

Points to remember when working with Autistic clients

- Use the name of your rider they are comfortable with (find out from carer teacher or mother)
- Do not make direct eye contact.
- Touch rider as little as possible. Let them put on their own hat then you can quickly adjust.
- Do not invade their space.
- If you have to handle them i.e. change stirrup length then tell them what you are going to do and then be firm and quick.
- Please do not count down much time has been used to teach your rider to count 1,2,3....
- Back up a direct question of choice with a visual prompt. A direct question is quite confrontational.
- If your autistic rider is grumpy and aggressive check that something could have happened on route to riding or earlier in the day. You may have to miss that session.
- Try to change their pony and leader at odd times to prepare for pony being unavailable etc. Be firm, positive straight on and instantly move off.
- If calling a dressage test only call the next movement at approximately 3-5 strides before and only give the one letter eg. At A turn right miss the letters in between.