

Jim Taylor: knows autism

Credentials 2014

“I am less interested in just making a difference now; I am more interested in discovering what it is that makes all the difference.”

Jim Taylor

Why Jim Taylor?

Jim works extensively with many organisations, including local authorities and independent schools, health boards and adult services to build their capacity to provide a specialist service/education for people with autism.

His particular interests lie in finding out what makes all the difference; what makes a school a specialist unit for pupils with autism; how to improve practice and how to address the very specific needs of people with autism.

Jim is passionate about working along with partners to improve the quality of their practice with Autistic and Asperger pupils and adults, whilst working with them to increase their knowledge of what qualities, skills and values make them successful.

Jim carries out audits of school environments and assesses how this can be improved upon to create better learning environments for the pupils. This can apply to services for adults and hospitals too.

He works alongside individual teachers who are looking to improve their practice and address the issues of more challenging problems with individuals.

His vast experience in the field of education means he can tailor each intervention to each individual school.

Jim provides training in any aspect of Autism; learning, behaviour, communication, environments etc. He has lectured around the world including Autism Europe and is regularly invited to speak in Ohio.

Individuals, teachers, class support workers, therapy teams, music therapists, social workers, staff working with adults with Autism, senior officers in organisations, families and parents have all benefited from his knowledge and experience.

The quality of training and Jim's ability to share over 35 years of experience in the field ensures that people leave his training sessions capable of making an immediate difference in their service or their family. They will increase their understanding of Autism and how it impacts on the learning style of children/young people; and will be provided with practical guidance on how to make all the difference.

Jim has great experience of giving direct support to individual families, supporting and enabling them and individuals to find a way through all the challenges presented by autism.

Should you want to Know Autism and solve problems whilst making all the difference, Jim can help you do that.

Projects

ASDI, Dublin

The Health Board responded to some parents' concerns and external funding issues by employing Jim to evaluate their services to assess how 'autism specific' these were. His intervention and subsequent report had the effect of increasing referrals and securing funding. Two years later, he was asked to lead the service towards attaining an Autism specific quality standard. By identifying good autism practice and improving staff's knowledge of what made them specialists in autism, this impacted positively on the quality of their service.

NAS Services, North of England

Jim advised on improving the learning and working environment in a service in Lancashire. This project involved evaluating the service's working and learning environments; training staff in how to create more effective environments; and providing senior staff with a report including suggestions for how further improvements could be made.

NAS and Manchester Children's Hospital

Involvement in this joint project involved developing an Autism friendly hospital environment and improve access to hospital interventions for children with Autism.

Ashley School, Widnes, Cheshire

Jim's role was to advise on the design for a new service within the school for post 16 children all the while maximising the positive impact environments can have on the learning of pupils with Autism.

An Independent School, North West England

This specialist Independent school for children with autism approached Jim to advise on developing a new management structure. They also requested he evaluate the 'specialist' nature of their practice and learning environment with a view to how this would impact on the behaviour of the pupils.

School in Central Scotland

This school required Jim to advise on improving their Inclusion Practice. This project involved developing policies and guidelines. Staff, pupils and parents were interviewed in order to provide a clearer picture about the understanding and attitudes towards inclusion in the school and wider community. Training presentations at school were held and he also contributed to a staff working party.

Projects

Autism Cymru

The roles have involved advising a specialist team who were formulating a response to a Welsh Government consultation document; acting as a parent telephone helpline; delivering full day training for staff in Education and Social Work in Wales.

Advisor in Autism to Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy

Currently Jim is working alongside senior therapists on a project to develop a method of evaluating and measuring the impact of Music Therapy.

Autism Outreach Personnel in Education

Jim is currently working alongside a number of regional Outreach Teams, mentoring, supervising and supporting their impact on local schools.

Local Authorities

Jim continues to work with local authorities to build their capacity to provide pupils with ASD an appropriate education in their local schools. This included a project in the North of Scotland where four young people required a different education so as to avoid an 'out of authority' placement. Through a positive partnership, a base in a mainstream academy was developed, complete with specialist staff whom he trained and supported whilst working in partnership with the school to increase opportunities for access to mainstream classes. Social Work departments were consulted to provide residential service in the community where the tenancy of the houses would transfer to the pupils on their becoming 18.

Other local authorities engage him to work with individual schools and address challenging behaviour in some pupils who are at risk of exclusion or transfer to less local schools.

Community Integrated Care (CIC)

Currently he is working on a commissioned project that involves assessing how they become the leading care provider in Autism across the UK.

Experience

Director
Jim Taylor Knows Autism
August 2013 – Present

Member of Senior Management Team
Director of Education
Scottish Autism
2005 – 2013 New Struan School

Head Teacher
Scottish Autism*
1982 – 2005 Struan House School

Class Teacher
Scottish Autism*
1979 – 1982 Struan House School

*Formerly Scottish Society of Autistic Children

Jim is an experienced Chair of major conferences and has in the last year Chaired national conferences in Scotland and Wales.

Credits

A History of Autism - Conversations with the Pioneers by Adam Feinstein

Organisations

Founding member of Coalition of Service Providers for People with Autism (CoSPPA)

Former Chair of Education section of CoSPPA

Lifetime Honorary Member, CoSPPA

Member of National Autism Society's Accreditation Standards Body

Conference advisor to Medica cpd, Glasgow

Board Member of Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy

Testimonials

Jim has been involved in autism almost as long as I have. His understanding and knowledge stems from commitment and experience – teaching, setting up and running specialist services (including a purpose built school), working with parents and supporting school providers to improve their provisions for children with autism. He served with me for 10 years on a national accreditation committee – assessing children’s services for the quality of their autism provision.

He built up and supported a talented and committed staff team to enable excellent autism provision and shared his knowledge in training events aimed at spreading his expertise. He is a joy to listen to at training events – full of practical ideas and good humour. He is also excellent at analysing situations and helping staff problem solve and find innovative solutions. If you are looking for someone to help you develop your services for children and young people on the autism spectrum I cannot think of anyone better.

And he is nice to boot!

Rita Jordan, Emeritus Professor in Autism Studies, Birmingham University

Jim Taylor certainly knows autism! This guy worked in the autism field for so many years that it would be impolite to mention. Suffice to say that he has supported hundreds if not thousands of children and their families, and has a cavernous reserve of knowledge, experience, skills and humour to draw upon.

Jim’s reputation and contributions to autism go well beyond Scotland, to the rest of the UK, Europe and the US where he has given talks, trained many practitioners and provided badly needed help and advice to families. This is no more true than in Wales where Jim has, in recent years, provided great support to parents and practitioners, and trained many staff. I would therefore have no hesitation in recommending Jim to you.

***Hugh Morgan OBE, FRSA, MMedSc, BA Hons, CQSW, RNMH, MIoD,
Former CEO Autism Cymru & Autism West Midlands***

Testimonials

Jim has a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field of autism spectrum disorders, I regularly use Jim to deliver training courses, speak and chair at our conferences which are attended by education, health and social care professionals. Jim is always very helpful and I greatly value his input when we are developing the content of our ASD professional development events. Its important to us as a training organisation that we keep our delegates coming back for more courses and the feedback Jim receives always ensures this.

Feedback from previous delegates:

“Refreshing, inspiring and motivating”

“It was all very valuable information”

“Very motivated to go back to school and do better”

“Jim’s humour is great, loved all the anecdotes, examples and practical information which I can apply”

Carolyn Fraser, Director, Medica Cpd Ltd

As a family affected by Autism, it has been a privilege to have Jim Taylor involved in our lives. Jim is a consummate professional. His vast knowledge, experience, understanding, advice and support have been invaluable to us. Without his guidance we would have really struggled to get the correct educational support for our child. Jim’s ability to examine difficult situations and to be able to offer clear, workable, practical solutions has made a tremendous difference in our son’s life.

Jim is held in high esteem by the many families who have been fortunate enough to work with him over the years. He has touched and enriched the lives of countless young people. Not only does Jim genuinely care, he has the knowledge, ability, drive and expertise to make a real positive difference to families like ours, coping in very difficult circumstances.

Sharon Holton, Parent

Testimonials

Thanks again for your work on this issue earlier in the year...it made a difference.

**John Tushingham Head of Access, Engagement and Performance, Education Services,
Torfaen County Bourough Council, Wales**

I have known Jim Taylor for over 20 years. We have worked together on a range of cases and issues. I admire not only his expertise in autism but also his openness to new ideas and developments. One of Jim's greatest strengths of all is his humanity in understanding the needs of children with autism & the pressures and anxieties experienced by families. Jim is particularly skilled in working alongside fellow professionals in the local authority context as an empowering and supportive partner. And he is an informative and entertaining presenter with an extensive stock of illustrative tales and stories to suit all occasions!

Carolyn Brown, Area Depute Principal Psychologist, Psychological Service, Fife

Jim Taylor is an inspirational figure in the field of autism. His highly engaging approach draws from a diverse range of practical experience. Whether considering young people, adults and/or their families Jim offers solution focussed information in which the individual, their strengths and their needs are central. It was a privilege to work for him and learn from him.

Jayne Porter, former teacher at New Struan School

We've been working with Jim for 2 years. Emma is now 6 years old and it was Jim that first recognised Emma 'had the ability to learn'. Everyone associated with Emma up until that point couldn't see past Emma's autism and blamed all her behaviours' on 'autistic traits' .Jim remains an 'inspiration' to us and through his wealth of knowledge he 'inspires' us to fight for Emma's development.

Susan O'Donnell, Parent

Testimonials

Jim Taylor is an exceptional education professional. His combined experiences in specialist and mainstream educational settings have developed an unparalleled knowledge of autism and young people; leadership; educational management and extended specialist provision. This has earned him a well deserved international reputation as an expert leader in his field.

Jim's qualities extend far beyond these accolades, however. He has an uncompromising determination to keep the child or young person truly at the centre of any plan, discussion or proposal. This requires a willingness to listen to and respect a young person which far exceeds common-place understanding of "inclusive practice." For Jim, it also means seeking a deep understanding of all aspects of their lives - their nature, their families, their relationships and environments; their skills and talents and their vulnerabilities. He will use this understanding to create the best possible environment for them because in Jim's words "anything else isn't good enough". To compromise for any child would in Jim's eyes be a failure.

Jim's vast knowledge of autism extends beyond educational provision for children and young people – he knows what families also need and how best to support them too. His support and knowledge have been invaluable to us and countless other parents in the past. His kindness, good humour and compassionate concern for young people with autism and their families is just one aspect of his appeal: he knows autism like no other and is an irresistible force of nature.

Catriona Oates, Parent

Testimonials

Jim Taylor and I first met each other in 1998. 16 years ago! At the time I knew nothing about Jim and nothing about myself! But Jim changed that. In 2004 I started at Struan House that was soon to be New Struan and with Jim at the helm he led me on a magical and exciting 7 years changing me into a independent young man and showing and teaching me something new each day.

Today having been away from Struan for nearly 4 years, much has changed including Jim's career. He has now set up Jim Taylor: Knows Autism and I can assure all parents and researchers out there that Jim definitely knows autism. He is a man with a strong passion for autism and for helping people with it. Jim will never stop at helping either 1 child or adult or 100 children and adults with autism. He will not rest until the job is done.

Murray MacDonald, Former pupil at New Struan School

The training and consultation we recieved from Jim was innovative, up to date and relevant to our workplace. The content and presentation blended theory and practice in a manner which suited the needs of our service and the participants. Without question Jim Taylor Knows Autism.

John Campbell, National Director, Autism Initiatives Ireland

Unfortunately, Jim Taylor is a shady man of dubious character. He is easily bribed by the offer of coffee, fancy biscuits, or any form of confectionery. It is noted that he has a particular penchant for Tunnocks tea cakes. Jim has an encyclopedic knowledge of tearooms within the FK postcode and beyond. He also has vast experience in all things Equis/fish supper/ice cream related. His failings many, his strengths few. However, he does do a pretty good Clive Mantel impression and can always be relied upon to sell a book or two in Morrisons on a dull Monday morning. He is nothing if not versatile. I would advise hiding valuables before his arrival and a swift frisk before he departs. You can never be too careful with those who hail from Cambuslang.

Sharon Holton, Parent

Jim Taylor: knows autism

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