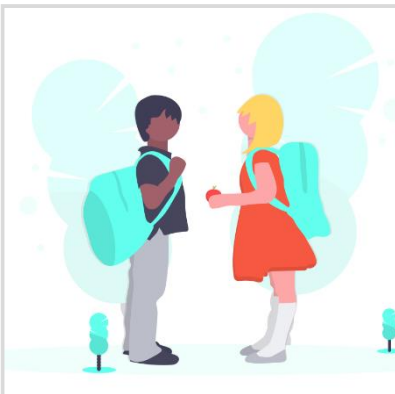


Pre-Assessment Information



Why is my child being offered this assessment?

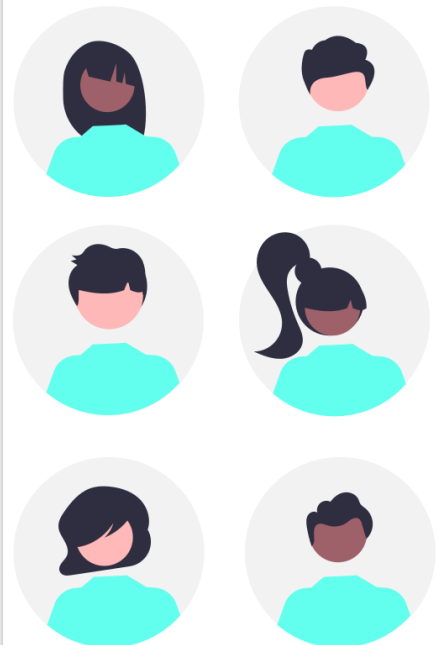
Your child has been referred to the Autism Assessment Service which involves finding out about their strengths and challenges, and any difference in their development (e.g. understanding and use of language, behaviour, social and communication preferences).

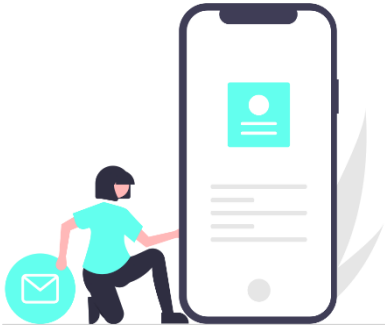
Who is in the assessment team?

The assessment team will include some of the following:

- Speech & Language Therapists
- Clinical Psychologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Assistant Psychologists
- Assistant Practitioners
- A Consultant Pediatrician may also be involved in the assessment process.

You will be unlikely to meet all the members of the team.





Who do I contact if I have questions?

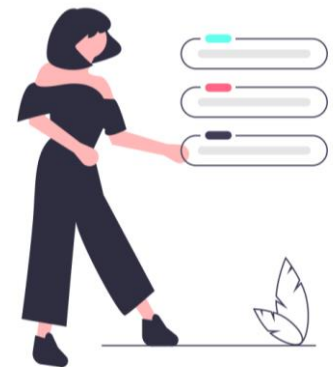
E-mail – hdft.autism1@nhs.net

Child Development Centre, Harrogate: 01423 557471

Child Development Centre, Northallerton: 01423 542498

What will happen after my child's assessment?

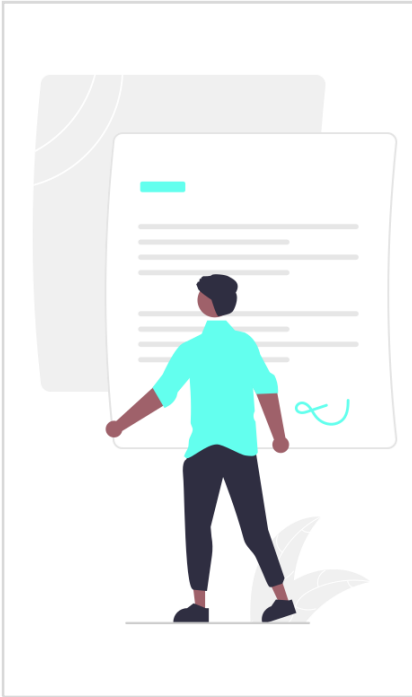
Once the assessment process is complete, the Autism Assessment Team discusses the findings at a diagnostic decision making meeting. This meeting can include clinicians who were involved in your child's assessment, other members of the autism assessment team and may also include a paediatrician.



As soon as possible after diagnostic decision making meeting, you will be offered a feedback session to share the outcome of the assessment. We will discuss the support that might benefit your child. We may ask your consent to refer your child to other services and will also discuss with you who we will share this information with.

After the assessment, we will send you the final written report, summarising the assessment and the outcome. You will also be sent a follow-up pack of information that signposts you to useful sources of information and offered a follow-up session so that you can ask any questions.





What happens before the assessment?

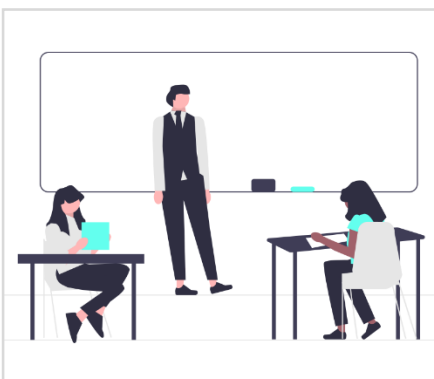
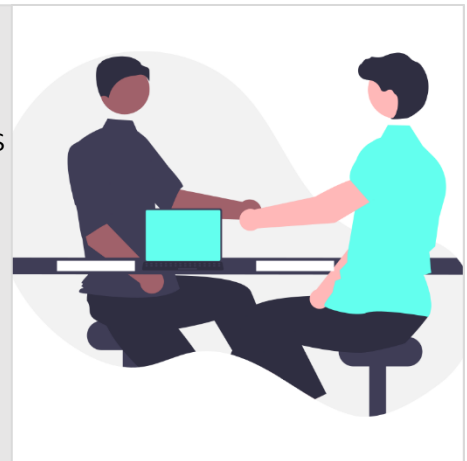
If you haven't made the referral for your child/young person yourself, the referrer needs to make it clear that you consent. If your child is over 14 and able to decide for themselves, they need to agree to have the assessment too. By opting into our service, you give us permission to use information on your young person to make a decision on whether they are autistic or not.

We have a range of forms for you to fill out on our website to give us more information about your young person.

What does the assessment involve?

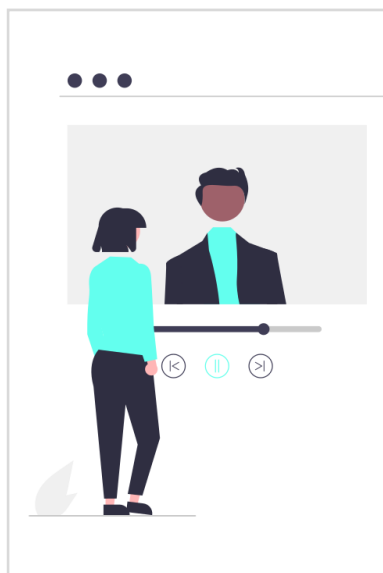
The assessment is carried out over a number of weeks and will involve different appointments, which may include:

- A detailed interview with parents/carers
- A clinic-based assessment of your child's communication, social interaction and play.



We may also undertake an observation of your child in their educational setting if we are unable to make a decision based on information gathered and the other parts of the assessment. We will let you know if any additional assessments are needed.

Parent/Carer Interview



Type of appointment? This will usually be via a phone call or video call

How long? Usually between 1.5-3 hours

Who needs to be there? At least one parent/carer who has known the child throughout their life. You can also have other family members or a friend present, if this is helpful to you. **Due to the nature and intensity of this discussion, it is important that you protect the time to talk without distraction.**

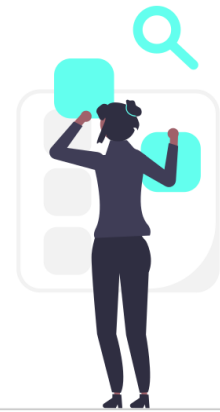
How can I prepare?

It would be helpful if you could find any records you might have from when your child was younger to help you prepare for questions about your child's early development. Examples of records could include their red development book or a baby book where you have written down things like their first words/steps or reports from a nursery or childminder. Reading through these records and perhaps watching any old recordings you have of your child as a baby/toddler could be very helpful to refresh your memory.

The areas that will be covered in the interview include:

- Milestones, like when your child first walked, said single words/short phrases, was toilet trained, etc.
- Their early play
- Communication, including non-verbal communication, like whether your child nods/shakes their head, points or uses gestures
- Friendships
- Understanding feelings/showing feelings
- Any special skills, interests/hobbies.

It is okay to include any notes, observations or questions you might have. It is also okay if you can't remember some things about your child's development. The interviewer will aim to make the session as comfortable and relaxed for you as they can. Lots of families find the experience quite positive, as it gives them an opportunity to talk about what they find challenging, and what they really value about their child.



Child/Young Person's Assessment



Type of appointment? This will usually be face to face.

How long? Usually around 1-1.5 hours

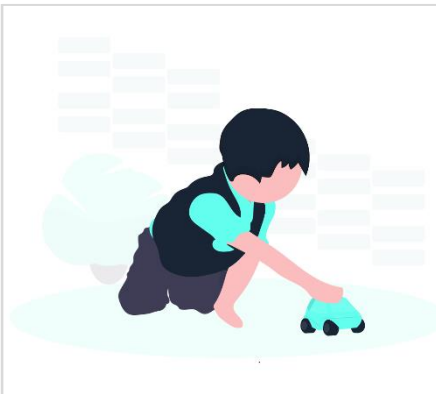
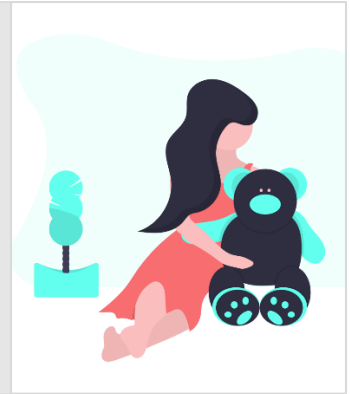
Who needs to be there? The child / young person. We will ask their parent/carer to wait in the waiting area during their appointment if the child is old enough and comfortable coming into the session alone.

Where? This appointment will be at one of 2 locations:

- Child Development Centre, Harrogate District Hospital
- The Friarage Hospital, Northallerton

If you rely on public transport and cannot make the location you have been allocated, let us know as soon as possible and we may be able to offer you an appointment at the location that suits you best.

The assessment is a child friendly experience, tailored to suit your child's age and it progresses at their pace. It is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. We explore and find out what your child is good at and if there are situations they finds more challenging



We do this by using tasks appropriate to the age of your child such as doing puzzles, looking at toys/resources and talking to each other. We may ask to film the assessment to help us gain the fullest possible picture of how your child interacts.