

Case Studies Template

Background

Child(ren) who is/are subject(s) of the referral/plan. - anonymised.

Harry is 16 years of age diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Severe Learning Disability. Harry is preparing to make a transition to a post 16 education placement.

Family Structure (e.g. divorced mother with three children aged 7, 5 & 2).

Harry lives at home with his mother and father.

Harry has 2 older sisters who live away from the family home although one provides occasional care for Harry.

What was the situation before the work was undertaken? Describe the presenting difficulties leading to the referral. This should tell the reader what the situation was before a course of action was taken

Harry was diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder at the age of 2 and half years. He also has a growth in his pituitary gland and low intensity area in his posterior thalamus.

Harry demonstrates anxious behaviour when an environment is changed and these can also indicate physical symptoms. It has been identified that there have been changes in Harry's swallowing ability. He appears to 'gulp for air' and frequently 'belches' at night time which is felt by parents to be related to stomach pain.

Harry attended a special needs school and had access to his own individual learning environment at all times. It was identified that Harry required a secure place that he can retreat too and this was incorporated within his learning environment. He was always supported by a familiar adult on a one to one basis. Harry's individual learning environment also pays high regard to the sensory perceptual difficulties (heightened senses to touch, taste, noise, sight etc.) which children with autism can experience.

Harry has a severe learning difficulty together with communication and interaction difficulties. He is non verbal child whose understanding of complex spoken language is limited. Harry requires visual and physical structure within his classroom. Daily schedules and work schedules are constructed, which encourage flexibility. Harry responds well in a very quiet and calm environment. He needs a level of quiet time away from others. Harry is very noise sensitive. He has 1:1 adult support at all times. The benefits for Harry being in this quiet environment with an adult to support him seemed to be immense and he made tremendous progress.

Harry finds change extremely difficult to cope with and when feeling stressed or anxious may push others, throw objects, hit out. He has been known to self harm when distressed. Harry needs a high level of support with self - help skills and independence. He needs help to stay safe, as he is unaware of danger. Harry can find it difficult to understand complex instructions and benefits from a structured uncomplicated environment where symbols/ mini-schedules are used with consistency and where language is kept simplistic.

Harry's parents have always been very dedicated to meeting Harry's needs and adapting their home and family life to achieve this. It takes intense planning, patience and thought to meet Harry's needs consistently.

Harry has been supported by the Disabled Children and Young People's Service for the past four years and has a Personal Budget to provide the support identified in his care plan. His parents receive a direct payment to employ a personal assistant to support Harry at weekends and in the holidays.

Harry's needs and care have caused significant strain on his parent's relationship and has been exhausting, especially when they had to bring up their other two children. It has been extremely challenging for them to lead any type of individual lives with employment, friendships etc.

Was anyone else involved, who and in what way?

Harry has been known to:

- Disabled Children and Young People's Service
- Paediatrician
- Community Learning Disability Team
- Dietician
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Educational Psychologist