



Parent / Carers Guide

Information about your child's
Neurodevelopmental Assessment

Who will carry out the assessment?

The involvement of different specialists helps to make the assessment more accurate, as it allows different aspects of a person's experience and characteristics to be identified to provide the right clinical outcome and a personalised plan of support.

Our specialist team is made up of Clinical Psychologists, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, ADHD Nurse Specialists and Specialist Educational Needs Consultants. All assessments include at least three different professionals who make up the multi-disciplinary team. The range of professionals involved in your assessment will depend on the needs of your child as identified through the pre-assessment questionnaires.

Your child's assessment will be led by one of our Clinical Psychologists who will be able to provide a skilled and careful evaluation of the clinical information to help understand your child's behaviour and needs.

What is the purpose of the assessment?

The aim of the assessment is to understand the differences and difficulties that your child has been experiencing and possible causes. This may be a neurodevelopmental condition, such as autism or ADHD, or may be caused by other conditions or factors. We have different clinicians involved to provide a full in-depth and thorough assessment of your child's needs.



What do I need to do before the assessment?

Please send through all relevant information through to us. This includes any reports, previous assessments, school plans, appointment summary letters. All the clinicians involved will spend time reviewing all the information providing. This can be very helpful in understanding your child's needs.

What shall I tell my child?

It would be helpful to have a chat with your child about the assessment prior to coming to your appointment and be as honest as you can about what it is for. It is normal for young people and parents to feel anxious about the assessment. However, please be assured that our team are very experienced and our goal is to get to know your child – we will do our best to help them feel at ease. Our clinic assessments are play and activity based, so often it is a lot of fun!

What will happen when we arrive at the clinic appointment?

One of our team will let you into the building and you will be shown to the family waiting area. The practitioners will then come and introduce themselves and talk briefly about the reasons for assessment and what will happen before asking the young person into the assessment room with them. If your parental interview is taking place at the same time, you will be shown to another room with another clinician.

How long will the assessment take?

We usually complete the individual and the parental in clinic at the same time, and aim to complete the school observation within the following week. From your first appointment, you should receive feedback about the results of the assessment within the same month. However, sometimes assessments can be a little longer if we need to book in further assessments or more information is required. Sometimes delays occur due to not being able to get into school within the assessment month due to half term holidays for example. We will communicate any delays and updates with you.

What happens during the assessment process?

We like to get to know our families and young people well and ensure we have a thorough understanding of their strengths and difficulties. This enables us to provide, at the end of assessment process, a thorough report and feedback of our conclusions and understanding of a child. The assessment takes place over three separate appointments with involvement from multiple members of our specialist team.



Individual Assessment (in clinic)

We interact with your child, and see how they learn, play, and communicate, and observe their behaviours. For an Autism assessment, we use tasks that will test a child's communication and interaction skills. For an ADHD assessment, we use specific questions and tasks and have a computer task which measures inattention, activity, and impulsivity. The assessment appointment usually lasts an hour.



Parental/Carer interview (in-clinic or online)

It is important for us to gain an understanding of parent's views, about what they have noticed about their child, and the differences in their child's development. We talk through a child's history, and discuss any specific differences regarding communication, interactions, and play. This is either an in-clinic appointment with a Clinical Psychologist or an online appointment with one of our Educational Psychologists and usually lasts an hour.



School Visit (in setting)

We speak with nursery / school or college staff to better understand how a child responds in social situations, how they communicate with others, their activity levels, and behaviour, and if staff have observed any differences in their development. We also carry out an observation of a child in setting during a lesson and break time however we do not disclose when this will be as we prefer the young person not to be aware they are being observed.

What will happen after all appointments are complete?

The professionals meet to discuss all the information they have gathered about your child. If enough information and evidence has been collected then an outcome will be decided. Sometimes the team may feel they need further evidence or information to provide a clinical outcome, in which case further assessment will be required and you will be contacted regarding this.

How will I find out the outcome?

Once the team have reached a decision you will be called by one of clinicians involved in the assessment to provide the outcome. They will explain the decision and how our clinical conclusions were reached and discuss a plan of support with you. You will receive a full written report a couple of weeks after your feedback call. Once you have received the report, you will be invited to book in for an optional follow up appointment in clinic to discuss the outcome and plan of support further if you feel this would be beneficial.

What happens if I don't receive a diagnosis?

Many people who come for assessments do not receive a diagnosis, and we understand that while for some this is a relief, for others this can feel disappointing and difficult to accept. It is worth noting that while a person may appear to have traits or identify with the traits or characteristics consistent with autism or ADHD, it does not mean that they meet the threshold and criteria required for a diagnosis, and that there are other causes for these difficulties.

Where possible the team will offer an alternative explanation for your child's needs. You will still be given recommendations and suggestions for where you can access appropriate help and support.

What happens if I have further questions?

If at any point you have any questions either prior to or throughout the assessment process, please feel free to contact us and we will be more than happy to answer them for you. We are with you every step of the way and we want you and your child to feel supported throughout the assessment process.



Our Assessment Process



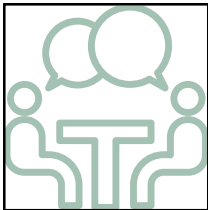
PRE-ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Once your referral has been processed, we need to ask for lots of information. Complete all of the relevant pre-assessment questionnaires so that we can match your child to the relevant professionals and provide scheduled appointments.



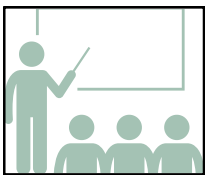
INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT - CHILD

The assessment appointment will be tailored to your child's needs and age based on the pre-assessment information we have been provided. This usually lasts for an hour and you may be invited back for additional individual appointments with different professionals.



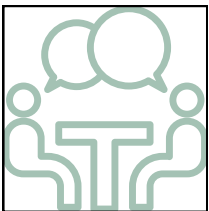
PARENTAL INTERVIEW - CHILD

It is important for us to gain an understanding of parent's views, about what they have noticed about their child, and the differences in their child's development. We talk through a child's history, and discuss any specific differences regarding communication, interactions, and play. This is with one of our Educational Psychologists or Clinical Psychologists.



SCHOOL VISIT

We will arrange to go and observe your child. We don't disclose with parents when this will be as we don't want the child to know that they are being observed. We observe during a structured lesson and a break time and we will chat to relevant members of staff while there.



PROFESSIONALS MEETING

Once all information has been gathered we will have a professionals meeting to discuss the outcome of the assessment. It may be concluded that we need more evidence to make a final decision or that further assessment is required, in which case we will invite you back for another appointment.



FEEDBACK APPOINTMENT & REPORT

When the professionals have agreed on a clinical outcome we will be in contact to discuss the outcome of the assessment and how our decision was reached plus recommended support strategies that can be put in place.

The report will then be finalised and go through clinical proofing before being sent to you and your referrer some time after the outcome was delivered.