



## Support for Individuals with ASC Policy

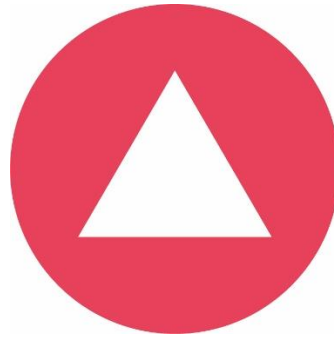
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<b>Owner:</b>	Neil Armstrong	<b>Job Title:</b>	Assistant Director – Care & Support
<b>To be issued to: (check as needed)</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board of Management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Staff <input type="checkbox"/> ET/SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Asset <input type="checkbox"/> ICT		<input type="checkbox"/> OD <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance <input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM) <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
<b>Method of Delivery: (check as needed)</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learn Pro <input type="checkbox"/> Board Portal <input type="checkbox"/> Line Manager to Share (e.g. Agencies)		<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Owner to Notify (e.g. Contractors) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
<b>Stakeholder Consultation Completed (check as needed)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Board of Management <input type="checkbox"/> All Staff <input type="checkbox"/> ET/SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Managers <input type="checkbox"/> Head Office Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Asset <input type="checkbox"/> ICT		<input type="checkbox"/> OD <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance <input type="checkbox"/> All Care & Support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C&S Managers (RM, OM, CSM) <input type="checkbox"/> C&S Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Unite the Union <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Voices Group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ The Autism Forum _____	

## Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
September 2024	Sean Taylor	3.0	Cyclical review New policy template

## Summary of Changes

Section	Change
All	Changed to new policy template.
All	ARK changed to Ark.
All	Service Users changed to Supported People.
All	Updated to reflect new job roles/titles.
All	Updated to include the Autism Strategy.



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# Support for Individuals with ASC Policy

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## 1.0 Ark's Values

Arks values are true to the core purpose of the organisation and the services we deliver. They determine our behaviours towards one another and what we should expect in our relationships with one another. Working within the following values will guide and help us deliver our vision and mission of Ark being an organisation where everyone is equal:

### Trust

We have confidence in our people to deliver excellent services and trust in them to do so. We will develop trusting and honest relationships and our customers will feel assured that they can rely on us to deliver.

### Respect

We treat everyone fairly and we listen. We are respectful of each person with whom we come into contact and expect our people to respond professionally and treat others as they would wish to be treated.

### Understanding

We will operate with empathy and compassion and approach each situation with an open mind. We will question and challenge to ensure we achieve the right outcomes for customers and our people.

### Equality

We believe everyone is equal and expect our people to create positive experiences where everyone feels valued and included.

### Integrity

We will do the right thing and take responsibility for our actions. We will work together to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and practice.

## 2.0 Purpose

This policy explains how Ark Care & Support services will support individuals with ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) also known as autistic people.

All Ark staff will also have an organisational awareness of ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition).

## 3.0 Policy Statement

Ark acknowledges that as a care, support and housing provider all staff may interact with, and support people who are autistic therefore there is a need for all Ark staff to have an awareness of autism.

Ark is committed to supporting autistic people with their specific and unique needs and experiences to participate fully in society on an equal basis.

It is the responsibility of all Care & Support staff to uphold supported people's rights to autonomy and liberty while protecting them from harm or abuse.

There may be circumstances where the behaviour of an autistic person has an impact on their ability to exercise their rights and places them at risk of harm or abuse.

## 4.0 Scope

This policy applies to all Ark staff teams who may come into contact with autistic people. It includes head office staff, Care & Support staff, agency staff, volunteers and students undertaking direct practice with supported people on behalf of Ark.

## 5.0 Legal/Regulatory Framework

This policy and associated procedures are written with regard to the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016
- Adult Support and Protection revised Code of Practice (Scottish Government, 2022)
- Rights, Risks and Limits to Freedom (Mental Welfare Commission, 2021)

- Health and Social Care Standards (Scottish Government, 2017)
- Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019
- Codes of Practice for Social Services Workers and Employers (SSSC, 2024)

## 6.0 Responsibilities

### 6.1 Board of Management

Ark's Board of Management is responsible for consideration and approval of this policy, and for ensuring that its decisions are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

### 6.2 Executive Team

Ark's Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed in accordance with Ark's schedule for review of policies, or sooner if required. The Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that its decisions, and that the decision of officers, are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

### 6.3 Leadership Team

Ark's Leadership Team is responsible for review of the policy, and for ensuring that its decisions, and that the decision of officers, are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

### 6.4 Managers

Ark head office Managers, Care & Support Managers, Operations Managers and Regional Managers will be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their area of responsibility.

They must also ensure that all established and relief Care & Support staff are made aware of this policy and participate in autism e-learning training where required.

## 6.5 All Staff

All Ark staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with its provisions as well as undertake Autism Awareness (level 1) e-learning and where required complete additional levels, as part of this policy and Arks Autism Strategy.

## 6.6 Third Parties

All agency staff, volunteers and students undertaking Care & Support duties are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with its provisions.

Ark will ensure that the Public Sector Equality Duty is complied with when third parties, such as contractors, are carrying out functions on behalf of Ark.

## 7.0 Autism

The Scottish Strategy for Autism (Scottish Government 2011) describes Autism as “a lifelong developmental disorder more commonly referred to as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) but also known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD).” ASC is a range of neuro-developmental conditions affecting people differently with some individuals being able to live independently. Others will need very specialist support.

ASC covers a broad range of intellectual ability, and some individuals have special areas of exceptional talent whilst others are severely disabled by the disorder and require a high level of support throughout their lives. It is estimated that over a third of autistic people have a co-occurring learning disability and many experience mental health concerns, particularly anxiety and depression.

While everyone with Autism will have their own highly personal experience in terms of how it affects them, people will have common challenges in 3 areas of functioning, sometimes referred to as the triad of impairments:

- Communication
- Reciprocal social interaction
- Restrictive, repetitive, and stereotypical routines of behaviour

(it should be noted that many autistic people reject the term “impairment” however this is in line with current diagnosis terminology).

## 7.1 The Autism Forum

Ark's Autism Forum established in 2017, has representation from various levels of Care and Support staff and includes Learning and Development colleagues. The Forum first set out to explore the need for a co-ordinated approach to Autism delivery and what that might look like.

The areas of focus set out below were identified by the Forum as the overarching areas of the Standards;

- Research & External Environment
- Tools & Process
- Training
- Practice
- Participation
- Quality & Continuous Improvement

Work streams were then taken forward by defined sub-groups to develop Ark's approach within these areas.

The Forum currently supports, oversees and measures the implementation of the Autism Strategy in line with its action plan.

## 7.2 Ark Autism Strategy

Ark's Autism Strategy ensures a consistent, person-centred approach for supporting autistic people across the organisation.

The Autism Strategy was developed and supported through input from the Autism Forum. Autism Standards, Communication Tools, Training and an Autism Audit have been developed and agreed with an action plan, outlining the timeline and responsibilities for implementation.



## 8.0 Learning & Development Requirements

All Ark employees will complete the Autism Informed Practice (level 1) e-learning training, called Autism Awareness.

Care and Support staff who support autistic people will also complete the 4 Autism Skilled Practice (level 2) E-learning, in the following order:

- Autism Module 1: Neurodiversity and Theories
- Autism Module 2: Flexible Thinking and Imagination
- Autism Module 3: Social Communication and Interaction
- Autism Module 4: Sensory Processing

After the E-learning, Support staff will complete the reflective account document, called “Autism Practice – Reflective Evidence form”. This form can be completed on an individual basis or with a manager or as part of a group/team discussion. This form is available on SharePoint or the Care and Support managers’ folder on the M drive.

When completed, it will be signed off by the manager who will notify the L&D team of the completion date and name of staff to ensure LearnPro records are accurate.

For new members of staff, managers must inform L&D who need the 4 modules and the reflective evidence form so those items can be manually added to the new staff’s learning plan.

All e-learning courses are contained on the LearnPro platform and adhere to Ark’s Autism Strategy.

## 9.0 Related Policies & Procedures

- HS01 Health & Safety
- G13 Openness & Confidentiality
- G34 Equality
- G36 Keeping People Safe
- G57a Adult Support & Protection
- CS02 Care Planning
- CS06 Reducing Restrictive Practice
- CS17 Behaviour of Concern

## 10.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Please see relevant Equality Impact Assessment.

## 11.0 Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

Please see AIMS Data Protection Impact Assessment.

## 12.0 Stakeholder Consultation

- Ark Board of Management
- Ark Leadership Team
- Ark Regional Managers
- Ark Operations Managers
- Ark Care & Support Managers
- Short-life working group (Care & Support)
- Ark Policy and Procedure Review Group

## 13.0 Monitoring and Review

### 13.1 Monitoring

Ark's Executive, Leadership Team and the Autism Forum will monitor implementation through quarterly Learn Pro reports completed by Learning & Development of this policy on an ongoing basis and ensure that relevant decisions within Ark are taken in line with the obligations and expectations set out in this policy.

### 13.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed within 3 years from the date of approval by our Board of Management, in accordance with Ark's policy review framework.