



National
Autistic
Society

Autism Specialist
Award Advanced
2022



How is the NAS Earybird Plus programme delivered to parents/carers?

The Working Together Team are licensed facilitators of the EarlyBird Plus Programme

- Sessions are delivered **virtually**, via Teams, or **Face-to-Face** (parents/carers can indicate their preference on application)
- Meetings last for 2 hours, if online, and for 2.5 hours when Face-to-Face
- A small group meet for **8 weekly session**, with **2 optional extra sessions** 1:1 as home visits or online/phone discussions.
- The optional home visit/online or phone call will last no more than an hour

Who can I bring with me?

- Each family are allocated 2 places for the 'family' and 1 for a supporting professional , if appropriate (e.g. a teaching assistant who works with your child on a regular basis)
- All 3 places do not need to be filled to access the programme – some parents attend alone, others bring a grandparent or friend for support
- It will not always be possible for a professional to attend with you (depending on the capacity of any education setting to release staff) and you may not feel that this is necessary.

Do I need to attend all of the sessions?

- We appreciate that attending this programme is a big commitment (8 weekly sessions and 2 home visits) and so it may not be *right* for your family at this time.
- It is important that you try and attend every session, as the discussions build from week to week and the intention is to build a mutually supportive group
- The strength of the programme is the knowledge and confidence parents gain around understanding their child's autism and the relationships that are built as support is offered to each other.

Can I bring my younger child with me? Does my child need to come with me?

- The sessions are for *you* to develop your confidence about autism and meeting your child's needs. The children do not attend with you.
- Unfortunately, there is no childcare available at any of the Face to Face sessions for your younger children.
- To get the most out of the programme your focus really needs to be on engaging with the sessions – listening to others, offering support and reflecting on how the advice and guidance may be applied to your child and family.

Do I have to have a home visit? What happens during a home visit?

- The 'home visits' are **optional** and you can choose to have a 1:1 online catch up, or a phone call with one of the facilitators if you would prefer.
- The offer of these sessions is to enable parents/carers to chat with one of the facilitators to consolidate what you have learnt on the course so far and talk about concerns that are pertinent to you and your child.

How much does this cost?

- The programme is offered for FREE, although we do ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the resources (parent booklet – which is yours to keep)
- A 'guide' to this financial contribution is detailed in the accompanying information with the application form