



 The Toby Henderson Trust

**Multi-disciplinary Private**

**Child Autism Assessment**

# Who we are

We are a registered charity and Company Limited by Guarantee, who have been working within the field of autism for over 22 years, the last 10 of which have been heavily invested in assessment and diagnostic work. The Toby Henderson Trust's clinical team consists of staff who are experienced and skilled in the assessment and diagnostic process.

The Toby Henderson Trust offer private autism assessments for children, young people and adults. We are also commissioned by ICB's in a number of North Eastern localities and the Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) to undertake assessment and diagnosis for autism in children and adults. This is over a range of locations ie: Newcastle/Gateshead, South Tyneside and Northumberland.



# The benefits

**Getting an autism diagnosis doesn't define your child or who they are, but it can have some benefits which may include:**

- \* Ensuring that your child gets access to the support that they need in order for them to reach their full potential.
- \* Developing an understanding for themselves, and those around them, as to why they might find certain things difficult or why they might struggle with some things.
- \* An autism assessment can often lead to other co-occurring conditions being detected such as ADHD.
- \* And, it is equally as important that an autism diagnosis can mean that they may have interests that, as they grow up, can be used and people can harness their interests and motivations to ensure that everyone can get the best out of them.



# NICE

## National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

The Toby Henderson Trust follow the National Institute of Care and Excellence (NICE) guidance and provide a very thorough but clear and transparent assessment pathway. We have a number of very experienced and knowledgeable clinicians who are able to offer a multi- disciplinary approach to make sure that we carry out an assessment.

Over the last ten years that we have been carrying out autism diagnostic assessments, we are so proud that the feedback we have received has been incredibly positive. Our experienced clinicians invest a lot of time in ensuring that they have the most comprehensive information as possible to then reach a well considered diagnostic decision.



**Firstly, I'd like to start off by saying thank you to all involved at THT for making the path to diagnosis a smooth and accessible process. NHS waiting lists are so long , the services you offer are a lifeline. You all made us feel so welcome and at ease-it's very obvious you're passionate about what you do. I think this has to be the best money we've ever spent (the relief of knowing the outcome so quickly!) and the fact that you have made it accessible to families with very reasonable costs and plans is just amazing. Everyone we have dealt with has been lovely from beginning to end.**

***Mum of child, aged 5.***

# Our process

## Pre assessment triage

After you have carefully considered all of the information we have provided for you about our pathway, and you decide that you would like to proceed with an autism assessment for your child, we will send out a standardised screener and mental health and social care assessment. The cost for this triage service is £100 and is non refundable (This cost is in addition to the cost of the assessment). These should be completed and returned, along with the payment for £100.00. Upon returning the forms they will be reviewed by one of the clinical team members to ensure that this is the correct pathway for your child. One of our team will then contact you to explain the outcome of the review and whether we are able to proceed to the next stage of our autism assessment pathway.

## Proceed with assessment

You will then be sent an email containing all the relevant paperwork in order to proceed, including the invoice for the deposit and details of how to pay this. (Please note that the remaining balance will only be invoiced to you on completion of the assessment when you receive all of the reports). Furthermore, you will also be given some provisional appointments for your child's assessment to begin with us.

## Neuro-developmental history

A key element of the assessment process is to gather information about your child's development, including details of the pregnancy and birth, your child's early milestones as well as their education, play and communication skills, interests and possible sensory sensitivities. This will be an in-depth discussion which will take approximately a couple of hours to complete and can be done via Zoom video conferencing call, by telephone or Face to Face at Toby House, whichever you would prefer. Your child wouldn't need to be present for this. However, if they are older and wish to participate, then we would welcome their input in any discussions.

# Play-Based assessment or Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) assessment

## Appointment for your child to attend

You will be invited to bring your child to our centre, 'Toby House' in Bedlington, Northumberland, for a Play -Based or an ADOS assessment and either of these assessments should take forty five minutes to an hour to complete. Here, two members of our clinical team will meet your child and engage with them through play or through the semi-standardised ADOS assessment. Your child's chronological age will determine if your child will attend a Play Based Assessment or an ADOS. For a child or young person aged up to 11 years, a Play Based Observation and Assessment would be completed using a set of activities and games to engage your child in social interaction and to observe their responses to certain stimuli.



In the case of young people over the age of 12 years, your child would be invited to have an ADOS assessment. The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2) is an individually administered task based assessment, which is semi-structured and can provide a standardised measure for a person's social communication skills. Please note that the ADOS was designed to contribute to a clinical diagnosis but not to provide a diagnosis in its own right.



Should further clarity be required during an assessment under the age of 12, then we can carry out the additional element of an ADOS-2 too. The ADOS consists of five separate modules. Each module is designed to provide lots of opportunities for the person to demonstrate their ability to communicate clearly, relate socially and to use imagination and creativity to engage in tasks. The most appropriate module for the individual is also selected on the basis of their language.



# Education Discussion

We will also contact your child's educational placement, or if they are not currently attending school, then we will try to contact any alternative provisions that your child attends. This is done by means of a phone call and we would ask to speak to the person whom both yourself and school feel would be best placed to discuss your child's presentation whilst there, particularly looking at their social and emotional presentation, as well as their academic progress.



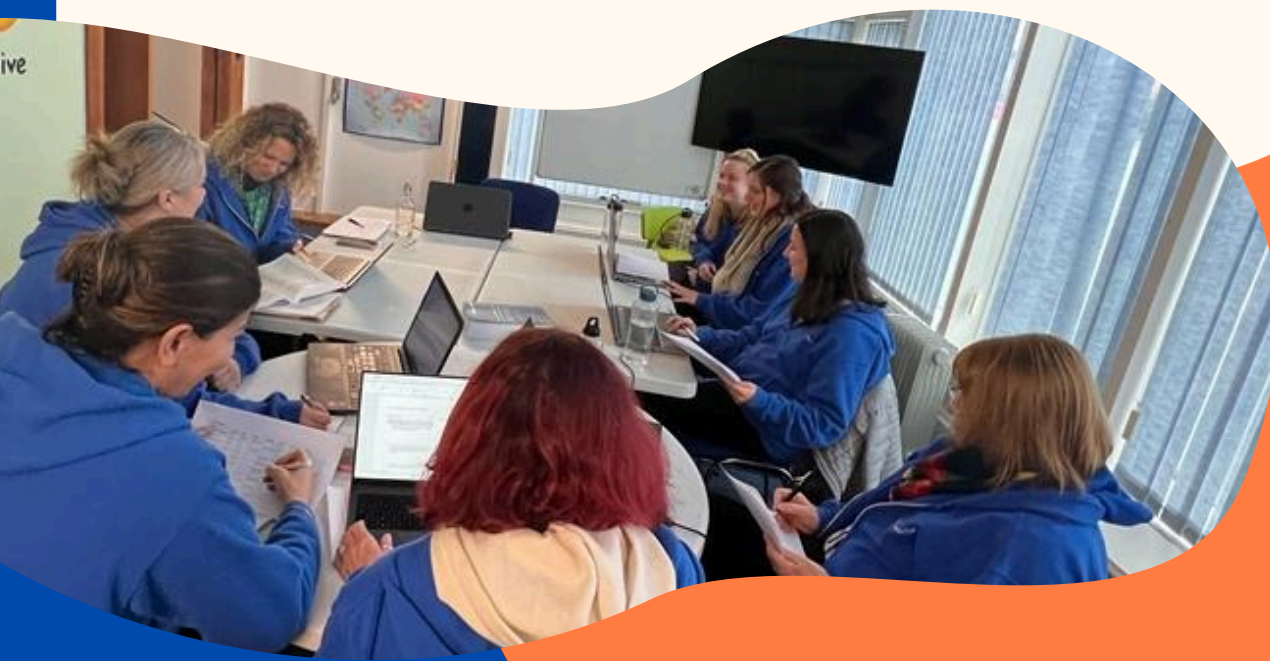
**Toby Henderson and all of your staff, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. The process from start to finish was easy, our son even found the assessment enjoyable! It is invaluable to have the evidence to support his needs through the detailed report which has been passed onto teachers and other people who help him. Thank you.**



# Multi-disciplinary Team Meeting

Once all the elements of the assessment have been completed, the team involved in your child's assessment will then write up their findings and observations in a report. These are then collated together and presented to our Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) for consideration of an autism diagnosis. The team includes 7 members of staff who are ADOS trained. They are a Practitioner Psychologist, Autism Nurse Consultants, Occupational Therapists, Speech & Language Therapists, Autism Nurse Practitioners, the Autism Service Manager and Play Specialist and the THT Director of Care Services. A number of the team also have teaching qualifications and are registered nurses.

Our team meet to review and discuss the information we have collated in line with the diagnostic criteria set out in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (edition 5), known more commonly as DSM-5. Well considered diagnostic decisions are made by the team and the outcome is shared with parents and carers. Following this, their GP and education setting will be notified of the diagnostic decision by post, where appropriate.





## Diagnostic report

Within 2-3 weeks of you receiving your child's diagnostic outcome verbally, we then endeavour send you a diagnostic letter confirming the outcome of your child's assessment. A copy of this letter is also sent to your child's GP for their medical records, and also to your child's educational placement, if this is appropriate. The diagnostic letter will also contain information about your child and more specifically how their presentation met the DSM 5 diagnostic criteria for autism. It also contains information and signposting to other relevant services that could potentially support you after you have received your child's diagnostic outcome. All reports are then sent out to yourselves as the child's parent/carer and they are then available for you to share if you so wish. The reports are then your property.

## Finally...

Our diagnostic pathway and process usually takes an average of 12 weeks from the date of your first appointment (but may be more timely). We are aware that on reading and discovering this diagnostic outcome for your child may leave you feeling overwhelmed. At The Toby Henderson Trust, we believe that everyone is different in their own way, with their own unique strengths and differences, whether they are autistic or not. During the assessment process with us, you can access pre, during and post diagnostic support with members of our specialist family support team. This entails an in-depth chat in a safe space, where you have access to specialist support, advice, strategies, suggestions & resources, as well as signposting to other relevant agencies and that much needed listening ear & understanding. These sessions can be face-to-face at Toby House, via Zoom, telephone call to suit the needs and flexibility of each family.

## Contact us

✉ [support@ttht.co.uk](mailto:support@ttht.co.uk)

🌐 [www.ttht.co.uk](http://www.ttht.co.uk)

☎ 0300 365 3055

📍 Earth Balance, Bedlington

**If you have any questions regarding our autism assessment pathway, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with us and we would be happy to answer any further questions you may have.**