



CASS Referral Guidance 2026-2027

The CASS team



Michelle Meredith - Assistant Head Teacher Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre – CASS

Michelle joined Trinity Fields School and the CASS team in January 2013. Previously, Michelle was the Head of the Caerphilly Specialist Resource Base for Autistic pupils aged 11-16 where she worked for 9 years. She was integral in developing the Resource Base into a highly specialist and successful placement for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism.

Michelle trained as a primary school teacher and specialised in working with Autistic children and young people. She has worked in a range of educational settings with young people aged 3-19.

Michelle has a postgraduate qualification in Autism, a diploma in Positive Behaviour Support, and is an intermediate Team Teach tutor for Trinity Fields. She has also completed a range of training in areas including Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP), 3-day TEACCH, Attention Autism, the Curiosity Program, total communication approaches, and is trained in mental health first aid. Michelle regularly attends training where she can listen to Autistic people and their families share their lived experiences and is a strong advocate for pupil voice.



Melissa Taylor- Home/School support

Melissa has worked for CASS since November 2020 as a home and school support worker. Prior to joining CASS Melissa worked at Trinity Fields school for two years as a teaching assistant.

Melissa has many years of experience working within mainstream schools supporting Autistic children and led a project across primary and secondary schools working with vulnerable children.

Melissa has previous experience of working with and supporting families as she previously organised a monthly playgroup for children with a range of additional learning needs.

**Annabel Hurley - Home/School Support**

Annabel has worked for CASS since June 2025 as a home and school support worker. Prior to joining CASS, she worked at Maes Ebbw school for 12 years as a level 4 Teaching assistant and Communication Lead.

Annabel has many years of experience in supporting Autistic children and children with a range of complex additional needs. She is a qualified SignAlong tutor and has level 4 BSL.

**Alison Evans - Home/School support**

Alison has worked for CASS as a home/school support worker for over 10 years. Alison previously worked with an outreach service for children with additional needs including children with Autism.

**Claire Hawkins - Home/School support**

Claire first worked for the CASS team from the very beginning back in 2006, Claire left the team in 2020 to focus on her own family; therefore, we are thrilled to have her skills and experience back in the team. Claire has previous experience working in nurseries and respite services in Australia, Claire is a registered foster carer and as a trustee for an Autism charity. Claire has lived experience of Autism, having two children with a diagnosis of Autism of her own.



Jo Tucker - Administrative Assistant

Jo joined the team in 2020 and has been an invaluable addition. Jo is an experienced administrator and is the first point of contact for anyone trying to contact the team.

All staff can be contacted at the following address:

Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre
Caerphilly Road
Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed
CF82 7XW
01443 866000
cass@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk

Summary of Privacy Notice: How we will use your information

The Caerphilly Autism Spectrum Service (CASS) will process referrals for support/advice either through training, home support, or school support. We will collate the information relevant to your request, your identity and contact details for the purposes of providing you with a response and correspondence. Involvement from CASS will involve collating/sharing information with other services areas within Caerphilly Country Borough Council and other organisations such as relevant schools/educational establishments, Health Boards, Careers Wales, Welsh Government, Special Educational Needs Tribunal Wales, SNAP Cymru and other Local Authorities. Your information will be kept for 31 years from your child's date of birth.

You have a number of rights in relation to your information including the right of access to information we hold about you and the right of complaint if you are unhappy with the way that we have handled your request or your information.

For further information on how we process your information, and your rights please click the following link:

<https://trinityfieldsschoolandresourcecentre.co.uk/media/d3zgrw4j/privacy-notice-cass-2022-final.pdf>

CASS – About Us

The Caerphilly Autism Spectrum Service (CASS) is part of the Resource Centre at Trinity Fields School. This team has been developed to support Autistic children, young people (CYP) and their families. The service provides support for staff and other professionals working with Autistic children and young people (CYP) up to the age of 18 years.

Support is directed towards:

- Parents and/or carers
- Children & young people with a diagnosis of Autism
- Family members
- ALNCO's
- Teachers
- Learning Support staff & other professionals working with CYP

The service is tailored to facilitate a multi-agency approach in addressing the individual needs of the CYP. CASS liaise with other agencies & professionals including:

- Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers.
- Social Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team (CAMHs)
- Primary Mental Health Care team
- Pediatricians and all other Neurodevelopmental services.
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- The National Autistic Society (NAS)
- Voluntary agencies
- Occupational Therapists
- Any other agencies where appropriate

Virtual Consultation

CASS are now offering a virtual consultation option for schools. Schools may request a consultation in the first instance to see if any general advice, signposting, or resources can be provided to support. We will also be able to support you in determining whether a full CASS referral is appropriate at this time. Where we have received a referral from a health/social service professional and they have specifically requested school support, we will contact the named school to offer a consultation in the first instance, based on the consultation school and CASS will determine whether adding the young person to the school support waiting list is necessary at this time.

Where a young person is not known to the service the consultation subject should remain anonymous throughout the meeting.

If a full referral is then submitted based on an outcome of the consultation, school should reference the consultation date within the referral form (space provided on updated form 24/25)

Consultations can be requested via the CASS inbox where we endeavor to offer a consultation date within 4-6 weeks of receiving the request (excluding school holidays).

Consultation requests

Requests for consultations can be made by email to the CASS inbox cass@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk.

Range of CASS Support

Young people aged 2-18 and their families can be referred to CASS for the following support and services:

CASS Support

CYP can be referred to CASS for the following reasons:

- Supporting learning style
- Supporting communication needs
- Advice around understanding and supporting behaviour's of concern.
- Advice around understanding and supporting anxiety (mild/moderate)
- Advice around supporting social skills.
- General advice around toileting and sleep routines (when the issues are directly linked to the CYP's diagnosis of Autism)
- Transition support (see transition to see if CYP meets criteria)
- Developing appropriate routines and implementation of supporting resources (such as developing visual structure)
- General advice around supporting sensory processing.

CASS does not provide support for the following:

- Emergency intervention either for the young person or the family
- Referrals for young people highlighting significant concerns around suicidal thoughts and/or self-harm or depression.
- Respite care
- Decisions around school placement and/or the allocation of funding.

School Support - The young people must have a diagnosis of Autism to be eligible for school support. Support is available from CASS to empower schools in meeting the needs of Autistic learners. This support may include modelling good practice, advice around understanding needs and learning styles, preparing, or loaning of resources and staff training.

Home Support - The young people must have a diagnosis of Autism to be eligible for home support. It is an expectation that the family will engage in some form of training with the CASS team (or equivalent) before direct home support will be considered. There are a range of training options available to meet most family circumstances, on the rare occasion the home situation is complex and engaging with any form of training is not possible, other support options will be considered on a case-by-case premise. Support can include, advice, signposting, sharing of resources and modelling practice or referral to other appropriate services. **CASS does not offer any type of respite care.**

What CASS support can look like?

CASS support can involve some of the following but is largely determined around the needs of the individual CYP, school or family.

- Face to face or virtual discussions/problem solving on an individual and time limited basis.
- Observations of the CYP in various settings
- Advice for parents and/or professionals.
- Modelling strategies or approaches and positive interactions/engagement.
- Support with development of resources for the CYP/ staff/ the home and school environment
- Telephone and email support for staff and families
- Liaison with a range of professionals.
- INSET training for school staff on request.
- Sign posting or the loaning of relevant literature or other resources.
- Attending PCP meetings and multi-agency meetings where appropriate for open cases only.

Transition

CASS is unable to arrange a bespoke transition for every child transitioning from one educational environment to another but will provide the following support for schools and CYP.

- Transition advice for school staff if required/requested.
- Access to the CASS Transition resources for pupils transitioning from primary to secondary school.

If the school determines that CASS should be involved in the transition planning for an individual, then a referral should be made to CASS following the timeline below to ensure involvement.

Children transitioning from primary to secondary school

- Referral made to CASS no later than October half term of Year 6.

Children transitioning in Early Years, College or any other setting.

- Referral made as soon as possible or once placement is decided.

Although CASS endeavors to support every young person referred to us, we cannot commit to supporting transition planning when the referral has been received late in the process. However, general advice is always available via virtual consultation requests.

Training for parents/carers

The CASS team has returned to an in-person training programme with some virtual options, some courses will continue to run virtually based on the needs of some families, venue availability and capacity.

Families can be referred to CASS for the following training courses:

NAS Early Bird- 6 weeks of training for families with a child who has received a diagnosis of Autism aged 0-6 years. This programme includes 6 in person workshop sessions and opportunities for problem solving with the team.

NAS Early Bird Plus - 6 weeks of training for families with a child who has received a diagnosis of ASD aged 5-10 years. If the child is in school, a member of school staff can also attend the training with parents. This programme includes 6 in person workshop sessions and opportunities for problem solving with the team.

Barnardo's Cygnet 4th edition training – A 6-week programme for families of children with Autism aged 5-18 years. The aim of the course is to increase parent understanding of Autism and guide parents through practical strategies they can use with their child. This programme is delivered in person and is also available in a virtual self-learn format (Cynet at home)

NAS Teenlife – Teen Life is an NAS six-session programme for parents/carers of autistic young people aged 10 to 16 years. The aim of the Teen Life programme is to bring parents together to share information, experiences, and ideas in a structured way.

Understanding Me - This workshop has been developed by the CASS team to help young people understand their diagnosis of Autism and is suitable for young people aged 11-17. The young person must be aware of their diagnosis and want to attend these sessions. The course is usually delivered as a group in secondary schools across the local authority. There is a separate Understanding Me referral form available for secondary school ALNCo's who only want to refer in a group of students to access this course in their school. **Only appropriate for students with a confirmed diagnosis of Autism.** Please contact the CASS team for further details.

Training for school and other professionals

CASS can currently offer the following training packages as part of whole school/setting training or for smaller groups of professionals. Training is not only available to schools but to any setting/professionals who are looking to develop their knowledge and skills. Training can be delivered in person or virtually as requested.

In addition to the training listed below we can also devise bespoke training to meet the needs of your individual setting or staff. Some of the training packages available include:

- An introduction to Autism
- Classroom strategies and developing visual structure
- Understanding and supporting behaviours of concern.
- Understanding Sensory processing
- Autism and girls/masking.

Bespoke training can be arranged for specific groups of children, presentation or need. Contact CASS to discuss.

For further details or to book training please contact:

The CASS team at cass@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk

CASS Referral- Who do we work with?

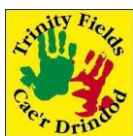
Residency

To receive CASS Home support the CYP must be a resident of Caerphilly County Borough. CASS will provide advice for schools where a CYP is educated in a Caerphilly school but is living outside the authority.

Diagnosis

All CYP accessing the service are recognised and known to the borough to have a medical diagnosis of Autism. Both health board and private diagnosis will be accepted.

CASS can only provide support to families who have a CYP with a confirmed diagnosis of Autism



Referrals

A supporting professional from Education, Health or Social Services **must submit a referral** for young people to access School or Home support. We ask that the diagnosing professional make a referral to CASS so the family can be offered access to an appropriate post diagnostic training course in the first instance. Where this has not happened, parents can contact CASS to request access to post diagnostic training only.

CASS referrals are to be made on a **CASS referral form** and can be submitted via email to cass@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk

Alternatively, referrals can be posted to CASS at Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly CF82 7XW

Children and young people should also be consulted and involved in a CASS referral wherever possible.

When a referral is being made for CASS for School Support, please ensure that it is part of a graduated response, and that this response is evidenced on the referral form. Where schools have not evidenced a graduated response referrals will be returned for further information before School Support can commence.

If the school has previously requested a consultation the consultation date should also be referenced within the referral.

Please be specific about the type of support that is required (you can ask for more than one) and be clear about the desired outcomes.

CASS will confirm receipt of the referral within one month of the referral being made (excluding school holidays). Parents will also be informed and asked to sign consent to allow CASS involvement and to share information with appropriate agencies.

Parents or carers will be informed of progress and current targets via initial paperwork/exit forms, discussions by phone or e-mail and/or home visits (including virtual). Parents also have the option to contact the service at any point for general advice.

Children and young people should also be consulted and involved in a CASS referral wherever possible.

Discharge Criteria

- The CYP has achieved the initial targets set.
- The planned piece of intervention or advice has been delivered.
- The CYP needs to be referred to another service.
- The school or parents feel support is no longer required and request to be discharged from the CASS service.
- The CYP, family or school refuses to engage with the service.
- The CYP is no longer a resident in Caerphilly County Borough.
- The CYP does not meet CASS criteria for intervention.
- The CYP turns 18 years of age.

When the young person is discharged from the service a copy Exit form will be sent to the:

- Referrer
- Parents/Carer and/or school
- Any other relevant professional

Working Arrangements

- 1) CASS will process the referral and place the CYP in the appropriate support category (based on the support requested on the referral form). When the request is for direct home support the family will be invited to attend training where they have not previously been known to CASS or have failed to respond to previous invites.
- 2) Upon receipt of the completed referral form, the team will respond and confirm it is an appropriate referral with the referring professional.

Once there is available capacity, a member of the CASS team will arrange an initial assessment with the parent/carers and/or education setting.

- CASS will set targets for the CYP.
- CASS will outline planned intervention.
- CASS will share the targets and planned intervention with the school, parents/carers and CYP (where appropriate).
- CASS intervention will take place over a specified time period and will be reviewed at the end of this period. Intervention can be extended, and targets are amended where deemed appropriate.
- Once CASS intervention is complete, targets will be reviewed and the CYP will be exited from the service. Involvement will be specific and time limited.
- CASS will support the school or parents/carers in making a referral to another service when appropriate.

The CYP will need to be re-referred to CASS to receive a further period of support and involvement. If it is less than 18 months since a previous referral, we would recommend a consultation initially to discuss whether another referral to the service is the best course of action.

Guidance Review

This guidance will be reviewed annually. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national updates.