

## Autism (ASD) Assessment at Hackney Ark

**All ASD assessments take place at the Hackney Ark for children aged 2-13.**

### Referrals:

**All new referrals to the Hackney Ark are to be sent to MARs (Multi-agency referrals).**

Once an ASD assessment has been discussed with a family, the appropriate pathway for assessment will be agreed. Social Care CAMHS referrals for ASD also come through this pathway.

### ASD Assessment Pathways:

**There are four pathways for assessment:**

- **Under 5's**
- **Over 5's with learning disability (LD 5-19)**
- **5-13 without primary learning difficulties (higher functioning)**
- **Over 14s without LD**

### Under 5's

All children aged 2-4 inclusive (with or without a learning disability) are referred to the community paediatricians at the Hackney Ark through MARs for neurodevelopmental assessment. Children with suspected ASD are then referred on to the specialist Complex Communication Clinic (CCC). CCC provides a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) assessment.

Diagnostic assessment can then be completed following a number of pathway options:

- Complex Communication Needs Assessment Group
- Individualised assessment (including ADOS)
- Complex Communication Clinic plus visit to education setting or home.

### 5-19 school age with primary learning disability

This assessment is taken up by CAMHS Disability Team, which is a specialist tier 3 NHS service for children with disabilities and mental health/emotional problems at Hackney Ark. The ASD diagnostic service is

completed by a clinical psychologist, consultant psychiatrist and speech and language therapist alongside consultation to the wider professional system.

### (5-13) school age without primary learning difficulties (higher functioning)

The Social Communication Assessment Clinic (SCAC) is a joint pathway by Hackney Ark clinicians Specialist mental health CAMHS (ELFT); Social Care CAMHS and Hackney learning Trust (HLT). This is an individualised assessment with an MDT including Paediatrician, Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist, Educational Psychologist and Speech and Language Therapist. Social Care bring referrals up to age 18.

### 14+ (higher functioning)

All young people over 14 or over suspected of being affected by an Autistic Spectrum Disorder are assessed at Specialist CAMHS, ELFT, due to overlay with mental health needs. **All referrals go to ELFT.**

### Structure of assessments:

Individualised assessments may comprise ADOS and 3DI-R (standardised assessments undertaken by specially trained clinicians) alongside developmental history and observation in familiar settings.

Group assessments for under 5's happen at the Ark by a MDT observing children across three mornings in a play setting, including home and school visits.

**All assessments comply with NICE guidelines and use DSM-5 to reach a diagnosis.**

### Who can refer/waiting times:

Any professional who knows the child and family can make referrals with consent from parents/carers.

**We contact by 5 weeks from receipt of referral. Referrals for assessment are completed within 18 weeks where possible (NICE).**

### Service Providers:

The **Hackney Ark** is a children and young people's centre for child development and disability. It offers multi-disciplinary and multi-agency care pathways.

**ELFT CAMHS**, is a tier 3 multi-disciplinary children and young people's service for mental health within the East London Foundation Trust (**ELFT**). 15 Homerton Row, London E9 6ED

**Social Care CAMHS** has clinicians who support the mental health of children, young people and families requiring support from the borough (Hillman Street).

**Hackney Learning Trust (HLT)** provides Educational Psychology (EP) to setting/schools. In SCAC the EP provides consultation and support to schools / settings to plan interventions and offer guidance for SEN support plans and EHC plans.



**AUTISTIC  
SPECTRUM  
DISORDER**

**CAMHS ASSESSMENT  
SERVICE**

**REFERRER'S GUIDE**

**Hackney Ark  
Children & Young People's  
Centre for Child Development  
and Disability  
Downs Park Road  
London E8 2HY  
020 70147000**