

**Task 2: Describe illnesses and conditions that affect the behaviour of children and ways of providing support.**

**Task 2A**

Luke is five years old and he was diagnosed with Digeorge Syndrome when he was four years old.

**Cause**

Digeorge syndrome is a rare disease that is present from birth, and it is caused by a large deletion of the chromosome 22, produced by an error in recombination at meiosis.

The symptoms vary greatly with each individual, but some of the symptoms that you could expect are...

- Immune deficiency that leads to children being more susceptible to infections.
- Lack of T cells.
- Convulsions or 'fits'.
- Underdeveloped parathyroid glands.
- Feeding problems.
- Heart defects.
- Abnormal facial features.
- Cardiac problems.
- Speech impairments.
- Learning difficulties.

Luke's symptoms are...

- Immune deficiency.
- Recurrent ear infections.
- Convulsions.
- Abnormal facial features i.e. disfigures ears.
- Speech impairment.
- Feeding problems.

Luke's behaviour may be affected

### **Physical health**

Due to his **physical health** Luke has poor motor skills, poor coordination, poor communication skills, immune deficiency and muscle tone. His poor motor skills make it hard for him to walk long distances, and after walking for just a short time he will refuse to walk anymore and become tired and irritable.

His speech impairment makes verbal communication barley possible, which makes it hard for him to say what he wants or feels, this makes him become aggressive and violent, because he cant express his feelings.

Luke also has poor balance, which makes him trip and fall over a lot of the time, this will make him feel him feel upset and frustrated and possibly throw a tantrum.

### **Aggression**

Luke can become frustrated, misunderstood and aggressive, due to his lack of communication and not adapting well to change. Luke's becomes aggressive because his only way of expressing his feeling is to have tantrums and become physically aggressive with people and objects.

Luke may be provided with support to deal with his condition.

### **Education**

Luke can be provided with support at school, depending on his level of needs. The type of support that he could expect are things such as a detailed time table so that he has a routine, one to one teaching, a key worker, regular assessments and being taught memory techniques.

### **Intervention**

Luke's mum can intervene when he is being physically aggressive by physically restraining him i.e. putting her arms around him, to stop him from causing harm to himself and those around him. Luke's mum could have training and guidance as to

how to do this without hurting him; she would be able to do this through a social worker or key worker.

If Luke is having a tantrum at school or at home a person can talk calmly to him, this will reassure him that everything is all right, and hopefully the tantrum will stop.

## **Task 2B**

Ian is a four-year-old boy who has been diagnosed with autism.

### **Cause**

It is not known what exactly causes autism, but research has lead to the belief that environmental and genetic factors such as vaccines or environmental toxins could be causatives.

### **Vaccinations**

Some people believe that it is caused by Thimerosal, which is a mercury based preservative found in some childhood vaccines, especially, in cases of regressive-type autism. This is where a child is developing normally and then regresses before they are three.

Another concern is the MMR vaccine, which contains three live viruses. Many children are believed to be immunologically depressed, and therefore cannot tolerate some viruses. Subsequently, these children react negatively to the vaccination. There isn't actually any scientific proof that the MMR vaccine causes autism, and that it's just a coincidence that children are diagnosed with autism around the time that they receive the vaccine.

### **Symptoms**

The type of symptoms that you can expect from an autistic child are...

- Difficulty in forming relationships.
- Communication difficulties.
- Poor verbal skills.
- Insomnia.

- Repetitive behaviour.

Ian's symptoms are...

- Difficulty in forming relationships.
- Communication difficulties.
- Poor verbal skills.

Ian's behaviour is likely to be affected.

### **Aggression**

Ian's emotions will be effected by autism and he could be aggressive. Children with autism like familiarity and can become scared and aggressive when faced with new people and surroundings, this causes a 'flight or fight' reaction, which is means when we are feeling in danger we either fight the problem or run away, which causes autistic children to appear aggressive.

### **Acting out**

There are no obvious physical clues that a child is autistic, so many autistic children are mistaken as being naughty or rude, but this is normal behaviour for a child with autism, and because Ian cant tell people how he feels or what he wants, he will become anxious and frustrated and may throw a tantrum. This might result over the slightest thing, such as going to a different shop or going a different route to school, this is because children with autism familiarise with routine and they need regularity.

Ian can be provided with support.

### **Education**

At school Ian can have an Individualized education program (IEP), which sets the goals for the child for the school year. Educational programmes are designed based on the child's specific needs and the evaluation of there disability. Meetings can be arranged with school personnel and parents to identify goals and establish a program to best help the child with the available resources.

Many children with autism will benefit from physical, speech and occupational therapies at school. An occupational therapist can help the child improve poor motor hand skills as well as address the sensory problems commonly found in children with autism.

### **Intervention**

It is common for children with autism to become aggressive at times and to have tantrums. Ian's teachers and parents can provide support to him by intervening if and when he is having a tantrum. They can have training and advice as to how they can physically restrain him (without hurting him) to stop him from hurting himself and others around him.

If Ian loses concentration when having a conversation, his parents or teachers can intervene by giving him eye contact and asking him to look at them. This will hopefully help to develop his communication skills, by encouraging him to maintain eye contact throughout a conversation so that he can lip-read.