



AUTISM (ASD)  
ACCOMPANIES THE  
WHO AM I  
WORKBOOK?



There is now more information about ASD than ever before, however this information can be confusing and is not always clear and consistent.

This section of the school website aims to help families understand how to help those with ASD, as it offers practical advice, which will hopefully help your child to live a richer, fuller and happier life.

This information emphasises the importance of how we can understand and accept difference and celebrate the diversity that our children who are on the spectrum bring to society.

The ideas in this area use the principles of TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children)

These resources will encourage you to see life through your child's eyes. To help you understand how they see everyday activities and their environment.

## **Provide Meaning**

Visual and easy to understand strategies should be used. Using your child's interests and strengths, will allow you to make these strategies meaningful. If we can show meaning, then anxiety and undesirable behaviours can disappear. Young people will feel happier when things make sense.

## **Individualise the Strategies**

The strategies we are sharing are best received when they are individualised. You know your child best and may need to adapt strategies to meet their need.



Autism is invisible, this means that it cannot be seen. It is one of the things that makes your child who they are. The 'who I am' workbook will explain what is different and unique about autism.

Autism is do with the brain; brains with autism, sometimes work differently than non-autistic brains. Everyone's brain is different and unique; therefore, people are different from each other. Some people use the term **neurodiversity** to describe this. **Neuro** refers to the functioning of our brains and the nervous system, which is controlled by the brain. **Diversity** is related to the fact that there is variety among humans, and, with all our differences, we are all members of the human race.

Neuro diversity promotes acceptance and understanding that every person is an individual, with differences in how they think, learn, grow and live. That we are all equal in society. This workbook promotes neurodiversity as it helps your child to understand more about themselves and that it is perfectly wonderful to be who they are. The workbook wants to help your child appreciate and celebrate their uniqueness.

## Language - 'person first' and 'identity first'

Some people like to hear and use the word *autistic*. They feel that being autistic is important to who they are. It is how they think, communicate and understand the world and other people. They may enjoy learning about autism and being with other autistic people. They want others to know that they are proud of who they are - an autistic person. They may choose to hear and say:

- He / She / They is/are autistic
- I am autistic

This wording is referred to as **identity first** because the first most important word has to do with their autistic identity. Autism cannot be separated from who they are.

## Language - 'person first' and 'identity first'

Some people believe that autism is a part of who they are, but it is not necessarily an important part of who they are. They may think of autism as separate from their real selves. They might not want other people to think of them as autistic. They may prefer to hear:

- He / She / They is/are a person with autism
- I am a person with autism

This wording is referred to as **person first**, people who like this wording may feel that autism isn't important to them.

The first essay describing the difference was written by Jim Sinclair, if you go to [autismmythbusters.com](http://autismmythbusters.com) and search 'identity first language'. Or read Lydia Browns essay [autisticadvocacy.org/identity-first-language](http://autisticadvocacy.org/identity-first-language), at the end of this essay, there are further links you can read.