



The CYGNET programme is for parents and carers of children and young people aged 5 – 16 and is delivered by staff from the Autism Support Team (High Incident Needs Team). It provides parents and carers who have an autistic child and has been diagnosed in Northumberland with the opportunity to access the programme virtually or face to face. It is a chance to network with other parents and carers to discuss their lived experiences of autism.

The face to face course is held in the family hubs at Blyth, Hexham, Ashington and Berwick.

The sessions cover:

- An introduction to autism
- An autism overview and the parent / carer experience
- Thinking and sensory
- Social interaction and communication
- Understanding and supporting behaviour

Session 1

An Introduction to autism:

- An opportunity for parents to introduce themselves
- Discussions around myths and facts in relation to autism
- Opportunities to ask any questions

Session 2

An autism overview and the parent / carer experience

- Discussions with regards to individual experiences
- Overview of how an autistic child may view the world – this will be expanded on in subsequent sessions
- Acknowledgement of child's strengths and challenges

Session 3

Thinking and sensory

- Differences in social imagination and the benefits to autistic children of routines and interests
- The autistic experience in relation to the senses will be explored

Session 4

Social interactions and communication

- Differences in communication and interactions in autistic children
- Look at the reasons for the differences in autistic children in relation to their communication and social interactions

Session 5

Understanding and supporting behaviour

- Explore the reasons why behaviour may present as challenging
- Recap over supportive strategies
- Discussions around additional strategies which could be implemented

Session 6

Analysing behaviour

- Exploring two differing frameworks to analyse behaviour
- Considerations in how to best support the child
- Address any challenges that you and your child is experiencing

Session 7

Group choice

- If any members want to recap over previous content
- A question and answer session
- It is up to the group to decide!