

## Frequently asked questions (FAQs)



### My child has been referred to the MDT: What is the MDT?

The MDT is a team of professionals from different agencies that have specialist knowledge of Autism and Social Communication Difficulties. The MDT work to the NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidance for Autism.

### Who is in the team?



- Consultant Community Paediatrician,
- Speech & Language Therapist,
- Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist and or Clinical Psychologist.
- Specialist Teacher
- The MDT Co-ordinator and Case worker
- Depending on your child's needs they may be seen by other services and this will be confirmed in the referral acceptance letter.

### How do I know if my child's referral has been accepted?

The MDT jointly triages (reviews) all referrals; the professional who made the referral will receive a letter to confirm if the referral has been accepted or declined. Parent/guardian will be copied into this letter also.



### How often does the team meet?

The team meet once a week to discuss children's assessments.

### How is parent information included in the meetings?

The team consider parental information that was included in the

- Referral
- Community Paediatric report
- Speech and Language Therapy report
- Other documentation you may have been asked to complete

### What does the MDT provide?

The team provide a forum to discuss and agree an outcome from assessments undertaken for a child/Young person. Outcomes may include the following

- Meets the criteria for a diagnosis of ASD
- Does not meet the criteria for a diagnosis of ASD
- Alternative diagnosis to be explored

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### How long will the assessment take?

There is no set timeframe for completing the assessment. Each child is different; therefore the assessment will vary from child to child depending on their needs. Nationally the time scale for assessments can vary, in Halton children referred are discussed by the team in order of their referral date.

### Why does the process take time to complete?



Autism is a lifelong diagnosis; there are currently no blood tests or scans that can be done to confirm a diagnosis. The diagnosis is agreed based on a number of assessments over a period of time. The team may in some cases want to allow more time to monitor a child's progress we call this 'watch and wait'

### Who do I call and ask for when I have a query?



First point of contact is the MDT Administration Team or the MDT Co-ordinators; they can be reached on telephone number 0151 495 5466 or by email: [bchft.haltonmdt@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.haltonmdt@nhs.net)

### How will I be kept informed along the process?



The MDT Administrator or Co-ordinators will contact you after they have been discussed.

### What support will my child receive during the assessment process?

It is important to remember that the MDT is an assessment and coordination process. Your child will be under individual services that can provide ongoing support during the MDT assessment process.

Schools and Early Years Settings will continue to support children who have additional needs and involve any other professionals as required for further advice. Schools may involve other professionals as appropriate i.e. Educational Psychology, School will discuss and gain consent from you if this is felt appropriate. Additional support is based on your child's needs and not a specific diagnosis.

The 0-19 Service (Health Visitors for children under 5 and School Nurses for school aged children) can offer support above the universal level and also signpost you to other services depending on the needs of your child or young person.

The Local Offer is a good website to find a range of local services that might be able to offer you and your family support. You can access this by typing Halton Local Offer into your search engine or follow the link [www.localoffer.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk](http://www.localoffer.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk)

### What happens when the process is concluded?



The outcome of the assessment will be shared with you via a Family Feedback Report. You will receive this in the post once it has been

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signed by a Consultant. Parents can contact a member of the MD admin team to discuss any queries afterwards if required.

Please note we do not give the outcome of your child's diagnosis by telephone.

### **School have said that I cannot apply for an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) without a diagnosis being finalised is that true?**

This is not correct; EHCP's are based on a child's presentation of need not their diagnosis.

Schools are able to provide additional support as part of a graduated approach; however if your child's educational needs cannot be met at this level the school can apply for an EHC Needs Assessment.

For some school provision they would require a specific need is highlighted, however, this does not mean a diagnosis.

Parents/guardians are also able to apply for an EHC Needs Assessment and the process is described on the Local Offer.