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**EarlyBird Plus** is a training and supportive programme designed by the **National Autistic Society** for parents and carers of children (ages 4 years to 9 years 10 months old) who are on the **Autism Assessment Pathway** *or* who have a confirmed **diagnosis of autism** plus a member of staff from school. This course offers advice and guidance on strategies and approaches for supporting young autistic children.

This **3 month programme** works on understanding autism, building confidence to encourage interaction and communication and analysing and managing distressed behaviour. Its aim is to empower parents and help establish good practice. Attendees will receive a workbook (one per family) that supplements the programme which are free for the family and loaned out to the member of school staff.

There are three strands to the programme:

• Understanding your child’s autism

• Structuring interactions to develop your child’s communication and attention

• Develop strategies to pre-empt difficult behaviours and/or manage those which are displayed.

**Further information:**

• The programme combines group training sessions with an individual consultation session.

• Each course consists of up to 8 families (depending on venue).

• Each family can have 2-3 places.

• If available, a **representative from the child’s school** should attend alongside the family to ensure consistency of approach and support.

• There are **8 taught sessions** each of which last **2 ½ hours** whilst the child is at school. Venue will change for each programme based on locality and need.

• There is one personalised telephone consultation to share progress.

• The course is run by 2 to 3 professionals with knowledge and experience of working with autistic young people. Each professional is **licenced by the National Autistic Society to deliver the programme.**

For more information, contact **Lindsey Best, EBP Lead** on the email address below: **Contact details:** [socialcom@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:socialcom@sefton.gov.uk)

*‘I have attended autism training before, but I learnt so much more than I thought I would on the EBP. It was also great to be with other parents and carers and know that I am not alone.’* **J. Parent.**