

A mirror to my practice

I found it fascinating to find out about the different school structures in other countries. The Italian team member who visited my school told me that Italian Heads of School have little or no say in who is employed at their school and no performance management systems. It was also interesting to hear that services in Italy are Health lead. It helped me to understand how autism provision varies and funding for supporting children and young people can come from different sources in other countries. I felt flattered to be asked to show our visitors the strategies we have put into place and was surprised to hear their very positive comments. Particularly those around visual support systems, familiar and consistent routines and regular communication with parents and professionals involved with individual pupils. I think we sometimes take for granted the services that are available to Children and Young People with autism in Birmingham, and the high expectations and aspirations we have. Having the visitors come and visit my school, and having the opportunity to talk to them gave me a mirror to my own practice, it gave me an insight into how other countries are trying to take frameworks for good autism practice on board and it made me think very carefully about what was really important in what we do and how best to highlight this to visitors.

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