

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) - Home to School Collaboration -

PHILOSOPHY

The Surrey School District is committed to meaningful collaboration with the ABA community. Together, we have made great strides in the supports and services for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who are involved in an ABA home program overseen by a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). It is the expectation that BCBAs will adhere to the professional and ethical compliance code for Behaviour Analysis in Surrey schools.

NATURE OF SUPPORT

The ABA Support Worker (ABA SW) functions as a member of a collaborative team (Classroom Teacher, Integration Support Teacher, Learning Support Teacher, Education Assistant, Education Assistant-Behaviour Technician, Principal or Vice Principal, Behaviour Consultant, parent, etc.) that supports and implements educational programs for students who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The ABA SW is not responsible for the development of the educational or behavioural program. Specifically, ABA SWs use a student-centred approach to collect data and apply principles of learning theory to develop social, motor, and verbal behaviour and reasoning skills with a view to developing independence. ABA SW positions are “student-centred” as opposed to “student-specific” as ABA SWs have the ability to provide support to multiple learners provided their focus student is making gains towards independent functioning.

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN REQUEST FOR ABA SUPPORT WORKER (CRITERIA)

1. The student must have a documented diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder.
2. The student must meet the Ministry of Education criteria for a Special Education designation within Category G - Autism Spectrum Disorder.
3. Student Support will assess all relevant information and determine the amount of paraprofessional support required.
4. The student must be involved in an active plan of intervention monitored by a BCBA.
5. Initial requests require that the parent/legal guardian submit the ABA Support Worker Request form and supporting documentation (e.g., an overview of the behaviour plan of intervention, and written permission from the parents/legal guardian to share information with the teachers (*Authorization to Share Student Information* form) and to conduct an observation (*Authorization for an Outside Agency to Observe a Student* form) to Student Support prior to March 1st.
6. Parents will not be required to submit an ABA SW request annually, however, they will be required to: (1) confirm the existence of a current plan of intervention under the direction of a BCBA, and (2) renew and submit written permission to share information with the teachers (*Authorization to Share Student Information* form) and to conduct an observation (*Authorization for an Outside Agency to Observe a Student* form) to Student Support prior to March 1st.
7. Home Team Behaviour Interventionists desiring work in the Surrey School District are encouraged to apply to the Human Resources department and are subject to regular hiring processes.

Please note:

- The Surrey School District cannot ensure that an ABA Support Worker or a trained Education Assistant with Behaviour Technician (EA-BT) training will be available for all students who meet the above criteria. If an ABA SW or EA-BT is not available, an EA with Autism training will be offered.
- When a BCBA is no longer working on a home team, he/she and the parents/guardians must notify Student Support within 30 days of discharge.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION

Educational Planning

- The Classroom Teacher is responsible for designing, supervising, and assessing the educational program for students who have special needs (School Act, Section 17 (1)(2) and Regulation 4) and therefore, must be central to any conversations regarding student performance, progress and/or intervention strategies.
- Development of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) should be designed in collaboration with the child's team (e.g., family, Classroom Teacher, Integration Support Teacher, Learner Support Team Teacher, ABA SW, BCBA and others involved with the child's program, such as a Speech-Language Pathologist and/or an Occupational Therapist).
- Outside individuals/agencies may share programming suggestions; however it is the school-based and district-based personnel who have the professional responsibility to decide on the instructional/behavioural strategies most appropriate to the particular child/classroom context.
- *Program Familiarization Hours:* Fifteen (15) hours of "Program Familiarization" time is available upon request by the parent for the ABA SW or EA to become conversant with home program protocols. This is not an annual consideration. The district intent is to provide this time whenever a different ABA SW or EA accepts an assignment to work with a student who is involved in an ABA home program overseen by a BCBA. The fifteen (15) hours of "Program Familiarization" time will be managed (tracked) by the school Principal with consideration of the needs of the ABA SW, case manager and the family. The case manager (e.g., Integration Support Teacher, BASES Teacher, LST Teacher etc.) will be encouraged to attend home visits with the ABA SW whenever possible during the "Program Familiarization" process. The district expects that "Program Familiarization" will be utilized at the earliest time possible in order to assist with transition from home to school. These hours cannot be carried forward or used to support home team meetings throughout the school year.

Consultation

- The Surrey School District and ABA community are committed to the necessity of ABA SWs to be working with students who are involved in home programs overseen by a BCBA approved by the school district. In order for effective home-school collaboration to occur, BCBA's (or Junior Consultants) identified as the supervising Behaviour Consultant are expected to meaningfully communicate and collaborate with school teams at least 3 times per year (September through June), once per school term.

Conducting Observations

- BCBA's (or Junior Behaviour Consultants) may conduct student observations to assist with planning. The purpose of any classroom observation is to observe the child in the school setting to inform the program and must not be evaluative in terms of the performance of a Classroom Teacher or an ABA SW.
- When observations are to be conducted, it is recommended that an initial discussion by all participants (parents, school staff, district staff, outside individuals, etc.) be held to discuss the purpose of the observation, how the members of the team will collaborate and how decisions will be made.
- As noted earlier, written permission from the parents/legal guardian to share information with the teachers must be obtained annually (*Authorization to Share Student Information* form) or conducting an observation (*Authorization for an Outside Agency to Observe a Student* form). The Principal must also approve any request before access to the student in the school setting is granted. Consent forms will be maintained in the student's school file.
- The school team should be provided with a signed and dated copy of any notes taken during such observations, either hard-copy or electronic, within 1-2 business days.

- A family may request up to 3 observations by outside individuals /agencies in each school year, once per school term (September - June). The need for additional observations will generally be accommodated as determined by the educational team. Either the supervising BCBA or Junior Behaviour Consultant to the case may conduct classroom observations.

Data Collection and Information Sharing

- ABA SWs are typically required to collect data on students involved in an ABA home program overseen by a BCBA. Data collection should be conducted in relation to the goals of the student's IEP.
- A copy of data collection sheets should be provided to families upon request. A copy of data collection sheets should be kept on file at the school, until the student transitions to the secondary grades.
- The Classroom Teacher is responsible for sharing information regarding student progress in accordance with the goals of the IEP.
- The Classroom Teacher is responsible for providing written feedback regarding the student's day, level of engagement, general progress, etc.

ABA Support Worker Assignments

- ABA positions must be posted. In the event that these positions are not filled, they are presented at an ABA SW "new hire" meeting. At the "new hire" meeting, the district makes every effort to match "new hires" to vacant postings. The district cannot guarantee a match.
- ABA SWs who have previously been in ABA SW positions are awarded assignments through a posting process (SD 36/CUPE Collective Agreement).
- ABA SW postings are separate from the EA posting/bumping process (Letter of Understanding, SD 36/CUPE Collective Agreement).

Supervision of the ABA SW

- As a school district employee, the ABA SW works under the direction of the Classroom Teacher or Case Manager and the supervision of the Principal/Vice-Principal.

Health Care Plans

- ABA SWs are able to implement a student's health care plan *if they have appropriate training* (e.g., the ABA SW is a qualified EA).

Coverage during an Absence or Breaks

- ABA SWs are required to take breaks per the CUPE collective agreement. When an ABA SW is absent or on a break, the school Principal will reassign another ABA SW or EA to provide coverage and ensure that appropriate training has been provided. ABA SWs are required and expected to cover breaks for other ABA SWs or EAs, as a student who has special needs can benefit from interactions with individuals they do not normally work with.