

Reasonable adjustments



Specialist Teaching Team | SEND Therapy Team



Agenda

- The Law
- School environment /Sensory needs
- What is reasonable to expect in a Mainstream school
- Specific forms of support for different areas of SEND

The Law

Equality Act 2010 – Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools have a duty to:

- Not discriminate against disabled pupils.
- Make reasonable adjustments to avoid substantial disadvantage.
- Anticipate the needs of disabled pupils rather than waiting for problems to arise.

A child does **not need an EHCP** to be protected by the Equality Act.

A diagnosis is not always required if the child has a disability that has a substantial and long-term effect on day-to-day activities.

Examples of reasonable adjustments



A parent could reasonably expect:

- Adapted teaching methods.
- Instructions broken into smaller steps.
- Visual supports and timetables.
- Additional processing time.
- Alternative methods of recording work.
- Reduced copying from the board.
- Flexible grouping arrangements.

Classroom Environment

- Preferential seating.
- Reduced sensory distractions.
- Access to a quiet or regulation space.
- Sensory resources such as ear defenders or fidget tools where appropriate.
- Flexible movement breaks.

Organisation

- Help with transitions.
- Advance warning of changes.
- Use of checklists and planners.
- Support with executive functioning.

Behaviour

- Behaviour policies adapted to recognise disability-related behaviours.
- Positive behaviour support rather than punitive sanctions.
- Individual behaviour plans where needed.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing

- Access to a trusted adult.
- Structured support during unstructured times.
- Opportunities for regulation breaks.
- Social communication support where appropriate.

School trips



Homework



Sports



Parent/ Carers



What Parents Can Reasonably Expect

A parent should expect that a school will:

- ✓ Listen to concerns and investigate them.
- ✓ Assess the child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ Put support in place promptly.
- ✓ Monitor whether the support is working.
- ✓ Meet with parents to review progress.
- ✓ Adapt teaching and the environment.
- ✓ Seek advice from specialists if school strategies are insufficient.
- ✓ Record SEND Support appropriately.

Children and Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act 2014 places duties on schools to:

- Identify pupils with SEND.
- Use a graduated approach of Assess – Plan – Do – Review.
- Involve parents and the child in decision-making.
- Put appropriate SEND Support in place without waiting for a diagnosis

Schools should not say:

- "We can't help until there is a diagnosis."
- "We don't have funding."
- "We only provide support with an EHCP."

These statements are inconsistent with their legal duties.





SEND Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice expects schools to:

- Deliver high-quality adaptive teaching.
- Identify and respond to emerging needs.
- Regularly review support.
- Work collaboratively with parents.
- Seek specialist advice where necessary.

The classroom environment



There are some resources and ideas that support all learners



Physical layout



Calm and
uncluttered
classroom

Supportive equipment



Sensory spaces/tools





Time out
arrangements/
spaces

Sensory environment audit





Autism/Social Communication needs

Classroom Environment

- Consistent routines and clear expectations.
- Visual timetables showing the structure of the day.
- Advance warning of changes to routines, staff, or activities.
- A designated quiet space or calm area for regulation.
- Reduced sensory distractions where possible (noise, lighting, visual clutter).
- Flexible seating arrangements if beneficial.

Autism/Social Communication needs

Teaching and Learning

- Instructions broken down into smaller, manageable steps.
- Use of visual supports alongside verbal explanations.
- Additional processing time before expecting a response.
- Checking understanding rather than assuming comprehension.
- Alternative ways of recording work if writing is a barrier.
- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts.
- Clear, concrete language and avoidance of unnecessary ambiguity

Autism/Social Communication needs

Social and Communication Support

- Structured support during unstructured times such as playtimes and lunch.
- Social skills groups where appropriate.
- Adult facilitation of peer interactions if needed.
- Explicit teaching of social rules and expectations.
- Support understanding others' perspectives and emotions.

Autism/Social Communication needs

Emotional Regulation and Wellbeing

- Individual regulation strategies identified and consistently used.
- Access to sensory tools where appropriate (fidgets, ear defenders, movement breaks).
- Planned movement breaks throughout the day.
- Emotional literacy support.
- A trusted adult the child can access when anxious or overwhelmed.

Autism/Social Communication needs

Transitions

- Enhanced transition support between activities.
- Photographs or visits before changes in classroom or staffing.
- Transition booklets for moves between year groups or schools.
- Additional preparation for school trips, special events, and assemblies.

Autism/Social Communication needs

Behaviour Support

Schools should recognise that behaviours may be a form of communication rather than deliberate defiance. Reasonable adjustments might include:

- Identifying triggers.
- Adapting demands during periods of stress.
- Using de-escalation approaches.
- Avoiding punitive responses to disability-related behaviours.
- Individual risk assessments and behaviour support plans where needed.

Ordinarily

Southend-on-Sea City Council

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES

A COLLECTION OF STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH SEND

COMPILED BY THE SPECIALIST TEACHING TEAM

Available

Southend on Sea City Council

Universal strategies for all classrooms Autism and Social Communication

LOOK LIKE

- Difficulty with conversation
- Hyper focus on specific areas of interest
- Difficulty reading non-verbal cues
- Struggles with the non-verbal rules of friendship
- Can dominate friendship/play
- Prefers to be younger children or adults
- Rigid in following rules
- Speech can be unusual in tone, accent or articulation
- Difficulty with complex instructions
- Limited facial expression
- Struggles with social activities
- Struggles with social space
- Struggles to follow instructions
- Reactions to changing or engaging in activities
- Sensitivity to touch or sound

Supporting Autistic Children in the Classroom
How can I support autistic children in my classroom?

ENVIRONMENT

- Visual timetables**
Additional simplified copies next to and portable for the student.
Now and Next
Task boards
Choice boards/lists
- School Sensory toolkit you can try**
 - Sensory cushion
 - Seat wedge
 - Weighted blanket
 - Foot block
 - Ear defenders
 - Fidgets
- Environment**
 - Calm colours, clutter free environment especially around the board area.
 - Labelling of equipment and key areas with pictures and words.
- Emotions**
 - How do students communicate if they need help/ time out?
 - How do they communicate emotions/ needs?
e.g. zones of regulation
 - Key member of staff - gaining trust
- Quiet space**
 - Quiet table
 - Calming space
 - Space to regulate
 - Workstation
 - Exit card

Access to alternative forms of recording

- 'Dictate' in Word
- Speech buttons
- Video
- 'Our Story' app
- Post-it note recording/sequencing

Structured breaktimes

- Quiet special interests areas at breaktimes
- Method of communication/visuals to be in all areas of school including lunch and break areas e.g. Talking mats

More visual/ language support

- Timers
- Countdowns
- Task boards /Checklists
- Language vocab word mats with pictures
- Pre-teach vocab/ language

Rules and routines

- Behaviour - written rules on display
- Consistent routines supported by visuals.
- Prepare for change eg supply cover, school trips, special assembly - communicate ahead

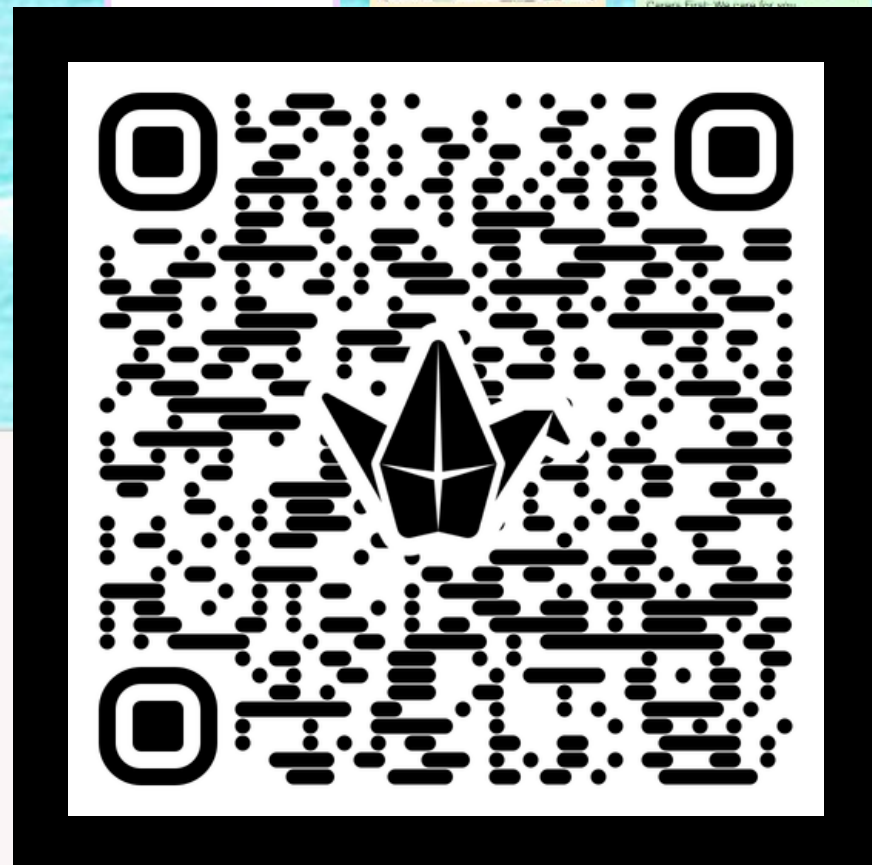
TEACHING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

- Language - slowly, clearly, simply
- Do not use idioms
- Instructions repeated, not rephrased
- Targeted questions to encourage participation, reduce number of questions
- Break down lesson/ chunking/ scaffolding
- Modelling how to complete tasks & having a completed example ready
- Talk partners/ good role model buddies (do not pressure a student to talk)
- Reminders before transitions
- Visuals to support all language
- Relate learning to a student's experience/ concrete examples
- Use positive language to encourage desired behaviours, praise all attempts at communication
- Be specific and descriptive when giving praise
- Positive directions e.g. "Sit down, thanks", rather than "Don't get out of your seat"
- See behaviour as communication of an unmet need.
- Complete ABC chart to understand the triggers and then make adaptations

Now and Next boards and how to use them
Redbridge SEND Advisory & Training Service

Visual Strategies when working with students who have complex needs
Redbridge SEND Advisory & Training Service

Watch on YouTube



Southend City Inclusion Ideas and Inspiration

History
Playlists
Watch later
Liked videos
Your videos

Explore
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Southend City Council Specialist Teaching Service
@SouthendCityCouncilSTS · 33 subscribers · 21 videos
Launched September 2025 | Rooted in Southend-on-Sea | Championing SEND, Empowering...more
[padlet.com/specialistteachingteam/southend-city-inclusion-ideas-and-inspirati...](#) and 1 more link

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Engagement Model
Therapeutic techniques
LET'S GET TECHY

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YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

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Southend-on-Sea City Council

FREE SEND training videos
for school staff and families

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 @SouthendCityCouncilS.T.S • 77 subscribers • 25 views
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 www.southendcitycouncil.gov.uk/specialteachingteam/southend-city-inclusion-ideas-and-impact... and 1 more link

Videos Playlists Posts

Latest Popular Oldest

- Sensory Circuits • Motor skills
- Sensory Circuits • ASD example
- Sensory Circuits • ADHD example
- Reception children Welcome to S.T.S
- Moving to Secondary School - S.T.S support
- White paper response 2026
- Universal, Targeted and Specialist Support
- SENCO FORUM • Provision Maps
- SENCO FORUM • Digital referral form
- New to SENCO Module 1
- Can't write/Won't write - Secondary
- Welcome to Specialist Teaching Service - January 2026
- S.T.S. Training offer
- ADHD- Primary School
- Total Communication

Southend City Council Specialist Teaching Service'



ADHD

ADHD

Classroom Organisation

A school should ordinarily provide:

- Predictable routines and clear classroom expectations.
- Visual timetables and clear lesson structures.
- Seating that minimises distractions while maintaining inclusion.
- Clear organisation of resources and workspaces.
- Opportunities to stand or work in different positions if this helps concentration.

ADHD

Teaching Strategies

Teachers should routinely:

- Give short, clear instructions, one step at a time.
- Check understanding before moving on.
- Break tasks into manageable chunks.
- Use visual prompts and written reminders.
- Repeat or rephrase instructions when needed.
- Provide regular feedback throughout tasks.
- Offer choices where appropriate to increase engagement.

ADHD

Attention and Executive Function Support

Ordinarily available adjustments include:

- Task checklists.
- Timers or countdowns for activities.
- Now-and-next boards.
- Support with planning and organising work.
- Help to prioritise tasks.
- Use of visual organisers and writing frames.

ADHD

Movement and Sensory Regulation

Schools should consider:

- Planned movement breaks.
- Opportunities for purposeful jobs around the classroom.
- Access to fidget tools if they support learning.
- Flexible seating options where appropriate.
- Access to a quieter area when overwhelmed.

These should be used as part of an agreed strategy rather than as rewards.


ADHD

Behaviour Support

Good practice includes:

- Understanding behaviour as communication.
- Positive behaviour support rather than punitive approaches.
- Clear, consistent expectations across staff.
- Immediate and specific praise for desired behaviours.
- Restorative conversations after incidents.
- Individual behaviour support plans if needed.

Ordinarily


UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES
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available

Southend on Sea City Council

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- Talking out of turn, shouting, throwing objects, showing aggression
- Refusal to follow instructions, reacting negatively to requests or boundaries
- Frequently presents as anxious, upset or angry.
- Can struggle to regulate their emotions/ taking a long time to regulate
- Feelings of anger/ resentment continue even after adult intervention.
- Struggles with new experiences/ changes to routine
- Struggles with taking risks with learning/ struggles with simple correction
- Struggles with being secure/ self-directing
- Struggles with understanding anything in written terms.
- Struggles with self-regulation/ difficulty accepting praise or constructive criticism.
- Struggles with peer relationships/ working with others/ difficulty maintaining friendships
- Struggles to maintain focus/ persistence
- Struggles to understand the right or wrong/ respect
- Struggles to understand conflict resolution/ problem solving/ peer support during group activities
- Struggles to understand the importance of listening/ attention
- Frequent complaints of physical ailments such as headaches/ stomach aches/ feeling tired

ENVIRONMENT

- Regulation**
 - Consistent tools in class and across school for students to communicate how they are feeling, and if they need 'time out'
 - Quiet corner or calm-down area where students can self-regulate
 - Workstation if required
- Rules and routines**
 - Behaviour- written rules on display
 - Classroom rules created as a collaborative with class and referred to explicitly
 - Consistent routines supported by visuals
 - Lessons structured and predictable
 - Small steps to allow students to focus on one step at a time
 - Immediate and specific feedback where possible
- Environment**
 - Calm colours, clutter free organised environment especially around the board area.
 - Labelling of equipment and key areas with pictures and words.
 - Manipulatives / concrete items to support the lesson
 - Sit with space around
 - Images in the class rare representative of community
- Visual timetables**
 - Individual visual timetables in addition to class
 - Now and Next
 - Task boards
 - Choice boards/lists
 - Visual timers
 - Chunking
 - Scaffolds
 - Visuals to support multi-step instruction
- Seating**
 - Flexible seating
 - Sensory cushion
 - Seat wedge
 - Standing desk
 - Seated facing the board directly
 - Sensory tools
 - Movement breaks
 - Move away from a peer who is distracting
 - Ear defenders /headphones
- Positive affirmations**
 - Model growth mindset- making mistakes, moving on, restorative practice
 - 'Mood check' in tools for whole class
 - Celebrate small achievements focussing on individual progress
 - Reward system that reinforces positive behaviour
 - Circle time meetings with class/ groups to work through issues
- Communication**
 - Alternative ways to communicate their emotions- zones of regulation, journals, communication cards/ codes between student and teacher.
 - Non-verbal cues e.g. hand signal/ colour card system
- Transitions**
 - Supported by visuals
 - Routine and predictable
 - Pre warning of changes

TEACHING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

- Fresh start every lesson/day
- Positive report cards/ WOW wall
- Small achievable (SMART) targets set for individuals, reviewed with them at the end of each lesson
- Nurturing relationships e.g. meet and greet, check in, 'hold in mind'
- Positive language - be aware of tone and level of language used
- Clear classroom routines and boundaries
- Access to an emotionally available adult
- Communicate daily plan and prepare for any change in routine.
- Adapted learning tasks matched to need
- Tools to access learning e.g. task board, use of timer
- Use of emotional support tools e.g. worry box, ZOR as above to support identification, communication and management of feelings
- Agreed approach for conflict resolution - repair and rebuild, time to calm
- Make choices in their learning eg select group members, materials, ways of recording

5 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT MISTAKES


Padlet: Southend City Inclusion Ideas and Inspiration



SPEECH & LANGUAGE

Speech and Language

verbo
communication skills for life

Universal strategies for all classrooms 

Cognition and Learning

Open Dyslexic Font

WHAT DIFFICULTIES MAY LOOK LIKE

- Student struggles if the lesson is too fast or has no visuals.
- Difficulty with phonics/blending/struggles with fluency when reading.
- Makes spelling mistakes/ forgets familiar grammar
- Confusion around number/ number order/patterns
- Memory - eg times tables, spellings
- Struggles to make links between learning
- Written account does not match verbal recall
- Low self esteem as a learner
- Lack of resilience when approaching new tasks
- Avoidance techniques/ behaviours
- Struggles to complete homework, family reports emotional response to homework tasks
- Taking much longer than others to complete tasks
- Relies on peers to 'check in'/ drop in performance during tests
- Difficulty moving from concrete to abstract learning

ENVIRONMENT

- Visual timetables** next to and portable for the student/ whole class.
- Now and Next** Task boards
- Choice boards/lists**
- Visual timers
- Chunking**
- Scaffolds

- Seating**
 - Sensory cushion
 - Seat wedge
 - Standing desk
 - Seated facing the board directly
 - Quiet space to read/write
 - Movement breaks

- Environment**
 - Calm colours, clutter-free organised environment, especially around the board area.
 - Labelling of equipment and key areas with pictures and words.
 - Manipulatives / concrete items to support the lesson

- Southend Library** has a range of high interest, easy text books, including those for older readers from companies such as Barrington Stoke. They also have comic strip format of many texts.
- Bookshare** also offer free e-books for students who have dyslexia.

- Font/display**
 - Use simple sans serif font for all displays, worksheets and space well, avoid too much on a screen/ handout
 - Click here for more info
 - Coloured overlays
 - Use bullet points or numbers to break up text

IT

- "Dictate" in Word
- Post it note recording/sequencing
- Immersive reader
- Clicker
- Audio or video version of books shared on You Tube/ Audio version
- Clicker
- Voice recording apps
- Chat GPT to adapt text instantly

Rules and routines

- Behaviour- written rules on display
- Consistent routines supported by visuals.
- Lessons structured and predictable
- Small steps to allow students to focus on one step at time
- Immediate and specific feedback where possible

Language

- Mind maps shows language links
- Task boards /Checklists
- Language vocab word mats with pictures
- Pre and Post teach vocab/ language

Whiteboards/ PowerPoints

- Ensure background of whiteboard screen is not white use Immersive Reader to change it in seconds.

TEACHING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

- Adaptation and differentiation in planning, teaching and resources.
- Time to process information
- Pre and post teaching
- Information broken down
- Explicit modelling
- Completed example to model
- Culture of asking for help
- Multi sensory opportunities in all lessons
- Adapted LO and SC resources
- Scaffolds, chunking and word banks
- Multi sensory approach to all learning -hands on activities, resources to touch, move and manipulate.
- Decodable texts that match the student's phonic level
- Precision teaching

PRECISION TEACHING

Radlet Southend City Education, Literacy and Intervention



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Talk to your Class Teacher/ SENCO



Cognition and Learning



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WHAT DIFFICULTIES MAY LOOK LIKE

- Student struggles if the lesson is too fast or has no visuals, unable to keep up with note taking
- Difficulty with phonics/blending/struggles with fluency when reading.
- Makes spelling mistakes/ forgets familiar grammar
- Incomplete work/ homework
- Memory difficulties- eg times tables, spellings
- Struggles to make links between learning
- Written account does not match verbal recall
- Low self esteem as a learner
- Limited use/understanding of subject specific vocab
- Lack of resilience when approaching new tasks
- Avoidance techniques/ behaviours/ distracting others
- Struggles to complete homework, family reports emotional response to homework tasks
- Taking much longer than others to complete tasks
- Relies on peers to 'check in'/ drop in performance during tests
- Difficulty applying knowledge learnt through rote



ENVIRONMENT	Language Task boards Word banks Language mind maps to link language Timelines Blank mind maps Post it notes White board/ spare paper Visual timers Scaffolds Chunking	Sensory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seated facing the board directly • Seating plan- minimal distractions • Movement breaks • Standing table at side, to write while standing 	Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm colours, clutter free organised environment especially around the board area. • Labelling of equipment and key areas with pictures and words. 	Southend Library has a range of high interest easy text books, including those for older readers from companies such as Barrington Stoke. They also have comic strip format of many texts. Bookshare also offer free e-books for students who have dyslexia.	Font/display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple sans-serif font for all displays, worksheets and space well, avoid too much on a screen/ handout • Click http://jazz for more info • Coloured overlays • Use bullet points or numbers to break up text
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Rules and routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour- written rules on display • Consistent routines supported by visuals. • Lessons structured and predictable • Small steps to allow students to focus on one step at time • Immediate and specific feedback where possible 	Whitboards/ PowerPoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure background of whiteboard screen is not white- use Immersive Reader to change it in seconds. 	Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Dictate' in Word • Post it note recording/sequencing • Immersive reader • Audio or video version of books shared on You Tube/ Audio version • Chat GPT to adapt text instantly • Study Skills links modelled and shared eg Quizlet
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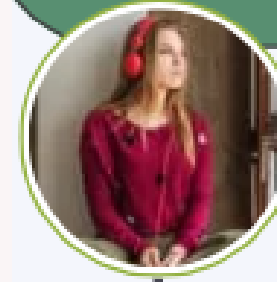
Online subject specific dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary>

TEACHING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

- Adaptation and differentiation in planning, teaching and resources.
- Time to process information
- Repetition and opportunities to practice and apply knowledge.
- Smaller steps with visual/ visual representation
- Explicit modelling/ scaffolding/ writing frames
- Maths- frames to place answers in
- Completed example to model/ checklists, clear expectations
- PowerPoint/copy of PPT shared with student
- Use AI such as Chat GPT to simplify text
- Multi-sensory approach to all learning -hands on activities, resources to touch, move and manipulate.
- Decodable texts that match the student's phonic level
- Precision teaching



Autism and Social Communication



WHAT DIFFICULTIES MAY LOOK LIKE

- Difficulty with conversation/ can talk 'at' others
- Hyper focus on specific areas of interest
- Difficulty reading non-verbal cues
- Struggles with the non-verbal rules of friendship
- Can dominate friendships or prefer to be on their own
- Rigid in following rules/ likes a strict routine
- Speech can be unusual in tone, accent or articulation.
- Difficulty with multi-step instructions
- Limited facial expression
- Difficulty with personal space
- Struggles to move on from negative interactions
- Spiky profile in different curriculum subjects
- Handwriting and organisation difficulties
- School anxiety/ EBSA.
- Not seeming to understand what others are thinking or feeling
- Difficulty expressing how they feel
- Taking things very literally

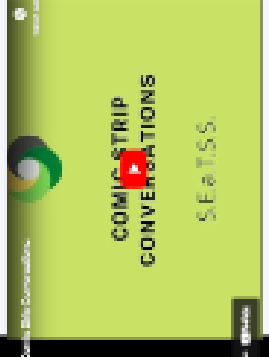
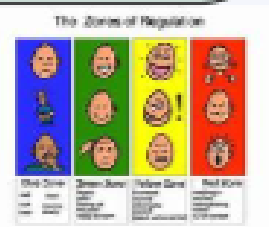


ENVIRONMENT	Visual support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task boards • Work broken into small steps • A completed example to show • First questions/ part of the task started to allow extra processing time. 	Sensory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the impact of sensory stimulation • Discuss with them best place to sit, time to study, support they require. 	Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm colours, clutter free environment • Information on board - spaced, colours and avoid too much content • Avoid changing seating plan/ groups with no warning • Email or print out copy of presentation 	Emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do students communicate if they need help/ time out? • How do they communicate emotions/ needs? e.g. zones of regulation • Key member of staff - gaining trust • Emotion scale in planner 	Quiet space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet table/ seating position • Space to regulate • Exit card • Regulation techniques
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Access to alternative forms of recording <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Dictate' in Word • Prediction • Study skills apps • Immersive reader • Post it note organisation 	Wider SEN offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet special interests areas at breaktimes • Homework clubs • Homework emailed • Stools with backs 	Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language- tone and level • Countdowns • Checklists/task boards • Language vocab word mats • Pre-teach vocab/ language • Avoid open questions 	Rules and routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour - written rules on display and explicitly related to • Consistent routines supported by visuals. • Prepare for change eg supply cover, school trips, special assembly - communicate ahead
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TEACHING APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

- Read Pupil profile to ensure you have a good understanding of the specific approach
- Be aware of students interests if possible, and relate learning to that
- Do not assume a student will want to please you
- Give instructions in lists, chunking tasks
- Provide physical structure for ideas - clove questions, scaffolds, mind maps, visuals to support comprehension/vocab
- Have a completed example to demonstrate the amount and context - this helps the student understand what finished looks like
- Give students time to process information / do not insist on eye contact.
- Homework - adapt, print on a sticky label for planner, email Parents to explain the task/how to complete
- Positive language eg 'Thankyou for sitting down' rather than 'Don't stand up'.
- See behaviour as a communication of an unmet need. e.g. Complete ABC chart to establish triggers and then make adaptations.
- Observe closely other students who may 'trigger' the student
- Be concrete and specific
- Don't give options if there are no other options.



SEND Code of Practice

Some children will require SEN support which should be ‘additional to’ or ‘different from’ from the support generally given to most children of the same age.

A child does not need a medical diagnosis to be recognised as having SEN.



School should use some of their budget to:

- Changes to the curriculum
- Special equipment / teaching materials
- Technology
- Support in the classroom
- Base to work in or have quiet time



School website

- SEND Information report
- Accessibility plan
- SEND policy





**SEND is my
superpower**



Specialist Teaching Service: STS@southend.gov.uk

SEND Therapies Team: SENDtherapies@southend.gov.uk



Thank you