



Autism  
Education  
Trust

Work-Based CPD

# Upskill Your Workforce: Drive Inclusive Practice

We explore the biggest challenges Schools and Trusts tell us they are facing in the fast-evolving world of SEND education.



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## The Biggest Challenges Schools and Trusts Face

1

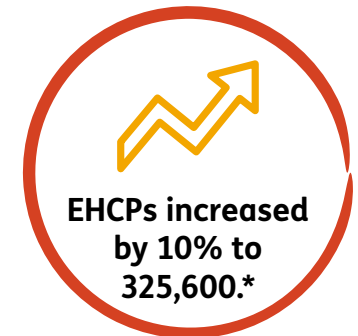
**Meeting the Diverse Needs of Students:** Schools and Trusts today serve a wide range of students with diverse needs, including autism, dyslexia, ADHD, and more. Tailoring support for each individual student can be challenging for staff for several reasons, with autistic students' needs often varying significantly.




There are over  
**180,000** autistic  
pupils in schools in  
England.\*

2

**Limited Resources:** Many Schools and Trusts face budget constraints and limited resources, making it difficult to provide specialised support for SEND students. This includes hiring and training specialised staff, purchasing assistive technology, and creating accessible and inclusive learning environments.



  
EHCPs increased  
by 10% to  
**325,600.\***

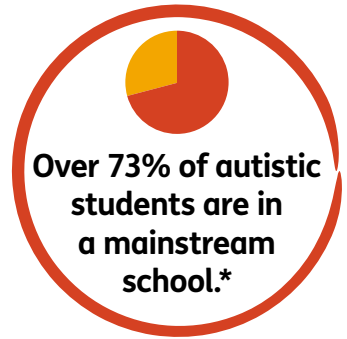
3

**Legal Compliance:** Schools and Trusts must comply with the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which outlines responsibilities for providing SEND support. Meeting these legal obligations, which include producing evidence for Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans, can be complex and time-consuming.

## The Biggest Challenges Schools and Trusts Face

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**Teacher Training and Continued Professional Development:** Varied levels of expertise and a mix of experienced and less-experienced staff in different academies can lead to disparities in how autistic learners are supported - negatively impacting students' progress, and a School and Trust's reputation. Ensuring that all staff, including teachers and support personnel, are adequately trained, aware and up to date with recognised best practice for supporting SEND students is a challenge. Training programmes and ongoing professional development can be expensive, time-consuming and resource intensive.



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**Inclusion and Accessibility:** Promoting inclusive practice and accessibility is a priority for Schools and Trusts. Done well, it can support a growing Trust's reputation and brand, but it can be challenging to create learning environments that accommodate the needs of all students. This includes physical accessibility, communication supports, and adapting teaching methods to different learning styles.



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**Communication and Collaboration:** Effective communication and collaboration among staff, parents and families, external support agencies and the autistic student is essential. Implementing communication strategies that connect home and school requires consideration and consistency to achieve positive outcomes.

## The Biggest Challenges Schools and Trusts Face

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**Recruitment, Training and Professional Development:** Providing ongoing training and professional development for staff to understand and support autistic students is crucial to attract and retain staff, but it can be challenging to ensure this is consistently delivered and cost-effective. Staying updated with best autism practice guidelines is essential for the success, growth and reputation of a Trust.

30%

of children with  
an EHCP are  
autistic.\*

8

**Mental Health and Well-being:** Autistic learners may face higher levels of anxiety, stress, and social differences. Understanding how to support students' mental health and well-being is crucial, particularly during key transitional stages such as between academies, year groups, or from school to adulthood where a big change can be unsettling for many autistic children and young people.



Exclusions  
increased to 6495  
in 2022-23.\*

9

**Data Collection and Monitoring:** Collecting and analysing data to assess and benchmark the effectiveness of autism training in delivering evidence-based impact can be complex, requiring the right systems and expertise to support a Trust's drive to make data-driven decisions.

Addressing these challenges requires a strategic approach that involves training, resource allocation, collaboration with a trusted autism training partner, as well as a whole-Trust commitment to inclusivity and diversity.



## Meet the Demand for Good Autism Practice with the AET Work-Based Programme

To meet demand for cost-effective and consistent autism expertise throughout the School and Trust we have crafted an innovative programme of online learning units that address key concerns while providing the following five essential benefits:

### 1. Upskill Your Workforce In-House with Ease

Our online units are designed to empower a whole School / Trust workforce with the knowledge and skills needed to create a more inclusive learning environment and help reduce pupil exclusions.

By upskilling your workforce, Schools and Trusts can ensure that all autistic learners receive the support they need and deserve to experience a positive education that supports their wellbeing.

### 2. Support the SEND Needs of Autistic Learners

Trusts and Schools aim to provide the highest quality education for all their students, including the growing numbers of autistic learners.

SEND can present unique challenges for both educators and students.

Our units are designed to equip all staff with practical strategies and insights on how to support autistic learners.

### 3. Align Your SEND Provision with the OFSTED Framework

All practitioners will be aware of the importance of adhering to the OFSTED framework.

Our programme is designed to help your school/s align its SEND provision with OFSTED's expectations, ensuring that you're well-prepared for inspections and can demonstrate your commitment to providing the best education for all students.

### 4. Meet Local and National Autism Strategy Targets

Meeting local and national autism strategy targets is crucial to advancing the inclusivity and quality of education.

Our units provide your staff with the knowledge and tools to not only meet these targets but exceed them, making your School and Trust a leading example of good autism practice in the UK.

### 5. Implement a Scalable and Cost-Effective Approach to Good Autism Practice

We understand the budget constraints that Schools and Trusts face.

We offer a scalable, sustainable and cost-effective solution to deliver the highest standard of autism practice across all your schools.

By investing in AET's Work-Based CPD Programme you're investing in the future of your students, your staff, and the long-term success of your School or Trust.



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## Embedding good autism practice can:

- ✓ Boost your School and Trust's brand and reputation
  - ✓ Empower your staff, align your provision with OFSTED
  - ✓ Help you achieve local and national autism strategy targets
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## Find out more about the Autism Education Trust's Work-Based CPD Programme today:

 <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/house-cpd-programme-schools-trusts>

 [info@autismeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:info@autismeducationtrust.org.uk)

\*All stats in this report can be found:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>