

# Attention Autism – A parent guide

Attention Autism is a programme which we deliver at school which aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities.

## Aims:

1. To engage attention
2. To improve joint attention
3. To develop shared enjoyment in group activities
4. To increase attention in adult-led activities
5. To encourage spontaneous interaction in a natural group setting
6. To increase non-verbal and verbal communication through commenting
7. To build a wealth and depth of vocabulary
8. To have fun!

## Stages of Attention Autism

The Attention Autism programme progresses through a series of stages, building on each skill level. Each new stage is introduced when the group is ready to expand attention skills.

### STAGE 1: The Box

A box contains 3 visually engaging objects and toys, aiming to gain the shared attention of the group. The adult leader shows each item to the group and uses simple repetitive vocabulary to comment on the objects.



### STAGE 2: The Attention Builder

Visually stimulating activities are shown to the group by the adult leader, aiming to sustain attention for a longer period. The activities are fun, visually engaging and often messy!



### **STAGE 3:** The interactive game

Stage 3 activities are similar to stage 2 activities except some of the pupils are able to come up and take a turn in front of the whole group. An adult from the class takes the first turn in order to demonstrate to the pupils what is expected of them. Pupils have to shift their attention between their own turn and then back to the group. Not every pupil in the group will get a turn, which then teaches important emotional regulation skills, as well as the essential skills of waiting, turn-taking and learning through modelling.



### **STAGE 4:** Table top activities

Stage 4 aims to develop the skill of engaging and shifting attention. The adult leader demonstrates a simple creative task, and then gives each pupil an individual kit to copy the task. The pupils take their kits to a table, complete the task independently, and then everyone returns to the group to show their completed tasks.



If you are interested in learning more, visit the **Gina Davies Autism Centre** page on Facebook & Youtube or speak to the SLIC team for more information and ideas of activities you can try at home!