

ASC

Main difficulty: Social communication, flexibility, and sensory processing.

Visual supports – use of symbols, pictures, or written instructions alongside verbal directions.

Individual now, next, then boards, visual timetables, checkers, word walls, task checkers

Clear, consistent routines, predictable schedules and visual timetables to reduce anxiety

Sensory circuits, movement breaks

Chunked instructions – breaking tasks into small, manageable steps.
Workstation, 1, 2, 3 baskets

Processing time – giving the child extra time to respond or complete a task before repeating or rephrasing.

Clear expectations and rules – visually displayed and regularly reinforced in positive terms.

Minimised sensory overload – reducing background noise, strong smells, or visual clutter, destimmed classrooms

Designated calm space – a quiet area or sensory corner for self-regulation when overwhelmed.

Use of clear, literal language – avoiding idioms, sarcasm, or ambiguous phrasing.

Pre-warning of changes – advance notice when routines or activities will be different.

Support for social understanding – modelling social behaviour, social stories, or role-play.

Interest-based learning – linking tasks or rewards to the child's special interests.

Flexible seating or movement breaks – allowing short physical breaks to maintain focus.

Positive reinforcement and predictable feedback – immediate, specific praise for desired behaviour.

Low-arousal communication style – calm tone, neutral body language, and reduced verbal load.

Use of visual or concrete outcomes – showing examples of “what finished looks like” to clarify expectations.

Collaborative working with parents and support staff – sharing consistent strategies across settings.

ADHD

Main difficulty: Concentration, impulsivity, and self-regulation.

Clear structure and predictable routines – visual timetables and consistent daily patterns help maintain focus and security

Support with organisation – checklists, colour coding, labelled trays, or daily planners.

Clear, concise instructions – short, direct, and repeated or written down as needed.

Movement breaks – short, purposeful opportunities to move between or during tasks e.g. Sensory circuits, movement breaks

Chunked learning tasks – breaking work into smaller, manageable steps with clear success criteria.

Processing time – giving the child extra time to respond or complete a task before repeating or rephrasing.

Clear expectations and rules – visually displayed and regularly reinforced in positive terms.

Minimised sensory overload. Minimised distractions – keep workspaces uncluttered and seat the pupil away from high-traffic areas.

Designated calm space – a quiet area or sensory corner for self-regulation when overwhelmed.

Flexible seating options – allow standing desks, wobble cushions, or seat choices to help regulate attention.

Pre-warning of changes – advance notice when routines or activities will be different.

Support for social understanding – modelling social behaviour, social stories, or role-play.

Use of timers or visual countdowns – support for time management and transitions between tasks.

Immediate and specific feedback – recognise effort and success right away to build motivation.

Positive reinforcement – reward systems focusing on effort, persistence, and positive behaviours.

Active learning approaches – hands-on, interactive tasks that engage movement and curiosity.

Calm and predictable responses to behaviour – avoiding escalation through calm, consistent feedback.

Encouragement of self-regulation skills – teaching strategies like breathing techniques or movement choices.

Dyslexia

Main difficulty: Reading, spelling, and sometimes writing and processing written information.

Use of clear, consistent classroom routines as predictability reduces cognitive load and helps all learners, especially those with dyslexia, to focus on learning rather than process.

Provide written and verbal instructions. Always say and show instructions and check understanding before they begin tasks.

Information is chunked into small, manageable steps, breaking tasks into clear stages and provide checklists for reference.

Use coloured backgrounds in iPads or paper. Off-white, cream, or pastel backgrounds can reduce visual stress and glare. Children can choose what works best for them.

Key vocabulary shown visually by displaying new or tricky words with visual cues and phonetic spelling.

Use of multi-sensory teaching approaches e.g. visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic activities - saying, writing, and building words.

Children given extra processing time. Pause after asking questions or giving instructions to allow thinking time before expecting responses.

Assistive technology encouraged. e.g. text-to-speech, spell-checkers, word prediction, or voice typing to reduce barriers to written expression.

Reading and writing strategies - think-aloud approaches help children to understand how skilled readers and writers process language.

Alternative ways to record learning e.g. oral responses, diagrams, mind maps, or digital recording instead of lengthy written tasks.

Use of visual organisers and scaffolds e.g. graphic organisers, sentence starters and writing frames to support planning and sequencing.

Inclusive classroom displays e.g. displays are uncluttered and purposeful – with visuals that reinforce key learning concepts.

Memory strategies taught and revisited e.g. support working memory through repetition, mnemonics, and linking new information to prior knowledge.

Understanding regularly checked by asking children to summarise or explain instructions in their own words before starting tasks.

Peer support and collaborative learning e.g. structured paired reading, group writing, or shared discussion to build confidence and reinforce learning.

Active learning approaches, hands-on, interactive tasks that engage movement and curiosity.

Spelling patterns explicitly taught. Highlight prefixes, suffixes, and root words – not just individual spellings.

A safe environment for risk-taking, encouraging mistakes as part of learning. Asking for help and revising work is the norm.

Sensory needs

Main difficulty: over or under sensitivity to sensory input, affecting focus, comfort, and regulation in everyday environments.

A calm, predictable environment with consistent routines, visual timetables and clear transitions to reduce sensory overload/anxiety.

Flexible seating options e.g. choices such as wobble cushions, standing desks, or quiet corners to help students regulate sensory needs.

Model calm regulation strategies e.g. demonstrate breathing, stretching, or grounding techniques. Use calm, measured tones.

Regular movement breaks, short, purposeful opportunities to move between or during tasks e.g. sensory circuits, calm brain.

Neutral, low-clutter displays, keeping classroom walls calm and organised, avoiding overwhelming colours or excessive decorations.

Fidget tools/sensory resources used e.g. wobble cushions, weighted items, putty, resistance bands, ear defenders.

Use natural light where possible; avoid flickering fluorescents and allow softer lighting.

Minimised sensory overload. Minimised distractions, workspaces uncluttered and sat away from high-traffic areas.

Designated calm space – a quiet area or sensory corner for self-regulation when overwhelmed.

Sensory regulation into classroom routines. Start the day or lesson with grounding activities / sensory circuits.

Prep for transitions, countdowns, timers, or verbal warnings to help children move between activities smoothly.

Self-advocacy and choice is encouraged to empower children to communicate sensory needs e.g., “I need a break”/ zones of regulation.

Controlled classroom noise levels, quiet zones and use visual noise meters.

Awareness of sensory sensitivities (smells, textures, sounds) Offer alternatives when materials may be uncomfortable to touch.

Regular check in with children, use zones of regulation - how do they feel and what helps them feel regulated.

Multi-sensory learning experiences e.g. tactile, visual, and auditory learning – supporting engagement and memory.

Calm and predictable responses to behaviour – avoiding escalation through calm, consistent feedback.

Encouragement of self-regulation skills – teaching strategies like breathing techniques or movement choices.

Social, emotional, mental health needs

Main difficulty: challenges with managing emotions, relationships, and mental wellbeing, which can impact behaviour, confidence, and learning.

Classrooms are safe, predictable environments with clear routines and consistent expectations to reduce anxiety and promote security.

Positive, trusting relationships with time to connect individually with children. g

Staff model emotional regulation, demonstrating calmness, empathy, and problem-solving when dealing with challenges or conflict.

Use of positive language focusing on what pupils can do rather than what they can't.

Emotional vocabulary taught and visual aids like emotion charts or zones of regulation is part of everyday practice.

Check-ins and check-outs at the start / end of the day with quick "temperature checks" to help pupils express how they feel.

Calm spaces or sensory areas where pupils can self-regulate safely with in their classrooms.

Self-regulation strategies are taught e.g. techniques like deep breathing, mindfulness, or grounding exercises.

Tasks are chunked and provide structure. Lessons are in manageable steps and use visuals to reduce overwhelm.

Clear, consistent instructions, repeating key points. Use of visuals.

Provide success opportunities e.g. design tasks where pupils can experience achievement and recognition, building self-esteem.

Flexible grouping allowing collaboration with supportive peers ensuring all pupils feel included.

A focus on relational, not punitive, behaviour management. Staff seek to understand behaviour as communication, not defiance.

Use restorative approaches to help pupils repair relationships and reflect on behaviour through guided conversations.

Try to identify triggers and patterns and proactively plan for transitions, tests, or social challenges that may cause distress.

Wellbeing is embedded into the curriculum e.g. topics like resilience, kindness, and coping strategies across subjects.

Close work with pastoral staff and SENDCO ensuring joined up support and early intervention.

Collaboration with parents/carers, maintaining open, non-judgmental communication, sharing successes as well as concerns.

PDA

Main difficulty: extreme anxiety-driven avoidance of everyday demands, leading to difficulties with control, compliance, and emotional regulation.

Trust and connection are a priority, building strong, respectful relationships before expecting compliance or participation.

Low-demand approach – in class to reduce unnecessary demands and reframed tasks so they feel collaborative, not authoritative.

Calm, non-confrontational communication, avoiding direct instructions where possible; use gentle suggestions or questions.

All staff model calm and empathy, demonstrating patience and understanding, especially when a child becomes anxious or resistant.

Use of indirect language. Staff phrase requests as choices or invitations e.g. “Let’s see if we can...”

Limited, genuine choices allowing the child to feel a sense of control e.g. “Would you like to write in pen or pencil?” “Would you like to put on your wellies on the chair or beanbag?”

Use of humour and playfulness to reduce tension through light-heartedness.

Visual prompts and cues used across school. Children can rely on visuals rather than repeated verbal demands to reduce pressure.

Staff tune in to possible triggers and watch for patterns e.g. transitions, unpredictability, or perceived loss of control.

Predictable environment and routines – changes handled sensitively and with advance notice where possible.

Time and space given to self-regulate. Spaces available that offer a calm/chill out or safe space for breakouts when needed.

Special interests incorporated where possible, using a child’s passions to motivate, engage and build positive relationships

Team approach / collaboration on learning tasks. Frame work as teamwork e.g. “Let’s figure this out together”.

Have flexible assessment methods allowing alternative ways to demonstrate learning e.g. drawing, speaking, using tech, etc.

Restorative and reflective conversations to talk through difficulties once the child is calm, focusing on understanding and repair.

Staff see behaviour as communication and understand that avoidance often signals anxiety, not defiance.

If needed educate peers sensitively and foster empathy and understanding among classmates and about PDA needs.

Collaboration with parents/carers – share consistent approaches and learn what works at home and school to all work together.

Dyspraxia

Main difficulty: Fine and/or gross motor coordination affecting writing, movement, and planning.

Allow extra time for tasks – give pupils more time to complete written work, change for PE, or organise materials.

Break tasks into smaller steps – provide clear, sequenced instructions and tackle one step at a time.

Provide visual aids and checklists – use diagrams, photos, or step-by-step guides to reinforce routines.

Offer alternative tools – use pencil grips, sloped writing boards, or weighted pens to support fine motor control.

Support gross motor skills – incorporate short movement breaks and exercises to build coordination and reduce fatigue.

Reduce handwriting demands – allow typing, oral responses, or use of scribe or voice-to-text software.

Accept varied presentation – focus on content rather than neatness or speed of writing.

Offer pre-printed worksheets or templates – reduce the need for copying from the board.

Teach explicit organisation skills – model how to pack bags, use folders, or plan tasks step by step.

Use consistent classroom routines – predictable structure reduces anxiety and cognitive load.

Provide visual timetables and reminders – use symbols, colour coding, or pictorial cues to support memory.

Give clear, concise instructions – avoid multi-step verbal directions; break them down or write them on the board. Check understanding.

Be patient and flexible – acknowledge that tiredness and frustration are common and adapt expectations accordingly.

Adapt PE and practical lessons – modify equipment, simplify movements, and allow practice in smaller groups.

Use discreet, supportive feedback – avoid drawing attention to difficulties in front of peers.

Use multi-sensory teaching approaches – combine visual, verbal, kinaesthetic methods (e.g. saying, seeing, doing) to strengthen understanding and memory.

Foster peer support and collaboration – pair pupils with understanding classmates for group or physical tasks.

Collaborate with support staff and parents – share consistent strategies, celebrate achievements, and ensure joined-up understanding of the child's needs.

Speech, language and communication needs

Main difficulty: Understanding and using spoken language effectively.

Speak slowly and clearly – Use short, simple sentences and pause between ideas to give processing time.

Give extra response time – Allow 5–10 seconds for the child to process and respond before repeating or rephrasing.

Reduce background noise – Seat the child in a quiet area and minimise distractions during speaking or listening tasks.

Use visual supports – Pair spoken language with pictures, symbols, or gestures to aid understanding.

Model correct language naturally – Repeat what the child says in the correct form without highlighting mistakes.

Encourage all communication attempts – Accept gestures, signs, or partial words as valid communication.

Give one instruction at a time – Break complex directions into smaller steps.

Use consistent routines and language – Predictability helps children understand and anticipate what comes next.

Use key vocabulary repeatedly – Revisit new words in different contexts to build comprehension.

Simplify questions – Ask “who,” “what,” and “where” questions before moving to “why” and “how.”

Highlight important information – Use gestures, tone, or visuals to emphasize key points.

Model and expand language – If a child says “big dog,” model “Yes, it’s a big brown dog.”

Allow alternative methods of expression – Drawing, role play, or technology can support communication.

Provide word banks or cue cards – Help children retrieve and use topic related vocabulary.

Teach turn-taking and conversation skills – Use games to practice waiting, listening, and responding.

Model social language – Demonstrate greetings, polite phrases and conversational repair strategies (“Sorry, can you say that again?”).

Encourage sentence building – Use prompts or sentence starters (“I think...”, “Because...”) to structure responses.

Work with speech and language therapists (SLTs) – Follow their strategies and use classroom resources they recommend.

Visual impairment

Main difficulty: Accessing visual materials and navigating the environment.

Provide materials in accessible formats – depending on the child's level of vision.

Give the child, parents/caers or support staff time to adapt worksheets or pre-read topics.

Read aloud what you write or show – For example, "I'm writing the word photosynthesis on the board."

Describe visual information verbally – Explain what's written on the board, shown in a video, or displayed around the room. Describe diagrams, images, and charts.

Use technology – Screen readers, magnification tools, audio books, or Braille displays can enhance access.

Allow extra time – For reading, writing, navigating resources, or moving between areas.

Simplify visual tasks – Reduce the amount of visual scanning required or adapt activities to focus on key concepts.

Keep the classroom layout consistent – Avoid rearranging furniture frequently; inform the child if changes occur.

Ensure clear, obstacle-free pathways – Remove tripping hazards such as bags or chairs in walkways.

Provide good, even lighting – Avoid glare and shadows; seat the child where lighting is optimal for their needs.

Label key areas and resources – Use tactile labels, large print, or Braille depending on the child's needs.

Seat strategically – Choose a position where the child has the best possible access to visual information and teacher support.

Avoid cluttered visual displays – Keep walls and resources clear, simple, and focused.

Use clear verbal cues in group activities – Say names before speaking ("It's your turn, Sam") instead of relying on gestures.

Encourage independence – Let the child try tasks before offering help, supporting confidence and self-reliance.

Promote peer awareness sensitively – Educate classmates about visual impairment to foster understanding and respect.

Check understanding regularly – Gently confirm that the child has accessed all relevant information.

Work with specialists and families – Collaborate with a Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (QTVI) and parents for consistent strategies.

Dyscalculia

Main difficulty: Understanding numbers, patterns, and mathematical concepts.

Use concrete materials first – Start with hands-on manipulatives (counters, cubes, bead strings) before moving to abstract numbers.

Make maths visual – Use number lines, charts, diagrams, and colour coding to support understanding.

Break tasks into small steps – Avoid overwhelming the child by teaching one concept at a time.

Allow extra processing time – Give the child time to think and respond before repeating or rephrasing.

Provide consistent, structured routines – Predictable lesson formats help with memory and focus.

Revisit and revise regularly – Build in frequent review of key number facts and methods.

Focus on understanding, not speed – Celebrate correct reasoning rather than quick answers.

Use rhythm and movement – Clapping, stepping, or chanting number patterns can support memory.

Teach strategies for estimation – Encourage “sensible guessing” to build intuition about numbers.

Highlight number relationships – Show how numbers connect (e.g., 6 is $3+3$, 2×3 , half of 12).

Use visual and auditory memory aids – Songs, rhymes, and visuals for facts (e.g., “ $4\times 4 = 16$, sweet sixteen”).

Provide cue cards or wall displays – Keep multiplication facts, number lines, and key terms visible.

Encourage verbal reasoning – Have the child explain how they got their answer, strengthening understanding.

Use spaced repetition – Revisit key facts over time rather than cramming.

Simplify mathematical language – Explain words like “difference” or “product” clearly and consistently.

Encourage peer support – Pair with patient, encouraging classmates for partner tasks.

Praise effort and progress – Recognise persistence, not just correct answers.

Link maths to real-life contexts – Use money, cooking, or measuring to make concepts meaningful.

Hearing loss

Main difficulty: Accessing spoken information and group discussions.

Seat the child close to the teacher – Preferably near the front, with a clear view of the teacher's face.

Ensure good lighting – So the child can see lips and facial expressions clearly.

Reduce background noise – Close doors/windows and use carpets or soft furnishings to dampen sound.

Avoid talking while facing away, face the child when speaking. Check visibility of your face, keep mouth clear (no covering with hands or papers) and avoid standing in shadows.

Speak clearly and at a natural pace – Don't exaggerate lip movements or shout.

Get the child's attention before speaking – Use their name or a gentle signal to ensure they are looking at you.

Use visual cues and gestures – Pair spoken language with written words, pictures, or signs.

Repeat or rephrase when needed – If the child doesn't understand, reword instead of just repeating.

Confirm understanding – Ask the child to explain back key instructions to ensure they heard correctly.

Use visual supports – Pictures, diagrams, and subtitles (where possible) reinforce understanding.

Summarise key points – Give short recaps after discussions or lessons.

Avoid giving important information while walking around – Stay in one position when giving instructions.

Promote confidence and self-advocacy – Encourage the child to say when they haven't heard or need repetition.

Be mindful during group discussions – Encourage one speaker at a time; use a visual cue (like a "talking stick").

Support social interaction – Facilitate small-group work where background noise is minimal.

Encourage peer understanding – Teach classmates about hearing differences in a positive, inclusive way.

Use hearing technology effectively – Ensure hearing aids, cochlear implants, or radio aids are working and used correctly.

Collaborate with a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) – Follow specialist advice and adapt resources accordingly.