



Autism and ASC-friendly communication

Autism and autism spectrum conditions (ASCs) affect how people communicate and interpret information, which can make it challenging to navigate social situations. But with a little understanding and some adjustments to the way we interact with others, we can make social situations more inclusive for everyone.

This guide gives you some helpful tips to improve communication with autistic people and people with ASCs, and tells you where to find more information or advice.



Tips for making conversation

- Address people by name, so they know that you're talking to them
- Be direct and avoid figures of speech, as non-literal language can be confusing
- Don't rely on non-verbal communication, like body language or facial expressions, because these can be difficult to interpret
- Don't read too much into other people's body language or facial expressions - remember that everyone communicates differently, and not everyone makes eye contact when they're paying attention
- Avoid open-ended questions, because they can be more difficult to answer - instead of 'how was your day?' try 'did you have a good day?'
- Don't ask more than one question at a time and give people enough time to process and respond
- Avoid overloading people with information
- Talk about topics that interest them - some people find small talk very difficult, but are happy to engage about the subjects they are interested in
- Be aware of the environment you're in - sensory stimuli, like lights, noise, and smells, can be overwhelming and make it hard for people to concentrate on a conversation
- Above all, be patient and give people enough time to process information and formulate replies - traa dy liooar!



Further information and advice

There are many online guides to help you communicate more effectively with autistic people and people with ASCs, including:

- National Autistic Society communication tips
- The Spectrum autism communications strategies
- Ambitious About Autism top tips for communicating effectively with autistic people

There are also local organisations who are happy to provide support, advice and guidance, including:

- The Autism and Social Communication Liaison Officer (ASCLO) can offer advice about supporting the communication needs of children and young people in education – asc@sch.im or call **07624 298781**
- Autism in Mann – autisminmann@manx.net or call **07624 480167**
- Autism Initiatives – paul.ormond-smith@autisminitiatives.org or call **01624 814801**
- Crossroads Isle of Man – info@crossroadsiom.org or call **01624 673103**
- Manx Mencap – support for people with learning disabilities – mencap@manx.net or call **01624 677289**