

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY C.S. ALVES OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th SEPTEMBER 2019**

Question

Will the Minister advise –

- (a) how many members of staff are qualified to support Autism in education;
- (b) how many of these members of staff are currently working solely with Autistic children;
- (c) what type of qualifications any such members of staff have; and
- (d) how long each qualification took to complete?

Answer

(a) how many members of staff are qualified to support Autism in education

There is no specific qualifications required for staff to support children and young people with autism in education. However there are a number of core professional development opportunities that all staff can access to build on their knowledge of best practice when teaching children and young people with autism. These include

1. *Central Training (PDC) on Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASCs) and Related Social Communication Difficulties*
- **Using Visual Aids and Structured Approaches to Support Children on the Autism Spectrum.**
A workshop to explain how visual aids and structured teaching –including the TEACCH programme - support children with autism and social communication difficulties in school.
 - **Sensory Processing - Practical Interventions for Autism.**
An introduction to sensory processing, how it can be different in individuals on the autism spectrum, strategies to support sensory integration and suggestions for adaptations to the school environment.
 - **Girls on the Autism Spectrum.**
An introduction to understanding the needs of girls on the autism spectrum.
 - **An Introduction to Autism.**
To understand autism
To identify strengths and challenges
To understand the sensory needs of a person with autism
ASCIT's five top tips for supporting a child with autism in the classroom.
 - **SPELL Training**

2. Training and support from the Autism and Social Communication Inclusion team (ASCIT)

This outreach team has a role supporting schools in their understanding and management of pupils presenting with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or related social communication difficulties. This may include difficulties in the areas of social communication, social interaction and social imagination. Work undertaken is usually a case-centred consultation, rather than regular direct contact with an individual pupil, with the aim of increasing the skills of the adults supporting the student.

Involvement from the ASCIT service may consist of:

- Consultation on an anonymous basis where a school is unsure if a ‘Request for Involvement’ is appropriate. The outreach worker will meet with school staff for problem solving and to share ideas.
- In-service training to schools, e.g. Introduction to Autism
- Providing a range of strategies to more effectively meet pupils identified needs, relating to:
 - I. Curriculum access
 - II. Behaviour arising from social communication difficulties
 - III. Sensory processing differences where an OT referral is not already in place
 - IV. Social skills
 - V. Emotional development supplemental to work with the school ELSA and Welling Support
- Support to identify appropriate targets and recommending arrangements to support identified needs
- Supporting parents to understand their child’s social communication needs in relation to education and advising on possible strategies that might help to provide consistency of approach between school and home.
- Developing peer awareness
- Advice on preparing for change and transitions – advice to the school and/or to staff providing direct support
- Sharing good practice and facilitating the exchange of information between schools working with pupils with autism and social communication differences.
- Signposting to other agencies where appropriate

(b) how many of these members of staff are currently working solely with Autistic children

There are 4 ARCS with the capacity to provide for 50 children and young people with autism and social communication. Children are placed here via a statutory process and represent the top 2 per cent of complexity. Within these ARCS, 30 staff work specifically with children and young people with complex autism, identified as having the highest level of need.

There are 2 specialist schools who have children and young people with autism. Staff in these settings will access the necessary training to meet the bespoke needs of the individual pupils.

All schools have children and young people with autism and / or social communication needs, some who may need specialist intervention or arrangements to support their access and inclusion. The required level of support sits on a continuum. This additional support will be the responsibility of the class teacher, SENCO or teaching assistant within the school. We do not have data on this.

(c) **what type of qualifications any such members of staff have**

Staff in mainstream schools access central training or support from ASCIT as detailed in (a).

Staff within the ARCs and ASCIT have specialist accredited training or are undertaking specialist accredited training according to their grade.

- Specialist teachers will have qualified teaching status and postgrad diploma (Level M) in autism or a MEd (Level M) in autism
- The team leader will have the Advanced Certificate in Autism (ACE)
- The specialist lead keyworkers will have the University Certificate in ASD or BILD Level 3

Specialist schools for children with a range of complex needs identify their own specific training needs according to the individual /bespoke needs of the pupils.

(d) **how long each qualification took to complete**

Central training ranges from a one hour to half a day session

Postgrad Diploma is a 2 year distance training course

The Advanced Certificate in Autism (ACE) and the University Certificate in ASD are 1 year distance training courses.