Principle One

Understanding the strengths, interests and needs of each autistic pupil.

Competency 1:

I identify the key strengths and challenges faced by autistic pupils in the areas of social understanding and communication; flexible thinking, information processing and understanding, and sensory processing and integration.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I observe the pupil in at least four different settings (e.g. in the playground; during a structured classroom activity, in PE and working independently). These help me to understand the pupil's strengths, interests and ways of learning.			
I work with the pupil, other staff and parents to identify each pupils' strengths and needs.			
I support discussion with parents and caregivers about their perspectives on their child's areas of difference and the goals they consider it important to work on.			
I consult the one-page profile that has been created with the pupil. This provides me with insight into the pupil's perspective.			
I emphasise key strengths to promote self-esteem when working with the pupil.			
I consider how to include the interests of the pupil in activities.			
I record and/or contribute to observations and information from the pupil, parents/carers and other staff in the one-page profile. The one-page profile helps me understand each pupil's strengths, and their preferred way of communicating, interacting and learning.			
I share the pupil profile with all relevant staff, the pupil and the parents. This helps others understand the pupil better.			

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Practical resources

- Observation Form template is provided with the 'Making Sense of Autism' module

- Diagnosing Autism (Autism West Midlands)

- The Progression Framework (in free AET resources)

- One-page profile template is provided with the 'Making Sense of Autism' module

- Parental interview framework is provided with the 'Good Autism Practice' module

- NAS information on diagnosis (see useful websites)

Competency 2:

I recognise that many autistic pupils have co-occurring conditions and differences. They experience high levels of anxiety and stress, and these can create barriers to learning. I know that a pupil may display behaviour based on a combination of factors and I work hard to understand the causes and functions of the behaviour.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I appreciate the potential impact of co-occurring differences on the pupil and take these into account when working with the pupil.			
I engage with professional development on increasing my knowledge around co-occurring differences.			
I gather information on co-occurring differences from parents, professionals and other reports.			
I record any co-occurring differences of pupils I work with in the one-page profile and I ensure medical records are up-to-date.			
I understand a pupil's behaviour as being a form of communication. I observe and reflect on what might be causing distress.			
I work closely with the pupil to identify and understand the reasons for and the functions of behaviour, with a			

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	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
particular focus on understanding behaviours that signify distress.			
Behavioural expectations are developmentally appropriate and meaningful for pupils.			
I use STAR charts to understand and identify the functions of behaviour, and to plan effective and individualised approaches.			
I understand the principles and purpose of the school's behaviour and SEND policies, its legal responsibilities, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.			
I am aware of the safeguarding policy of the school, and the processes I need to follow if I have concerns around safeguarding.			
I understand the principles and purpose of the school's behaviour and SEND policies, its legal responsibilities, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.			

Practical resources

- Key fact sheets on ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia – NAS (see useful websites)

- STAR Chart is provided with the 'Good Autism Practice' module

- CAT Co-occurring conditions

- Reward Chart (free AET resource)

- Pupil-centred education plan is provided with the 'Good Autism Practice' module

Professional Development that will help me develop this competency

The AET 'Making Sense of Autism' is specifically created to support you to develop this competency. The module has a focus on supporting practitioners to understand and get to know the individual pupil, and to develop/provide input into a one-page profile.

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Principle Two

Enabling the autistic pupil to contribute to and influence decisions.

Competency 3:

I include, consult and support pupils to communicate their strengths, experiences and emotional wellbeing. I understand the importance of listening to the pupil and regularly consult and involve pupils in any decisions being made.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I develop the one-page profile in partnership with the pupil, parents and other staff in the setting or contribute my thoughts to the development of the one-page profile.			
I observe how the pupil communicates, and I use strategies to ensure they can communicate and express their views.			
I take onboard the perspective of the autistic pupil across the range of activities in which they engage and provide pupils with opportunities to make choices and to communicate in a range of ways.			
I have a structured conversation with the pupil about their experiences of school (e.g. using a template such as the Ideal school document).			
I set time aside to discuss aspirations with the pupil.			
I have high expectations of all pupils.			
I find opportunities to celebrate the strengths, hopes, dreams and aspirations of pupils.			
All one-page profile, pupil-centered education plans and Education, Health and Care plans have up to date information about the pupil's hopes, dreams and aspirations.			

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Practical resources

- One Page Profile is provided in the 'Making sense of autism' module.

- Pupil-centred support plan provided in Good Autism Practice module.

- Likes/Dislikes (free AET resource)

- My World Map (free AET resource)

- Helen Sanderson templates (see useful websites)

Professional Development that will help me develop this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module focuses on the practicalities of developing a pupil-centered education plan. This includes providing guidance and resources on how to elicit the perspective of the pupil.

Competency 4:

I see the pupil as a partner in their learning and actively involve autistic pupils as part of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle so that the pupil is at the centre of educational planning.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I make sure pupils have regular opportunities to give feedback and participate in decision-making. This includes discussing the pupil's current and future needs and wishes and reviewing/contributing to the review of their one-page profile.			
I encourage and/or support attendance at all meetings. For meetings the pupil cannot attend, I seek their views separately and feedback accordingly.			
I engage pupils in making choices about curricular and extra-curricular activities.			
I use and/or consult the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process and the records of important information on each stage of the graduated approach.			
I recognise that for some pupils, planned approaches and the assess, plan and do review will be sufficient in			

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
ensuring that their individual needs are met and that they make progress. For other pupils, a targeted plan and further support from specialist services might be needed.			
Following an Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle, I discuss or contribute to next steps with the pupil and their family.			
All pupil profiles, pupil-centered education plans and Education, Health and Care plans have up to date information about how the pupil is involved in the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.			

Practical resources

- One Page Profile is provided in the 'Making sense of autism' module.

- Assess, plan, do, review template provided in Making Sense of autism module

- Professional development that will help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module focuses on the practicalities of developing or contributing to the development of a pupil-centered education plan. This includes providing guidance and resources on how to involve pupils in the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.

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Principle Three

Collaboration with parents, carers and other professionals and services.

Competency 5:

I engage with and involve parents/carers in contributing to decisions about their child's education and on future prospects. I establish and develop ways to communicate and share information, ideas and progress.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I involve parents in their child's education*.			
I use/contribute to learning journals and summaries to support learning at home and to enable a consistent approach.			
I recognise that supporting pupils to understand their diagnosis may also include providing sensitive and balanced support for peers, parents and siblings.			
I signpost parents/carers to and/or am aware of appropriate services and support in and around the local area.			
If parents are seeking diagnostic assessment, I inform them/ am aware that they should be informed about the referral pathway in their local area through the Local Offer.			
I provide/am aware of the need to provide timely information to parents about post-16 options and post-18 education and training.			
I communicate regularly with parents/carers through a home-school 'diary'.			

* The level and type of involvement between staff, parents/carers and other agencies depends on the role and position of the staff member.

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Practical resources

- Positive Relationship Between Home and School (Free AET resource)

- Link to GAP Case Studies Report. Case Study of John at St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School: p3 in GAP Case Studies.

- Daily Diary (free AET resource)

- Parental Interview Framework is provided in the Good Autism Practice module.

- Class dojo – an app to enable staff to communicate with parents https://www.classdojo.com

Professional development that will help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module is focused on developing a pupil-centered education plan for a pupil. This includes guidance on how to involve parents/carers in this process.

Competency 6:

I collaborate with health, social care and other professionals to improve educational experiences and outcomes for autistic pupils.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I understand who to go to, and the processes in place for making referrals for further assessment.			
I am aware of the services that exist through our Local Offer, and the training and expertise that exists in my local area.			
I collaborate with health and social care staff to ensure we have an accurate picture of a pupil's needs.			

Practical resources

Team Around the Child Template is provided in the Good Autism Practice Module

Professional development that will help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module includes examples and guidance on working with health, social care and other professionals when developing a pupil-centered education plan.

Principle Four

Workforce development related to good autism practice.

Competency 7:

I engage in professional development that enables me to address the needs of autistic pupils and to enhance and embed inclusive practice.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I have participated in induction training on autism.			
I participate in refresher training every year.			
I have completed the AET 'Making sense of autism' and 'Good Autism Practice' modules.			
I share and enhance my skills through discussion with other staff.			
I use the AET School Competencies to identify my own professional development needs and to improve my understanding, knowledge, skills and practice.			
I draw up a plan for my professional development and for improvement in my practice.			
I consult with my line manager, and/or the Lead Practitioner and SENCO regarding my professional development needs.			

Practical resources

- Promote and embed Good Autism Practice Bite Size Learning Fact Sheet (free AET resource)

- SEND CoP (see legislation)

- Children and Families Act (see legislation)

- IPSEA – How should the setting/school help This provides advice on supporting children with SEND and their families

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Competency 8:

I reflect on, note down and gather data on the implications of my learning and development for my practice, and ultimately for the autistic pupil/s I work with.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I reflect upon, discuss and evaluate my practice in partnership with other staff.			
I complete evaluation forms to provide feedback on what I have learnt, and the implications for my practice before and after I have undertaken professional development.			
I complete a self-evaluation form about my own knowledge and practice before and after attending professional development so I can monitor my progress.			
I consider the impact of professional development on the learning and wellbeing of autistic children and young people.			
I reflect on and observe the impact of approaches and strategies I use with individual pupils and change those if needed.			
I regularly take feedback from autistic pupils about their experiences.			

Practical resources

- Assessing and Planning Tool Scottish Toolbox (see useful websites)
- AET Schools Competency Framework
- Promote and embed Good autism Practice Bite Size Learning Fact Sheet (free AET resource)
- SEND CoP (see legislation)
- Children and Families Act (see legislation)
- IPSEA – How should the setting/school help This provides advice on supporting children with SEND and their families

Principle Five

Leadership and management that promotes and embeds good autism practice.

Competency 9:

I create enabling environments based on what I know of the individual pupil and through making reasonable adjustments accordingly.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I consider the accessibility of the learning environment for autistic pupils by taking account of potential physical barriers, communication and processing difficulties as well as social demands of working with or being with their peers.			
I seek to reduce unpredictability within the day-to-day environment whilst ultimately seeking to support students to develop their capacity to manage change.			
I meet statutory obligations to create enabling environments through making/supporting the making of a number of reasonable adjustments for autistic pupils. The reasonable adjustments that need to be made are identified through the process of creating the 'All about me' document or one-page profile and through the pupil-centered education plan.			
I have developed/contributed to the development of an action plan for implementing reasonable adjustments.			

Practical Resources

- Self-evaluation exercise (free AET resource)
- AET Schools Competency Framework.
- CPD log (free AET resource)
- School Standards 2018 (see legislation)

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Professional development that can help me to meet this competency

Good autism practice is a module that provides practitioners and settings with the knowledge, tools and skills to develop pupil-centered education plans and therefore supports practitioners to enable the development of good autism practice. This includes taking practitioners through the process of identifying which reasonable adjustments need to be made.

Competency 10:

I create positive, supportive, and caring relationships, between autistic pupils and staff, between autistic pupils and their peers and between staff and parents/carers. I work hard to address barriers to learning. This includes reducing the risk of social exclusion.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I support the implementation of approaches to develop the mutual understanding, communication and support between autistic pupils and their peers.			
I deliver/support the delivery of developmentally appropriate autism awareness sessions to peers to increase understanding and promote a supportive attitude to autistic pupils.			
I support autistic pupils to develop friendship circles and circles of friends/buddy systems/social stories.			
I work with autistic pupils to provide specific guidance on how to recognise the signs of bullying and what they should do if they feel they, or others, are being bullied.			
I recognise the vulnerability of autistic pupils and safeguard against actual and perceived episodes of teasing and bullying both on and offline.			
This includes information on cyber-bullying and how to stay safe online.			

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	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I proactively work to create an environment which promotes inclusion.			
I access materials, resources and guidance on the legal context regarding exclusion.			
If a child has been excluded, I support/contribute to the support of the autistic child/young person and their family before, during and after exclusion. This includes managing the transition back into school.			

Practical Resources

- Bullying Guide for Teachers (see useful websites)

- Tony Attwood indices of Friendship (see useful websites)

- Circle of Friends template provided in Schools Good Autism Practice module.

- AET Exclusions Guidance (in free AET resources)

- Good Autism Practice Case Study (Nursery and Primary School in the South West of England: p 11 on workforce development).

- Appreciative Enquiry (see useful websites)

- Next Steps Action Plan (free AET Resource)

Professional development that can help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module provides materials on creating an inclusive and enabling environment.

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Principle Six

An ethos and environment that fosters social inclusion for autistic pupils.

Competency 11:

I understand the importance of focusing on identifying and addressing barriers to learning in the three areas of difference, namely social understanding and communication; flexible thinking, information processing and understanding, and sensory processing and integration.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I conduct/contribute to an audit of the sensory environment, and consult sensory checklists to inform how to make adaptations.			
I consider how to minimise sensory experiences that may be distracting or uncomfortable in classrooms and other spaces.			
Pupils have access to quiet spaces that are suitable for regulating sensory needs.			
I help pupils to recognise, and indicate, their need for a sensory break.			
I adapt the way I communicate, interact and teach. This includes giving pupils processing time and reducing the amount of language used, for example.			
I support verbal and non-verbal communication through a range of approaches, including classroom organisation, visual aids, reducing and simplifying language, avoiding ambiguities and idioms and providing sufficient time for processing and understanding of language instruction.			
I make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to participation and enable autistic pupils to access the curriculum, break and lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities, residential trips, work experience or exams.			

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I adopt flexible educational approaches, based on understanding the requirements of the individual pupil. For example, this can include where the pupil sits in class, how and when they do their homework.			
I provide activities the pupil enjoys either alone or with others at breaktimes and lunchtimes to reduce unpredictability.			
Pupils are supported in identifying causes of emotional dysregulation in themselves and others. Students are provided with opportunities to practice and generalise a range of emotional coping strategies and problem-solving skills.			
I identify triggers for anxiety and stress in autistic pupils and develop strategies to reduce these.			
I support the pupil to recognise the bodily sensations linked to emotions e.g. quickly beating heart, sweaty palms, being tense. I use visual scales of emotions to help recognise, quantify and communicate how the pupil is feeling.			
I assess/support the assessment of pupils' sensory needs, and construct/contribute to the construction of a sensory assessment in partnership the pupil to determine whether modifications to the environment are needed.			
I undertake/support the undertaking of an audit of the sensory environment and make changes according to the needs of the pupil.			
I organise my classrooms to minimise sensory experiences that may be distracting or uncomfortable.			
I ensure that pupils have access to quiet spaces that are suitable for regulating sensory needs. We help pupils to recognise, and indicate, their need for a sensory break. Pupils use a 'break card' to support them in this.			

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Practical resources

- My Ideal School. Heather Moran (see useful websites)

- Link to Peter Vermeulen's sensory preferences checklist - NAS (see useful websites)

- Promoting Autism Inclusive Attitudes - Whole School SEND Suite of Resources (in free AET resources)

- Sensory preferences and differences template provided in Good Autism Practice module

- Environmental audit template provided in Good autism practice module

Professional development that can help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module provides materials on creating an inclusive and autism friendly environment. This includes concrete and person-centered ways of identifying and addressing barriers to learning.

Competency 12:

I provide a clearly organised classroom and an environment which takes account of the needs of autistic pupils.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I use objects, pictures and visual timetables to support understanding and learning, and promote independence.			
My classroom is arranged to allow accessibility and easy management of materials (e.g. use of labels, visuals and colour coding).			
Visual schedules/timetables are used to provide predictability and structure to the school day.			
Consistent and clear timekeeping methods are provided for students as required (e.g. sand timers/digital timers).			

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	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
Class rules and routines are developed in collaboration with the class and regularly reinforced using visual aids. Expectations are set out clearly and supported by visual aids.			
Strategies are put in place to support organisational skills and to foster independence around study skills and examination preparation, for example.			
I recognise that changes associated with key transitions (micro- e.g. moving from classroom to another, or from the playground into the classroom, or macro: from one setting to another) require support. I establish/use visual schedules and routines to support transitions between activities/ environments.			

Practical resources

- Professional reflection tool on transitions - Scottish Autism toolbox (see useful websites)

- Transition checklists: EY to primary; Primary to Secondary - Scottish Autism toolbox (see useful websites)

- Transition Guide for parents and young people, NAS (see useful websites)

- Professional reflection tool on transitions Scottish Autism toolbox (see useful websites)

- Transition checklists: EY to primary; Primary to Secondary Scottish Autism toolbox (see useful websites)

- 'Check your timetable' cards - Scottish Autism Toolbox (see useful websites)

- Sensory preferences and differences template provided in Good Autism Practice module

- Environmental audit template provided in Good autism practice module

- Visual timetable template is provide in Making Sense of Autism Module

- Transition Guidance Whole School SEND Suite of Resources (free AET resource)

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Principle Seven

Targeted support and measuring the progress of autistic pupils.

Competency 13

When assessing progress towards learning goals, I have a holistic approach that builds on strengths and interests, whilst addressing skills and understanding that autistic children may find difficult as a result of their autism.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I am flexible in adapting/contributing to adapting assessments, behaviour policy, homework, lesson planning and teaching to account for different ways thinking and interacting with the world.			
Assessment approaches include tools developed specifically for autism.			
I use a range of assessments to identify areas of strengths and those areas needing additional support and to build a comprehensive profile of the pupil's performance of key skills across a range of environments.			
I assess/support the assessment of pupils' sensory needs and construct/contribute to the construction of a sensory assessment in partnership the pupil to determine whether modifications to the environment are needed.			
Assessment methods are adapted to meet the needs of autistic pupils, and information is gathered on their learning profile and progress across the curriculum.			

Practical resources

- The AET Progression Framework interactive tool (in AET free resources)
- Assessment app http://www.evidenceforlearning.net/
- Observation forms provided in Good Autism Practice module

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Competency 14:

I am involved in and contribute to the development and implementation of pupil-centred education plans in partnership with pupils, parents and other staff. These include details of how the staff can support the pupil.

Further examples of how I can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
Pupils have pupil-centred education plans which are tailored to their strengths and needs, have clear learning targets and strategies, and monitor progress. These plans aim to improve the pupil's quality of life by reflecting their strengths, needs, skills and experience.			
Pupil-centred education plans combine information from the student, their family and staff who know them well.			
I develop/support the development of and I undertake/support the undertaking of careful reviews of targets, approaches used and outcomes related to the learning environment every term.			
I initiate/support the initiation of education plans promptly, they focus on communication and joint social interactions, and include opportunities for peer collaborations and home/school links to support the generalisation of skills. The plans are regularly updated and review dates are set.			
I support the development of and implementation of individualised transition plans which combine information from the student, their family and staff who know them well.			
I am committed to preparing pupils for adulthood, through the holistic development of their daily living and I embed/work to support the embedding of 'Preparing for Adulthood Outcomes' (community, independence, life skills) in all education support plans.			

Practical resources

- Pupil-centred support plan provided in Good Autism Practice module.

- Assess, plan, do, review template provided in Making Sense of autism module

- Preparing for adulthood outcomes (see useful websites)

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Principle Eight

Adapting the curriculum, teaching and learning to promote wellbeing and success for autistic pupils.

Competency 15:

I strive to understand my autistic pupils and I embed inclusive practice in my teaching approaches and learning environments.

Further examples of how we can do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I understand the need to provide support for pupils in developing personal, social and independence skills.			
I plan/contribute to/support the implementation of engaging activities that build on the strengths and interests of the pupil to deliver the curriculum.			
I make adjustments and provide/implement differentiated curriculum content, teaching approaches and learning environments.			
I identify and monitor/contribute to reasonable adjustments over time to ensure they are effective.			
I draw on evidence-informed approaches when making adaptations.			
When a new skill is taught, I make sure that I also teach the pupil how to use the same skill in other settings and situations.			
In teaching activities, I ensure that there is clarity about what the pupil needs to do, how long they have to work on it, and what they will be doing next.			

Practical resources

- SEND Code of Practice 2014 (see legislation)
- Happy Book template is provided in the Good Autism Practice module
- Equality Act 2010 (see useful websites)

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Professional development that will help me to meet this competency

The AET Good Autism Practice module provides materials on creating an inclusive and enabling environment. It engages participants in the activity of developing an pupil-centered education plan and provides guidance on how to adapt classroom management and teaching approaches.

Competency 16

I promote positive attitudes towards autism and have high expectations for all my pupils.

Further examples of how I do this

	Room for improvement:	Developing:	Do this really well
I develop/support the development of a culture of high ambition and aspiration for all pupils and this includes autistic pupils.			
I create/contribute to the creation of an inclusive learning environment by promoting positive attitudes towards autistic pupils. This includes 'celebrating success' events, inviting autistic adults to speak to the class, holding whole-school assemblies on diversity, for example.			
I create permanent and visual reminders of successes. I include activities where pupils can share their knowledge and abilities to practitioners and peers.			
I work with the pupil to develop their understanding of autism and how it affects them.			
I promote a culture of acceptance and regularly review inclusive practice and policies, including parental/carer and pupil engagement.			

Practical Resources

8 inclusion promises handout (free AET resource)

Professional development that will help me to meet this competency

The AET have a range of modules to support practitioners. In order to help you meet all the competencies, we suggest you undertake the 'Making sense of autism in the Early Years' and 'Good Autism Practice in the Early Years 'modules. A set of 'topic-based' modules can also help you develop your practice further.

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