|  |
| --- |
| **Communication and Autism Team (CAT) – Parent Information**  **Who are the Communication and Autism Team?**   * The Communication and Autism Team (CAT for short) is part of Access to Education who are a group of services supporting children and young people with additional needs in schools in Birmingham. * Every mainstream school and academy has a Communication and Autism Team professional assigned to the setting.   **How does the Communication and Autism Team support schools?**   * We work together with schools to build their knowledge, understanding and skills to support children/young people with autism or significant social communication differences. * We support schools through the delivery of a package of training including Autism Education Trust Training; and through a School Partnership Plan based upon the Autism Education Trust Autism Standards. <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/> * We work with schools to ensure improved outcomes for autistic children and young people throughout their school.   **How does the Communication and Autism Team support individual children/young people?**   * We work in partnership with the school to embed good autism practice within the school community. * We may look at your child’s access to their classroom environment; their relationships with teachers and peers; their communication skills; their access to the curriculum; and sensory differences. * We may observe and/or work one to one with pupils in school. The work we do is dependent upon the child/young person needs. * We may use tools that we have developed such as our “All About Me” tool and our “Anxiety Tool” to gather your child/young person’s view of their experience in school. * We suggest strategies and model ways of working with children/young people to support them within their classrooms. Sometimes these do not work straight away so we will monitor with schools to help support your child/young person. * We support the child/young person to have their say about their school experience.   **How is my child registered with CAT?**   * We support children and young people with a diagnosis of autism and those on the pathway towards a potential diagnosis of autism. We also support children with significant communication and interaction differences. * The SENCo within the school or setting will ask you if you are happy for your child to be registered with our team. * Your child will only be known to our service following receipt of your signed consent.   **How do I contact my child’s Communication and Autism Team professional?**   * Email [CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk) with your child’s name and school. * A message will be sent to your CAT professional who will contact you as soon as they are able to.   **Do the Communication and Autism Team give support to parents?**  *CAT PAC (Parent Awareness Course):*   * We have developed a 6-week course for parents/carers called CAT PAC to support understanding around autism as well as giving parents/carers a chance to talk with others. * The course looks at different aspects of autism such as: communication and interaction; sensory differences; eating, sleeping and toileting differences; and supporting anxiety and emotional distress. * CAT PAC courses are delivered each term and invitations are sent to SENCos to pass onto you if you are interested in attending a course. * Courses are delivered remotely via Microsoft Teams or face to face at a school. * CAT also run coffee mornings within schools and across the city for parents to meet up and discuss experiences.   *Webinars*:   * We deliver webinars and sessions around specific issues in addition to the CAT PAC. Information will be sent via your school SENCo and can be found on the Local Offer website: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk> * Previous webinars which you can watch and listen to can be found via this link: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/webinars/>   **Will I meet my Communication and Autism Team professional?**   * Sometimes you will meet your Communication and Autism Team professional in school. * You are the expert on your child, and it is important that we work together to support your child/young person to reach their goals. * Sometimes contact will be via email, phone call or Microsoft Teams. We will try to keep in touch with you.   *Communication and Autism Team*  *Access To Education*  *Education and Skills Directorate*  *Birmingham City Council*  *Office: PO Box 17843, Birmingham, B2 2JR*  *Birmingham Local Offer: www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk*  *Access to Education: http://accesstoeducation.birmingham.gov.uk*  *Birmingham Local Offer: www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk*  *To contact CAT:* [*CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk*](mailto:CATParentEnquiries@birmingham.gov.uk)  Please note: Provision and support may change due to COVID restrictions. |