



# Merton Autism Strategy Easy Read



**This is a plan to make life better for people with autism in Merton. This plan is for children, young people and adults with autism and Asperger syndrome**

# Why do we need a plan?



We want Merton to be a friendly place to live for people with autism and Asperger syndrome.



We want to make it easier to find out if you have autism, and easier to get help and support if you want it.



We want all people with autism to feel included.



We want everyone in Merton to know about the things that people with autism are good at, as well as the things people with autism might find difficult.



We want to make things better at school for children with autism, and make it easier for people with autism to get a job and live where they want to live.

# What is autism



Autism is a condition that lasts your whole lifetime. It affects how you understand other people and how you make sense of the world.



Everyone with autism is different. Some people with autism find these things difficult:

- understanding other people and telling people how they feel
- meeting new people and making friends
- being in loud places or where there are bright lights and lots of people



Some people with autism will be very good at these things

- understanding numbers and patterns
- thinking creatively and solving problems
- remembering things



About one out of every 100 people has autism.

# Part 1: Teaching people about autism



Teaching people about autism helps them to understand the problems that some people with autism might have. It also helps them understand the good things about autism.

## What we plan to do



Train doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers and children about autism, so they can help support people with autism in a better way.



Offer autism training to employers (owners of businesses), so that they know about the things that people with autism are good at and make it easier for people with autism to get a job.



Encourage autism 'champions' in all schools to help other teachers when they are working with people with autism.

# Part 2: Finding out if you have autism



Finding out if you have autism can be helpful for some people. You can have an assessment to check if you have autism and this can help you to get the right support.



We want to make it quicker and easier for children and adults to find out if they have autism.



We want to make sure everyone can get help if they are having problems with autism, even if they don't know that they have autism yet.

# What we plan to do



Make a new 'pathway' for children who want to find out if they have autism.



Make sure this new pathway is clear, and makes it quicker for children to find out if they have autism, with help and support along the way



Make it clearer for adults to find out if they have autism



Make sure doctors, social workers and teachers know about autism and how people can find out if they have autism.



# Part 3: Involving and supporting people with autism



Everyone with autism is different. We want to make sure that people with autism get the right help at the right time.



We want people with autism to be involved in decisions about the help they get.



We want to make it easier for people with autism to join in with social activities and get a job if they want one.

# What we plan to do



Ask people with autism to help us to make services that will work better for them



Make it easier for adults to find out if they have autism and get help from social services if they need it



Teach more people about autism, so that they know about the things people with autism are very good at, and the things they might find difficult.



Work with charities to make it easier for people with autism to take part in social activities



# Part 4: Helping young people with autism as they grow up



Growing up can be difficult for young people with autism

## What we plan to do



Make sure that children's services and adult services share information so that people with autism can move easily from one service to the other if they need.



Make sure young people with autism are involved in decisions about what happens as they get older



Make sure that young people with autism have the option to continue learning if they choose to, get a job or live on their own as they get older.



Make sure that children with autism and their families and carers know about the services that will be available to them as they grow up.

# Part 5: Supporting the carers and families of people with autism



We want to make things better for the carers and families of people with autism

## What we plan to do



Make sure there is clear information for carers and families about where they can get support



Ask carers and families to help design new services for people with autism



Increase the number of services which help parents and carers in the borough and make it easier for parents to use them

# Part 6: Information



We want to make it easier for people with autism to find out what help and support they can get.



We also want doctors, social workers and teachers to know more about where people with autism can go to get help.

## What we plan to do



Make the 'local offer' better and keep it more up-to-date. The 'local offer' is a website which tells you what services there are in Merton for people with special needs, including autism.



Make sure that information for people with autism is easy for people with autism to understand, including people with autism who do not speak English.




Find a way for people with autism to share their knowledge with other people in the local community.

# Next steps



We will make a group of people, including people with autism, who will be in charge of making sure that this plan happens over the next 5 years.

## Get in touch

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This easy read booklet about your information was made by the London Borough of Merton.

