

GRAMPIAN AUTISTIC SOCIETY



Grampian Autistic Society

The Grampian Autistic Society (GAS) was founded in 1987 by a small group of parents and professionals who were concerned for the needs of those affected by autism. It was the first organisation of its kind in the region to offer help and support to autistic individuals and their families. Beginning as a support group, the society expanded over time and became a parent-run organisation which was later constituted into a charity. We now have a staff of around 40 people and are providing ongoing support and services for well over 100 families.

Mission Statement

“The Grampian Autistic Society seeks to ensure the provision of the best possible education, care, support, and opportunities for people of all ages with autism in North East Scotland. The society also seeks to support families to improve understanding of autism and to develop best practice amongst carers, professionals, and society at large”

Our Vision

Our vision is that all those living with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) in the Grampian region are supported and encouraged to fulfil their potential within their community and society. At GAS we are committed to being there from childhood through to adulthood and every stage in between so that those affected by autism have all the help and support they need to live full and happy lives.

About Autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disorder characterised by difficulties in three areas, often referred to as ‘the triad’:

- Social interaction, including difficulties relating, sharing, and forming relationships with others.
- Social communication, including difficulties interpreting and expressing verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Imagination and social understanding, including difficulties with imaginative play, pretending, planning ahead, and a tendency toward focus on detail at the expense of global understanding.

Activities, thinking patterns, or interests that are unusual in their intensity or focus are also common in those with an ASC.

ASCs affect people in different ways and to varying degrees of severity, however sensory perception and motor anomalies or difficulties are almost always experienced.

ASCs are estimated to affect 1 in every 100 individuals, with more males than females being affected. The exact causes are unknown, however it has been recognised that environmental and genetic factors are involved in causing the changes in brain function which produce symptoms of ASCs.

Although living with an ASC can be challenging for both the person affected and their families, with the right support and encouragement people with autism can live happy and productive lives.

Services

The Grampian Autistic Society is committed to the development of relationship based practice and seeks to ensure that the nature of ASC is reflected in the planning and provision of services. GAS construct services that are appropriate and responsive to changes in need whilst also providing services that facilitate integration, continuity of care, and ongoing support.

Playscheme



“The only environment I feel totally happy to put my child without feeling apprehensive or any anxiety”

The GAS Playscheme service offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities that focus on developing children’s social and communication skills, as well as providing respite for parents and carers. The Playscheme is open to children of school age with an ASC or related conditions and runs at weekends during school term time and on weekdays during school holidays. Referrals for the Playscheme come from private individuals or via the Social Work department. All new referrals receive the opportunity to visit the Playscheme before taking on a place.

Outreach

Formed in 1996, the Outreach service at GAS provides a specialised one to one support service for children and adults with an ASC or related condition. However, diagnosis is not a prerequisite for one to one support and all referrals are considered individually.

"I know my support workers are always there for me when I have problems"



Sibling Support Group

The GAS Sibling Support Group is open to any child of school age who has a sibling or other family member on the autism spectrum. The aim of the service is to link families and siblings in the area, to provide the opportunity for siblings and young carers to partake in new activities, and to develop understanding and knowledge of Autism Spectrum Conditions. The group runs six sessions a year during the school holidays between 9.30am and 3.30pm in the Playscheme building.



"Staff are always friendly and helpful"

Social Groups

GAS runs a specialised social group for young people and adults with an ASC or related condition. This group meets every Thursday afternoon between 1.00pm and 3.00pm. GAS also runs an evening social group for those with an ASC who are in full time employment, education, or any other reasons for not being able to attend the social group on a Thursday. This group runs on Mondays from 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

“I enjoy going out and having someone to talk to”



Training

GAS can provide a range of training courses in relation to ASCs. Training courses can be adapted and tailored depending on the needs of organisations and/or parents of people with an ASC. We recommend therefore that you contact us directly to discuss your requirements before booking a training course.

Employment Support

Started in 2014, the Employment Support service at GAS provides an opportunity for people on the autism spectrum to meet one to one with an advisor to discuss employment difficulties. Offering guidance on recognising strengths, completing CVs, interview practice, as well as offering support to eventual employers the Employment Service has already proven to be extremely helpful to those who have used it.



“Lots of positive things have happened...I’ve managed to get 2 jobs!”

Self Directed Support

GAS can offer services to individuals who are looking to purchase support through Self-Directed Support funding. Individuals who wish to discuss any aspect of what support is available as well as exploring and agreeing the aims and objectives of support can do so prior to entering into a formal agreement with GAS.



Policies and Procedures

GAS has a full set of policies and procedures and works to all relevant National Care Standards. Our policies and procedures are available to read on request. Everyone is actively encouraged to communicate with GAS regarding any comments or concerns.

CALM (Crisis, Aggression, Limitation, and Management)

The CALM philosophy forms part of the approach to managing and supporting change of challenging behaviour adopted by GAS. This offers training in a step-by-step process for crisis prevention and intervention. The major objective of the CALM programme is to familiarise staff with ways of assisting and teaching children to maintain self-control and to train staff to use pro-active methods of behaviour change.

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