

Supporting Autistic Students

Resource for Primary Schools



- 1 Make a plan for collaboration and communication with the student's family. They know their child best and can be a great source of knowledge and expertise when catering for the student's strengths and support needs.
- 2 Get to know your student to develop a positive and trusting relationship. Find out what interests them - this can be a useful point from which to build a connection.
- 3 Wherever possible, use structure in your class. Having well defined and labelled spaces and organisation systems can help students to plan and build independence.
- 4 If a student is impacted by the sensory environment at school, it can be beneficial to have a plan for taking sensory breaks as needed throughout the day in a calm space.
- 5 Set a predictable and consistent daily routine – represent this visually using a schedule or timetable which is always visible in the classroom.
- 6 Provide warning and preparation about any upcoming changes to routines or activities. Visual timers and daily schedules can help students feel more prepared.
- 7 If possible, address students individually to gain their attention before giving instructions.
- 8 Provide clear, simple instructions and requests using concrete language; try to reduce unnecessary jargon. Break longer instructions into manageable steps.
- 9 Where possible, pair verbal instructions with a demonstration or example of the work to be completed. This can visually support the students to understand what is expected.
- 10 Take care to set tasks that are well matched to the student's level of skill or ability. Ensuring a task is achievable can help the student to stay motivated.
- 11 Gradually increase the complexity of tasks as skills progress. Meaningful and tangible rewards can be paired with social praise to build motivation for tasks.
- 12 You can support the student's communication needs by providing visual supports for daily settings and activities.