

# AUTISM WESSEX

A brief overview of our  
history



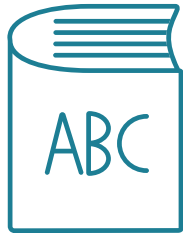
## 1971: OUR FIRST SCHOOL IS FOUNDED

In 1971 our very first school was founded, held in the garden shed of one of the founding family's homes in Southbourne. Those same parents then purchased a large house in Christchurch, replacing the garden shed with 'Portfield School', offering up to 20 places funded by the local authority.



## 1990'S: OUR SCHOOL EXPANDS

Having established one of the first schools for children with autism in the UK, demand for places grew, and by the mid-1990's the school had grown into three buildings supporting 36 children.



## 1999: OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE IS LAUNCHED

In 1999, our Community Support Service was launched, offering care and support to individuals within their own homes or out in the local community.



## TODAY:

Now, over 50 years later, we operate Portfield School and Life Skills, offering specialist education to over 80 students, we have 7 residential homes offering 24/7 care to adults with autism, and we provide over 3,000 hours of care a week to individuals in the community.

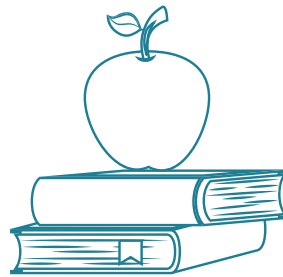
## 1968: OUR CHARITY IS FOUNDED

In 1968 our charity was founded by parents of children with autism, who recognised the gap in specialist education settings for children with autism.



## 1988: OUR FIRST RESIDENTIAL HOME OPENS

After recognising the lack of offerings for adults with autism in 1986, our first residential home, High Croft, was opened in 1988, providing care and support to 8 individuals.



## 1995: OUR EARLY YEARS PROVISION LAUNCHES

In 1995 an early years class was constructed at Portfield School, and student numbers increased to 42 children.



## 2002: PORTFIELD SCHOOL MOVES

In 2002, Portfield School moved to its current location in Parley, a purpose built school, opened officially by HRH The Princess Royal.

