

Job Title	Autism Mentor
Date	June 2025
Department	SEND
Reports to	Assistant Head – Inclusive Learning

Purpose of the Role

To provide personalised, consistent support to autistic pupils, helping them navigate school life, build confidence, and manage challenges. To promote autism awareness and acceptance across the school, working closely with staff, families, and the SEND team to ensure inclusive, strengths-based support.

Departmental Information

Autism Resource

Autism Resource offers 1:1 and small group enhanced provision for pupils in KS3 and above with Autism Spectrum Condition. Typically, pupils are able to access a programme of formal learning, with support. Within Autism Resource, our specialist team deliver targeted interventions to support academic attainment, progress towards EHCP outcomes, therapeutic programmes, preparation for adulthood and emotional literacy.

Senior School (Learning Support)

Ackworth's dedicated Learning Support Department provides tailored assistance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or those needing help with specific areas of learning. The goal is to ensure all pupils have the best opportunity to succeed alongside their peers, through support such as timetable adjustments, one-to-one interventions, and exam access arrangements. Support is adapted to individual needs ranging from short-term interventions to more sustained help, including for those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), which can be applied for with guidance from the SENCo.

BRIDGE

BRIDGE is a newly developed provision within the Senior School, designed to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with EHCPs. It offers a safe, nurturing environment with access to subject specialist teaching, personalised timetables, one-to-one and small group interventions, therapeutic support (including counselling, speech and language, and emotional literacy), and access to the Wellbeing Hub. Guided by the principles of Belonging, Respect, Inclusion, Diversity, Growth and Equality, BRIDGE ensures that all pupils are supported to grow in confidence, develop resilience, and thrive both academically and personally.

Main Roles and Responsibilities

- Offer consistent, personalised mentoring to autistic pupils, helping them navigate school life, build confidence, develop social understanding, and manage sensory or emotional challenges.
- Establish trusting and supportive relationships with pupils, acting as a safe, understanding point of contact who champions their individual needs and interests.
- Help autistic pupils prepare for and manage key transitions like daily routines, timetable changes, new environments or moving between year groups.
- Empower pupils to understand their own needs and advocate for themselves, where appropriate, helping them recognise their rights and communicate their preferences.
- Actively foster an inclusive school culture by promoting neurodiversity and educating staff and peers on autism awareness, acceptance, and strengths-based approaches.
- Share expertise and current best practice with colleagues to enhance autism-informed teaching strategies and reduce barriers to learning.
- Work closely with teachers, the SEND team, and families to ensure pupils' needs are understood, respected and effectively supported.
- Monitor and record pupil progress, challenges and achievements, feeding back to the wider SEND team and contributing to pupil reviews or support plans.

Person Specification

Educational Attainment and Qualifications

Recognised teaching qualification, such as PGCE or equivalent (essential).

Relevant certification in Autism Mentoring, e.g., NAS/AET (essential).

SENCo qualification (desirable).

Experience, Knowledge & Skills

- Proven experience working directly with autistic children or young people in educational, therapeutic, or support settings.
- Familiarity with working as part of a multi-disciplinary team, including families, teachers, and external professionals.
- Experience supporting transitions, sensory needs, or social communication development.
- A sound understanding of autism, including neurodiversity, sensory processing differences, and co-occurring conditions (e.g., anxiety, ADHD).
- Knowledge of inclusive education principles and the SEND Code of Practice.
- Awareness of safeguarding, confidentiality, and professional boundaries.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability build rapport, trust and respectful relationships with autistic pupils.
- Excellent communication skills, including active listening and adapting language for different needs.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively, using initiative and good judgement.
- A calm, patient, and empathetic approach with strong emotional resilience.
- Effective organisational and record keeping skills.
- Reflective practice and willingness to engage in ongoing training related to autism and inclusive education.

Ackworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are therefore expected to behave in such a way that supports this commitment. All staff are required to understand and adhere to the Schools Health and Safety policies.

Job descriptions may be subject to review from time to time and can be altered or amended to meet the changing requirements of the school. They are not designed to limit the extent of the role but instead to outline the main tasks and responsibilities.