

BeyondAutism Outreach – Associate Consultants

Good Practice Guidelines and Minimum Quality Standards

May 2017

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1. About BeyondAutism Outreach

1.1 Background

The Outreach and Training Service was initially set up in January 2015 under the umbrella of BeyondAutism Schools. During the first year the service was delivered part-time and was focused on supporting individual children with ABA/VB programmes within non-ABA schools. BeyondAutism launched its 5 year strategy: Empowering People, Launching Lives, in 2016 and ensured that the Outreach service was developed as a self-sustaining, viable service within the organisations service portfolio.

1.2 Underpinning philosophy

BeyondAutism's mission is to promote, maintain and improve education and training for people diagnosed with autism and/or other autistic and related communication disorders. We empower people with autism to lead fuller lives through positive educational experiences, training for the people who work with them and support for their families and carers.

Our vision and values

We believe that every child deserves the best possible education

We believe our team is forward-thinking, expertly trained and professional, using the latest research and techniques to teach and empower individuals.

We believe that ABA/VB can make a real difference to the teaching and learning for people with autism and their families

We believe in a future where parents and carers don't have to fight so hard for the provision of quality services for their children with autism.

We are

Person centred

Aspirational

Innovative

Creative

Clear, honest and open

Respectful

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

Behaviour is everything that we do – our actions, our thoughts, our language, and our feelings are all behaviours.

What is Behaviour Analysis?

Behaviour Analysis is perhaps best described as the science of learning. Like most sciences, Behaviour Analysis involves both basic scientific research and the use of that scientific knowledge to help people in the real world. Thus, Behaviour Analysis has two “branches” – an experimental and an applied branch.

The practical application of basic scientific knowledge about learning is the second branch of Behaviour Analysis – Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). ABA focuses on positive behaviour change for individuals, groups of people, and society at large. The primary focus of ABA is on behaviour that is important to people and enables them to lead more fulfilling lives.

At the individual level, we might want to help a child or adult learn a new skill. For example, we might be interested in teaching a child with significant special educational needs to read.

At a group level, behaviour analysts have worked on organising classroom environments (including what the teacher does and how they teach) to ensure that all children can learn effectively.

Values (UK Society for Behaviour Analysts)

The values shared by behaviour analysts working in applied settings include:

- Focus on the individual

Behaviour analysts ensure that the goals, methods, and outcomes of any intervention are important, understandable, and acceptable to the person whose behaviour is being changed, as well as to those who care about the person (e.g. parents, carers and teachers).

Any decisions made about how behaviour will be assessed or changed are sensitive to the individual circumstances of the person and are aimed at improving quality of life.

- Focus on positive intervention and use of least restrictive alternative

Behaviour analysts value the use of positive, reinforcement-based interventions as the first choice for enacting behaviour change.

- Focus on skill acquisition

Behaviour analysts take a constructive approach to behaviour change and view acquisition (not reduction) of behaviour as the primary goal. Behaviour analysts value equipping individuals with skills that will make them more successful across a range of life domains (e.g. work, leisure, home).

- Reliance on science as basis for assessment and intervention

Behaviour analysts have a commitment to using evidence-based practice. This commitment involves selecting strategies validated by research, as well as evaluating the efficacy of any interventions they implement (i.e. data-based decision-making).

- Focus on ecological validity of intervention strategies and behaviour change

Behaviour analysts value lasting change. They recognise that an individual's skills must be portable across different environments and across time, and consider the wider context in which behaviour occurs when planning strategies.

Verbal Behaviour (VB)

Verbal Behaviour or VB is simply the application of these scientific principles to language. "Verbal Behaviour" is a language classification system developed by B. F. Skinner. As the name suggests, the VB approach concentrates on teaching the child their first functional communication, then speech and language, then the social skills that come with language.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Our 2021 Ambition: Outreach and Training

- To be the leading edge Applied Behaviour Analysis/Verbal Behaviour Outreach and Training service within the UK
- To be the 'go to' organisation for expertise and services for all people with Autism within the UK, and their families and carers

How will this be achieved?

- Developing training courses that will be accessible to educators, parents and carers who support people with autism
- Supporting mainstream, independent and special nurseries, schools and colleges

- Ensuring the Outreach and Training service provides value for money ensuring the latest research within the field of Applied **Behaviour Analysis**/ Verbal Behaviour influences practice and training
- Monitoring and evaluating the Outreach and Training service at regular intervals
- Implementing monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the service is judged as an outstanding provision within the UK
- Develop and deliver an Early Years provision where parents and children are taught together.

2. Benefits

Associate Consultants will have access to:

- A broader scope of work, providing breadth and depth to their own professional experience and expertise
- A nationwide peer group to shape and improve practice
- Self-promotion opportunities through marketing and communication with BeyondAutism
- Continuous professional development credits through attendance at BeyondAutism Outreach team days
- Opportunities to develop and share research.

3. Responsibilities

Associate Consultants agree to the terms and conditions – particularly working within the minimum quality standards and good practice guidelines.

Signed Associate Consultant Letters of Engagement will be renewed annually

Associate Consultants who fail to maintain the terms and conditions will be supported to do so but may not renew engagement with BeyondAutism Outreach if they continue to fall below the standards set.

BeyondAutism will support Associate Consultants to maintain the minimum quality standards and agree to provide Outreach team days in order to facilitate positive peer support and a network of interactive practitioners.

4. Good Practice Guidelines and Minimum Quality Standards

4.1 Professional qualifications and qualities

It is essential that quality is maintained with professional integrity and as such each BeyondAutism Associate Consultant will have achieved a professional qualification and will be able to evidence continuous professional development within their own field.

In addition BeyondAutism relies on professionals that uphold our beliefs and ways of working presenting at all times a friendly, can do attitude that people relate to.

Minimum Standard 4.1

- Professional qualification as evidenced by certification
- Professional body registration as evidenced by an individual membership number
- Evidence of continuous professional development
- Testimonial/reference dated within the current calendar year

4.2 Teaching and training

BeyondAutism Associate Consultants will be competent practitioners able to model good practice and able to adjust their delivery style as appropriate. There may be times when modelling an approach or idea with a child is required, giving clear instructions so that the people working with the child everyday are empowered and able to follow through.

At the core of BeyondAutism Outreach is training parents and other professionals. To maintain consistency and quality Associate Consultants will use BeyondAutism branded and agreed materials. All Associate Consultants will attend the designated team training days to ensure that the materials being used are up to date and relevant. There is also an expectation that BeyondAutism Associate Consultants will contribute to the development and ongoing review of training materials.

Minimum Standard 4.2

- Training sessions are planned, taking account of the customers' needs
- Attend at least 2 team training days per calendar year
- Able to access and use BeyondAutism branded training materials

4.3 Partnership Working

BeyondAutism Associate Consultants are required to work in a variety of settings, meeting a diverse range of people; at times meeting people that have had no exposure to behaviour analysis, with its intrinsic ways of working. The ability to listen is crucial, the ability to hear what is being said is paramount, when forming effective professional relationships. Open dialogue that explores the issues and breaks down any barriers will be pivotal to achieving outcomes and effective communication.

Minimum Standard 4.3

- Satisfactions, complaints and concerns are recorded
- Materials and written reports are made readily available/on request

4.4 Team Work

Associate Consultants form the BeyondAutism Outreach team and are supported by the BeyondAutism Head of Outreach. The team is geographically spread across England, it is therefore important that individual contact details and availability are shared. In the event that an Associate Consultant is not available to attend an appointment the Head of Outreach must be contacted immediately so that expectations can be managed effectively.

A buddy system is in place to facilitate safe working and to reduce any feelings of isolation.

Minimum Standard 4.4

- Contact details are up to date
- Calendar of availability is up to date
- Actively engaged with the buddy system
- Emergency absence is reported in a timely fashion, in order that expectations can be managed/alternative arrangements can be made

4.5 Record Keeping

All training and outreach consultancy sessions will have a record of participants that must be submitted to the Head of Outreach within the 48 hours following the session.

Where an individual child consultation is provided a record of the session, the recommendations and required follow up will be written and sent to the family/school and a copy submitted to the Head of Outreach within 5 working days of the session.

Evaluation is an important element to the development and monitoring of the service. An evaluation form must be completed by participants at the end of each session and all forms submitted to the Head of Outreach within 48 hours following the session.

All work in relation to BeyondAutism will be saved in the appropriate place on the company server and will not be saved for any purpose to your own hard drive or desk top.

Minimum Standard 4.5

- Course participant records submitted to the Head of Outreach within 48 hours following the session
- Written reports sent within 5 working days
- Evaluation forms submitted to the Head of Outreach within 48 hours following the session.
- Records are filed appropriately on the BeyondAutism server

4.6 Policies and procedures

Associate Consultants must adhere to the BeyondAutism Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure.

Consultants are expected to maintain and be able to demonstrate health and safety in the work place, appropriate personal insurance and relevant risk assessments.

Minimum Standard 4.6

- Read and implement BeyondAutism’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure
- Hold an insurance certificate that covers public liability

4.7 Contributing to research

Case studies, sharing best practice, and learning from more challenging situations can all be used to inform and enhance education and outcomes for children with an ASD.

BeyondAutism is committed to advancing practice in furtherance of each child reaching its goals, supported by a family resilient enough to respond positively to change.

Minimum Standard 4.7

- Contribute case studies for the purposes of publication
- Share practice and experiences with the wider team

5. Monitoring standards

BeyondAutism’s Head of Outreach will monitor the quality and standards set out by:

- Attending and observing sessions
- Reviewing satisfactions, complaints and concerns
- Reviewing evaluation forms
- Regular “keep in touch” calls with each Associate Consultant
- Organising and facilitating Outreach Team days
- Annual audit of minimum quality standards

6. Contact details

BeyondAutism: 020 3031 9705

outreach@beyondautism.org.uk

7. Appendices

- I. Reference document listing each associated professional body standards
- II. Record of participants template
- III. Record of individual session template
- IV. Training evaluation form template
- V. Testimonial/reference template