalence of autism at 1% of the population, we know that at that time the numbers of autistic children and young people was at least more than double the national prevalence (based on the understanding that we will not have every child registered with us for services).

Since March 2017, we have had a further 200 families (net) registered for service, this includes the number each month who are removed from our services due to transition to adult services, moving out with the Perth & Kinross area, or any other reason.



| Introduction

Autistic Children and Young People face a number of challenges within their daily lives including:

Social isolation

The differences that are integral to autism in terms of social communication, flexibility of thought and emotional regulation can leave our children and young people socially isolated and the individuals we support find the complexities of friendships, particularly as young people move into teenage years and into young adulthood, stressful to understand.

Naturally, they will then remove themselves from any situation that is too unknown or too hard to take part in, leading to a large proportion of autistic individuals who we work alongside socially isolated, unable to work or attend school/college/university and with no support or social network around them.

This leads to an increase in mental health conditions with research showing 40% of the population of autistic individuals having at least one symptom of anxiety disorder at any one time compared to 15% of the general population.

Risk of bullying

Not being properly supported in school can lead to our children and young people being viewed differently by their peers, meaning that social relationships which are already challenging for them even more difficult to foster.

1 in 4 autistic individuals experience bullying. By supporting them with social skills and helping them to be able to understand social complexities we can help our children and young people to better “fit in” with their mainstream peers.

Through activities at Perth Autism Support SCIO they have a safe, nurturing environment to be in whilst they develop these skills ensuring they have access to social opportunities with their peers.

Risk of exclusion and lower attainment

With the inclusion agenda nationally, the majority of our children and young people are educated in mainstream settings and this can prove particularly challenging. Many of the children and young people we work with, without the right support, are regularly excluded, either informally or formally from school.

We know that research shows this leads to young people being socially isolated, more anxious, achieving poorer results in literacy and numeracy and in some cases becoming school refusers.

Through working with children, young people and schools to increase knowledge, to think of alternative strategies that can keep the pupil's anxiety low and to ensure they are included in the classroom our work in turn raises the confidence and attainment for many of our children and young people.

Risk of exclusion from universal youth services

The lack of autism knowledge and numbers of staff to support in community groups can mean that our children and young people do not have access to the same social opportunities in universal youth services as their peers.

Our training of community groups in best practice for supporting our children and young people along with developing skills in the individuals themselves, mean that our services support children and young people to access all community activities they would like to, enabling them to have a meaningful, integrated life in their communities.

Covid impact & recovery

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on all of our lives and on the service delivery within Perth Autism Support SCIO. Since March 2020, the team have worked hard to pivot our service delivery in an agile and flexible way to ensure our children, young people and families continued to get the support they required. Our centre closed to face to face services and we very quickly moved to delivering our services in a flexible way online. With demand for services increasing at an unprecedented level throughout lockdown.

The cumulative effect of the pandemic as time moves on is having a sustained and significant effect on the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families, and the support we have provided has been completely responsive to the needs of families, with the staff identifying key themes, building resource packs for families, supporting increased numbers on a one to one basis and seeing significant needs in terms of mental health and wellbeing.

Whilst an online approach does not replace the full service it is a way to ensure that support is maintained, anxiety-managed and social isolation reduced. A number of parents we support identify, or are diagnosed, as autistic and whilst we would normally be able to support them daily and in many different ways through times of crisis, at this time

of national difficulty some are finding having our centre as their “safe place” closed, particularly challenging.

We are conscious that we have a number of children and young people for whom online support is not appropriate and they are struggling to engage via technology and with this, we have developed a fully articulated plan to resume face to face services in line with Scottish Government and Care Inspectorate guidelines. Through summer our partnership working with Perth & Kinross Council was further strengthened by the delivery of face to face services to complement Education Activity Hubs for children of key workers or those young people who were particularly vulnerable due to losing access to their usual support systems.

Whilst moving online has challenges for some, it has allowed opportunity for others to receive continued and regular support in a way that they are comfortable with.

Moving forward, given the benefits we have seen for some young people, we will continue to offer a range of blended support on an ongoing basis. Our ability to continue to offer a flexible and continued support is essential to our young people and their families/carers.

| Covid Impact & Recovery

Some of the feedback we have received whilst supporting children and young people through Covid-19:

"Huge thank you to PAS for amazing support for our daughter during this lockdown period. I had thought she would benefit from the lack of social demands at school, and whilst she has had more emotional reserves, she was becoming overly withdrawn and down. PAS organised a Zoom meeting with her and the result has been quite remarkable. It was clearly just the right level of input - they REALLY know what they're doing. Thank you so much."

"I knew when things got tough I could come to PAS to ask for help"

"The call with staff members made such a difference to M. You honestly seem to have some sort of magic wand, sprinkling fairy dust joy wherever you go!"

Moving forward through the rest of this year, we are focussing on:

- Working with our colleagues in Education to support those young people who have found it particularly challenging to transition back to school following an extended period at home
- Changing our face to face service provision to ensure we remain working within Scottish Government guidelines but to increase the flexibility in how we offer services to children, young people and their families
- Changing how we deliver new and innovative training solutions for a variety of audiences Having successfully started to deliver online content from March to date, and whilst we will always prefer a face to face option for training delivery we will continue to promote a choice of delivery formats even when restrictions are lifted as this will hopefully allow us to increase our reach of training delivery and allow flexibility in attendance

Children, Young People and Families Strategy

PRIORITY 1:

Autistic Children, Young People and their Families have access to a choice of services, that allows flexibility and informed decision making to fit their individual and wider family needs.

OUTCOME 1:

Autistic Children and Young People have access to the same opportunities as their peers.

“Our children and young people will have the best start in life and Tayside will be the best place in Scotland to grow up”

- The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2017-2020

Who we support

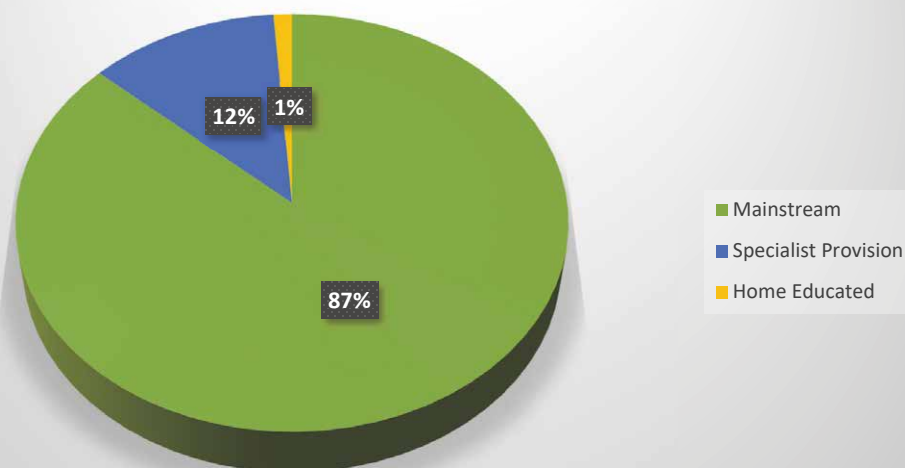
Our services are for any autistic child or young person up to the age of 18 years old who lives within Perth & Kinross, or those who are awaiting assessment through the Child Development Paediatric Team or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team, NHS Tayside, who live within Perth & Kinross.

As at 29 February 2020; we had 845 families registered for services, the children and young people we support have varying degrees of additional needs but 87% of the children and young people attend mainstream education settings.

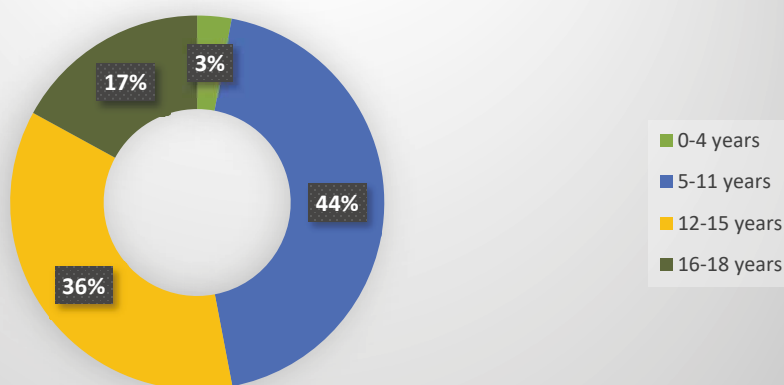
Accessing our activities programmes and social opportunities is a flexible process which our registered children and young people can engage with at any time.

Taking a full family approach means that parents/carers and siblings are not precluded from accessing support from other areas within the organisation, even if the young person does not wish to.

Education Setting as at 29.2.2020



Age of Children and Young People as at 29.2.2020



What we currently provide:

- Activities programme 6 days per week through term time with a range of focused activities including creative learning, life skills, sport and social opportunities. Our programme is delivered in Perth City and our rural hubs of Highland Perthshire, Blairgowrie, Crieff and, from 2021, Kinross.
- Holiday programme 5 days per week through Easter, Summer and October (three days all young people, 1 day rural and 1 day young adult focussed) with a Christmas programme including social events and pantomime trips
- One to one support to allow easier access to general activities programme

What our children and young people have told us:

Through continued evaluation with those accessing group activities and one to one support, we know that a varied programme of opportunities is important to them. They have indicated that they feel more comfortable in Perth Autism Support SCIO activities as they do not generally see themselves as “disabled”. The activities being autism specific allow the children and young people a safe space, with peers who can identify and relate to each other.

The children and young people who have accessed support, particularly those on a one to one basis, have all identified the importance of having autism knowledgeable staff, who “get them”. However, we also know that improvements could be made in working with other agencies to share the learning and development strategies for our children and young people to allow this feeling of inclusion, safety and understanding to be reflected in all areas of children and young people’s lives.

Children and young people have told us that through activities in Perth Autism Support SCIO, they have now developed a network of peer support that is not as easy to find within school, particularly for those in mainstream education settings. This allows a strong peer network to be formed to support them when moving in to adult life and life beyond Perth Autism Support.

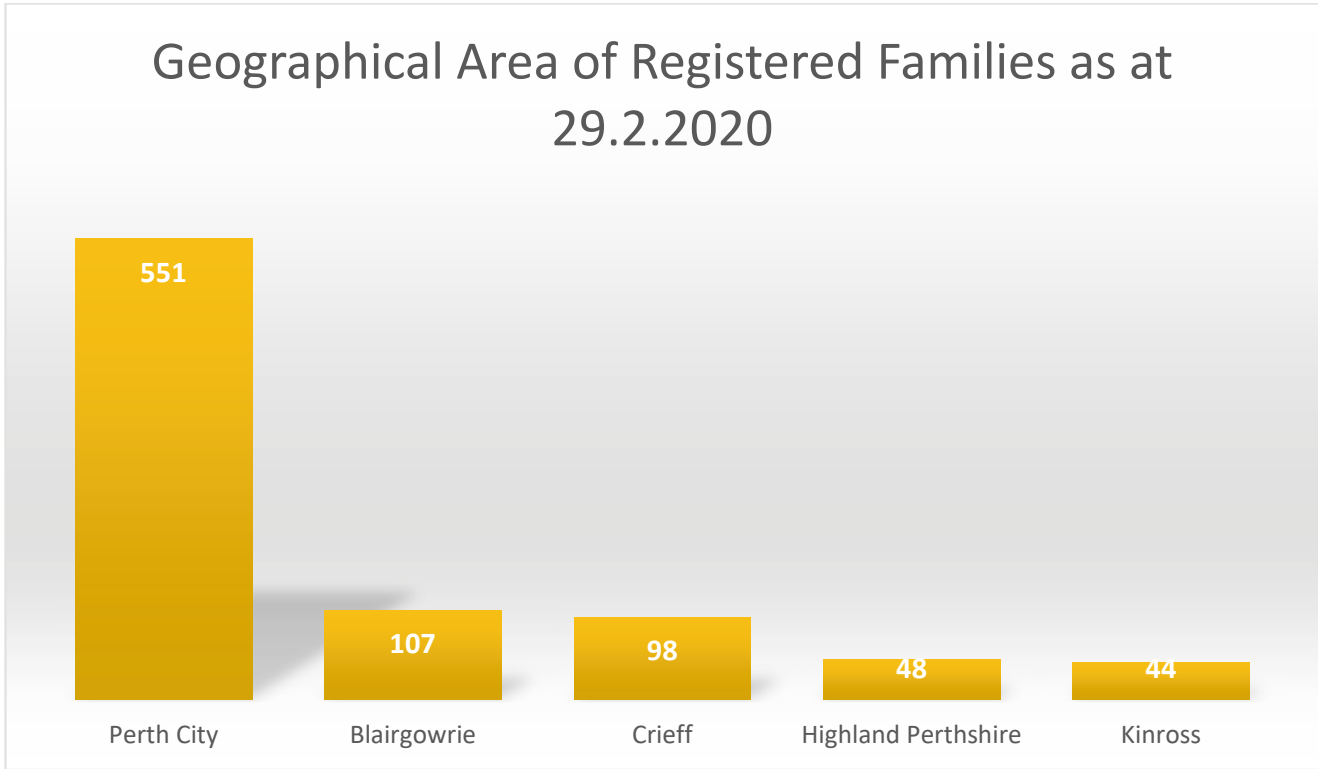
Our specialist programmes for young people – “I Am Me” and “Be Content”, focus on young peoples’ understanding of their autism diagnosis, and what that means individually to them, as well as helping them to understand and learn to manage anxiety. This information is not available from any other agency locally at this time and the feedback from young people is that the courses are helpful, engaging and can make things easier to understand and cope with. For young people, who require it, after the course there is follow up one to one work available to develop these skills and knowledge further, although we do not have the resource to be able to do this as much as we would like.

The key for children and young people developing skills and confidence has two requirements:

1. A safe space to make friends in an understanding environment
2. Opportunities for more focussed work out with group situations working with autism specialist staff

Outreach Service

Due to the geographical nature of Perth & Kinross, we have developed a programme of support for those children, young people and families who live in the more rural areas, to ensure that geography is not a barrier to receiving autism specialist support. These services require development at a rate that is in line with the needs of the community and available funding.



What we currently provide:

Services that replicate our Perth City Activities and Skills Development Programme, based in three geographical areas in Perth & Kinross – Highland Perthshire, Blairgowrie and Crieff and most recently funding secured has allowed us to deliver pilot services in Kinross.

“The Principles of Good Transitions 3 provides a framework to inform, structure and encourage the continual improvement of support for young people with additional needs between the ages of 14 and 25 who are making the transition to young adult life”

- Principles of Good Transitions 3, Scottish Transition Forum, 2017

Young Adult/Transition Service

Our young adult transition service is focussed on developing skills and opportunities to allow our young people the same life opportunities as their non autistic peers. The service focusses on support for young people from 14 years old until their transition in to adult services. We aim for this to happen at 18 years old, however, our service is flexible to the needs of each individual and arrangements can be made to work with some young people longer if their support needs require us to do so.

What we currently provide:

- Weekly group social opportunity with a focus on accessing community facilities and developing a peer network of support that can be carried with the young people on to the next stage of life
- One to one support for young people not attending education
- One to one support for young people to understand their autism, anxiety, emotional regulation

- One to one support for young people to develop independent living skills including independent travel, access to further/higher education, access to volunteering, and access to work placement opportunities
- 6 week I Am Me programme for secondary school age young people
- 6 week Be Content programme for secondary school age young people
- Support to complete Personal Independence Payment applications, signposting to other benefits and financial supports

What our young people have told us:

In November 2018, Perth Autism Support SCIO undertook a consultation of our young adult service within a consultation of our young adult services, with four opportunities to feedback for:

- Young People
- Parents/Carers
- Staff
- Staff from other organisations who work with the young adult project

We were keen to ensure that we were shaping the service in the best way suitable for autistic young people in Perth & Kinross. One of the key outcomes from the consultation was to evaluate the service areas of importance to young people, families and other services:

1. Dealing with anxiety (80%)
2. Completing CVs & Interview Skills (73%)
3. Healthy Relationships (73%)
4. Help with money (73%)
5. Transition Support (60%)
6. Independent travel (50%)

OUTCOME 2:

Everyone in a parenting/care role will have access to the right support for their family at a time that is right for them

“The Tayside Strategy for Parents aims to improve information and support so that ALL parents are as equipped as possible to support their child or young person to grow up as happy, healthy, attaining and achieving as possible”

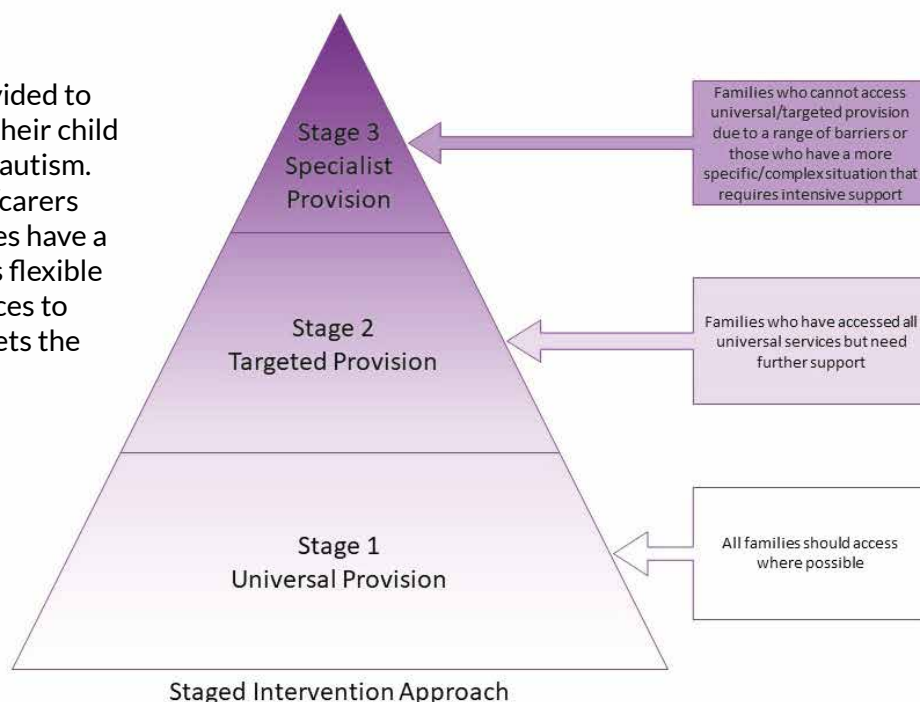
- The Tayside Strategy for Parents 2019-2024



Who we support

Our services for parents/carers are provided to those who are awaiting assessment for their child as well as those who have a diagnosis of autism. We are aware that many of our parents/carers identify as autistic and whilst our services have a clear model of approach, we aim to be as flexible as possible in the delivery of these services to provide information and advice that meets the needs of each individual parent/carer.

Parents/carers services are offered in a Universal, Targeted and Specialist approach to allow us to concentrate intensive services on the families who need this most.



Universal services:

These services are for all parents/carers of autistic young people and include access to our resource library and weighted therapy loan service, access to our entry level training – Practical Understanding of Autism, online group support, complementary therapies and social opportunities to develop a peer support network.

Targeted services:

These services are for parents/carers who require more in depth information and support on a short term basis. These include our intermediate and advanced training sessions, support for the completion of Disability Living Allowance forms, signposting to other organisations to meet needs, support at school meetings, support to develop resources for use with their children and young people and specific small group practical discussion based sessions around any challenges they face in supporting their young people effectively.

Specialist services:

Specialist services: these services are designed to be accessed when both universal and targeted services have been tried and there is still a need for

ongoing support or intensive family support work. This area tends to include families who have more complex needs in addition to autism.

Training

Over the last 10 years we have developed a programme of training for parents/carers that addresses some of the information that increases support for our children and young people to develop skills and confidence.

We know that parenting ALL children and young people requires different knowledge and a change in our approach at different stages of their development and it is exactly the same for autistic young people.

We also know that early understanding is key in improving outcomes for all young people, and therefore expect that parents/carers will want to undertake these training sessions to be fully equipped for supporting their children and young people as soon as they need.

Our training programme has been redeveloped to have a clear process based on evaluations and through our Training Consultation with families in

| Children, Young People and Families Strategy

early 2020, to allow the best outcomes for all of our delegates.

This means that moving forward we would ask that all parents/carers attend our Practical Understanding of Autism programme before advancing through further workshop choices. This also includes parents/carers who have been registered for some time but have not attended training within the previous 2 years, to re-familiarise themselves with our training approach.

This is for two reasons:

1. Our understanding and approach to autism is changing rapidly in line with current academic and scientific research and from learning from the autistic community and therefore it allows parents/carers the most relevant and up to date information in supporting their children and young people
2. Our intermediate and advanced workshop information is based on the most current general autism information, and therefore a clear understanding of autism and current approaches is required to get the best out of the training programme.

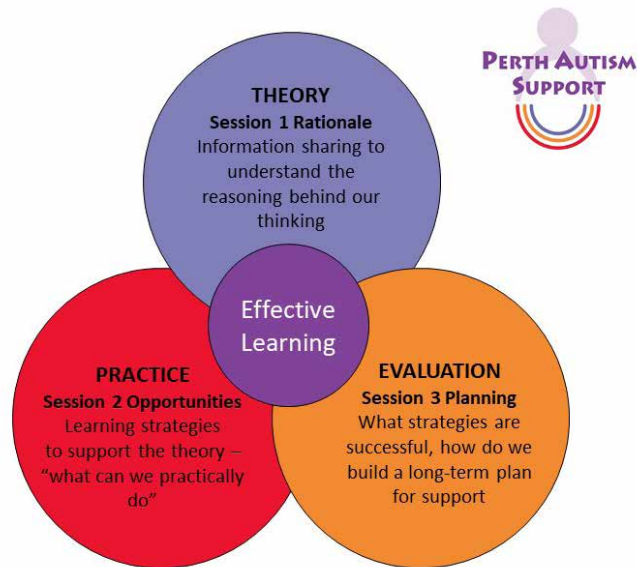
This approach will make the learning easier to understand and implement to support children and young people.

Parents/carers should reinvest in their training at each stage of childhood for their young person, Early Years, Primary and Secondary/Young Adulthood.

This is because for all parents/carers we need to change and adapt our approaches to parenting for all of our children as they grow. Our focus and parenting challenges change and with that we need to ensure we are as equipped as possible to deal with these changes.

It may have been some years since parents/carers have attended training and the demands on their parenting will have changed over this time.

We deliver our programmes using a Theory-Practice-Evaluate model:



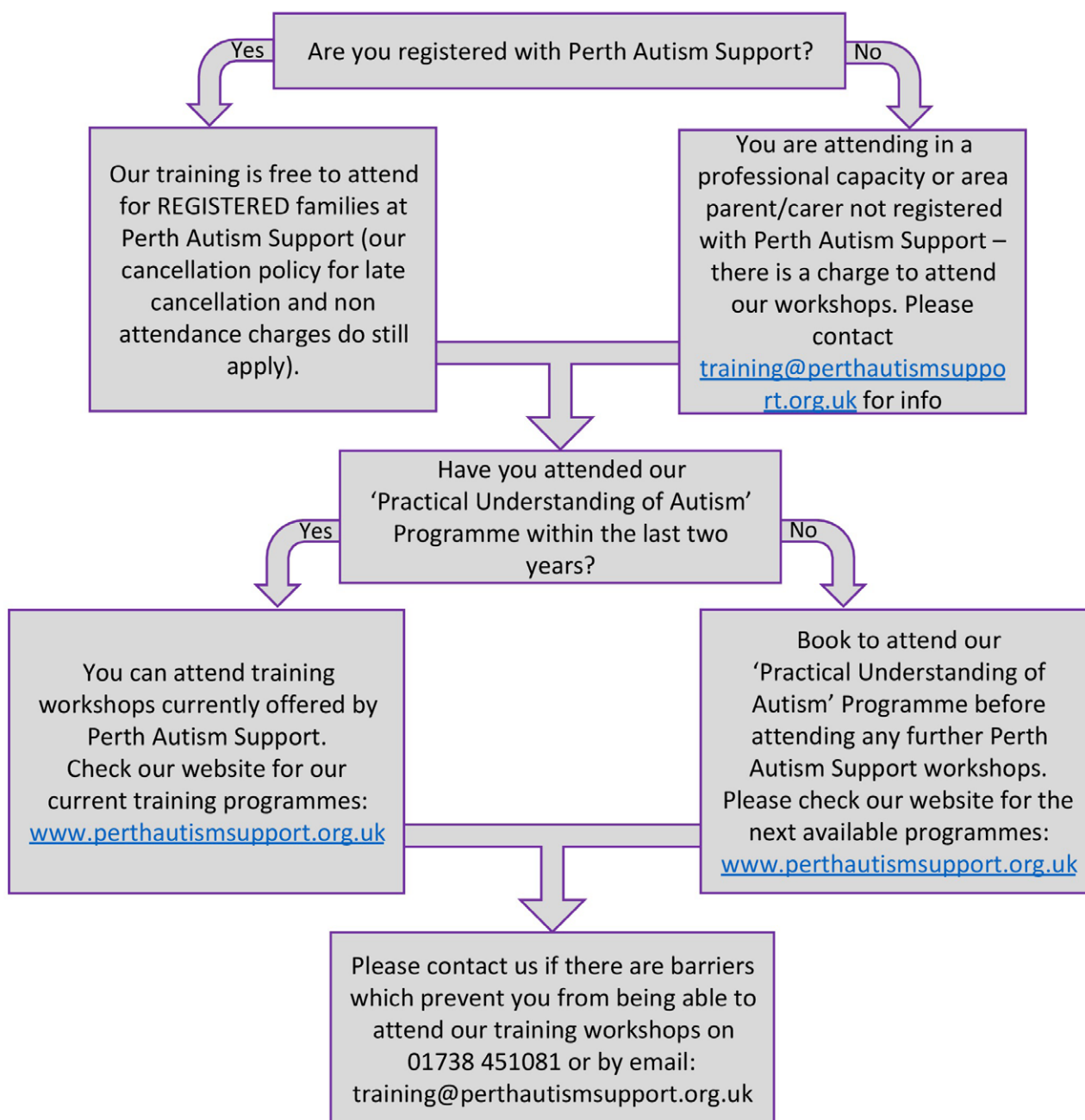
By reinvesting in training, parents/carers will be bringing new questions and a different need for information and will update their strategies and responses to be appropriate to the age and stage of their child or young person.

Finally, we will ask that parents/carers invest in the training programme as a support tool as opposed to reacting to sudden changes in their family home. With early planning key to success, this allows time to go through all stages of the programme and be prepared for any future challenges.

We know through the families who have attended training regularly, that they are less likely to require intensive Family Support which not only alleviates the pressure on our services but also gives parents/carers confidence, skills and knowledge to be able to implement supports and strategies for their child as soon as they are required.

As with all our services, if the training requirements put barriers in place for parents/carers accessing this, we will work with each individual family to ensure that we can support in a way that is right for them.

A guide to choosing the right PAS workshop for you



| Children, Young People and Families Strategy

School Liaison

Both children, young people and their parents/carers can be supported through the School Liaison service and examples of work have included:

- One to one work to understand what autism means to individual pupils
- Support for families in Child Plan and Young Person Planning meetings
- Support for transition

This continues to be an area with a breadth of support depending on the needs of each young person and/or their families and we will continue to support in this way throughout 2020-23.

Our School Liaison service for parents/carers is not an advocacy service, for that we will continue to signpost to our colleagues at Independent Advocacy where appropriate.

Family Support

Our Family Support service is designed to be accessed by the families who either require more intensive support for specific challenges they are facing, for those who have barriers to accessing our universal support or for those who have been referred to the service by other agencies.

The service takes a full family approach depending on the needs of the referral and our team will work either with the parents/carers alone or with the whole family.

The service provides time limited support, in other words, we start each block of support with a clear action plan with outcomes the family would like to achieve and although this is reviewed throughout the time we work with families, it is not designed to be long term support. The service provides autism specific support and for any other needs, the team will refer and signpost the family to alternative services where appropriate. We have also diversified the service to develop tools and a suite of resources that can be shared with families and have implemented different models of support including online question and answer sessions in line with our Digital Media Policy to allow our team to address quick queries from families.

As we have experienced large demand on this area of service, throughout 2020-23 we will work with families to ensure that referrals to the service are appropriate and signpost to other areas of Perth Autism Support SCIO where applicable. This area of service is our specialist area of support and all families who access this will have shown a clear pathway through our universal and targeted services, so we can ensure it is those who still require a further level of support that are given the time and support for their particular circumstance.



What have our parent/carers told us?

As with our children and young people, we continuously evaluate services with our parents/carers and invite views and ideas for service provision through more formal consultation process. Our most recent training consultation took place in January - March 2020.

Through our consultation processes, we know there are two clear areas of support that our parents/carers would like to continue to be developed, out with our direct support for children and young people:

1. Autism specialist support for their family that is flexible in approach and available when they require it
2. Support within school to help think of possible approaches and by sharing ideas and knowledge

How will we achieve Priority 1

Children, Young People and their families have access to a choice of services, that allows flexibility and informed decision making to fit their individual and wider family needs.

Our Offer to Children and Young People:

- We will recognise and support your strengths
- We will continue to offer an activities and skills development programme that you help us to develop
- We will listen to your goals for each area of service and work with you to help you achieve them
- Our staff will commit to ongoing training and development to help support you as effectively as possible
- We will be as flexible as possible in our approach to your support and listen to your views through ongoing evaluations

Our Offer to Parents/Carers and Families:

- We will continue to offer a tiered service approach to families ensuring the right support at the right time
- We will deliver a robust training programme designed to offer early intervention information, advice and strategies
- We will be flexible in our approach to family support considering the needs of all individual families
- We will continue to involve families in our consultation processes and to develop and improve services based on these outcomes where possible

Health, Education and Social Care Strategy

PRIORITY 2:

All Health, Education and Social Care partners will have the same access to create a supportive, autism specific understanding to add value to their own area of expertise, allowing the best outcomes for Autistic Children and Young People.

OUTCOME 1:

All partners will be aware of clear referral pathways for individuals and families and how to access these and all partners will be provided with relevant Quality Assurance Framework, feedback and evaluation for all referrals to our service

“Strategic action is needed both nationally and locally. Children and adults on the autism spectrum each have a unique set of conditions which will not necessarily fall within the categories of learning disabilities or mental health, although these conditions may be present. Autism impacts on the whole life experience of people and their families. They need to be supported by a wide range of services such as social care, education, housing, employment and other community based services. A holistic, joined-up approach is necessary.”

- Scottish Strategy for Autism, Scottish Government 2011

What we currently provide

- Support for individual children and young people in education and social support services
- Support for parent/carers in education and social support services
- Support for whole school settings with Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience across Tayside
- Training to education and social care services through the Tayside Framework for Education and Social Support Services – Children and Families and our bespoke training programme for those unable to access under the framework, both within Tayside and nationally across Scotland
- Training to health services both within Tayside and nationally across Scotland
- Commissioned service approach for specific intensive, autism specialist support for children, young people and families
- Consultancy support for health, education and social care
- Support for secondary schools through our work placement programme (see also Employability and Community Engagement Strategy)

“The needs of people on the autism spectrum are lifelong. It is very important that services recognise this and work together to make sure that moving from one stage of a person’s life to another is planned for and managed as smoothly as possible, that transitions are managed better and indeed minimised. It is common for people with ASD to have a range of conditions. These may include, but are not limited to, learning disability and mental health issues. Such individuals often have complex needs that have a direct impact on their health and wellbeing as well as their overall quality of life. It is essential therefore that the services that are commissioned and developed are both generic and specialist where needed, across the lifespan.”

- Scottish Strategy for Autism, Scottish Government 2011

Health, Education and Social Care Strategy

Who we support

With increased demands on budgets within all services, not just within the Third Sector, it is important we offer a cost effective but robust support to colleagues in health, education and social care.

We have over the previous 10 years developed close working relationships with many colleagues in health, education and social care; these will continue to develop in line with needs indicated to us from statutory services. Perth Autism Support SCIO work with colleagues in Education and Children's Services, including Community Learning and Development, across Tayside (Perth & Kinross Council, Dundee City Council and Angus Council), Health and Social Care Partnerships within Perth & Kinross and health colleagues across NHS Tayside, with our services available nationally across Scotland.

Our approach

At Perth Autism Support SCIO, our approach is clear, to add autism added value to services. We are not a replacement for services but are available for time limited pieces of work and consultation for health, education and social care services to help achieve the best outcomes for children, young people and families, meeting statutory requirements.

Through work with health, education and social care, we have a proven track record in supporting change. We do this by:

Stage 1 - delivering training

Stage 2 - modelling our approach with children, young people and families for colleagues to observe

Stage 3 - encouraging colleagues to take the lead, allowing them to develop theory into practice with our support and observation

Stage 4 - on-going support provided through attendance at relevant meetings, by email or telephone.

This approach allows skills development for colleagues within health, education and social care,

allowing greater confidence in supporting families and ensuring a sustainable approach to achieving outcomes but also protects the demand on Perth Autism Support SCIO resources.

Commissioned Services

To continue to sustain our services in an increasingly difficult funding landscape across the Third Sector, we have analysed the level of work requested by Health, Education and Social Care teams and how referrals, which over 2019/20 rose significantly compared to previous years, have been made to our service.

This indicates to us that the workforce does not feel equipped or have the training and resources to be able to support more complex cases involving young people and families for whom they have a statutory duty to provide health, education or social care services.

This rise in demand on our services is increasing pressure on our resources and if not governed will soon become unsustainable. To that end from April 2020, all relevant Perth Autism Support SCIO services will be available to be purchased through relevant commissioning framework or bespoke packages for each individual directly from Perth Autism Support SCIO at a competitive hourly rate.

Throughout 2020-23 our strategic approach will ensure clear referral pathways and evaluations for other agencies to understand our offer to them and what we will expect from them in return to support us deliver on outcomes for children, families and young people.

This will allow confidence in commissioning specialist services from Perth Autism Support SCIO.

Examples of some work that could be commissioned:

Children and Young People

- work with autistic children and young people who are currently not in education for a number of reasons, including exclusion or school refusal, to re-engage with education
- supporting autistic children and young people to understand their autism diagnosis and exploring what this means to them

- supporting autistic children and young people to manage emotional regulation and anxiety
- supporting autistic children and young people to understand and manage social relationships
- supporting autistic children and young people to access work placement and volunteering opportunities
- supporting autistic children and young people who are looked after or on the edge of care
- on site delivery of our I Am Me and Be Content programmes to relevant groups of autistic young people in specific settings

Parents/Carers

- support to enable understanding the impact of autism in the family home and on children and young people
- support with strategies for a range of a range of parenting support, to increase skills, resilience and confidence in their parenting role.
- support to access relevant training programmes and information to increase confidence in their caring role

This is not exhaustive and we are flexible to the needs of each young person and their family.

Whilst we usually receive requests for individual support from mental health services, schools and social care services, this too is not limited and we are happy to talk through the requirements of any statutory organisation.

Health and Wellbeing Whole School Approach

Over 2019-20 we have been piloting a new way of working in partnership with North Muirton Primary School which has involved a whole school approach and understanding that the work done to support autistic children and young people around health and wellbeing is applicable in supporting development of all young people.

The aim of this whole school project is to help all children to have the necessary skills and resources to help them manage their emotions in order for them to be able to engage in learning and develop better resilience.

The first stage of the project included a whole school environmental audit, an audit of the wellbeing of staff and pupils and training for staff on emotional regulation. We encouraged the school to invest in Emotion Works, an all age, all ability model for helping children build emotional understanding and we supported the school to implement this into their classrooms.

The second phase of the project identified, assessed and supported a group of children who need additional targeted support to help them manage their emotions. This includes the development of a bespoke emotional regulation plan for each identified pupil.

This phase of the project also includes parent training to help them understand why emotional wellbeing is fundamental to success for all children and to equip the parents in how to support their child's emotional development at home. This creates a truly holistic approach to developing skills in pupils with home and education working together in a clear partnership.

Some of the outcomes from the project identified in North Muirton Primary school:

- More settled environment which is increasing readiness to learn
- Less staff time and resource supporting pupils who are emotional deregulated
- Increase in pupils' emotional understanding measured through an increase in emotional vocabulary
- Significant increase in staff's understanding of how emotional deregulation affects a pupil's behaviour and ability to learn, with this applicable to all pupils

This whole school Health and Wellbeing project is available for schools to book through the Framework for Education and Social Support Services – Children and Families.

Health, Education and Social Care Strategy

"Our partnership with the PAS team has been transformative for North Muirton PS. We knew that our school culture had to change, we needed to build a shared understanding amongst all staff as to why young people can display distressed and dysregulated behaviour. We also needed to establish a whole school approach which empowered staff to support all their learners at classroom level.

PAS delivered a number of highly effective training sessions, building our collective understanding and shaping our attitudes. These sessions provided the space to work as a team to establish our vision and agree our shared approach to achieve it.

Through a series of targeted data gathering exercises PAS started to build up a picture of how it felt to learn and work at NMPS. The results of the bespoke environmental and emotional wellbeing audits led to a radical restructuring of our physical environment, its presentation and the establishment of agreed classroom and whole school practices.

PAS specialist knowledge has also heavily supported our whole school adoption of Emotion Works which has been instrumental in building emotional resilience, self-regulation and wellbeing amongst our young people. PAS also supported us to share our approach with parents through a very well received parent workshop.

Parental engagement is somewhat of a speciality for PAS. Through home visits and meetings they have worked very closely with parents and all stakeholders to develop bespoke support plans for some of our young people. This has provided us with invaluable insight, strengthened home-school relations and empowered our pupils.

We would thoroughly recommend working in partnership with PAS. They are endlessly positive, solution focussed, flexible, realistic, child centred and highly skilled. Our partnership has been the keystone in our school success."

– S. Clarkson, Acting Deputy Head Teacher, North Muirton Primary School

OUTCOME 2:

Training will be provided to Health, Education and Social Care colleagues through the Framework for Education and Social Support Services – Children & Families, and through bespoke training packages for those unable to access the Framework.

What we currently provide

Our training programme for Health, Education and Social Care has been evaluated consistently throughout the last 10 years with an evolving development programme.

The sessions offered within our core training programme have been written and developed based on the information of the requests for services from Health, Education and Social Care and from feedback and evaluation of previous training offered.

The focus of our training programme for Health, Education and Social Care colleagues is to:

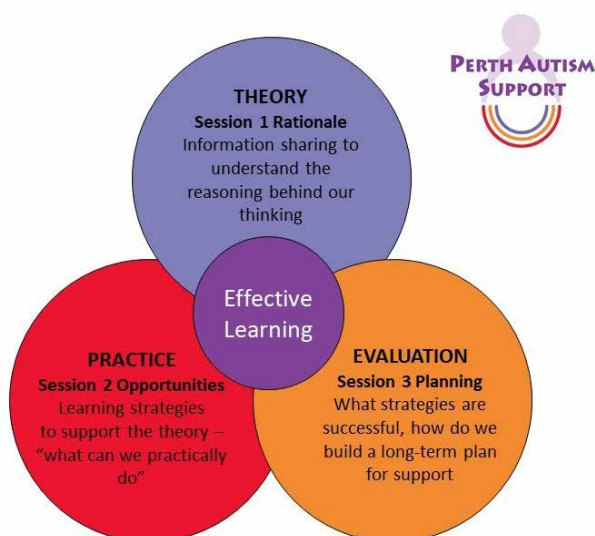
1. Develop skills and confidence in staff to allow them to better support autistic children, young people and their families
2. To ensure that autistic children, young people and their families have access to a wide network of support that are all skilled in understanding and supporting autism

Our training offers a sustainable and empowering approach for staff across many service areas. The sessions are practical in nature and although there is an element of understanding autism as a condition, we know that many of our colleagues are keen to learn to put this into practice. The training focusses on the most recent research on autism, our current thinking, understanding and approach of best practice and to ensure a strengths based approach.

"Staff education, training and development remain at the heart of the Scottish Strategy for Autism"

- The Scottish Strategy for Autism: Outcomes and Priorities 2018-21, Scottish Government

Training can be delivered as online sessions or face to face and we offer training based on a Theory-Practice-Evaluate model.



Training can be adapted to suit different settings and be appropriate to the staff team audience. The training can be booked through the Framework for Education and Social Support Services – Children and Families for colleagues in Perth & Kinross, Dundee City and Angus. For colleagues within NHS Tayside, Adult Services within Perth & Kinross Council, Dundee City Council, Angus Council or any other department or relevant setting locally or nationally, training can be booked directly through Perth Autism Support SCIO.

For each training booking; we will provide confirmation, a detailed booking form with outcomes for each session, costs and our cancellation policy; requested booking dates will be held for 7 days until booking form is agreed, signed and returned and the work will be invoiced. All evaluations will be provided following the training.

Delegates will receive resource packs/handouts relevant to the training and will receive follow up email/phone support. Should services require more intensive support on site to support theory into practice, this will be chargeable at an agreed rate following the training.

How will we achieve Priority 2

All Health, Education and Social Care partners will have the same access to create a supportive, autism specific understanding to add value to their own area of expertise, allowing the best outcomes for Autistic Children and Young People

Our offer to Health, Education and Social Care services:

- we will work with you to identify goals for staff teams to ensure the best outcomes for staff, children, young people and their families
- we will provide training options that are based on best practice and current research
- we will provide training that is relevant to your setting
- we will provide a clear referral pathway for services to introduce children, young people and families to support
- we will provide clear, open details of costings for services provided with a timeframe for achieving outcomes with review meetings scheduled as appropriate
- we will offer evaluation and feedback on all training and commissioned services
- we will provide a Quality Assurance Framework for training offered

It should be noted that a successful partnership with Health, Education and Social Care will increase positive outcomes for children, young people and families and therefore we would like our colleagues to:

- adhere to referral pathway processes
- provide full information on cases through commissioned services whilst understanding that we have organisational policies and procedures to work to including but not limited to Perth Autism Support SCIO Lone Working Policy, Risk Assessment Procedures, Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct
- work in true partnership with Perth Autism Support SCIO, understanding the work and training we provide is for added value to statutory services and is not a replacement for statutory services.

Employability and Community Engagement Strategy

PRIORITY 3:

Our communities will be inclusive, understand the needs of Autistic Young People and be able to offer them the same opportunities and life choices that are available to all other young people.

OUTCOME 1:

Employers will be more autism aware and be able to support work placements which in turn will increase employability options for young people in the future

“Our long-term vision requires societal change and so must be shared and advanced for true equality of opportunity to become a reality for everyone, including carers, so that they are not toiling alone with what can be very testing circumstances. Partnership working between central and local government and engagement with the independent sector will be pivotal to success”

- Scottish Strategy for Autism, Scottish Government 2011

“For a world-class, professionally-led, aligned and flexible system of CIAG services which delivers for every citizen, regardless of where they live in Scotland, their age or circumstance. A system through which citizens can expect a high standard of support that meets their needs when they need it most, a system that is fully interconnected to ensure citizens access the right people and services which includes employability and skills support.”

- Scotland's Career Strategy Moving Forward, Scottish Government 2020

Who we support

Current research tells us that only 15% of autistic individuals are in full time employment and this rises to only 16% for those who have accessed further/higher education and through our Employability planning we aim to address this within Perth & Kinross by providing meaningful work experience placement for senior secondary school age pupils.

Through the desire to increase numbers of all pupils to move into a positive destination following education, and with a high percentage of our young people following a pathway into further/higher education, we often miss the essential skills development of understanding the world of work through secondary school. This means, while our young people are able to leave college or University with often high achievements in their chosen field, securing employment can become a more challenging task as they have not had the opportunity to develop work experience whilst at school, or have perhaps not been able to work part time to support their studies due to fatigue and exhaustion of navigating a full time study programme.

We need to recognise that our young people will, at some point, be likely to want to enter into employment and use their strengths and abilities in their chosen field so we need to support them to be ready to do this at a time that is right for them.

Through speaking with our colleagues in education, we know that there is sometimes a difficulty in

finding appropriate work experience opportunities, and when placements are found these are traditionally within areas that are assumed to be autism friendly, but which may be of little interest to the young people and we know that placements are much more successful and meaningful if young people are invested, motivated and engaged in their chosen area.

There can also be challenges with employers feeling that they may not be equipped to support an autistic young person, with resources to support those young people who may not be able to access a fully independent placement and anxiety in the young people as they do not feel prepared for the placement as they do not know what to expect and what is expected of them.

“An ambition of DYW is that education and employers work closely together to equip all young people with the skills and knowledge they will need to flourish in work, and to support diversity in the workplace”

- Education Scotland DYW Guidance for School/Employer Partnerships, 2015

Employability and Community Engagement Strategy

What we currently provide

Young People

We deliver a Ready to Work programme which allows our young people to prepare for any work placement/volunteering opportunity. This is developed for each individual and can include but is not limited to:

- support to think about where they would like to work
- CV/interviewing planning
- Practical support to access work e.g. travel, what is needed for work
- Understanding expectations in the workplace
- Site visits to familiarise themselves with the workplace and key contacts
- Support in the placement where required, working to increase time spent independently in work
- Flexible approach to times/lengths of work placement sessions to meet the individual needs of the young people

Employers

- General autism understanding training
- Placements matched to young people who have a keen interest in the particular area of work
- Site visits with the young person to develop relationships
- Understanding of the particular young person who will be undertaking the placement
- Understanding of the strengths that autistic employees add to organisations
- Environmental audits to support small changes that can lead to a more positive experience for young people

- Information and advice for staff working directly with the young person
- Support for the young person in the placement until confident to access the placement independently
- A flexible approach to times of placements to meet the needs of the business
- Ongoing evaluation, support and advice for employers

“Employees on the autism spectrum were as much as 140 percent more productive than their peers”

- James Mahoney, Global Head of Autism at Work at JPMorgan Chase, 2017

Our aim is to ensure a confident, inclusive network of employers throughout Perth & Kinross, including those in more rural locations. This will increase the percentage of autistic individuals in full time employment, raise awareness of the strengths of autistic employees, and increase future work opportunities for our young people as they move in to adulthood.

OUTCOME 2:

Autistic young people will have a wider range and choice of social opportunities that will allow increased positive experiences, decreased social isolation and a wider community support network.

Who we support

At Perth Autism Support SCIO we take a social model approach to developing skills and confidence in our children and young people with the goal of autism not being a barrier to accessing a full, inclusive life in the community with the same life opportunities as their non-autistic peers.

We also respect the fact that our autistic children and young people will grow to be autistic adults and whilst we want to build skills and confidence this is not the same as making them change to fit into a world that means they cannot be individual, unique members of the community.

Autism is a lifelong condition so there is a clear need to increase the understanding of autism within the non-autistic community.

To Get it Right for Every Child, in the spirit of

GIRFEC, this means we need to Get it Right for Every Family but also ensure that the work the young people do in building confidence and using strengths to achieve are not just realised in autism specific services. This means that we have to ensure that all areas of life around the young person are understanding and supportive and the Community Engagement element of our strategy addresses this.

To achieve this we offer advice, information and support to all community organisations who may be working with or supporting autistic individuals and/or their families.

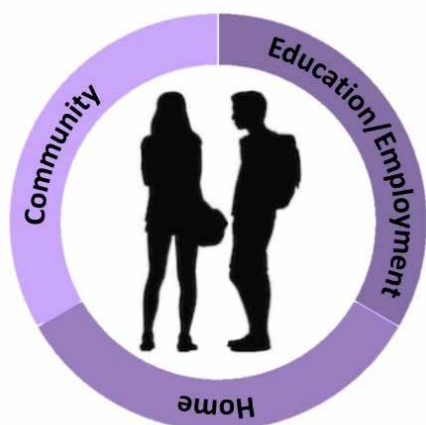
“Autistic people contribute much to Scottish society and with the right support many could contribute much more”

- Scottish Strategy for Autism: Outcome and Priorities 2018-21, Scottish Government

Employability and Community Engagement Strategy

What we currently provide

Our training programme is key to raising awareness and understanding within the wider community and we offer this to specific organisations, within Perth & Kinross, throughout Tayside and nationally across Scotland.



Training can be adapted to suit different settings and be appropriate to the staff team audience, training can be booked directly through Perth Autism Support SCIO.

For each training booking, we will provide confirmation with a detailed booking form with outcomes for each session, costs and our cancellation policy, requested booking dates will be held for 7 days until booking form is agreed, signed and returned and the work will be invoiced. All evaluations will be provided following the training.

Delegates will receive resource packs/handouts relevant to the training and will receive follow up email/phone support. Should services require more intensive support on site to support theory into practice, this will be chargeable at an agreed rate following the training.

To address support for organisations who may not have staff teams large enough to necessitate on site training, we commit to offering Working with Autism in the Community training throughout each year both in Perth City and at locations throughout Perth & Kinross, in which delegates can book individual places.

We offer specific support, advice and information to organisations who require further support to embed theory in to practice, increasing confidence

in the workforce, ensuring sustainability and widening the support network and giving choice and control to our young people in the community activities they would like to integrate with.

We would encourage all community groups to invest in training of their staff and volunteers to meet Corporate Social Responsibility outcomes and to offer a truly meaningful, inclusive approach to the autistic community.

How will we achieve Priority 3

Our communities will be inclusive, understand the needs of Autistic Young People and be able to offer them the same opportunities and life choices that are available to all other young people.

Our offer to employers and the wider community:

- We will work with you to ensure that training and support is meaningful and appropriate to your organisation
- We will ensure that you have the required level of ongoing support, advice and information
- We will ensure that training takes a strengths based, meaningful approach
- We will offer general training sessions, bespoke training within specific organisations or one to one/small group support with a flexible approach to your needs



Income generation strategy

It is important that we recognise that our work is continually impacted by an ever challenging economic climate and whilst we develop an Income Generation Plan on an annual basis, we have a four strand approach to our income stream that we work to and maximise to allow our organisation to be as sustainable as possible within the Third Sector.

Our Income Generation Strategy has four strands:

- Grants from Trusts and Foundations
- Self-generated income
- Commissioned services
- Community and Corporate fundraising

Throughout the life of this strategy we aim to generate the required income for our organisation by the following:

Trusts and Foundations

The demand on Trusts and Foundations across the Third Sector has continued to increase as statutory budgets decrease and it is increasingly more difficult to be reliant on this income stream. We continue to develop our relationships with our funders and at point of publication of this strategy, April 2020 we have already secured 38% of our income for the life of our strategy. We would like to acknowledge and thank our funders who have supported us over the last 8 years and continue to support us as we move into our new strategy.

Self-Generated Income

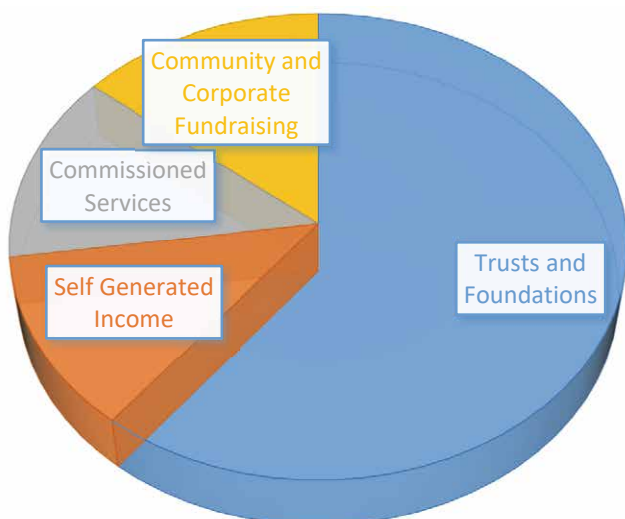
With the increased demand on Trusts and Foundations, this means we have to diversify our income streams and assume responsibility as much as we can to ensure we maximise self-generated income opportunities.

We do this through:

- chargeable services for children and young people through our activities programme
- external training fees
- hire of rooms within our centre

Whilst we can anticipate and project our activities income based on previous year's attendees and with the knowledge that numbers are ever increasing, the other two areas of income are more fluid and reliant on a robust marketing plan. This is supported through our monthly key performance indicators and our Digital Media Strategy 2019/21.

INCOME STREAM BREAKDOWN



Throughout the life span of this Strategy we will also be exploring the opportunities of a Social Enterprise to allow another viable income stream to the SCIO.

Commissioned Services

As detailed within the Health, Education and Social Care Strategic strand, it is imperative that our colleagues within these sectors recognise that demands on finances and resources are subject to further cuts within the Third Sector, and that we cannot continue sustained support within these areas without applying charges to the work delivered.

We know that colleagues understand the importance and worth of support provided by Perth Autism Support SCIO within front line service provision for autistic children, young people and their families to support delivery of statutory services and we will continue to work closely with services to deliver high quality, autism specialist support.

Community and Corporate Fundraising

Whilst we have been fortunate over 10 years to have received continued support from both community and corporate fundraising, with demand on staffing resources continuing, we were aware that we were not investing as much time in cultivating relationships as this deserved.

During 2019, the organisation has invested in a Fundraiser role for the organisation to manage and support our community and corporate partnerships. We expect to see a significant impact on our income during 2020-23 through this investment. Our community and corporate partnerships are important to us and we want anyone who fundraises for us to see that we recognise the importance of the support they are providing.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our past, current and future individual community and corporate partners. The support through this income stream helps support our services in many ways:

- Specific service delivery areas
- To help us to pilot new ideas for children, young people and families
- Continuous support to ensure services can be kept running whilst we await gaps in funding

Our offer to all financial stakeholders:

- We will continue to monitor our services to ensure they are competitive and cost effective
- We will continue to foster and develop relationships with key funders
- We will continue with open, honest communication with all stakeholders in Perth Autism Support SCIO
- We will offer full support to all our community and corporate partners to support them in their fundraising journey

Local and National Policies, Framework and Legislation

There are a number of local and national policies, framework and legislation which underpin our Strategic Approach 2020-23.

Our services relate to or help to deliver on the outcomes of:

Children, Young People and Families Strategy 2020-23

National Legislation and Policies

- The Scottish Strategy for Autism 2011
- The Scottish Strategy for Autism: Outcomes and Priorities 2018-21
- Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision, Scottish Government 2013
- Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027
- “Gaun Yersel!” The Self-Management Strategy for Long Term Conditions in Scotland 2008
- Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Developing the Young Workforce Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy
- National Youth Work Strategy
- National Parenting Strategy
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Statutory Guidance on Part 3: Children’s Services Planning
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- GIRFEC
- A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Our Delivery Plan to 2021
- Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice
- Principles of Good Transition 3, Scottish Transitions Forum, 2018
- Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework 2020

Health, Education and Social Care Strategy 2020-23

National Legislation and Policies

- The Scottish Strategy for Autism 2011
- The Scottish Strategy for Autism: Outcomes and Priorities 2018-21
- Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision 2013

- Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027
- “Gaun Yersel!” The Self-Management Strategy for Long Term Conditions in Scotland 2008
- Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- Curriculum for Excellence
- SIGN Guidelines – Assessment, diagnosis and interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders – A National Clinical Guideline
- Optimising Outcomes - - The NHS Education for Scotland Autism Training Framework
- National Youth Work Strategy
- National Parenting Strategy
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Statutory Guidance on Part 3: Children’s Services Planning
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- GIRFEC
- Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice
- Support for Learning: All Our Children and All Their Potential, June 2020
- Additional Support Learning Action Plan, Scottish Government, October 2020

Tayside/Perth & Kinross Strategies and Plans

- Perth & Kinross Autism Strategy 2016-21
- The Tayside Strategy for Parents 2019-24
- Play Framework for Perth & Kinross
- Local Community Actions Plans
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Perth & Kinross Action Plan 2017-20
- NHS Tayside Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Children and Young People Toolkit

- Carers Strategy 2019-22 for Young and Adult Carers
- Raising Attainment Strategy 2016-19
- The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2017-2020
- Community Learning and Development Plan 2019-22

Employability and Community Engagement Strategy 2020-23

National Legislation and Policies

- The Scottish Strategy for Autism 2011
- The Scottish Strategy for Autism: Outcomes and Priorities 2018-21
- Scotland’s Career Strategy Moving Forward 2020
- Developing the Young Workforce Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy 2014
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Our Delivery Plan to 2021

Tayside/Perth & Kinross Strategies and Plans

- Perth & Kinross Autism Strategy 2016-21
- Local Community Actions Plans
- Partnerships Community Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) 2017-2027
- Perth & Kinross Council Employability Pipeline
- The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2017-2020
- Community Learning and Development Plan 2019-22

