



# Attention Autism



# What is it?



- Attention Autism originates from the idea that successful communication is dynamic, engaging and joyful. We learn best when we work with enthusiasm, motivation and creativity. We remember good times and shared experiences.
- Children, whether they are autistic or not, make sense of the world around them by taking in information through their senses, working out what it means to them and relating it to what they really understand. They build a bank of knowledge and experience that shapes how they interact, develop and grow as individuals. The problems start when you are not sure what a child is taking in. What do you do if they don't seem interested or don't share any interests with you?
- This is the all too familiar problem when teaching children with autism - The answer is to make your interactions irresistible! Attention Autism has been designed to help parents and professionals give their child with autism an irresistible invitation to learn using fantastic activities and having a really good time whilst doing so.
- **The Attention Autism approach provides the child with an experience worth communicating about.**

(Attention Autism is an intervention created by Gina Davies. Drumbeat staff have adopted the framework, principles and ideas to best meet needs of Drumbeat pupils.)

# Some of the rules:

## As a leader:

- Remember the bucket belongs to you and only you!
- Be the most interesting and amazing thing in the room
- Use simple relevant language
- Teach! Don't test!
- Practise first
- Have fun!

## As a supporting adult:

- If you are in the room then you participate.
- You do not leave your seat. (It gives a message to the children that they have permission to leave too!)
- You do not record anything.
- You don't ask questions or communicate with the lead person or other staff members.
- You model how to sit and look at the bucket as if it is the most exciting thing you have ever seen.
- Aim to prevent a child from touching without speaking.



# Why do we use the 'Attention Autism' approach at Drumbeat?

- We need to work on concentration so we can plant an idea our pupils' head so we can talk about something that we both have shared and understand.

- What makes you want to communicate with someone?

Eye contact, gesture, facial expression, proximity, body language, shared experience.

- Attention autism works on these things!!

- Attention Autism builds on ASD strengths: Such as visual skills, a memory for motivating things and routines and lots of energy



# Why do we use the 'Attention Autism' approach at Drumbeat?

Pupils with ASD often have difficulties with their attention skills. People need to have developed attention and listening skills in order to understand and use language.

Attention Autism strategies can help us start at the attention level pupils are at and help them to build upon it.

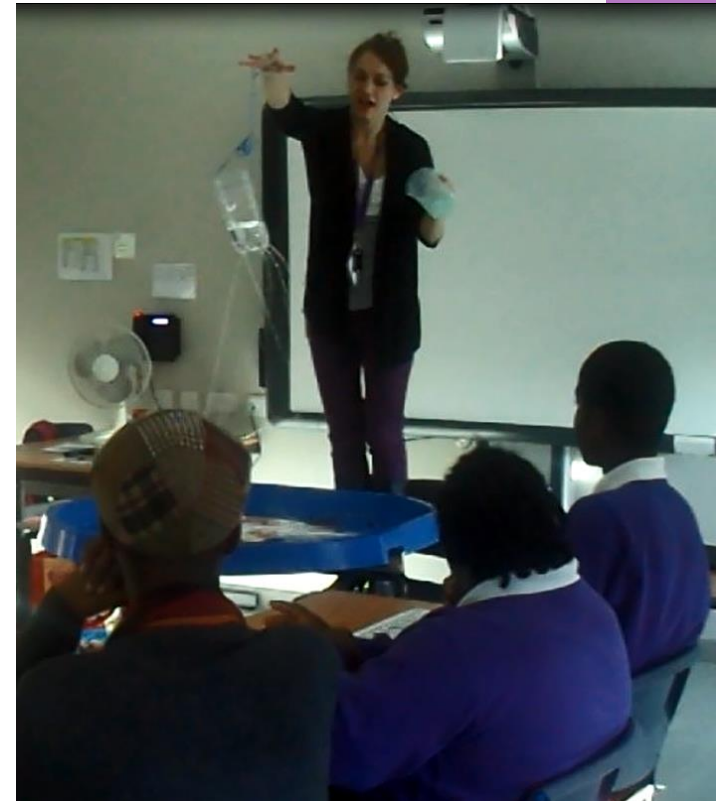
**The 4 stages of the attention autism approach help children at different levels.**

Stage 1- The Bucket: Everyone attends to the same thing chosen by the adult

Stage 2- Attention Builder: Pupils develop longer and sustained attention skills.

Stage 3- Turn-taking games: Pupil learn to shift attention

Stage 4- Independent work: Pupils focus, sustain, shift attention, transition and then refocus.



# How it links to the curriculum?

**At Drumbeat we use attention autism techniques to help:**

- Our concentration
- Story telling
- Independent working
- Cooking skills
- Art
- Commenting skills



- Understand scientific ideas
- Counting
- Anticipation
- Learn new vocabulary
- Work and play with our friends

**IT HELPS EVERYONE TO ACCESS THE CURRICULUM!**



# Evidence and Impact of Attention Autism



Everyone is attending to the same thing



Lewis takes a turn



Tiras and Ibs anticipating what will happen next



Bradley working independently



Jessein commenting spontaneously



Cameron and Anthony sharing what they can see

# What do we think at Drumbeat?

*'Attention Autism has been really effective in my class. It has helped the pupils with their focus, spontaneous commenting, anticipation and above all; it's fun!'*

(Claire, KS1 teacher)



*'Using the attention builders has helped me to think creatively about how I teach vocabulary and language concepts.'*

(Hannah, Speech and Language Therapist)



*'The attention autism approach has been so engaging and lots of fun. It has inspired me to think of new ideas. I love seeing the pupils complete their work independently.'* (Joanne, KS3 teacher)