

Edinburgh Airport recognised as Autism Friendly

Our capital's airport has become the first in Scotland to get an Autism Friendly Award recognising its accessible and supportive environment for those passengers with autism.

Measures which the airport has implemented to improve the environment for those on the autism spectrum include additional training for staff to help those with additional needs, an Edinburgh Airport Social Story to help children prepare for the journey, the possibility of visiting the airport ahead of any trip to familiarise with the specific sights and sounds, discreet lanyard and pin badges to identify travellers with hidden disabilities and providing children's books to any children who have not travelled by air before. There is more information [available here](#).



Chief executive of Edinburgh Airport Gordon Dewar being presented with an Autism Friendly award by Jenny Paterson, director of the National Autistic Society Scotland, Also pictured Ryan Gibbons (7) who suffers from autism

Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport, Gordon Dewar said: "Airports can be extremely busy places and that can be quite daunting for people with additional needs, especially if they rely on a routine which a place like an airport can upset.

"We've looked at that and considered where we could make simple but effective changes to make the journey through Edinburgh Airport as easy as possible for those with autism

and other additional needs.

“Our staff and partners have worked together to provide this service and this award is a clear indication of our commitment to make Edinburgh as accessible as possible for the 13 million passengers who use the airport every year.”



Kim Gibbons travels through Edinburgh Airport regularly with her son, Ryan, who has autism. She said:

“Places like airports can cause Ryan distress due to the high number of people and different noises so we have always been wary of travelling, but the fantastic assistance we receive from the staff at Edinburgh Airport has helped make the situation easier.

“Knowing we have that support means we now travel more regularly as the staff know us very well and have created a good relationship with Ryan, which also helps his journey through the airport.”

Seven-year-old Ryan added: “I really like airports and aeroplanes so it’s really exciting when I come to the airport to go away, and the people who help us through the airport are very helpful and friendly.”

Jenny Paterson, director of the National Autistic Society Scotland said: “I am very impressed by the comprehensive approach the team at Edinburgh Airport has taken to improving access for autistic passengers.

“Visiting the airport can be a very stressful, and sometimes daunting experience for autistic people and their families – these changes will make a huge difference to their experience.

“The Airport is very deserving of our Autism Friendly Award and has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring autistic

visitors are supported and know what to expect when they transit though Scotland's busiest airport."



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