Contact details

Please feel free to contact use if you have any comments or questions

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Research Newsletter

Buckinghamshire Autism Spectrum Disorders Project

- You will probably remember taking part in a study to investigate the outcomes for students with ASD in Buckinghamshire.

- We would like to thank you for helping with this important research.

Background to the project

- Students with ASD vary enormously in their strengths & difficulties across language, cognitive, social, emotional & behavioural areas.

- This project aimed to look at these areas in students with and without ASD to examine how students with ASD in Buckinghamshire are getting along compared to their peers.

Who took part?

- Over the three years that we have been visiting schools for this project, we have seen over 120 students attending Primary and Secondary schools.

- Participants included students with ASD, as well as those without ASD, who we could use as a comparison group, to show us how students with ASD might be similar or different to their mainstream peers.

- We matched students with ASD and without according to their age, gender, and general ability.

## What have we found out about social inclusion?

- We asked students to let us know how much they like to work with the other students in their class.

- This year we found that although students with ASD are slightly less well socially accepted than their peers, they are not more socially rejected.

- Students with ASD are more likely to be described as being 'shy'. We also found that being shy was not seen as a bad thing for students with ASD, although it was a predictor of social rejection for their mainstream peers.

- One of the main predictors of social acceptance for all children was being considered 'co-operative' by their peers.

What have we found out about recognising emotions?

- One of the things we were interested in investigating was how good students with ASD were at recognising facial expressions of emotion.

- Previous research in this area has found many different results. We used a task that involved both matching and labelling emotions.
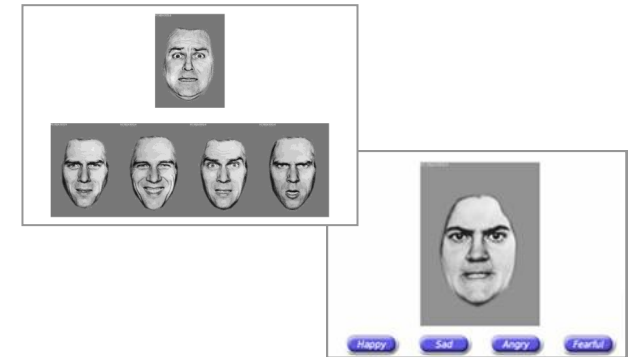
- We found that students with ASD are just as good at recognising these static facial expressions of emotion as their peers.

- Both groups of students found it easier to label faces, scoring an average of over 27 out of 32.

Last words...

- We also spoke to teachers who told us that they had developed a wide range of classroom and school based strategies and policies for working with students with ASD.

- One of the key concerns raised by teachers was where to seek advice about the transition to and from secondary school and this has been identified as an area where more support is needed.