



Autism
Education
Trust

Schools

Competency Framework

This framework can be used by practitioners as a self-reflection tool that enables them to evaluate their practice when supporting autistic pupils



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Introduction to the AET School Competency Framework

The Autism Education Trust (AET) School Competency Framework provide guidance that enables school staff to reflect upon and evaluate their practice.

The framework can be used by staff in schools (5–16) across a range of settings from mainstream to specialist. It is an ongoing self-reflection tool to enable staff to:

- Self-assess their skills and competencies.
- Identify priority areas to work on.
- Decide which aspects of their practice require further development.
- Consider their professional development needs.
- Seek appropriate professional development.

These competencies support staff in meeting Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy and legal requirements and their equality duties whilst complying with the Education Inspection Framework (2019) and the Teacher Standards (2011).



Why is it important to have specific competencies for staff working with autistic pupils?

Autistic pupils often face significant barriers to learning within the educational environment. These can be overcome by ensuring we create supportive teaching environments that are structured, consistent, and respectful of differences. The environment that autistic pupils require is one that should be saturated in high quality and inclusive teaching.

The AET School Competencies support school practitioners in meeting the specific learning needs of autistic pupils, and they provide pointers to teaching approaches, methods, and resources to use in educational provision and practice for this group of learners.

Practitioners need to be aware of three key areas of difference in autism influence the way in which autistic pupils learn and experience their educational settings. Knowledge about autism and these areas of difference is crucial for understanding autistic pupils. Staff need to take into account differences in:

- Social understanding and communication.
- Flexibility, information processing, and understanding.
- Sensory processing and integration.

- Autistic pupils often have uneven or spiky development, and each autistic pupil will have their own unique profile. For example, pupils can have relative strengths and needs in areas such as verbal or visual processing. They can also have relative strengths and challenges in academic subject areas or study skills.
- Autistic pupils often have additional co-occurring conditions and differences alongside a diagnosis of autism. As with all pupils, co-occurring conditions and differences need to be considered in educational planning.

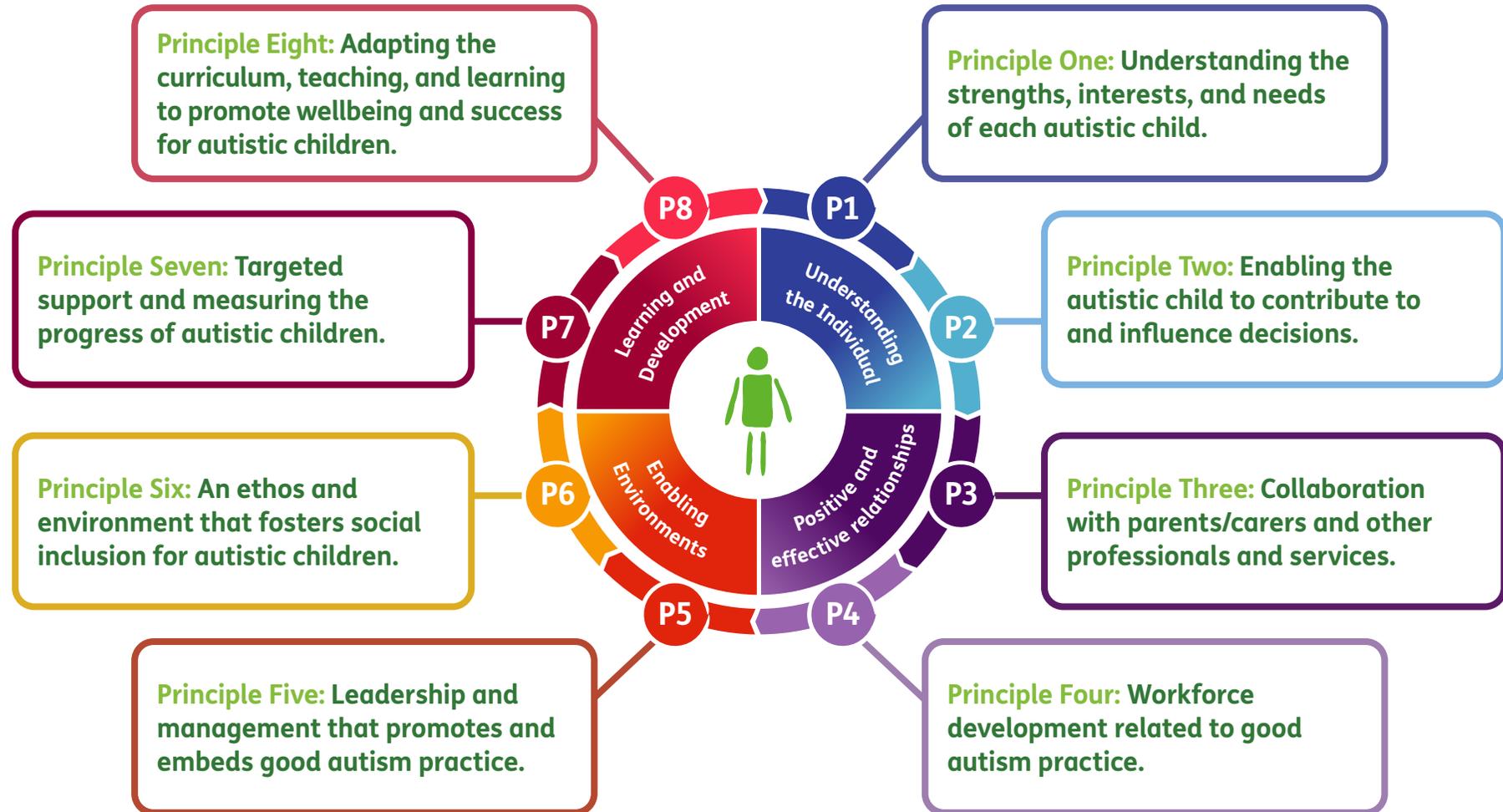
Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice

The AET School Standards are structured around eight key principles that provide the framework for the development of whole-school approaches (ages 5–16) to enhancing provision for autistic pupils and their families. For each principle, there are two standards.

These principles are embedded within the AET's key themes of 'Understanding the Individual', 'Positive and effective relationships', 'Enabling Environments', and 'Learning and Development'. The eight principles have emerged from an examination of the current evidence from research and practice, as well as key policies and the perspectives and insights of autistic individuals (Guldberg et al., 2019). The reports outlining this work are available for free on the [Autism Education Trust](#) website. They consist of two reports, the Good autism practice: full report, and a Practitioner guide to good autism practice in education.

The AET Eight GAP Principles

This is how the Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice are embedded in the four themes.



The AET Inclusion Promises

The eight GAP principles are also distilled into eight Inclusion Promises developed by the Autistic Young Experts panel. The panel created these promises so that the GAP principles were more accessible for autistic pupils.

We promise to:

1 Understand what you are good at, what you like doing, and when you might need help.

2 Listen to and act upon your ideas about how we can help you if you need it.

3 Listen to and work with the people who know you best and who you trust.

4 Make sure we are always progressing towards your goals and aspirations.

5 Make sure all staff know the best way to support you, both in and out of lessons.

6 Help you to get involved and be included in the activities you wish to participate in.

7 Work together to set achievable goals that are important to you, and that help you see how well you are doing.

8 Help you to feel safe, secure, empowered, and able to learn.

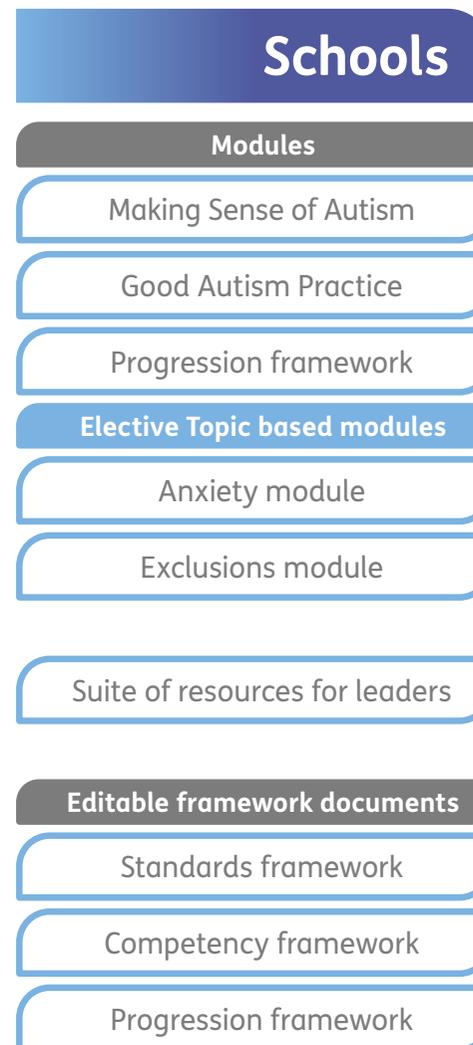
AET Schools Professional Development Programme

The AET Schools Competency Framework are part of the Schools Professional Development Programme. This Programme contains a set of modules and materials for staff working in Schools across mainstream and specialist settings.

In addition to the Competencies the AET Schools Professional Development Programme consists of:

- A Schools Standards Framework that has been created for leaders or leadership groups within schools to enhance and embed inclusive practice in their settings.
- A Progression Framework that is a comprehensive interactive assessment tool that supports practitioners to identify learning priorities, set key learning intentions, and track progress for autistic children and young people in both mainstream and specialist educational provisions.

The Schools Professional Development Programme also has a range of training modules for those working in Schools educational settings. For further information, please visit the AET website: www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/training



At a Glance:

The four key themes, Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice, the AET Autism School Standards, and the AET Autism School Competencies.



The following tables outline how the four themes, the Eight Principles of Good Autism Practice, the AET School Standards, and the AET School Competencies are interlinked.



Understanding the Individual

Principle One: Understanding the strengths, interests, and needs of each autistic pupil.

STANDARDS

S1. We are committed to developing knowledge about autism, and we gather information from a range of sources to fully understand the individual autistic pupil.

S2. We take into account how each pupil's co-occurring differences, including anxiety and stress, can affect behaviour and can cause barriers to learning. We are committed to understanding the causes and functions of behaviour.

COMPETENCIES

C1. I identify the key strengths and challenges that autistic pupils face in the areas of social understanding and communication; flexibility, information processing and understanding, and sensory processing and integration.

C2. I recognise that many autistic pupils have co-occurring conditions and differences. They experience high levels of anxiety and stress, and these can create barriers to learning. I know that a pupil may display behaviour based on a combination of factors and I work hard to understand the causes and functions of the behaviour.

Principle Two: Enabling the autistic pupil to contribute to and influence decisions.

STANDARDS

S3. We use pupil-centred approaches to support pupils to communicate their hopes, dreams, and aspirations.

S4. We actively involve autistic pupils as part of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle so that the pupil is at the centre of educational planning.

COMPETENCIES

C3. I include, consult, and support pupils to communicate their strengths, experiences, and emotional wellbeing. I understand the importance of listening to the pupil and regularly consult and involve pupils in any decisions being made.

C4. I see the pupil as a partner in their learning and actively involve autistic pupils as part of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle so that the pupil is at the centre of educational planning.



Positive and effective relationships

Principle Three: Collaboration with parents/carers and other professionals and services.

STANDARDS

S5. We actively listen to and involve parents/carers in contributing to decisions about their child's education and future prospects.

S6. We work collaboratively with health, social care, and other professionals to improve educational experiences and outcomes for autistic pupils.

COMPETENCIES

C5. I engage with parents/carers and involve them in contributing to decisions about their child's education and future prospects. I establish and develop ways to communicate and share information, ideas, and progress.

C6. I collaborate with health, social care, and other professionals to improve educational experiences and outcomes for autistic pupils.

Principle Four: Workforce development related to good autism practice.

STANDARDS

S7. We show a commitment to continuing professional development on autism across our staff and ensure they receive ongoing training that is appropriate to their role.

S8. We audit staff confidence levels, understanding and knowledge of autism, and the changes staff make to their practice as a result of undertaking professional development.

COMPETENCIES

C7. I engage in professional development that enables me to address the needs of autistic pupils and to enhance and embed inclusive practice.

C8. I reflect on, note down, and gather data on the implications of my learning and development for my own practice, and ultimately for the autistic pupil(s) I work with.



Enabling Environments

Principle Five: Leadership and management that promotes and embeds good autism practice.

STANDARDS

S9. We promote a supportive environment where leaders and managers are knowledgeable about autism and cascade information to their staff. We encourage our staff to reflect upon, discuss, and evaluate their practice.

S10. We develop mutual understanding, communication, and support between autistic pupils and staff, between autistic pupils and their peers, and between parents/carers and staff. We address the risk of social exclusion for autistic pupils.

COMPETENCIES

C9. I create enabling environments based on what I know of the individual pupil and through making reasonable adjustments accordingly.

C10. I create positive, supportive, and caring relationships, between autistic pupils and staff, between autistic pupils and their peers, and between staff and parents/carers. I work hard to address barriers to learning. This includes reducing the risk of social exclusion.

Principle Six: An ethos and environment that fosters social inclusion for autistic pupils.

STANDARDS

S11. Our enabling approaches foster a calm low-arousal learning environment and we promote a sense of wellbeing, security, and belonging for all our pupils.

S12. Our learning environments are structured, understandable, and predictable. We adapt learning environments to enable pupils to participate fully in learning.

COMPETENCIES

C11. I understand the importance of focusing on identifying and addressing barriers to learning in the three areas of difference, namely social understanding and communication; flexibility, information processing, and understanding; and sensory processing and integration.

C12. I provide a clearly organised classroom and an environment that takes into account the needs of autistic pupils.



Learning and Development

Principle Seven: Targeted support and measuring the progress of autistic pupils.

STANDARDS

S13. We use a holistic approach to assessment that includes a pupil's sensory needs, emotional wellbeing, and preferred way of communicating, interacting, and learning.

S14. We develop and implement targeted pupil-centred education plans in partnership with pupils and parents. These are regularly reviewed to monitor progress.

COMPETENCIES

C13. When assessing progress towards learning goals, I have a holistic approach that builds on strengths and interests, whilst addressing skills and understanding that autistic pupils may find difficult as a result of their autism.

C14. I am involved in and contribute to the development and implementation of pupil-centred education plans in partnership with pupils, parents, and other staff. These include details of how the staff can support the pupil.

Principle Eight: Adapting the curriculum, teaching, and learning to promote wellbeing and success for autistic pupils.

STANDARDS

S15. We provide a broad, flexible, and balanced curriculum that addresses the learning needs of autistic pupils and their social and emotional well-being, communication needs, and life skills.

S16. We always promote positive attitudes towards autism and have high expectations for all of our pupils and staff.

COMPETENCIES

C15. I strive to understand autistic pupils and I embed inclusive practice in my teaching approaches and learning environments.

C16. I promote positive attitudes towards autism and have high expectations for all the pupils I work with.

How to use the AET School Competencies

The AET School Competencies can be completed by an individual member of staff or a small group of staff. Staff can rate their knowledge and skills against the set of descriptors that outline good autism practice. Not all staff will be in the position to develop and implement each of the competencies in full, but all staff will benefit from having as much involvement as possible.

We suggest that the practitioner or team of practitioners reflects on which of the AET School Competencies they have identified as a priority for them, and then creates an action plan for implementing this.

Every competency will be linked to a section on the AET website with more examples, further reading, practical materials and templates to help you develop and implement that competency.

For each competency, you should aim to collect:

- Documentary evidence (e.g. records of training events, assess, plan, do, review documentation, accounts from children, child outcomes, observation schedules, and policy documents).
- Photographs, or video clips of relevant practice.

1. Give each competency, and each example, a RAG (red, amber, green) rating:

 **Room for improvement:** I need to undertake further professional development to develop practice in this area.

 **Developing:** I have started working on this area of practice.

 **I do this really well:** My practice is well developed in this area.

2. Use this information to decide which of the AET School Competencies are the most important for you to focus on at this moment in time.
3. Document your evidence for those competencies that you have rated as amber or green. The examples provided will help you here but you can also provide other evidence.
4. Using the Next Steps action plan, document your actions for some of the competencies that need improvement and include specified time frames for implementation.
5. Collecting data allows you to monitor the progress of identified improvement areas against your agreed timeframes.

Theme one: Understanding the Individual





Understanding the Individual

Principle One: Understanding the strengths, interests, and needs of each autistic pupil.

Competency One: I identify the key strengths and challenges that autistic pupils face in the areas of social understanding and communication; flexibility, information processing and understanding, and sensory processing and integration.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I have a good understanding of the main areas of difference in autistic pupils. I understand that autistic pupils may develop differently from their peers and are likely to have an uneven profile of abilities.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I gather information from a wide variety of sources about the strengths, interests and needs of each individual pupil. This includes drawing on observations and/or discussions with the autistic pupil, discussions with their parents/carers, and other professionals who work with them, and from previous reports and assessments.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I observe the pupil in at least four different settings (e.g. in the playground, during a structured classroom activity, in PE, and working independently). These help me to understand the pupil's strengths, interests and ways of learning in a range of environments.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

A detailed assessment of need should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual should always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs and seek to address them all (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:96).



Understanding the Individual

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Understanding the Individual

Principle One: Understanding the strengths, interests, and needs of each autistic pupil.

Competency Two: I recognise that many autistic pupils have co-occurring conditions and differences. They experience high levels of anxiety and stress, and these can create barriers to learning. I know that a pupil may display behaviour based on a combination of factors and I work hard to understand the causes and functions of the behaviour.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I have a good understanding of autism and co-occurring conditions. I am able to develop a holistic understanding of the child's individual needs based on this knowledge.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I work closely with the pupil, parents/carers, and other staff to identify and understand the reasons for and the functions of behaviour, particularly if signify distress. I use positive behavioural support for learning, and functional behavioural analysis to understand the functions of behaviours, and plan effective and individualised approaches.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I record any co-occurring conditions and differences of children I work with in the one-page child profile and I ensure medical records are up-to-date.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

A detailed assessment of need should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual should always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs and seek to address them all (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:96).



Understanding the Individual

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Understanding the Individual

Principle Two: Enabling the autistic pupil to contribute to and influence decisions.

Competency Three: I include, consult, and support pupils to communicate their strengths, experiences, and emotional wellbeing. I understand the importance of listening to the pupil and regularly consult and involve pupils in any decisions being made.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I recognise that autistic pupils learn in different ways and at different rates. I use a range of tools with the pupil to find out what they enjoy, what they find difficult, what they are good at and how others can help them.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I support and encourage each pupil to use their preferred means of communication to convey their views, experiences e.g. their likes and dislikes.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

All one-page profiles, education support plans, and Education, Health and Care plans have up to date information about the pupil and families' hopes, dreams and aspirations.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Teacher Standards (2011), Standard 2: Teachers promote good progress and outcomes by pupils and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching.



Understanding the Individual

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Understanding the Individual

Principle Two: Enabling the autistic pupil to contribute to and influence decisions.

Competency Four: I see the pupil as a partner in their learning and actively involve autistic pupils as part of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle so that the pupil is at the centre of educational planning.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I identify individual priorities for the individual pupil for that particular point in time in partnership with the child, parents/carer, and staff.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I make sure pupils have regular opportunities to give feedback and participate in decision-making. This includes discussing the pupil's current and future needs and wishes and reviewing/contributing to the review of their one-page profile.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I provide and/or contribute to learning and development opportunities that are planned around the needs and interests of each individual pupil and that take account their autism.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Guidance

SEN should arise from a four-part cycle, known as the graduated approach, through which earlier decisions are revisited, refined and revised, leading to a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcome' (NASEN: 'SEN support and the graduated approach', 2014:2).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child established the right of all children to express their views and to have these views listened to and taken seriously when decisions are being made that affect them.



Understanding the Individual

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:

Theme two: Positive and effective relationships





Positive and effective relationships

Principle Three: Collaboration with parents/carers and other professionals and services.

Competency Five: I engage with parents/carers and involve them in contributing to decisions about their child’s education and future prospects. I establish and develop ways to communicate and share information, ideas, and progress.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I facilitate the exchange of information between members of staff, home, and relevant professionals. This includes identified special educational needs, the provision required to meet these needs and the pupil and parent/carers wishes.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I am aware of the importance of understanding the needs of parents. This includes parents who themselves may have diagnosed or undiagnosed autism as well as families from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I use or contribute to learning journals and summaries to support learning at home and to enable a consistent approach.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Local authorities, Early Years providers and schools should enable parents to share their knowledge about the child and give them confidence that their views and contributions are valued and will be acted upon. At times, parents, teachers and others may have differing expectations of how a child’s needs are best met. Sometimes these discussions can be challenging but it is in the child’s best interests for a positive dialogue between parents, teachers and others to be maintained, to work through points of difference and establish what action is to be taken (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:21).



Positive and effective relationships

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Positive and effective relationships

Principle Three: Collaboration with parents/carers and other professionals and services.

Standard Six: I collaborate with health, social care, and other professionals to improve educational experiences and outcomes for autistic pupils.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I engage in joint planning and working with health and education professionals beyond the setting to support language, communication, and emotional wellbeing, and to create an environment conducive to learning (this includes educational psychology, CAHMS, specialist autism teams, careers guidance, and transition support service).

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I am aware that the SEND Code of Practice highlights the importance of the Team Around the Child working in a multi-agency way. For example, this can include drawing up a plan of action that might lead to an Education, Health and Care Plan.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I am confident in knowing who the Team Around the Child is and how and when I might need their professional input.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Teacher Standards (2015), Standard 8: Teachers develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action (Keeping children safe in education, 2020:5).



Positive and effective relationships

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Positive and effective relationships

Principle Four: Workforce development related to good autism practice.

Competency Seven: I engage in professional development that enables me to address the needs of autistic pupils and to enhance and embed inclusive practice.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

My ongoing professional development includes self-directed learning, mentoring and coaching, discussion, and collaboration with colleagues.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I consult with my line manager and/or the Lead Practitioner and SENCO regarding my professional development needs.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I have attended training in autism and common co-occurring conditions that is relevant to my role and will or have scheduled refresher training.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

The local authority must set out information in its Local Offer on securing expertise among teachers, lecturers or other professionals to support children and young people with SEN or disabilities. This should include professional development to secure expertise at different levels (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:68).



Positive and effective relationships

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Positive and effective relationships

Principle Four: Workforce development related to good autism practice.

Competency Eight: I reflect on, note down, and gather data on the implications of my learning and development for my own practice, and ultimately for the autistic pupil(s) I work with.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I reflect on whether my own interactions and communications are enhancing the learning and wellbeing of the pupils I work with, and carefully consider the adaptations I need to make to my practice.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I reflect on and observe the impact of approaches and strategies I use with individual pupils and I change those if needed.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I reflect upon, discuss, and evaluate my practice in partnership with other staff.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Teacher Standards (2015), Standard 4: Teachers take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.



Positive and effective relationships

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:

Theme three: Enabling Environments





Enabling Environments

Principle Five: Leadership and management that promotes and embeds good autism practice.

Competency Nine: I create enabling environments based on what I know of the individual pupil and through making reasonable adjustments accordingly.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I am aware of the different forms of disability discrimination and our setting's legal duties under the Equality Act (2014) and am aware of my statutory obligation to create or support the creation of enabling environments through making reasonable adjustments.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I consider how autism affects an individual pupil (including levels of anxiety and stress) and whether reasonable adjustments have been made to support them.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I consider the accessibility of the learning environment for autistic pupils by taking into account potential physical barriers and communication and processing difficulties, as well as social demands of working with or being with their peers.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

The leaders of Early Years settings, Schools and Colleges should establish and maintain a culture of high expectations that expects those working with children and young people with SEND to include them in all the opportunities available to other children [...] There is a significant overlap between children and young people with SEN and those with disabilities and [many] are covered by both SEN and equality legislation (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:27).

Leaders are to ensure all learners, including those with SEND, get the information, advice, guidance and support to achieve their next steps and progress [...] Leaders are to provide the support for staff to make this possible (Ofsted Education Inspection framework, 2019).



Enabling Environments

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Enabling Environments

Principle Five: Leadership and management that promotes and embeds good autism practice.

Competency Ten: I create positive, supportive, and caring relationships, between autistic pupils and staff, between autistic pupils and their peers, and between staff and parents/carers. I work hard to address barriers to learning. This includes reducing the risk of social exclusion.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I create an inclusive learning environment through promoting positive attitudes and behaviours toward autistic pupils at all times.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I implement approaches to develop mutual understanding, positive communication and support between autistic pupils and their peers. I build effective relationships by actively listening to and observing pupils, and by communicating regularly and positively with parents/carers.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I implement approaches to develop the mutual understanding, communication, and support between autistic pupils and their peers.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Autism (APPGA, 2017) report highlights a lack of accountability is an important factor in the rise of school exclusions for autistic pupils.

The evidence suggests that children on the autism spectrum are regularly unlawfully excluded, with consequences for their academic progress, self-esteem and mental health. (APPGA: 'Autism and Education in England', 2017:13).



Enabling Environments

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Enabling Environments

Principle Six: An ethos and environment that fosters social inclusion for autistic pupils.

Competency Eleven: I understand the importance of focusing on identifying and addressing barriers to learning in the three areas of difference, namely social understanding and communication; flexibility, information processing, and understanding; and sensory processing and integration.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I consider the accessibility of the learning environment for autistic pupils by taking into account potential social demands of working with or being with their peers.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I identify, monitor, build, and maintain the mental and emotional wellbeing of autistic pupils and involve pupils in communicating how they view their ideal school.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I assess the sensory needs of pupils and construct a sensory assessment for or with the pupil to determine whether modifications to the environment are needed.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action (Keeping children safe in education, 2020:5).



Enabling Environments

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Enabling Environments

Principle Six: An ethos and environment that fosters social inclusion for autistic pupils.

Competency Twelve: I provide a clearly organised classroom and an environment that takes into account the needs of autistic pupils.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I ensure the pupil has a safe space they can go to when they need a break and they have the means to request this. If they are unable to request a break themselves, I will know when to prompt a break.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I support verbal and non-verbal communication through a range of approaches, including the organisation of the school, visual aids, reducing and simplifying language, and providing sufficient time for processing and understanding of language instruction.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I use objects, pictures, and visual timetables to support understanding and learning, and promote independence.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Teachers' Standards (2015), Standard 7: Teachers manage classes effectively, using approaches that are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them.



Enabling Environments

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

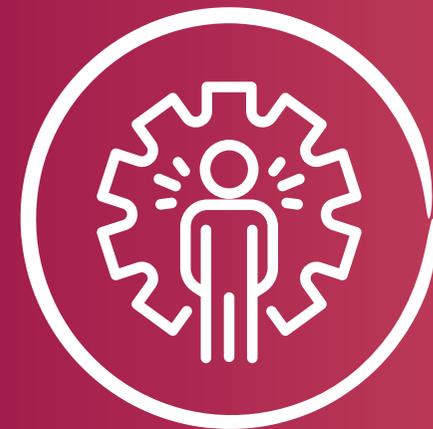
What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:

Theme four: Learning and Development





Learning and Development

Principle Seven: Targeted support and measuring the progress of autistic pupils.

Competency Thirteen: When assessing progress towards learning goals, I have a holistic approach that builds on strengths and interests, whilst addressing skills and understanding that autistic pupils may find difficult as a result of their autism.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I actively involve parents, pupils and external professionals, as appropriate, in the identification of strengths and needs, in setting shared learning objectives, and in reviewing and assessing progress.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Assessment approaches are adapted in line with the needs of the pupil, and include tools developed specifically for autistic pupils.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I am flexible in adapting assessments, behaviour policy, homework, lesson planning, and teaching to account for different ways of thinking and interacting with the world.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

A detailed assessment of need should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual should always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs and seek to address them all (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:96).



Learning and Development

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Learning and Development

Principle Seven: Targeted support and measuring the progress of autistic pupils.

Competency Fourteen: I am involved in and contribute to the development and implementation of pupil-centred education plans in partnership with pupils, parents, and other staff. These include details of how the staff can support the pupil.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

Pupils have individual one-page profiles and pupil-centred education plans that are tailored to their strengths and needs, have clear learning targets and strategies, and monitor progress. These aim to improve the pupil's quality of life by reflecting their strengths, needs, skills, and experience.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I initiate one-page profiles and pupil-centred education plans promptly. They focus on communication and joint social interactions, and include opportunities for peer collaboration and home/school links to support the generalisation of skills.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Pupil-centred education plans combine information from the student, their family, and staff who know them well.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Early years providers, schools and colleges should know precisely where children and young people with SEN are in their learning and development. They should ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children and young people themselves; have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them; track their progress towards these goals; keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them; promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:25).



Learning and Development

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Learning and Development

Principle Eight: Adapting the curriculum, teaching, and learning to promote wellbeing and success for autistic pupils.

Competency Fifteen: I strive to understand autistic pupils and I embed inclusive practice in my teaching approaches and learning environments.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I see social communication skills as a foundation for learning and a key predictor of positive long-term outcomes. I prioritise the development of communication skills such as joint attention, communication, speech, and vocabulary, as well as turn-taking and interactions with peers.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I develop and promote social and emotional skills through relationships and sex education (RSE), personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education, as well as in the wider curriculum. Autistic pupils have access to enhanced and differentiated learning and teaching in these areas.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I understand the need to provide support for pupils in developing personal, social, and independence skills.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Early years providers, schools and colleges should know precisely where children and young people with SEN are in their learning and development. They should ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children and young people themselves; have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them; track their progress towards these goals; keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them; promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress (SEND Code of Practice, 2014:25).



Learning and Development

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:



Learning and Development

Principle Eight: Adapting the curriculum, teaching, and learning to promote wellbeing and success for autistic pupils.

Competency Sixteen: I promote positive attitudes towards autism and have high expectations for all the pupils I work with.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Examples of how we can do this:

I embrace and celebrate differences between pupils and promote awareness and acceptance of autism.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I am committed to staying attuned to recognising a pupil's strengths and talents, and to encourage others to do so.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

I develop a culture of high ambition and aspiration for all pupils and this includes autistic pupils.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOPING

I DO THIS REALLY WELL

Links to statutory frameworks

Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people (Equality Act, 2010:17).



Learning and Development

How do I document evidence of working on this competency?

I document evidence of working on this competency through case studies, keeping one page profiles and support plans up to date, making reasonable adjustments and recording the impact of these.

Evidence to show how I meet this competency:

What has been the impact of implementing this competency?

On my own practice:

On parents/carers:

On autistic children:

Additional information

Please click [here](#) to access further information on:

- AET materials
- Guidance, legislation, and statutory frameworks
- Further examples of how to action the Standards
- Useful websites
- Further reading



Author and Acknowledgements

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Professor Karen Guldberg

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