



CHILD Autism Assessment What to Expect Guide

What to expect during your child's Autism assessment with Linked Communication?

Your child's Autism assessment will consist of a structured clinical assessment for Autism Spectrum Conditions using the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2) and the Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R), school visit, completion of a developmental history and pre-screening measures.

Prior to Appointments: Pre-screening measures

Once the appointment date(s) have been scheduled, prior to your first appointment, we will kindly request that you complete the pre-screening questionnaires sent to you. We may also send ADHD screening measures if co-occurring symptoms are present. Please check your junk folder.

Additionally, we will request any relevant professional health reports and provide you with a developmental history questionnaire to be completed. This questionnaire will encompass several key aspects, including:

- **Presenting Symptoms:** We will ask you to describe the current symptoms or concerns your child is experiencing.
- **Symptom Development Over Time:** You will have the opportunity to share how these symptoms have evolved or changed over time.
- **Past Medical and Psychiatric History:** We will enquire about any relevant medical or psychiatric history that may provide context for your child's assessment.



- **Developmental History:** This section will explore your child's developmental milestones and any noteworthy events or observations from their earlier years.
- **Family History:** We will ask for information regarding your child's family's medical and psychiatric history, as this can be valuable in understanding potential genetic factors.

These questionnaires and assessments will assist us in gaining a comprehensive understanding of your child's situation and help guide our assessment process effectively.

ADI-r Interview

During this appointment, an informant, someone who knows your child well (e.g., a parent or caregiver), will meet virtually or in person with one of our clinicians. The primary focus of this session is to conduct an in-depth review of the information provided in your developmental history questionnaire and to ask further questions as part of the ADI-r. Please note that this appointment may be scheduled separately from other components of the assessment.

This appointment is expected to last approximately 3 hours. To make the most of this appointment, we encourage you and your family members to engage in discussions and revisit old photos, videos from early childhood, school reports, professional reports, health records (such as the "red book"), and any other relevant documents.

Clinical Observation and ADOS Assessment

One of our clinicians will meet with your child in person. During this appointment, the clinician will conduct an informal clinical observation and administer the ADOS assessment. The ADOS comprises a range of questions (depending on the child's expressive language abilities) and some activities. You will be informed of which module of the ADOS your child will be accessing. The module is selected by the clinician based on your child's level of expressive (spoken) language. The ADOS is usually completed by one clinician and with permission is recorded. The recording is deleted within 48 hours of the assessment.



School Visit

If appropriate, one of our clinicians will visit your child in school. The visit will consist of the following:

- Classroom observation (45-60 minutes)
- Break time observation (15-30 minutes)
- Discussion with SENCo/ someone who knows your child well (30 minutes)

What happens after the assessment?

Both appointments are essential components of our comprehensive evaluation process.

The clinicians involved in the assessment will collaborate to formulate a comprehensive differential diagnosis, taking into careful consideration all the information gathered during the assessment process.

You can expect to receive **feedback on the assessment findings within 7 days** following the second appointment unless any further information is deemed necessary.

Following the discussion of the assessment and its findings, our team will prepare a detailed report. This report will be **provided to you within three weeks**. Our reports include the following components:

1. **Assessment Process:** A thorough account of the assessment procedures conducted.
2. **Information Provided by the informant, child (if applicable) and education staff:** A summary of the information the informant provided.
3. **Diagnostic Outcome:** A clear and concise statement of the diagnosis, if applicable.
4. **Understanding of your child's differences:** Our insights into your child's unique strengths and differences.



5. **Recommendations:** Actionable recommendations tailored to your child's specific needs, aimed at optimising their well-being and functioning.
6. **Resources:** A list of resources and support options for you to explore.

We strongly advise sharing our comprehensive report with your General Practitioner (GP) and any other healthcare professionals who are involved in supporting you and your child. Additionally, our report can be a valuable asset when communicating with your child's school, especially when seeking accommodations to meet your child's specific needs.

Coaching Support

As part of the Autism diagnostic package with Linked Communication Services, **we offer one free post-diagnostic life coaching session with our Neurodivergent Coach (from 14 years and above)**. Each session lasts 60 minutes and can be used when suitable for you. More information about how this may help and what Coaching involves can be found at: <https://www.linkedcommunication.co.uk/coaching>

We look forward to supporting you through the Autism diagnostic journey.

The Linked Communication Team