



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR AUTISM ASSESSMENT (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet outlines the standard components of the assessment process at The Owl Centre, however there may be variations depending on your individual needs.

Our autism assessment pathway typically consists of 3 appointments:

- Developmental History
- Clinical Observation
- Feedback

HOW TO PREPARE AHEAD OF YOUR APPOINTMENTS

- Please ensure you have **completed the pre-assessment questionnaires** prior to the appointments.
- **Please use a laptop** or tablet (not a phone).
- Make sure the **device is fully charged or plugged in**. It's important that all tech is functioning well.
- **Test your internet connection**, camera, and microphone.

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- A parent or carer should attend.
If the young person is 14 or over, they can join too if they wish.
- Choose a quiet, private space. Please find alternative childcare arrangements for other children, to avoid disruption.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- We'll talk about your child's early development, including communication, behaviour and play - especially around the age of 4-5. Looking at old photos, videos or school reports before hand can be helpful.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

- This appointment lasts up to 2 hours.

WHERE IT TAKES PLACE

- Check your appointment confirmation carefully:
 - If in person, the venue address will be provided.
 - If online, you'll receive a secure link to join .
- Note down the date and time of the appointment.
- Set a calendar or phone reminder.
- Be ready to join the call 5-10 minutes early.



OBSERVATION APPOINTMENT

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- The young person being assessed **must attend**.
- A parent or carer can **support them at the start** but will usually be asked to leave the room or sit out of camera view during the session, unless agreed with the clinician.
- Set the camera up so the child can be seen from head to hips.
- Choose a quiet, private space and set up the camera so the child can be seen from head to hips. Children should be dressed in daytime clothes and should join the call in an appropriate environment (e.g. not on their bed).
- Please find alternative childcare arrangements for other children, to avoid disruption.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- We'll use structured, conversation-based tasks to observe **communication, social interaction, and imaginative play**. This helps us gather useful information for the diagnostic process.
- Your child will need to bring **5 random household items** to their observation appointment, such as a cup, hair comb, paperclip, toy car and wooden spoon. Please prepare these ahead of the observation session and put them in a safe place, out of reach until they are needed.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

- The session usually lasts **45–60 minutes**.

WHERE THE APPOINTMENT TAKES PLACE

- Check your appointment confirmation carefully:
 - If **in person**, the venue address will be provided.
 - If **online**, you'll receive a secure link to join.
- Note down the date and time of the appointment.
- Set a calendar or phone reminder.
- Be ready to join the call 5-10 minutes early.



FEEDBACK APPOINTMENT (UNDER 18'S)

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- For **children, a parent or carer** should attend (the child can join too if appropriate)
- If the young person is **14 or over**, they can join too if they wish.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- The clinician will explain the **assessment outcome**, how the decision was made, and what happens next.
- You'll also have time to **ask any questions**.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

- Usually **15-30 minutes**.

WHERE IT TAKES PLACE

- Held **online via Microsoft Teams** - check your confirmation email for the secure link



NON-ATTENDANCE (UNDER 18'S)

We know life gets busy. If you can't make your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so we can offer the slot to another family or individual.

- If you don't attend without notice, this will be recorded as a **DNA (Did Not Attend)**.
- **Late cancellations** (less than 24 hours' notice) may also count as a DNA.

FEELING UNSURE OR NERVOUS?

You're not alone.

The Owl Centre is built on the belief that everyone deserves to be understood, supported, and treated with kindness. We take pride in offering professional, evidence-based care in a way that is approachable and human.

Whether you're attending an appointment for yourself or your child, we aim to make the process feel calm, clear, and centred around your needs. We look forward to being a part of your journey.