



MIDDLETOWN
CENTRE FOR AUTISM

**Middletown Centre for Autism:
Business Plan 2022-2023**

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1. Background to the Centre

Middletown Centre for Autism was established as part of a range of education policy initiatives arising from the Good Friday Agreement. The Centre was opened in April 2007 to deliver educational services on an all-island basis for children with complex autism, their parents and families and the education professionals who work with them.

The creation of the Centre reflects the commitment by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) and Department of Education (Ireland) to the development of services for those young people with more complex autism and long-term needs. Funding is provided equally by the two Departments to support the Centre in its provision of specialist support and services not currently available to the education sector in either jurisdiction.

The Centre is established under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Orders 1986 to 1990 as a company limited by guarantee. The objects of the Centre are set out in Section 3 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Ministers of Education (NI) and Education (Ireland) are accountable to their respective legislatures for the activities and performance of the Centre.

The Purpose of the Centre

Our Mission

“support the promotion of excellence throughout Northern Ireland and Ireland in the education of children and young people with autism”

Our Vision

“to enhance the lives of children and young people with autism, and their families, through the delivery of specialist educational services”

A Focus on Excellence

The Centre has over the last fifteen years built a reputation for excellence in the quality of its services and this has been confirmed by independent joint inspections in 2012 and 2016: on both occasions the Centre and its services were deemed to be outstanding. The inspectors concluded in 2016 that

“the Centre has developed provision and services in agreement with the Department of Education (Ireland), and the Department of Education (NI), and there is evidence that in both jurisdictions they are impacting significantly on the education and life experiences of the referred pupils, their teachers and parents” **Joint Inspection Report 2016**

2. A Specialist Provider of Autism Services Throughout Ireland

The Centre has been established primarily as a specialist second tier service provider to work in partnership with existing statutory and voluntary providers to develop and provide specialist autism services primarily in the education sectors. The Centre provides an integrated package of services, including a cohesive, trans-disciplinary learning support and assessment service combined with research and training services together with opportunities for family support and professional development.

Supporting the Educational Policy Framework in Northern Ireland

Throughout 2022-2023 the Centre, in collaboration with DE and EA will work to shape and support educational policies, with a view to improving the educational attainment of children and young people and their parents and provide support for the educational professionals who work with them.

This commitment links the Centre's work to DE strategic priorities 4, 6 and 7 and to Children and Young People (CYP) outcomes 1 to 8.

DE Priority 4: Support those who need more help with learning

Working with health & education partners, we deliver high quality services for children and young people, including those with Special Educational Needs

DE Priority 6: Tackle Disadvantage and Underachievement

We improve developmental and learning outcomes for all children & young people, with a particular focus on those who are underachieving, at risk of underachieving, or disadvantaged

DE Priority 7: Support and develop our education workforce

We develop and deploy teachers, other education professionals and support staff effectively, promoting high standards and leadership and improving health and wellbeing

Links to Draft Programme for Government (PFG) outcome:

"Our children and young people have the best start in life."

Links to the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities (Annex A) and the Children and Young Peoples Strategy (Annex B) are provided against each action.

Supporting the educational policy framework in Ireland

The Centre throughout 2022-2023 will work in collaboration with the Department of Education Ireland, NCSE, HSE and schools to deliver services which support the Department of Education Statement of Strategy 2021-2023. The Centre has a particular focus on Goal 2: Strategic Actions 2 and 3 arising from it.

Goal 2

Ensure equity of opportunity in education and that all students are supported to fulfil their potential.

Strategic Actions to deliver Goal 2

2. Support the participation and progression of students with special educational needs through the delivery of integrated resources, in particular by advancing towards the roll out of the School Inclusion Model and a new Special Needs Assistants (SNA) allocation model.
3. Increase the development of special class places for students with additional needs in new and existing mainstream schools, as well as continued support for the development of special schools as a vital part of our education system through effective forecasting of future need and equipping schools to better support students with special educational needs.

Delivering Effective North/South Autism Services Conferences

Since 2007 the Centre has developed an effective programme of work spanning both jurisdictions and has gained recognition as an all-Ireland body providing specialist services to discerning client groups. The north/south aspect of the Centre's programmes has enabled expertise to be developed and shared through extensive joint working and co-operation.

The Centre has worked to enhance and add value to existing practice and enable services across the island of Ireland to benefit from the Centre's expertise and training provision. It has forged effective partnerships with key players in education throughout Ireland.

The blend of professionals, from health and education backgrounds, employed in the Centre lends itself to the development of specialist courses and work which complement the work and services offered by other education partners.

The Centre as a leading provider of autism training in Ireland will in 2023 host its fifth international conference.

The Conference is designed to attract individuals with autism, parents and educational professionals from across Ireland with keynote speakers from across the world contributing to the proceedings. The conference normally attracts some 2000 attendees and this conference may be offered online as well as affording attendees the opportunity to attend in person.

Partnership Working

- **Working with the Department of Education N Ireland and the Department of Education Ireland**

The Centre will work with both Departments of Education to provide support for the development and implementation of policy to provide support for children and young people with autism, their parents and the education professionals who work with them.

- **National Council for Special Education, (NCSE) Ireland**

The Centre works collaboratively with the NCSE to deliver specialist autism training for educational professionals and schools in Ireland. It provides specialist research services to support the NCSE in the delivery of its education support services and works with the NCSE to support individual children who are referred to the Centre's Learning Support and Assessment service.

- **The Education Authority, (EA) Northern Ireland**

The Centre works closely with the Education Authority Regional Autism Group (EARAG) who liaise with the Centre staff upon referral of a child or young person to the Learning Support and Assessment service. In this work the focus is on supporting that cohort of children and young people across the spectrum with highly complex needs, including children with high functioning autism. Since the commencement of the service in 2010, it has provided important signposts to a personalised social and learning pathway for each child referred. The EARAG team also work in liaison with the Centre to commission and agree a 'second level' comprehensive training programme delivered from the Centre by guest presenters with recognised expertise in autism, members of EARAG teams and the Centre's own staff. In 2020 the Centre and the EA developed and are currently delivering an enhanced programme of Continuous Professional Development training on autism for teachers and classroom assistants to meet Ministerial commitments given to the NI Assembly.

- **The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) Ireland**

The Centre provides access to its specialist training programme for NEPS staff and provides tailored commissioned training sessions for NEPS. The Centre works with NEPS staff to provide support to individual children and young people referred to the Centre's Learning Support and Assessment service.

- **Teacher Training Colleges in Northern Ireland and Ireland**

The Centre works with Teacher Training Colleges throughout Ireland including DCU Institute of Education, St Angela's College NUI Galway, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University Colleges in Belfast. The Centre provides specialist autism training and modules for their teacher training programmes.

- **Universities in Northern Ireland, the UK, USA and Ireland**

The Centre offers the Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies (GCAS) accredited by the University of Limerick, the programme is delivered as a partnership between Middletown Centre for Autism and Mary Immaculate College. The programme provides an academic qualification for professionals and parents engaged in any support function for children and/or adults with autism. The Centre offers a similar GCAS programme in Stranmillis University College accredited by QUB.

Staff from the Centre deliver specialist autism modules on Northern Ireland Post Grad teaching diplomas and work closely with the University of North Carolina to deliver TEACCH's training annually and also have had input into their annual International Conference.

- **Further and Higher Education Colleges (NI), Education and training Boards and Institutes of Higher Education (Ireland)**

The Centre provides a range of training options for staff working in FE/HE who teach young people with autism to support the transition of children through the education system. It will seek to develop and strengthen links with the Education and Training Boards and Institutes of Higher Education in Ireland in 2022-2023.

- **Voluntary and Parent Groups**

The Centre has provided access to specialist training and advice to voluntary groups not previously available in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

- **Other Specialist groups with an interest in autism**

The Centre will seek to develop working partnerships with other specialist organisations in the field of autism with a view to producing resources for use by parents, education professionals and children with autism.

3. The Services Offered by the Centre

The Centre has identified three core groups of service users for whom it develops and offer services to;

- Children and young people with autism
- Parents (and guardians) of children and young people on the autism spectrum. The Centre's work with this group is provided within an educational context
- Professionals working in the autism sector, mainly those based in the education sector but including some health professionals who are school based.

The three core services offered by the Centre to our service users: -

- A Training and Advisory Service
- A Learning Support and Assessment Service (LS&A)
- A Research and Information Service

The Centre has built its success in delivering services on three main foundations;

- The development of high quality specialist services not available to the education sectors in either jurisdiction
- The integration of these services with those provided by mainstream education providers and
- Flexibility of delivery to service users in terms of location and time and supported by online material and resources.

Core Group	The Centre's Service Delivery Objective
Children and Young People	<p>The Centre's focus with this group is to assist children and young people who are referred to the Centre to maximise the benefit from their current educational placement. It does this through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of a trans-disciplinary assessment by the Learning Support and Assessment Service • the development and implementation of a Learning Support Plan (LSP) which may be reflected in a revised Educational Plan for the child or young person • supporting the development of an autism competent school environment • improving the educational experience and outcome for children and young people with autism in their current educational setting • linking with parents to enable them to support their child's school-based programmes at home and • liaison with first level services to agree the learning support plan goals and upskill as required.
Parents	<p>The Centre's primary focus with parents is to deliver second tier autism support to parents in N Ireland and core training to parents in the Republic of Ireland. The Centre does this through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabling parents to support their children's education • helping them manage their children's autism • increasing parents' knowledge of autism and how it impacts on their child • provision of education-based home support • provision of advice for the parents of children and young people referred to the LS&A Service • access to autism literature and peer reviewed research • the provision of post diagnostic training, information and advice for parents in Ireland • provision of specialist led second level training to assist parents in the management of specific difficulties in the education of their child in NI.
Professionals	<p>The Centre delivers second level specialist support services to front line professionals who work in education with children and young people with autism. It does this through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Centre's case study based research programme, supporting the introduction of new research based practice with the provision of resources, information and training to support classroom practice and the sharing of good practice. • research bulletins which distil current specialist research on autism to enable it to be effectively used within schools • supporting collaboration amongst teachers and the creation of learning communities of good practice • supporting the delivery of the learning support plan for children and young people referred to the Learning Support and Assessment Service (LS&A)

- providing specific training for those professionals working with children and young people referred to the Learning Support and Assessment Service
- the identification and development of needs led training programmes for educational professionals
- developing and providing access to an autism specific research network
- helping professionals reduce their dependency on external support
- helping schools to improve the capacity to meet the identified needs of children and young people with autism earlier and more effectively through learning and teaching
- supporting schools in developing essential leadership behaviours to develop good autism education provision.

4. The Business Plan 2022-2023

Planning Assumptions

In planning for services and the associated expenditure in 2022-2023 the following assumptions have been made:

- That price inflation will be in the range 3.5%-5.5%
- That funds approved from both departments will cover increased staff costs incurred following approved pay remit costs
- That pay policy within the framework of Joint Negotiating Council for the Education Authority will apply, subject to any guidance and/or direction received from DENI or DE Ireland.
- That any significant additional maintenance requirements over and above that required to maintain the estate will not be undertaken without consultation with the Departments.
- All requests for capital expenditure will be notified to the Departments with supporting business cases.

Covid 19. The continuing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic

The impact of Covid 19, the coronavirus pandemic will have some impact on the delivery of services during 2022-2023 and the achievement of agreed business plan targets. The Centre will continue to follow guidance from instruction from the NI Executive (and in the absence of an NI Assembly, Public Health guidance) and the Irish Government; it is anticipated that from 1 April 2022 a phased return to more normal working for staff will occur with a phasing out of working from home, with some possible exception, particularly for staff who have underlying medical conditions which render them more vulnerable to the Covid infection.

Training Services

All face-to-face training programmes were again suspended from November 2021 and it is anticipated that a blended learning programme of face to face training will be delivered in 2022–2023.

The Centre’s training Department has developed an online training programme, a range of webinars and other online resources which will continue to be provided in 2022–2023.

The Centre substantially upgraded and developed its capacity to deliver a range of its services online: it plans to deliver 70% of all training online during 2022–2023. It plans to deliver 30% of its training on a face-to-face basis at geographically distributed centres throughout Ireland and N Ireland if circumstances permit this form of delivery.

In addition, the Centre has developed the capacity and skills to offer webinars utilising both the Centre’s specialist staff and internationally recognised autism experts to deliver sessions catering for up to 3000 online attendees weekly. The Centre has also developed its capacity to offer podcasts for use by parents, children and professionals and will continue to offer these throughout 2022-2023.

Learning Support and Assessment services.

The Learning Support and Assessment service was adversely impacted in 2021–2022, through school closures, the inability of the Centre’s staff to complete home visits for referred children and travel restrictions. However, those referrals were supported online throughout lockdown and this time was not counted towards their Learning Support and Assessment Service delivery. When restrictions allowed service resumed online and in person where possible.

It is planned to resume normal full service for referrals, whole schools and schools taking part in the Centre’s accreditation programme; this work will continue to be adapted to enable it to be delivered within the parameters permitted by Covid regulations in both jurisdictions.

The Learning Support specialist staff, training and research staff have at the request of the funding Departments, been developing and have disseminated a significant volume of supportive and educational resources on social media platforms e.g., Twitter, Facebook and the Centre’s website to provide support to children, parents and professionals with remote learning. It is planned that this volume of engagement will increase over the duration of the 2022–2023 academic year.

These resources are and will continue to be available on the Centre’s website and via its social media platforms.

Section 4: Business Plan Actions for 2022-23:

WHAT WE WILL DO AND BY WHEN	HOW WILL WE KNOW IF ANYONE IS BETTER OFF?	
	N Ireland	Ireland
1. Providing Training Services		
1.1 Northern Ireland The Centre will develop and deliver a comprehensive training programme for 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre will evaluate its training programmes and will aim to have a satisfaction rating of 80-90 % in categories 4 	

<p>parents and siblings and 3300 professionals, offering training in the Centre and outreach programmes throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland by March 2023.</p>	<p>(very Good) and 5 (excellent).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre will use as a baseline, data collected for 2022- 2023. <p>These service delivery actions are designed to support DE Strategic Priority 4: <i>Support those who need more help with learning</i> and Priority 7: <i>Support and develop our education workforce</i></p> <p>Links to Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 3 & 6.</p>	
<p>1.2 Ireland</p> <p>Professional Training The Centre’s professional training programme will provide 7000 differentiated training opportunities for professionals in Ireland. This will include Training required by the NCSE and training required by DE Ireland to support the planned increase in new autism classes and autism units as per Strategic Actions 2 and 3 scheduled for implementation during 2022–2023.</p> <p>Parental Training The centre will provide 7000 training opportunities for parents in Ireland.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre will evaluate its training programmes and will aim to have a satisfaction rating of 80-90 % in categories 4 (very Good) and 5 (excellent). The Centre will use as a baseline, data collected for 2022- 2023.

<p>1.3 NI/Ireland Training joint actions.</p> <p>Post graduate Training programme;</p> <p>N Ireland The Centre will continue to work with Stranmillis University College (15 places) to build on current accreditation secured for its training programmes and to ensure that educationalists on the Island have access to a broad and balanced range of research based higher education CPD opportunities by March 2023. The Centre will also explore the option of developing a similar programme with St Mary’s University College in Belfast.</p> <p>Ireland The Centre will continue to work with the University of Limerick (max of 60 Graduate Places) to build on current accreditation secured for its training programmes and to ensure that educationalists on the Island have access to a broad and balanced range of research based higher education CPD opportunities by March 2023. This will include planning for the expansion of the current programme to Masters level.</p>	<p>MCA will develop evaluation to measure the % of applicants who report that the training has been useful to them within the 1st 6 months since achieving the qualification.</p> <p>These service delivery actions link to DE Strategic Priority 7: <i>Support and develop our education workforce.</i></p> <p>Links to Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 3 & 6</p>
<p>1.4 Developing Attention Autism throughout Ireland.</p> <p>The Centre will on an all-Ireland basis plan the expansion of the current Attention Autism programme from two sessions per year for 50 staff up to a capacity of 10 additional sessions for 250 staff to cater for increased demand. This</p>	<p>MCA will develop evaluation to measure the % of educational professionals who use the approaches contained in the programme in their work in the classroom.</p> <p>These service delivery actions link to DE Strategic Priority 7: <i>Support and develop our education workforce.</i></p> <p>Links to Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 2, 3 & 6</p>

programme will be reviewed by March 2023.		
2 Provision of Learning Support and Assessment services		
<p>2.1 NI Service Action</p> <p>The Centre will deliver a Learning Support and Assessment Service for referred children and young people in N Ireland (60 referrals from Education Authority) by March 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On completion of the LS&A programme, at least 50% of parents and professionals will identify moderate to large improvements across the core areas of difficulty experienced by the young person, and at least 70% will identify moderate to large improvement of the main area of difficulty experienced by the cohort. <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 4: Support those who need more help with learning</p> <p>Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1, 2& 3.</p>	
<p>2.2 Whole School Programme N Ireland</p> <p>The Centre will continue to develop its whole school referral programme by producing a detailed plan for expanding provision by December 2022 and by working with up to 3 schools by March 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of schools who undertake the whole school approach will report an improvement in relation to the learning journey of Autistic Children & Young People within their school. 75% of school staff involved in the Whole School Programme will report an improvement in relation to the learning journey of Children & Young People with autism within their school. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of school staff involved in the Whole School Programme will report an improvement in relation to their continued professional development. <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 4: Support those who need more help with learning</p> <p>Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1, 2 & 3.</p>	
<p>2.3 School Accreditation Pilot Scheme N Ireland</p> <p>During 2022/23, the Centre will continue with its pilot of an accreditation scheme for schools who have invested in a whole school referral programme. This pilot will take up to 3 years. 2022/23 is year 2 when 2 more schools will complete the programme by March 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of schools who achieve accreditation will report an improvement in relation to the learning journey Children & Young People with autism within their school. <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 4: Support those who need more help with learning</p> <p>Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1, 2 & 3.</p>	
<p>2.4 Ireland Service Action</p> <p>The Centre will deliver a Learning Support and Assessment Service for a minimum of 12 referred children and young people in Ireland. The Centre will discuss with the Department a plan for the <u>Expansion of this service during 2022 – 2023.</u></p>		<p>RoI outcome measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On completion of the LS&A programme, at least 50% of parents and professionals will identify moderate to large improvements across the core areas of difficulty experienced by the young person, and at least 70% will identify moderate to large improvement of the main area of difficulty experienced by the cohort.

<p>2.5 NI/Ireland Joint Action</p> <p>During 2022/23 the Centre will work with both Departments to review LSA referral processes to ensure that maximum benefit is derived from all aspects of the service in both jurisdictions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of agreed report outlining proposed changes to the referral process. 	
<p>3 Improving the wellbeing of children and young people</p>		
<p>3.1 Throughout 2022/23, the Centre, in collaboration with DE, EA and other children’s authorities, will work to shape and support educational policies with a view to improving the wellbeing of children and young people as outlined in the Children’s Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015, and will provide a report to DE when requested.</p>	<p>The Centre will provide specialist advice, based on research, to the Department, EA, schools and parents to develop and deliver effective policies to improve the educational outcomes for children and young people with autism.</p> <p>It will measure the outcomes of its agreed training and learning support work as described in Sections 1&2 above; it will also provide research support to the EA and Departments to develop additional metrics to measure the outcomes of interventions and policy changes.</p> <p>(Links to DE Strategic Priority 3)</p> <p>(Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1-8)</p>	
<p>3.2 The Centre will work with DE to develop an agreed plan of work to support the Department in implementing the New SEN Framework arising from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.</p>	<p>The Centre will agree an action plan in 2022 – 2023 to support the implementation of the New SEN Framework (arising from Special Educational Needs and Disability Act) in the 2022– 2023 academic year.</p>	

	<p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 3</p> <p>Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1-8</p>	
4. Development of Integrated and Irish Medium Education		
<p>4.1 Throughout 2022/23, the Centre will support DE in fulfilling its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated and Irish Medium Education and will provide a report to DE when requested.</p>	<p>The Centre will provide access to its training programme & commissioned training when requested. It will provide Learning Support and referral services for children referred from IMS and integrated schools.</p> <p>The Centre is presently working with Gaeloideachas and CnaG to develop a programme of resources, online materials, podcasts and training for use in Irish medium schools, partially funded by Gaeloideachas. This work will also benefit and be available to Irish Medium Schools in Ireland. The output will be available in the next academic year.</p> <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 5</p> <p>Links to Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcome 3, 7, 8</p>	
5. Provision of Research and information services		
<p>Joint NI – Ireland work</p> <p>5.1 Develop and deliver an island wide research and information programme focused upon the needs of parents, professionals and priorities identified by the</p>	<p>Research Bulletins accessed by over 1000 people via website. The Centre will develop an evaluation to measure the % of them reporting that this was useful to their practice or research.</p> <p>Teachers Resources disseminated to 100% of schools.</p> <p>10 % of increased reach and engagement to MCA online resources on Facebook.</p>	

<p>funding Departments by March 2023.</p>	<p>The MCA team will work in liaison with the EA to update the SEN Resource file.</p> <p>3 case studies produced in relation to the impact of a pupil referral to the Learning Support and Assessment.</p> <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 7: Support and develop our education workforce.</p> <p>Links to Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcome 3 & 6.</p>	
<p>Ireland Based Research work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Centre will work with the NCSE to implement the three recommendations detailed in NCSE Policy Advice NO. 5 “Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Schools” and such other work programmes that will be agreed with NCSE to support its Inclusion Programme. 2. The Centre will commence in April 2022 a formal review and updating of the list of evidence informed educational interventions for ASD as detailed in the NCSE Policy advice of 2016. 3. The Centre will work with DE(Ireland) to develop and support the implementation plan for implementing “Supporting Students with Autism: Good Practice Guidance for Schools” throughout Ireland. The Centre will agree the production of a project plan for this work to commence in the 2022 – 2023 academic year. 		

<p>Research Projects with HSE (Autism Services)</p> <p>HSE Cavan and Monaghan have discussed developing a new pilot programme to bridge services for early adulthood particularly for service users who fall outside of ID Services. This will involve training and workshops for service users and their parents / carers / spouses. The Centre will provide additional training for HSE staff as well as a research follow-up for all service users who participate in the projects. the funding for this project to be confirmed and if it will take place in 2022 – 2023.</p>		
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6. Implement the Managing Attendance Strategy

<p>6.1 Staff Absence</p> <p>Throughout 2022/23, to work with DE to implement the Managing Attendance Strategy for the Education Sector and reduce absence levels.</p>	<p>Achieve an absence target of 6% of available working days in 2022/23 for the Centre’s staff.</p> <p>Use access to the EA’s “Health Well” Hub for staff providing staff with support, education, signposting and information on a wide range of topics relating to health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Updated health and wellbeing and health and safety policies and developed a framework of activities to support staff wellbeing with a focus on reducing potential causes of absence.</p> <p>Review the impact of covid on staff working patterns and future working patterns in the light of any findings.</p>	
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	<p>(Links to DE Strategic Priority 7)</p> <p>(Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcome 3)</p>	
<p>6.2 Managing the selection and recruitment of specialist staff for the Centre</p> <p>During 2022/23 work with both Departments to provide a resolution of the difficulties experienced in the recruitment of specialist staff needed to provide the services offered by the Centre.</p>	<p>Improved service delivery for autistic children, young people and their families through the recruitment and retention of high calibre specialist staff.</p> <p>Increased knowledge of autism/ neurodiversity through the in-house research programme.</p> <p>Improved pathways for more autism competent environment in schools and other educational settings.</p> <p>Links to DE Strategic Priority 4: Support those who need more help with learning</p> <p>Priority 7: supporting the education workforce</p> <p>Links to NI Children and Young People’s Strategy Outcomes 1, 2 & 3.</p>	

5. Expenditure Plan for 2022-2023

Description	Budget 2022-23	Budget 2021-22
Salaries	2,128,000.00	2,044,000.00
Travel & Subsistence	96,000.00	80,000.00
Teaching & Training Materials	20,000.00	20,000.00
Computer Supplies & AV Equipment	30,000.00	50,000.00
Recruitment	10,000.00	1,000.00
Training/Conference	50,000.00	45,000.00
Books & Periodicals	6,000.00	6,000.00
Subscriptions	20,000.00	20,000.00
Procurement Fees	1,000.00	1,000.00
CPD Training	20,000.00	19,000.00
Printing & Photocopying	2,000.00	2,000.00
Postage	2,000.00	2,000.00
Corporate & Promotional Activities	4,000.00	4,000.00
Repairs & Maintenance	15,000.00	15,000.00
Cleaning Materials	500.00	500.00
Hygiene Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00
Office Supplies	8,000.00	10,000.00
Hire of Facilities	2,000.00	3,000.00
Light & Heat	34,000.00	30,000.00
Telephone	30,000.00	30,000.00
Rates	1,500.00	1,500.00
Insurance	38,000.00	36,000.00
Audit & Accountancy Fees	18,000.00	18,000.00
Bank & Admin Fees	1,000.00	1,000.00
Catering Supplies	3,000.00	3,000.00
Security	5,000.00	5,000.00
Total Revenue	2,546,000.00	2,448,000.00

6. Capital Expenditure

Allocation to be agreed with the Departments on the basis of the current 4 year plan submitted previously.

Department of Education (Northern Ireland) Strategic Priorities for 2022-23

<p>1. Make learning accessible to all</p> <p>We give all children and young people access to pre-school, school and youth education provision</p>
<p>2. Improve the quality of learning for our children & young people</p> <p>We ensure that education provision is of a high quality and supports learning and progression</p>
<p>3. Look after our children & young people</p> <p>We support and promote positive physical and emotional health and wellbeing and support high-quality affordable childcare</p>
<p>4. Support those who need more help with learning</p> <p>Working with health & education partners, we deliver high quality services for children & young people, including those with Special Educational Needs</p>
<p>5. Improve the learning environment</p> <p>We promote equality of opportunity, respect for others, good relations and inclusivity and we provide modern, sustainable educational settings which are fit-for-purpose and facilitate shared learning</p>
<p>6. Tackle Disadvantage and Underachievement</p> <p>We improve developmental and learning outcomes for all children & young people, with a particular focus on those who are underachieving, at risk of underachieving, or disadvantaged</p>
<p>7. Support and develop our education workforce</p> <p>We develop and deploy teachers, other education professionals and support staff effectively, promoting high standards and leadership and improving health & wellbeing</p>
<p>8. Effectively manage, review and transform our education system</p> <p>We deliver our corporate governance and finance responsibilities while seeking to improve efficiency, increase sustainability and introduce new ways of learning</p>

Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Strategy Outcomes

(in support of the Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015)

1	Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy
2	Children and young people enjoy play and leisure
3	Children and young people learn and achieve
4	Children and young people live in safety and stability
5	Children and Young People experience economic and environmental well-being
6	Children and young people make a positive contribution to society
7	Children and young people live in a society which respects their rights
8	Children and young people live in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted