



**The Polesworth School**  

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**ENSURING EXCELLENCE**

# **Classroom Strategies for Students with SEND**



## Strategy sheet.

### Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

Be realistic about the student's need to move.

Establish with the student which part of the classroom is less distracting and seat them there (try to avoid areas others need to walk through).

Allow the student to fiddle with a piece of Blu-Tack or fiddle toy.

Make tasks short, with frequent breaks and opportunities to move around.

Give simple and clear instructions.  
Make sure the student is looking at you first.  
Check that they have understood them.

Use a timer to help student complete a task in specified period of time.

Use plenty of praise and the school's reward system.

Devise a private signal system to let the student know they when they are off-task or behaving inappropriately.

Teach a relaxation strategy like slow breathing and cue student when they need to use it.

Establish well embedded classroom routines.

When student is off task:

- Tell the student what you want them to do, rather than what you don't:  
"Name, I want you to keep your hands in your lap." Instead of "Name, stop that!"
- Follow the Polesworth script.

To help student work independently:

- Actively teach core routines for certain tasks;  
Encourage the student to practise them with progressively less help;  
Embed these until they become routine for those types of task;
- Give the student independent tasks that have previously been modelled to the whole class;
- Give clear guidelines: "Name, I need you to have produced at least three lines by half past ten; I will be asking you then to share these with your partner;"
- Provide support in the form of writing frames and scaffolding.

## Strategy sheet. Dyslexia:

**Don't ask the student to read aloud in front of others, unless they volunteer.**

To help the student work independently:

- Design worksheets so that the layout is uncluttered;
- Use buff or cream paper (or as directed by the Inclusion Department);
- Use a clear, simple font without a serif (such as Tahoma, Ariel, Calibri or Verdana) in size 14 font or larger;
- Set information out in panels to focus the sections;
- Signpost sections with key words, symbols and pictures;
- Put important information in bold or colour.

Have complex texts read to the student by you, or a "study buddy," or a TA.

Where possible, avoid asking a dyslexic student to copy from the board. Provide a photocopy for longer pieces of text.

To help the student follow tasks:

- Repeat instructions and questions;
- Chunk them and allow take up time;
- Jot them down on a sticky note, or encourage the student to do so;
- Allow time for processing (for example paired discussion with a partner putting hands up).

Dyslexic students may:

- Know something one day and forget it the next;
- Lose or forget equipment they need;
- Forget what they are supposed to be doing in the course of a lesson.

Avoid criticism when this happens.

Instead, talk with them about strategies they can use to help them remember things.

Use ICT aids such as:

- Laptops;
- Sound files of key texts or revision notes uploaded to teams;
- Reading pens;
- Audio recorders.

When marking, praise for two correct spellings, target two incorrect spellings and use these errors as teaching points.

Enable student to record their ideas using alternatives to writing:

- PowerPoint presentations, making posters and oral presentations;
- Mind mapping;
- Matching labels to pictures or diagrams;
- Sorting statements or pictures into categories.

Scaffold writing by providing:

- Writing frames and templates (e.g. writing up a science experiment) to help structure thinking;
- Prompt sheets, questions to answer, key words to build each section or paragraph around, sentences or paragraphs to put in correct order, paragraph openings;
- Cue cards.

Do not expect the student to easily remember sequences such as: days of the week, months of the year, the alphabet, times tables, number facts etc. These may need to re-taught frequently.

Provide aids (for example, a pocket alphabet or calendar, table squares, calculator).

Overcome problems in learning by rote by helping students recognise patterns, use mnemonics, or use memory strategies that create relationships between items in a list in order to aid recall.

Training the student to use a "mind palace" can be highly beneficial.

Teach the student strategies to improve organisation, such as diaries, workplans, checklists of equipment they have to bring to school each day, use of organiser functions on mobile phone/laptop.



Provide the student with a study pack:

Highlighter pens, glue sticks, Post-it notes, index cards for subject vocabulary or spelling mnemonics, dictionary, a tables square and a calculator.

Write down homework for student, or give it on a pre-printed sticky label or sheet they can stick into their book.

Allocate a homework buddy they can ring if they have forgotten what to do.

## Strategy sheet. Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC):

Prepare the student before the lesson by outlining what it will be about.

Support oral presentations with concrete resources eg: charts, diagrams, pictures or real objects.

Set tasks with clear goals and write worksheets in step-by-step form.

If student becomes anxious allow them to go to an agreed area to self regulate.

Seat the student in an area of classroom where they feel comfortable.

Establish very clear and predictable classroom routines.

Use short simple instructions:

- Give one at a time;
- Check for understanding;
- Repeat instructions using the same words;
- Write instructions down as a list for student to tick off when completed.

Use the student's name before asking a question or giving an instruction.

Avoid metaphorical or idiomatic language. eg: 'pull your socks up'; 'it's raining cats and dogs'; 'in a minute'.  
A student with ASC might take: "in a minute," completely literally.

Explain any changes of routine to the student in advance.

Involve the student by asking direct, concrete questions at their level of understanding.

Support writing with writing frames or templates.

Allow the student to work alone rather than in a group if that is their preference.  
If group work is essential, define clear roles within the group.

Put a green start dot on the student's book and a line to show where to finish.

Provide the student with a symbol card to display when he or she wants help.

Expect to teach student social skills eg: how to ask for help appropriately.  
Tell the student what to do, rather than what not to do.

Model to the student that making mistakes is fine and an important part of the learning process.

If student goes off at a tangent, direct conversation back in the topic in hand; 'Right now we are talking about volcanoes'.



## Strategy sheet.

### Cognition and learning difficulties:

Prepare the student for a task so that they come to it already knowing the key vocabulary and concepts.  
If parents and carers are supportive, this could be set as homework prior to the new topic.

Link new learning to what student already knows.

Tell students the three key points of the lesson, teach them and recap on them at the end.

Break new learning down into small steps, scaffold extensively.

Provide multiple examples of new concepts, and take these examples from children's own real-life experience rather than talking in the abstract.

Where possible, use visual and kinaesthetic learning: pictures, diagrams, mind maps, using practical equipment, handling objects and moving and doing.

Use short simple instructions.  
Give one at a time and check for understanding.  
Write down and leave up instructions after saying them.

Question student after some other students have given examples of what is required.

Give the student time to think, or to talk to a partner before answering a question.  
Be careful when "cold calling." This can cause extreme anxiety for the student.

Read to the student any text they will struggle with.

Put up a list of key vocabulary for a particular topic or lesson and teach the meaning of each word.

To help student extract key points, provide highlighter pens.

Make learning strategies explicit by 'thinking aloud' yourself.

Help student develop effective learning strategies: when they succeed, ask them to identify what they did to solve the problem/find the information.

Model to the student that making mistakes is good, and an important part of the learning process.

Agree a private signal that the student can use to show you when they have not understood.

Prepare students for writing: have them rehearse orally what they want to write.

Where possible, allow the student to record their ideas using alternatives to writing: PowerPoint presentations, posters, oral presentations, mind maps, matching labels to pictures /diagrams/maps, sorting statements or pictures into categories.

Scaffold writing:

- Provide writing frames and templates (e.g. writing up a science experiment) to help structure thinking;
- Supply prompt sheets: questions to answer, key words to build each section or paragraph around, sentences or paragraphs to put in correct order, paragraph openings;
- Provide cue cards;
- Use cloze procedure (where the student fills in the missing words in a text).

Give homework instructions on a sheet and make time to explain them.  
Allocate a home work buddy to ring if they need help ('phone a friend').

## Strategy sheet.

### Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties:

Seat the student where they feel secure.

Agreed a "self regulation" procedure in advance.

Make tasks short, with frequent check ins.

Remember that children (and adults) who are stressed find it hard to take in and remember complex information; make instructions short and clear.

Set tasks with clear goals, outputs and timescales.

Develop clear and predictable classroom routines.

When student is off task:

- Tell the student what you want them to do, rather than what you don't:  
"Name, I want you to keep your hands in your lap." Instead of "Name, stop that!"
- Follow the Polesworth script.

Make an effort to 'catch the student being good' and praise them.  
Aim for a ratio of four positive comments to one negative and teach student how to reward themselves.

Devise a private signal system to let the student know when they are off-task or behaving inappropriately.

Take steps to build student's self-esteem:

- Find out what they know about or are good at;

- Give them in class responsibilities;
- Photocopy good pieces of work for them to take home.

## Strategy sheet.

### Dyspraxia, motor coordination and associated difficulties:

Where possible, allow the student to record their ideas using alternatives to writing: PowerPoint presentations, posters, oral presentations, mind maps, matching labels to pictures /diagrams/maps, sorting statements or pictures into categories.

If possible, allow the student to choose writing tools that are most comfortable for them; this might not always be in pen.

Check the student's seating:

- Ideally, the desktop should be at elbow height;
- They should be able to sit right back in their chair, with their knees at right angles;
- Both feet should be flat on the floor.

Use books or paper with larger lines, columns or squares paper.  
Attach loose paper to the desk with Blu-Tack.

Pair the student with a more co-ordinated study buddy for practical work.

Provide additional time for practical tasks, changing for PE, putting on their coat and packing away.

Provide pre-printed formats (diagrams, charts and graphs) on which the student can record information.

Avoid criticism if the student looks untidy.

Choose resources that require no, or less, manipulation (e.g. a number line rather than counters in maths).

Allow rest periods if necessary as concentration and motor effort can be demanding and cause fatigue.

Write down homework for the student or let them photograph it.

Allow the student to submit printed homework where possible.

## **Strategy sheet.**

### **Hearing impairment:**

In collaboration with the student, seat them where they are able to read text, hear and lip-read.

Ensure light is on the teacher's face, the light source needs to be behind the student.  
Don't stand with your back to a window.

Directly face student when speaking to facilitate lip-reading.  
Repeat any instructions that have been given when the student could not see the speaker. Avoid writing on board or IWB while speaking as you will not be facing the student.

Don't make the student concentrate on lip-reading for too long without a break.  
Provide a transcript if possible.

When other students contribute, ensure that they speak one at a time. Paraphrase their contributions back to the class.  
Speak clearly, naturally and at a normal rate, shouting or exaggerated 'mouthing' distorts normal lip patterns and can be confusing.

Where possible, minimise background noise e.g. a noisy heater or buzzing light.  
Make other students aware of need for a quiet working environment.

Use simple instructions:

- Give one at a time and check for understanding;
- Initially, repeat instructions using the same words;
- If the student still does not understand a word or phrase, use different ones.

Prepare the student by outlining the content as you greet the class.

Use the student's name before asking a question or giving an instruction.



Cue the student to a change of topic: 'now we are going to talk about...'

Be aware that independent writing will reflect the student's spoken language levels and will not necessarily be grammatically correct. Mark this sensitively.

Put up a list of key vocabulary for a particular topic or lesson and explicitly teach the meaning of each word.

Agree a private signal the student can use to show you when they have not understood.

Try to use videos with subtitles. If this is not possible, give the student links to the material after lesson to go through it again. Don't ask the student to make notes while watching a video.

Allow extra time to complete tasks and be aware of the fatigue the student may experience because of the amount of effort they have to put in to listening.