

Supporting Children with Autism and Asperger Syndrome

Policy Reference: NC-CH-2.4

Applies to: Children's Residential Services

Reviewed: July 2025

Next Review: July 2026

Owner: Head of Children's Services / Clinical Lead

1. Our Commitment

Nwando Care is committed to providing high-quality, personalised support to children and young people with autism, including those diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome and other neurodevelopmental conditions. We recognise that each child is unique and that autism presents differently for every individual. Our approach is grounded in compassion, evidence-based practice, and trauma-informed care.

2. Our Approach

We create supportive environments that are:

- **Neurodiversity affirming:** We celebrate difference and individual strengths
- **Structured but flexible:** Predictable routines with personalised adaptations
- **Low arousal:** Calm, sensory-considerate spaces that reduce anxiety
- **Communication-aware:** Using visuals, symbols, and assisted communication
- **Relationship-led:** Built around trust, safety, and co-regulation

3. Who We Support

Our children's homes are registered to support:

- Children and young people aged **7–18 years**
- Those with a diagnosis of **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**
- Young people with **learning or communication difficulties**
- Children who may also present with:
 - Social, emotional and behavioural needs
 - Sensory processing differences
 - Anxiety, trauma, or attachment challenges

4. Personalised Care Planning

Every young person has a **bespoke care plan**, co-developed with the child, their family, and involved professionals. This includes:

- Communication and sensory profiles
- Emotional regulation strategies
- Triggers and calming preferences
- Individual learning and education plans
- Short- and long-term goals

Key workers provide consistency, support daily routines, and advocate for each young person's voice to be heard.

5. Therapeutic Support

We integrate multidisciplinary therapeutic input, which may include:

- **Speech and Language Therapy**
- **Occupational Therapy** (e.g. sensory integration)
- **Cognitive Behavioural or Narrative Therapy**
- **Creative Therapies** (art, drama or music)
- **Therapeutic parenting models** and attachment-informed care

Therapies are delivered in a flexible, child-led manner with an emphasis on building trust and emotional literacy.

6. Life Skills, Education and Community Integration

We support children to develop:

- **Functional life skills** – cooking, hygiene, travel training
- **Social and emotional learning** – through modelling and structured activities
- **Educational progress** – via strong links with specialist schools and SENCO teams
- **Confidence and independence** – with tailored community outings and participation in local life

All care is underpinned by **preparation for adulthood** and the promotion of self-advocacy.

7. Positive Behaviour Support

We do not see behaviour in isolation but as a **form of communication**. Our Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSPs):

- Identify underlying needs and emotional states
- Use proactive strategies to reduce anxiety or overload
- Build co-regulation and self-regulation skills
- Include clear, non-punitive responses to behaviour that challenges

We do **not use restraint** unless absolutely necessary to prevent immediate harm, and all incidents are fully reviewed with learning shared across teams.

8. Partnership with Families and Professionals

We work closely with:

- Parents and carers, ensuring transparent and regular communication
- Social workers, SENCOs and Local Authorities
- Mental health professionals, SALT and OT specialists
- Advocacy and safeguarding bodies

We host regular **child-centred reviews** to track progress, discuss adaptations, and co-produce future plans.

9. Our Environments

Our homes offer:

- Calm, homely and sensory-friendly interiors
- Visual schedules and choice-making tools

- Structured routines with clear transitions
- Safe spaces and 'quiet zones' for reflection or decompression
- A consistent team trained in autism best practice

10. Staff Training

All staff receive training in:

- Autism awareness and neurodiversity
- Trauma and attachment-informed care
- Sensory needs and communication strategies
- De-escalation and co-regulation
- Cultural competence and inclusive practice

Supervision and reflective practice sessions allow staff to continuously improve their understanding and approach.

11. Monitoring and Outcomes

We use both qualitative and quantitative measures to track progress:

- Goal setting and achievement logs
- Daily logs and incident tracking
- Child and family feedback
- Progress in communication, independence, education and wellbeing

Success is defined by **positive relationships, increased resilience, and improved quality of life.**