



Williamwood

High School

Mighty oaks from little acorns grow

Respect * Ambition * Kindness



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Supporting Children with Autism

Practical Tools for Home and School Success

Tuesday 4th November

Respect * Ambition * Kindness

What's the purpose?

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Tonight is about realistic, simple strategies to make study and home life calmer and easier.

Experience the mind set and thinking of an ASC learner

Empathy, understanding and practical support ideas.



How do we Support Learners at Williamwood

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At Williamwood, we work closely with families to ensure every autistic learner feels understood, supported and able to thrive.

What We Do:

- Provide personalised support through the Support for Learning team.
- Share classroom visuals, visual timetables, now & next task routines and structure to create consistency across home and school.
- Offer quiet spaces and sensory breaks when needed.
- Promote co regulation helping pupils recognise and manage emotions safely.
- Deliver staff training on autism awareness and inclusive classroom practice.
(circle)
- Support transition planning and key moments of change.

Understanding the Learning brain

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In a nutshell Autism is just a different way of thinking/learning/processing

- 80% of autistic learners prefer visual prompts, to reduce cognitive load.
- Processing time and sensory load affect concentration.
- Structure, clarity, and predictability support focus.

Challenge 1 for you

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Processing Delay Game

Question – What did you have for your dinner last night?

5 seconds to think

A few extra seconds can make the difference between success and frustration

Building a Calm, Predictable Routine and The Homework Environment

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- Predictability reduces anxiety and creates safety (Plan A, Plan B)
- Use visual timetables, timers and clear routines
- Same workspace = same mind set
- Minimise distractions – one instruction at a time.
- Provide calm, consistent space.
- Praise effort, not outcome.

Study tips that Actually Work

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- Break work into short bursts (10–15 mins).
- Link tasks to interests and celebrate effort.
- Use visuals and timers
- Create a daily study schedule with visual blocks (e.g., “Work – Break – Work – Reward”).
- Keep fidget aids or a soft stress item on hand to support attention.
- Encourage teaching back — “Explain what you just learned to me in your own words.”
- Try voice recordings or short videos to review information later

Challenge 2 for you

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Have we ever said this to young learners?

- Hit the books
- Pull your socks up
- Get your head in the game
- You need to get a move on
- I've told you a hundred times
- You're burning the candle at both ends

- **Being clear, concrete and consistent when giving directions or encouragement**

Supporting Emotional Regulation

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- Co-regulation before correction
- Use calm tone, safe spaces, sensory tools
- Emotional check-ins: 1–5 scales, colours, or words
- Model calm behaviour - children mirror your energy

Anxiety and School Avoidance

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Remember Anxious behaviour isn't defiance — it's a signal of overwhelm



Anxiety is extremely common among autistic children

Research shows up to **40–50%** of autistic young people experience significant anxiety.

It's often connected to sensory overload, changes in routine, or social uncertainty rather than general “worry.”

School avoidance is usually a *response*, not defiance

For some autistic pupils, school becomes associated with anxiety noise, transitions, group work, or can feel unsafe. Avoidance is often an attempt to *protect themselves from overwhelm*, not to “skip” learning

Challenge 3 for you

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Following the instructions, please complete the task the teacher has set.

Anxiety and School Avoidance tips and tricks

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Keep mornings calm and predictable

Use a visual checklist or calm music to start the day smoothly and reduce stress.

Validate, don't minimise

Acknowledge feelings ("I can see this feels hard") before giving reassurance or solutions.

Take small steps forward

Build confidence gradually — celebrate effort like putting on uniform or reaching the gate.

Stay connected with school

Share triggers, routines, and successes early with Support for Learning staff.

Create calm spaces at home

Use sensory corners, weighted blankets, or fidget tools to help your child regulate.

Focus on safety and connection before attendance

Children learn best when they feel safe — calm first, then talk about school plans.

Sensory Smart Home

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Light:

Use soft, natural, or warm lighting instead of harsh overhead lights.
Try lamps, fairy lights, or dimmers to create calm spaces

Sound:

Reduce background noise where possible.
Offer noise-cancelling headphones or quiet background music if soothing

Smell:

Keep scents gentle and predictable.
Use mild room sprays, diffusers, or none at all if sensitivity is high.

Tools & Resources:

Build a simple “*sensory box*” with fidget aids, stress balls, or textured items.
Rotate items to keep it engaging but familiar

Working Together with the School

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- Share what works at home – ask what works at school
- Use consistent strategies and language
- Request visuals or scaffolds where needed
- Contact Support for Learning team when support is needed

Key Takeaways

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Structure = calm.

Predictability = confidence.

Effort = perfection.

Collaboration = success.

Calm homes build ready learners

Celebrate small wins

PICK YOUR BATTLES

Useful Links and Parent Supports

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Local and National Support Networks:

- Autism Toolbox (Scottish Government): www.autismtoolbox.co.uk
- National Autistic Society Scotland: www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/scotland
- Enquire Scotland: enquire.org.uk
- East Renfrewshire Parent Carer Council: erpcc.scot

✉@ Contact our team directly for tailored support or follow-up after tonight's session:

Thank you

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- Thank you for joining us tonight.

You know your child best and together, we
can help them thrive.

Support for Learning are always here to support 😊

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Located in the Wellbeing Wing

Chloe Smith

Fiona Glen

Jonathon Mackie

Gordon MacKintosh

Lewis Brown

David Baird

