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| **Early Year Setting Self Evaluation Tool** |

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| **School Name:** |  |
| **Date of Review:** |  |
| **Completed by:** |  |

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| **Learning with Autism** |
| Learning with Autism is a programme that has been developed by the Welsh Local Government Association to raise awareness of ASD in Early Year Settings, and is open to teachers, support staff, childcare staff, other early years staff, and all children. The programme can be accessed at [**www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/early-years**](http://www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/early-years). |
| **Notes on Self Evaluation Tool** |
| The Learning with Autism self-evaluation tool is based on the CSSIW Inspection Framework for childcare (2016).  A judgement scale has been incorporated to help determine areas that the early years setting needs to prioritise.  Those areas identified as Excellent may only need to be sustained whereas those assessed as Adequate or Poor may require prioritising in the setting improvement processes. |

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| **Judgement Scale** | |
| **Excellent** | Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice |
| **Good** | Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement |
| **Adequate** | Strengths outweigh areas for improvement |
| **Poor** | Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths |

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| **THEME** | **EXCELLENT** | **GOOD** | **ADEQUATE** | **POOR** | **WHAT IS EVALUATED** | **EXAMPLES OF WHAT GOOD MAY LOOK LIKE** | **EVIDENCE** |
| 1. **WELL-BEING** |  |  |  |  | Evaluations will always consider the child’s age, stage of development, additional learning needs and the child’s starting point, as well as the type of service they attend. | This is not a definitive list but provides examples of positive outcomes for children with ASD or social communication difficulties.  Providers/practitioners include child minders and those employed to work directly with children. |  |
| **1.1 To what extent do children with autism have a voice?** |  |  |  |  | Children with autism are supported and encouraged to make choices and decisions.  The social interaction and communication impairments experienced by the child with autism are understood, and all attempts at communication are valued.  Staff within the setting are able to recognise and respond appropriately when attempts at communication are displayed as challenging behaviours.  Systems and resources that support communication are available and utilised.  Adapted practice, Communication systems and resources are utilised to ensure that the child with autism is not disadvantaged because of their communication impairments.  The environment is inclusive, and children with autism are encouraged and supported to contribute ideas and views. | Setting staff use a range of autism strategies to encourage children with autism to express their needs and opinions e.g. PECs, Signalong, Makaton, visuals supports.  Children with autism are supported to make appropriate choices through the use of gesturing, pointing, choice boards, eye gaze equipment.  Children with autism’s special interests are reflected in key child planning and activities offered as a motivator to express their needs and opinions  Staff allow a child with autism extra time to process an instruction prior to expressing their view/opinion (extra processing time can take up to 15 seconds). |  |
| **1.2 To what extent do children with autism feel safe, happy and valued?** |  |  |  |  | Staff within the setting are to recognise that children with autism have difficulties expressing and showing emotions.  Children with autism are supported to cope with the significant change of going to a new environment and this may take a long time for them to settle.  Staff within the setting are to recognise that children with autism may display unusual behaviours i.e. Rocking, flapping, spinning, humming as a way of showing they are happy and settled in the environment.  Staff within the setting are to recognise and respond appropriately as a child with autism will not initiate interaction to make the member of staff aware if they are happy and settled in the environment due to having social interaction and communication impairments. | Enhanced transition plan put in place prior to entry to setting.  Extra transition visits took place, first when setting empty and then during session time.  Meet and greet policy in place with an identified consistent adult who supports entry and exit to Setting and who communicates regularly with parents/carers of the child with autism  Special interests of children with autism are used as motivators to learning.  Opportunities for children with autism to spend time in quiet, calm areas are planned into the daily routines.  Children with autism have access to a work station to carry out focussed tasks.  Children with autism are given opportunities to experience success on a daily basis e.g. backward chaining, short simplified tasks that do not rely on language or understanding of language as appropriate.  As the majority of children with autism are visual learners – staff to incorporate as many visual structured activities as possible into the learning and play environment.  Staff to provide visual activities with a start and an end to them so that children with autism are aware of what is expected of them.  Adults follow the child’s lead during play activities copying the child’s actions and extending the play when appropriate – staff to use commenting.  Children with ASD are supported to make friendships through adult modelling, playing alongside peers, turn taking with adult support, the use of social stories and other stories about friendships and turn taking. |  |
| **1.3 How well do children with autism interact?** |  |  |  |  | Children with autism:  Staff within the setting are to recognise and understand that children with autism have social interaction and communication impairments and will not always appropriately interact with other children.  Staff within the setting are to recognise and respond appropriately when attempts to interact are displayed as challenging behaviours or inappropriate social behaviours.  Adapted practice and resources are utilised to ensure that the child with autism are not disadvantaged because of their social interaction impairments. | Adults use suitable activities to engage a child’s attention e.g. using a favourite/motivating toy, exciting activity such as bubbles, puppets, visual matching activities.  Staff use ‘Teifi and Friends’, an animated film showing how children in early years settings can be kind and accepting towards peers with additional needs.  The use of intensive interaction and ready steady go games as a means of children with autism encouraging them to attempt to communicate/interact with an adult.  Children with autism are supported to interact with adults and peers through rewarding, stimulating activities along with turn taking and sharing activities.  Children with autism are supported to develop an awareness of their feelings and emotions and are learning to express them appropriately. Staff regularly label the feelings children with autism might be experiencing as they occur throughout the day. Feelings are reinforced through visual supports e.g. happy and sad faces.  Appropriate social interaction skills are taught e.g. good looking, good sitting, good listening visual cards with one person speaking at a time.  Routines and expectations are made very clear and are unambiguous through visual supports and clear positive messages. |  |
| **1.4 To what extent do children with autism enjoy their play and learning?** |  |  |  |  | Children with autism are supported and encouraged to play and learn.  Strategies and resources that support play are available and utilised.  Staff within the setting are to recognise and respond appropriately when a child with autism attempts to engage in play based activities or cannot participate in pretend/imaginary play.  Staff within the setting are to recognised and respond appropriately when attempts to access free play are displayed as challenging behaviours. | Staff are aware that children with autism may find new experiences and activities difficult to engage in – staff use visual strategies and supports such as whole setting routines visual cards, now and next, visual timetables, visual matching activities.  Staff are sensitive to children with autism’s anxieties and plan to introduce new activities gradually at the child’s own pace.  In order to support the children with autism to access play, staff to use “now and next” techniques, visual timetables and visual supports.  All staff model task requirements and do not solely rely on verbal direction.  Staff balance the use of sensory stimulating and sensory calming activities. |  |
| **1.5 How well do children with autism develop and become independent?** |  |  |  |  | Children with autism:  Children with autism respond well to structure and routine.  Staff within the setting are to recognise and respond appropriately when attempts at developing and becoming independent are displayed as challenging behaviours.  Systems and resources that support independence are available and implemented.  The environment is inclusive, and children with autism are encouraged and supported to become as independent as possible. | Staff are incorporating special interests into everyday activities.  Staff are using special interests to engage reluctant children in new activities e.g. dinosaurs in the sand, numbers in water tray etc.  Staff are differentiating for individual needs around any sensory issues a child with autism may have around food or placement of food on a plate  Staff are supporting children with autism to make choices through using various visual strategies in order to promote independence e.g. “now and next” card, visual timetable.  Visual prompts/schedules are available to support a child’s independence e.g. for hand washing and using the toilet. |  |

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| 1. **CARE & DEVELOPMENT** |  |  |  |  | Evaluations will always consider the child’s age, stage of development, additional learning needs and the child’s starting point, as well as the type of service they attend. | This is not a definitive list but provides examples of positive impact providers/practitioners have on good outcomes for children. Providers/practitioners include child minders and those employed to work directly with children. |  |
| **2.1 How well do Settings/practitioners keep children with ASD safe and healthy?** |  |  |  |  | Setting staff are fully compliant with statutory guidance to safeguard and promote the well-being of children with autism.  Setting’s policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting children’s well-being are implemented. These include:   * Child protection policy. * Health and safety including food hygiene and provision for infection control. * Fire safety. * Promote healthy lifestyles. * Safe administration of medication. * Supporting children with medical conditions. * Administering first aid. * Safety on outings and visits. * Internet safety. * Bullying. * The management of children’s behaviour including physical intervention and restraint.   **Child protection**  In considering how effective procedures for child protection are, inspectors should evaluate whether risks to children identified; the signs and symptoms of abuse are recognised and understood and whether the service’s Child protection policy is implemented correctly. | All staff fully understand policies and procedures and have completed the Learning with Autism Early Years programme and certification scheme.  Positive handling plans are in place for children who need them and are agreed with parents / carers.  Staff are aware of sensory issues relating to food and personal hygiene and adapt their practice accordingly.  Where possible settings prepare children with autism in advance for unexpected events e.g. using visuals and ear defenders to practice fire alarm procedures.  Children with autism are prepared in advance for outings/trips and mobile visual supports are available for them. |  |
| **2.2 How well do Settings/practitioners manage the interactions of children with autism?** |  |  |  |  | Staff within the setting are to recognise and understand that children with autism have social interaction and communication impairments and will not always appropriately interact with other children.  Staff within the setting are to recognise and respond appropriately when attempts to interact are displayed as challenging behaviours or inappropriate social behaviours.  Setting staff to have the knowledge and awareness to set realistic boundaries bearing in mind that children with autism have social interaction and communication impairment. | Staff are aware children with autism may have highly developed skills in some areas but very weak skills in other areas such as social understanding and receptive language.  Staff view children’s challenging behaviour as a means of communication i.e. the child expressing their need for support  Staff understand the need for structure, routine and consistency.  Where possible children are prepared in advance for any changes of routines.  Children are taught appropriate behaviours through modelling, visual supports, social stories and positive reinforcements.  Regular communication takes place between Setting and home to share appropriate effective strategies and approaches. This could be through face to face meetings or through a Home/Setting book. |  |
| **2.3 How well do Settings/practitioners promote children with ASD’s development and meet their individual needs?** |  |  |  |  | Setting staff provide a nurturing and caring environment taking into account that children with autism have social interaction and communication impairments.  Individual Play Plans (IPP) / Individual Development Plans (IDP) are devised and implemented to meet the individual needs of children with autism and reviewed in line with the Statutory guidance.  Setting staff differentiate activities to meet the individual needs of children with autism.  The environment is inclusive, and children with autism’s development is promoted and encouraged to reach their full potential by having their individual needs met.  Setting staff to track progress over time of children with autism to ensure they are reaching their full potential.  Setting staff to integrate support in an inclusive manner not to disadvantage children with autism  Setting staff to liaise regularly with parents on children with autism progress in line with Statutory guidance.  Support, advice and guidance from specialist outside agencies is requested, implemented and incorporated into IPP and IDP for children with autism in order to reach their full potential. | Person centred planning/Individual Play Plan meetings take place on a regular basis with parents/carers and outside agencies to set appropriate targets/actions which are reviewed regularly.  Provision to enable children to follow their special interests at appropriate times is available.  Developmentally appropriate visual supports are used to support children with autism.  Visual cues and unambiguous language are used by all staff to aid children’s understanding.  Staff use resources effectively to support children with autism.  Staff meet the developmental, play and social interaction needs of children with autism.  Children are given advanced warnings of changes in routine.  Staff adopt a calm, quiet approach and give children lots of time to process and respond to instructions.  Staff view challenging behaviour as the result of an interaction of factors and a possible means of communicating that the environment/situation is too stressful e.g. in terms of sensory overload. |  |

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| 1. **ENVIRONMENT** | |  |  | |  | |  | | The environment includes indoor and outdoor play areas or any other registered play space. Inspectors will take into consideration the type of service offered when evaluating the environment and consider the quality and suitability of resources and play equipment. | | This is not a definitive list but provides examples of how leadership impacts on positive outcomes for children. Leaders include child minders, registered persons, responsible individuals, person in charge etc. | |  | |
| **3.1 How well do Settings/leaders ensure the safety of the environment for children with autism?** | |  |  | |  | |  | | Setting staff to ensure children with autism are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment  Setting staff to understand and acknowledge that children with autism have no awareness of danger and can display risk taking behaviours. | | Staff have an awareness of pica and the risks this pose to children  Risk assessments include environmental adaptations.  Providers/leaders ensure risk assessments are comprehensive and include dangers associated with risk taking behaviours e.g. fleeing, seeking height, pica etc.  Routines and good hygiene practices are reinforced through visual supports e.g. handwashing routines. | |  | |
| **3.2 How well do Settings/leaders ensure the suitability of the premises for children with autism?** | |  |  | |  | |  | | Setting staff to recognise and understand that children with autism prefer neutral sensory environments.  Setting staff to recognise and understand that children with autism prefer to use the same route into and exiting the premises.  Setting staff to recognise and understand that children with autism do not cope well with change and will need to be prepared in advance for any changes to the premises.  Ensure the premises and any outside play areas are secure, welcoming, friendly and provide a rich environment for play and learning.  There is sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of children with autism. | | The décor within the Setting has been made sensory neutral.  Where necessary, children with autism are able to utilise different options of entering and exiting Setting.  Children with autism are supported in or provided with alternatives to whole Setting activities such as circle time where they find it difficult to cope with this – backward chaining technique is used.  The physical environment is well ordered and uncluttered.  Visual supports are used consistently throughout the Setting. | |  | |
| **3.3 How well do Settings/leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment for children with autism?** | |  |  | |  | |  | | Children with autism have access to furniture, equipment, toys and materials that are appropriate and suitable for their individual needs.  Setting staff to recognise and understand that children with autism may use resources and toys in different ways to fulfil their special interests.  Resources are of a suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to relevant safety standards.  Resources are clean and their maintenance complies with infection control principles.  Toys and play materials promote cultural awareness and equal opportunities.  Setting Staff to recognise and understand that children with autism may prefer to stay in one area in the outside area.  Setting staff should evaluate that there is sufficient child sized furniture, toys, resources etc. are available for children with autism.  Setting staff should ensure that the use of a wide range of sustainable materials is promoted. | | Resources to aid learning, including technology and sensory equipment are available to support children with autism to access the curriculum.  Resources are easily accessible to children with autism and are clearly labelled with pictures and words. | |  | |
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| 1. **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT** |  | | |  | |  | |  | | The type and nature of the service provided, including the arrangements to support the engagement of all staff in continuing their professional development, including participation in whole-service learning experiences. | | This is not a definitive list but provides examples of how good leadership impacts on positive outcomes for children. Leaders include child minders, registered persons, responsible individuals, person in charge etc. | |  |
| **4.1 How effective is leadership in settings for children with autism?** |  | | |  | |  | |  | | Leadership and management promotes Autism friendly practice and ensures that children with autism are not disadvantaged.  Leadership and management encourages inclusivity for children with autism.  Leadership and management is responsible for ensuring staff are appropriately trained and knowledgeable to meet the needs of children with autism.  Leadership and management ensure setting compliance to statutory guidance, policies and procedures.  Leadership and management promote the importance of the role of ALNCo/ASD lead in supporting and meeting the needs of children with autism to reach their full potential.  Leadership and management to have processes/procedures in place to track, monitor and review progress of children with autism. | | Settings undertake ‘Learning with Autism’ as part of the wider improvement agenda.  All staff are aware of the signs of autism and are aware of diagnostic referral routes if they suspect a pupil has autism.  There is a named person in the Setting who is able to provide information and advice on autism and specific information about individual children.  The role of the ALNCo / ASD lead is strengthened in order to provide expertise for children with autism within the Setting.  All staff are aware of the difficulties individuals have in trying to understand conventional social rules and systems.  Autism practice and provision is a regular focus within Setting meetings. | |  |
| **4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement for children with Autism?** |  | | |  | |  | |  | | Settings Improvement Plan and priorities through the self-evaluation process for ALN includes priorities for children with autism.  Settings self-evaluation process takes account of the views of practitioner, parents/carers, children, the management committee and other stakeholders applicable to service provision for children with autism.  Settings self-evaluation process draws on first-hand evidence of the quality of care provided for children with autism.  Settings self-evaluation process results in improvement in the quality of care, play and learning provided for children with autism.  Settings self-evaluation process takes into account whether concerns/complaints relating to provision for children with autism have been appropriately addressed.  Settings self-evaluation process results in improvements in the quality of care, play and learning provided for children with autism. | | There is a clear self-evaluation process for ALN which informs the Settings Improvement Plan and priorities.  There are clear priorities for improving ALN provision including provision for children with autism.  There is evidence that the expertise of the ALNCo/ASD Lead informs the priorities.  There is a quality assurance procedure in place in relation to the planning, teaching and reviewing of children with autism  Children with autism and their parents are listened to  Staff are supported to improve their skills and experience in working with children with autism. | |  |
| **4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners/staff and other resources for children with Autism?** |  | | |  | |  | |  | | Setting leader ensures that all cover staff have appropriate training to support children with autism.  Setting leader ensures that all cover staff have access to children with autism IPP/IDP and About Me Document so that they are fully informed about individual needs. | | All staff have undergone appropriate training in autism awareness and strategies to support pupils with autism.  There is specific ALN training including ASD awareness for existing and all new staff  Staff share information with other staff in a formal and informal way when they return from courses and conferences on autism.  A record of staff training in ASD and conferences attended is maintained.  Autism resources are available to support learners to access the curriculum.  The Setting actively seeks to and succeeds in removing barriers to learning and participation for children with autism.  The Setting is committed to and provides a high standard of support for children with autism. | |  |
| **4.4 How effective are partnerships for children with Autism?** |  | | |  | |  | |  | | Setting demonstrates effective partnership working for children with autism.  Setting demonstrates transition partnerships with parents / outside agencies prior to the child with autism attending the setting.  Setting works in partnership with parents and keeps them informed about the child with autism well-being, care, development and progress.  Setting works in partnership with outside agencies for specialist input for children with autism. | | The focus of partnership working is to improve standards for children with autism. There is regular partnership working which includes:   * Frequent communication between the Setting, LA, health, social services and the voluntary sector. * Consulting with external agencies during the development of policy and provision. * Working with parents to provide joint intervention programmes, and regular communication systems e.g. Person centred planning meetings/Individual Play Plan meetings. * Facilitating a range of opportunities for parents to liaise with outside agencies. * Working closely with other Settings, sharing best practice and exchanging information e.g. network meetings. * Ensuring arrangements to facilitate a seamless transition for children with autism are in place. | |  |