



**Keynote Address: Dr Dave Hewett**

**Location:** The Presidential Ballroom

**Date:** Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> May

**Time:** 11.00 am

**Communication Learning is so Much more than Words**

Over the past thirty years, teaching and learning for communication abilities has been developed based upon knowledge from the research on the processes of infant learning and how crucial, complicated attainments in usual infancy occur during relaxed, pleasurable interactions with adults.

It is increasingly recognised that many apparently high ability learners who have ASD may have facility with speech, but their actual communication abilities and understandings are nonetheless limited by a lack of facility with the 'fundamentals of communication' – things such as learning to give attention, developing use and understanding of eye contacts, facial expressions, turn-taking, psychological and emotional connections with another person.

The presentation will use extensive video examples to illustrate communication development in infancy and the development of flexible, naturalistic approaches to helping learners of various abilities and ages progress in these areas. This developing expertise is also focusing on the way in which these activities beneficially contribute to emotional and psychological well-being issues for the learner, frequently resulting in a reduction in behaviours considered challenging.