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Abstract

The main aim of this research project is to establish whether being part of a Social Art Group (SAG) supports children with autism during their transition from primary to secondary school through an arts activity programme with mainstream peers. The main research question refers to the effect of peer support on children's transition and there is the hypothesis that peer interaction and familiarity developed through an arts activity programme focused on transition issues and among children making this transition from the same primary to the same secondary school is going to be judged as helpful by all participants, according to their perceptions. The research methods which are being used are a standardised instrument about communication skills delivered through a semi-structured interview, questionnaires created for this research project, a standardised questionnaire about peer relationships and observation of participants' interactions using video. Analysis of data is based on using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. There is scoring analysis of the standardised research tools, interview data and video analysis which is used as supporting overall analysis. The results are positive in relation to the beneficial effect of this group on peer relationships according to the majority of participants.