

## SEN/D Code of Practice – Quality First Teaching

*High expectations for all Challenge for all Achievement for all*



# Top Tips Booklet

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## Communication and Interaction Top Tips Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have Autism Spectrum Disorder may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Where possible, keep belongings and areas separate and labelled – the more organised and less cluttered the classroom (including displays), the better.
- ✓ You may need to give the student additional reminders regarding equipment, homework, etc.
- ✓ Try to position the student away from windows, doors, heaters and ‘busy’ displays, as they may be distracted by the minor background noise and visuals that most people filter out.
- ✓ The student may benefit from working on their own at times, and may need to step out for a minute or two to relax, as the demands of social interaction can be stressful.
- ✓ If there are significant behaviour issues (some students are not motivated by praise and do not have a desire to please), use one or more of the following:
  - linked to clear expectations and targets – apply the term ‘finished’ and time limits
  - a traffic light or problem card, to enable the student to communicate their feelings
- ✓ Give the student opportunities to be responsible (e.g. regular class job).
- ✓ Be consistent; stick to well-defined and predictable routines as much as possible, but also allow for flexibility. Tell the student if there is a major change to the routine before it happens.
- ✓ Try to augment spoken language with visual cues – pictures, real objects, etc.
- ✓ For work, tell the student what you expect; be explicit in terms of each part that needs to be completed, e.g. how many questions, how many sentences, how much writing, etc.
- ✓ Provide tasks with clear visual structures to support chunking the work as well as clear direction on ‘what to do next’, e.g. a visual ‘to do’ list, including the task’s estimated time.
- ✓ Model and prompt appropriate social behaviour – this can be quite explicit or very subtle.
- ✓ Avoid overloads of verbal information. If there is a lot of verbal information, simplify it verbally (afterwards) or in writing, as part of your differentiation.
- ✓ Remember that student is not likely to understand metaphors and idioms. They will tend to take everything literally. Sometimes it is necessary to clarify what you or other people mean.
- ✓ Visual timetables, schedules and prompts can help the student to understand and cope with small events and changes within lessons.
- ✓ Be aware that facial expressions and gestures may be misinterpreted – sometimes you need to state how you or someone else is feeling. Other people will have thoughts and feelings that are different from their own – this sometimes needs to be explained.
- ✓ Before you speak, use the student’s name (sometimes the full name is necessary) as often as possible when addressing whole class. They may not pay attention otherwise.
- ✓ Choose work partners/buddies carefully!
- ✓ Each lesson must be a fresh slate – “forget about last lesson – this is a new opportunity”.
- ✓ Avoid prolonged or disproportionate punishments.
- ✓ Break down aspects of work into smaller units to identify areas that they can achieve in.
- ✓ Look for ways to provide tangible evidence of their successes, even if small.
- ✓ Recognise small achievements. Use positive reinforcement and feedback. Remind the student of something they did well in a recent lesson, even if this was something small.
- ✓ Outside of class, share your experiences, concerns and stresses with a trusted colleague.



## Communication and Interaction Top Tips

### Students with speech, language and/or communication needs

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have a speech, language and communication needs may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- ! For tests and controlled assessments, provide 25% extra time.
- 📖 If the student is listed as a netbook user and they are about to undertake a substantial writing task, please send them to collect a netbook.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Pre-teach and then keep reinforcing new vocabulary – this is really important!
- ✓ Know how the student feels about reading aloud in class (it may or may not be an issue).
- ✓ Seat the student with a clear view of you and the board at all times.
- ✓ Ensure that you have the student's attention and that you are making eye contact with them.
- ✓ If necessary, speak more slowly and clearly.
- ✓ Facilitate overlearning: this is repeated practice and revision (above the normal level).
- ✓ Place the student in as small a group as possible for class discussions and group work.
- ✓ Keep language simple and familiar. Avoid any language that is likely to confuse the issues.
- ✓ Avoid long stretches of talk but say things more than once (rephrasing and simplifying), and ask for instructions to be repeated to ensure the student has understood.
- ✓ Try to explain the purpose of the task you want the student to perform, as the student is likely to respond better to the whole concept.
- ✓ Use short, specific language and lists of instructions. For example, ask the student to "put the textbook back" and then "put your pens in your pencil case", instead of saying "tidy up".
- ✓ Give group instructions to the student first, so that they can focus on what is required rather than listening to everyone's instructions.
- ✓ Use the chunking method – this involves putting information into small bits and then chunks.
- ✓ Use visual prompts to reinforce spoken words.
- ✓ Give the student time to think of a response – never answer for them. Encourage peers to wait for a response too where this is appropriate. It may also help to say "I will ask you this question and then I will come back to you in a moment for your answer".
- ✓ Keep reinforcing the link between new concepts and those previously learnt.
- ✓ Model back a correct response: e.g. "I bringed ..."; adult responds "yes, you *brought* ..."
- ✓ Remind the student to ask questions when they do not understand.
- ✓ Identify and teach subject specific vocabulary. Link vocabulary to concrete objects, photographs, pictures or symbols first.
- ✓ Use task cards and other written prompts and frames.
- ✓ Use verbal 'rehearsing' strategies (self-talk and 'thinking aloud') while processing as they read, problem-solving or sequencing and planning a response to an activity.
- ✓ Try to avoid closed questions that allow the student to say just "yes" or "no".
- ✓ Allow extra time to complete tasks, to allow for delays in processing.
- ✓ Facilitate overlearning: this is repeated practice and revision (above the normal level).
- ✓ Enable the student to use highlighter pens to highlight key points.
- ✓ Try to include some opportunities to rest/break in between learning sessions, for very short periods of time. Concentrating for an entire hour can be exhausting!



## Cognition and Learning Top Tips

### Students with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- ! For tests and controlled assessments:
  - provide 25% extra time
  - provide a netbook if the student has significant handwriting difficulties
  - ask a TA to scribe – this should only be provided in exceptional circumstances and where a netbook is not appropriate
- 📁 If the student is listed as a netbook user and they are about to undertake a substantial writing task, please send them to collect a netbook.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Pre-teach and then keep reinforcing new vocabulary – this is really important! You can also supply lists of key words that are subject/topic-specific. This may extend beyond one lesson, used as a reference (perhaps at the back of the student's book) throughout a topic.
- ✓ Know how the student feels about reading aloud in class (it may or may not be an issue).
- ✓ Use multi-sensory methods (e.g. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic) as often as possible.
- ✓ Allow the student to use pictures/symbols to help them express their understanding.
- ✓ Facilitate overlearning: this is repeated practice and revision (above the normal level).
- ✓ Try mnemonics – using the initial letters of words – to help the student recall a sequence.
- ✓ Use the chunking method – this involves putting information into small bits and then chunks.
- ✓ Use or encourage the student's use of mind maps. These can help reinforce the connections that need to be made between key points. They can also support recording and sorting.
- ✓ Ask the student to repeat aloud what has to be remembered or planned.
- ✓ Use verbal 'rehearsing' strategies (self-talk and 'thinking aloud') while processing as they read, problem-solving or sequencing and planning a response to an activity.
- ✓ Provide pre-written notes and/or save any whiteboard presentations and/or place them on Google.
- ✓ Use colour-coding in your presentation of materials. Pictures can also help.
- ✓ Use less information on the page, with appropriate size of print and font.
- ✓ Take care to present information – and to allow the student to present their work – in different ways: include diagrams, key headings, visual cues, arrow/flow charts, mind maps, etc.
- ✓ Give additional time to absorb information, gather materials and complete work.
- ✓ Sometimes you may need to restructure language, making it shorter, simpler and precise.
- ✓ Consider the amount of talking time, avoid dictation and frequently recap key information.
- ✓ Give prompts (verbal and written) to aid comprehension and recall, e.g. prompt cards/frames.
- ✓ Repeat and rephrase questions when necessary.
- ✓ Check that the student has understood. Remind them to ask questions when they do not understand.
- ✓ Use writing/response frames to help the student organise their thinking.
- ✓ With reading work, try PQRS: 1. Preview → 2. Question → 3. Read → 4. Summarise.
- ✓ Encourage the student to use a highlighter or adhesive tabs to highlight key points/sections.
- ✓ Use post-it notes or cards for sequencing information that may need to be re-arranged.
- ✓ Encourage the student to use metacognition strategies (thinking about their own thinking processes and learning styles), including questions such as: *how will I remember this?; what was easy/difficult?; how did I/will I do this?; and is there a quicker/easier way?*



## Social, Emotional and Mental Health Top Tips Students with anxiety, low mood, social and behavioural difficulties

Under the **SEN/D Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have a social, emotional and mental health needs (including anxiety, low mood and behavioural difficulties) may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Set a consistently positive ethos in your classroom from the outset. Establish a welcoming atmosphere via 'meeting and greeting' and settling the student at the earliest opportunity.
- ✓ Be personable. Show an interest in the student – this might be by briefing referring to a topic of interest or something else that is specific to that student's life. Use humour too!
- ✓ Take the time to answer any questions the student may have, or reassure them.
- ✓ Break down aspects of work into smaller units to identify areas that they can achieve in.
- ✓ Consider using preferential seating – talk to the student about what will work best for them.
- ✓ Allow short breaks and/or provide extra time when required. This needs to be discrete.
- ✓ Make sure that your voice is at the volume and intonation you expect from the student – avoid shouting. A loud/aggressive voice may result in a similar, or withdrawn, response.
- ✓ To speak with a student individually, avoid being public – move in, without invading the student's personal space.
- ✓ Once you have spoken to the student, move away, expecting compliance. This enables the student to make a good choice without losing face.
- ✓ Use visual rule reminders (written and illustrated, e.g. posters, symbols on the board, etc.).
- ✓ Say "thanks" after an instruction, rather than please.
- ✓ Simply stand near the off-task student to prompt them to self-regulate their behaviour.
- ✓ Rather than giving random praise or telling off, spot the off-task student and make sure you praise the student nearby who is on task and complying. They are modelling the right behaviour for learning.
- ✓ Don't be verbally misled by an arguing or disengaged student. Refocus them on the issue by using a statement of understanding, e.g. "Yes, I see, but that is not the point; you need to..."
- ✓ Pair the student with a positive role model wherever possible.
- ✓ Identify any changes to routine well in advance.
- ✓ Find opportunities to show the student that you trust them (even if it feels like a bit of a risk).
- ✓ Give the student opportunities to be responsible (e.g. regular class job).
- ✓ Recognise small achievements and refer to previous lessons. Use positive reinforcement and feedback, as well as any tangible evidence of their successes.
- ✓ Whatever you're doing, be explicitly fair, equal, balanced and consistent in your approach.
- ✓ Each lesson must be a fresh slate – e.g. "forget about last lesson – this is a new opportunity".
- ✓ If there is a problem that needs to be addressed, be patient and show that you are actively listening to the student. Be clear about the steps you are going to take to resolve the problem. Be clear about when you are available outside of class – or which other staff might help.
- ✓ Be open and honest if you've made a mistake or a rash decision in the heat of the moment.
- ✓ Avoid snap judgements. Avoid prolonged sanctions too, however you can – close it quickly.
- ✓ Outside of class, share your experiences, concerns and stresses with a trusted colleague.



## **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Top Tips**

### ***Extra:* Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder may include some of the following strategies:

- ! **Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.**
- ✓ Use multi-sensory methods (e.g. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic) as often as possible.
- ✓ Ensure that distracting items are kept away from the student from the beginning of the lesson.
- ✓ When possible, incorporate structured opportunities for movement/activity to release excess energy; this could be as simple as the student being given an active 'job' or allowing them some short 'walk about' time (this could be combined with a work-related discussion).
- ✓ Have the student seated nearest to the place in the class where you will teach most often. Seat them as close as possible without it looking punitive. Pair with a responsible student.
- ✓ Do not place the student at the back of the classroom, near windows or doors.
- ✓ Ask the student if the seating plan will work for them.
- ✓ Where possible, find ways to give the student shorter quizzes and avoid long tests.
- ✓ Have the student think 'out loud' when they are problem-solving – this will provide insights into their reasoning style and will also slow them down, before they respond impulsively.
- ✓ Encourage the student to practice 'stopping and thinking' before they respond in a class or group discussion/activity. Encourage them to wait about five seconds before responding.
- ✓ Break down aspects of work into smaller units to identify areas that they can achieve in.
- ✓ Remind the student to check their work.
- ✓ When the student is off-task, either tactically ignore them or redirect them back to the work.
- ✓ Don't confront the student on each little thing.
- ✓ Recognise small achievements. Take time to catch the student being on task and working hard. As soon as the student is on-task, reward this behaviour with a smile or comment.
- ✓ Give 'hands on' tasks as often as possible.
- ✓ Break long tasks into a series of shorter 'sprints' – this involves the same amount of work but is organized differently so that the student can work with focus, rest for a few seconds and see how they did, then work again.
- ✓ Ask the student how long they think it will take them to perform a certain task. Let the student then set their own time. They will then have a motivating measure in place.
- ✓ Stress accuracy and mastery instead of quantity of work.
- ✓ Combine your verbal instructions with illustrations or demonstrations.
- ✓ Give instructions one step at a time.
- ✓ Encourage the student to keep their desk clutter-free, as they may be disorganised.
- ✓ Repeat and rephrase questions when necessary.
- ✓ Check that the student has understood – you need to do this more often.
- ✓ Each lesson must be a fresh slate – "forget about last lesson – this is a new opportunity".
- ✓ Avoid prolonged or disproportionate sanctions. Close it as soon as possible.
- ✓ Look for ways to provide tangible evidence of their successes, even if small.
- ✓ Remind the student of something they did well in a recent lesson – even something small.
- ✓ Outside of class, share your experiences, concerns and stresses with a trusted colleague.



## **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Top Tips**

### ***Extra: Students with Anxiety***

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have anxiety may include some of the following strategies:

**Most common ‘social’ anxieties that are associated with a fear that, in public, they will (1) make a mistake, then (2) be exposed to peer scrutiny and then (3) be rejected by their peers:**

***“Performing in front of people”***

***“Doing a presentation in front of the class”***

***“The teacher picking me to answer a question (when I have not put my hand up)”***

- ✓ Talk 1:1 with the student about how they could still participate, but in a modified way (this still might make them uncomfortable but to a tolerable point – try to not to indulge complete avoidance).
- ✓ Once an agreed strategy is in place, promise them – face-to-face – that you will stick to this.

***“A teacher calling my name in assembly and asking me to come up to the front in front of everyone”***

- ✓ If necessary, simply promise them that you will not do this (this also applies to the classroom).

***“If I had to change seats to sit next to some people I’m not close with/don’t know well”***

***“Other students in the class messing about”***

- ✓ Ask the student if the seating plan will work for them. Keep them away from more challenging peers.

**Most common ‘general’ anxieties that are associated with fears related to failure, not meeting expectations and being admonished:**

***“A strict teacher who I think might get cross”***

- ✓ Go out of your way to smile and be welcoming and friendly, face-to-face and on an individual level, to the student, especially at the beginning of the lesson. If you see them around the school, do the same.
- ✓ It might be necessary to say, in a very straight-forward way, a comment directly to them that reinforces that they will not be getting in trouble, e.g. “You are a well-behaved, hard-working student. I am not going to be getting cross with you.”
- ✓ Look for opportunities to praise them during lessons.

***“A strict teacher who I know sometimes punishes the whole class/group, even if some people did nothing wrong”***

- ✓ Completely avoid sanctioning the whole class/group. If you do, speak with the anxious student directly to re-assure them and be clear, before, during and/or afterwards. End on a good note with them.

***“Sitting in the same area as people who do not get enough work done and who might stop me from finishing my work”***

- ✓ Ask the student if the seating plan will work for them. Placing them as far away as possible from students who may be poor work partners is best.

***“Homework being set online – I might miss something”***

- ✓ Be clear, verbally and on the board, about what the homework is and when it is due – avoid just saying “look at your homework”. Remind the student that they can ask you about the homework also.

***“Homework that doesn’t have ‘right/wrong’ answers (e.g. a research project, unlike a list of maths questions or a list of spellings to learn)”***

***“A test that is coming up”***

- ✓ Break the homework or test preparation down into smaller tasks, ‘to do’ lists etc.
- ✓ Remind the student that they can see you – and/or check in with them to see how they’re progressing.
- ✓ Advise the student to complete an early draft or go offer to go through practice, so that they can show it to you and you can give them advice before submission of a best/final copy or before the test happens.



## Sensory and Physical Difficulties Top Tips Students with a hearing impairment

Under the **SEN/D Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have hearing impairments may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Avoid seating the student near the window or door. Try to eliminate background noises as much as possible and think generally about noise sources in the classroom.
- ✓ Sit the student close to, and facing, the board. They should not have to twist around in their seat to see you or the information on the board. Consider also whether the hearing loss is worse in one ear; if so then the better ear should be closest.
- ✓ Get the attention of the student before speaking and always face the student.
- ✓ Remember that facial expressions, gestures, and other body language are all helpful.
- ✓ Speak naturally and clearly. Do not exaggerate your lip movements or shout.
- ✓ Use or emphasise visual aids/prompts, as vision is the student's primary means of receiving information. Present only one source of visual information at a time.
- ✓ Try not talk while writing on the whiteboard (i.e. with your back turned). If you do, read back what you have written.
- ✓ Check that the student has understood.
- ✓ Try not to move around too much while addressing the whole class.
- ✓ Clearly identify who is speaking or asking a question (pointing is OK).
- ✓ Call the student by name to initiate communication, or use a nod or a hand gesture.
- ✓ In group situations or discussions which include the student who is lip reading, it is very helpful to have students sit in a horseshoe or circle.
- ✓ Paraphrase the contributions of other class members if necessary.
- ✓ Reduce difficult vocabulary load, or provide a keyword reference.
- ✓ For a new term, repeat the word numerous times in a variety of contexts.
- ✓ Avoid standing in front of windows or light sources that may silhouette you (where the light is not on your face) and hinder visual cues.
- ✓ Keep your hands away from your face when speaking.
- ✓ If the student does not understand, try repeating. If the student still does not understand, rephrase or use a different word order.
- ✓ Do not expect the student to be able to simultaneously lip read/concentrate and take notes at the same time!
- ✓ Use captioned/sub-titled films and clips when appropriate
- ✓ As you demonstrate a procedure or technique, try to alternate between speaking and demonstrating. This allows the student to look at one thing at a time.
- ✓ Maximize the use of visual media and demonstrations.
- ✓ Wait until the room is quiet before speaking.
- ✓ Check for understanding by using open-ended questions.
- ✓ Use displays around the classroom to aid language development.
- ✓ Expect and encourage the student to participate in class by answering questions, giving reports, and volunteering for other verbal activities.
- ✓ Give the student additional time to respond to questions.





## Sensory and Physical Difficulties Top Tips Students with a physical disability

Under the **SEN/D Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have a physical disability may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student is listed as a netbook user and they are about to undertake a substantial writing task, please send them to collect a netbook.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Ensure that any dangers or barriers to inclusion are eliminated or reduced as much as possible. Consult the student whenever you anticipate that an activity may be difficult for them.
- ✓ Ensure that any class aids and modifications to the room are implemented at all times.
- ✓ Encourage and explicitly expect independence as much as possible, even if TA support is available.
- ✓ Provide alternative methods of recording if the disability makes it difficult for them to write.
- ✓ Consider where the student is seated – what is the best place for them to sit?
- ✓ Where possible, keep belongings and areas separate and labelled – the more organised and less cluttered the classroom (including displays), the better.
- ✓ The demands of 'keeping up' may be difficult and stressful. The student may therefore benefit from working on their own at times, some extra time and/or may need to step out for a minute or two to relax.
- ✓ Give the student opportunities to be responsible (e.g. regular class job) and to lead others.
- ✓ Organise for the student to have a regular work partner/buddy who can assist with any difficulties and also alert you to any potential problems.
- ✓ If necessary in your subject area, as you demonstrate a procedure or technique, try to demonstrate how the student will be able to carry out the task in a modified way.



## Sensory and Physical Difficulties Top Tips Students with a visual impairment

Under the **SEND Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have a visual impairment may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student is listed as a netbook user and they are about to undertake a substantial writing task, please send them to collect a netbook.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Consider very carefully where the student is sitting in the classroom; they need to be in the best position to see the whiteboard.
- ✓ Avoid standing near or in front of a window; it can reduce you to a silhouette and make it difficult for the student to see you properly.
- ✓ Speak clearly as you write on the whiteboard, facing the student.
- ✓ When providing the student with worksheets and texts, please note the following tips:
  - consider whether large print texts/enlarged copies and/or magnifiers are required
  - consider print size (at least 14), font type and contrast
  - use a clear font such as Helvetica, Arial, Tahoma or Tiresias and avoid using mixed font types
  - avoid light or curved fonts such as italics
  - do not use upper case letters for continuous text
  - justify text spacing between letters, words, lines and illustration
  - leave space before and after paragraphs and illustrations
  - if the pupil has to write on the resource, allow extra handwriting space
  - avoid glossy paper as this can cause glare
  - keep the page design clear and uncluttered
  - avoid coloured print and backgrounds if possible or make the contrast strong
  - avoid putting text over illustrations
- ✓ Use place markers to help with scanning
- ✓ Talking book versions of set texts can reduce fatigue.
- ✓ Working with a partner can help with location of material on the page.
- ✓ Any work based on maps and graphs may have to be adapted.
- ✓ Be prepared to accept less accuracy in written work and in measurement.
- ✓ Provide individual copies of anything presented on the whiteboard if needed.
- ✓ Avoid cursive script and using coloured pens on the whiteboard that are running out of ink!
- ✓ Where lesson materials are electronic, print them out and in a larger size.
- ✓ Provide electronic copies of resources so they can put them into their preferred format themselves, using generic or pre-set functions in their own computers.
- ✓ Allow students to submit written work electronically wherever possible.
- ✓ Give extra time if needed to process information and complete tasks.
- ✓ It is helpful to check that pupils are familiar with a concept before asking them to do work related to it, as the student may not have access to 'incidental' visual learning.
- ✓ The student may have difficulties with skimming and scanning to find information on a page. Their reading can be slower and they may tire easily. It is therefore often useful to allow the student to take materials home to read before they are used in lessons so that they can take part in activities, rather than spending their time trying to read the material.
- ✓ Ensure that the student has written all homework down correctly.
- ✓ Never expect the student to share books or sheets!



## Cognition and Learning Top Tips

### Students with signs of dyscalculia and significant general difficulties in Mathematics

Under the **SEN/D Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who have signs of dyscalculia (and significant general difficulties in Mathematics) may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Give the student explicit instructions in strategy and then support their practice.
- ✓ Link mathematics to familiar and relevant (practical) contexts. Use as many real life situations to make the maths meaningful to the student.
- ✓ Get the student to visualise maths problems.
- ✓ Use concrete resources – a variety of objects, images and models is best.
- ✓ Ask the student to read out loud the maths problem or to listen very carefully to a problem that is read out loud.
- ✓ Avoid moving the student onto higher-level tasks before easier levels have been fully understood.
- ✓ Encourage the student to discuss and explain in order to support the development of their mathematical reasoning. Allow them to show their way of working out and validate their thinking process.
- ✓ Be on the lookout for misconceptions that may hinder progress and deal with them explicitly.
- ✓ Encourage the student to make choices about the methods they have used.
- ✓ Use peer tutoring – a peer can often explain in terms more readily accessible to a classmate.
- ✓ Support accurate recording by providing squared paper or prepared formats.
- ✓ Where applicable, establish a routine of 'estimate – calculate – check'.
- ✓ Display maths terms and symbols on the walls, via laminate table prompts and personal prompts/reminders (in books or work folders), using particular colours for different operations, e.g. all blue for subtraction.
- ✓ Take additional time to explain vocabulary and check understanding.
- ✓ Use number squares with alternate rows shaded for ease of use.
- ✓ Incorporate chants, e.g. maths raps (this can include videos on You Tube, for example).
- ✓ Use small numbers to introduce new concepts.
- ✓ Provide extra time for practice and consolidation at each stage.
- ✓ Encourage the student to develop a whole picture of the problem; it may help to ask the student, using a mini-whiteboard or drawing pad, to draw the problem for you.
- ✓ Encourage additional maths work at home via suitable games websites and games such as Monopoly. If possible, try and incorporate some games and competitions involving numbers into some of your lessons.



## Cognition and Learning Top Tips

### Students who are learning English as an additional language

Even though this is an Additional Educational Need and not under the SEN/D Code of Practice, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who are learning English as an Additional Language is vital. It may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Don't be discouraged if the student does not want to speak much for a while – it is not unusual to go through a 'silent period'. Concentrate first on building relationships with peers and looking for ways to enhance their inclusion in class/group discussions and activities.
- ✓ Ensure that the student does tasks and activities that are age and ability appropriate.
- ✓ Group the student with peers who provide good language role models, wherever possible.
- ✓ Plan for rehearsed talk via role play, talk partners (paired discussion), collaborative group tasks and guided talk activities. This will give them plenty of opportunities to practise speaking (building their fluency) so that they can build new language meaningfully and move towards the additional demands of writing.
- ✓ Check that the student has understood what you have said (they may have developed strategies for appearing to understand by copying others).
- ✓ Speak to them as they work, commenting on what they are doing and giving them the words they need in context. You can also ask partnered students to do this if appropriate.
- ✓ Use plenty of visuals to differentiate work – familiar/universal symbols, pictures, photographs, video, diagrams, flash cards, picture dictionaries, tables, timelines, flow charts, artefacts and objects (providing first-hand experience).
- ✓ Pre-teach key vocabulary.
- ✓ Provide short vocabulary lists for single lessons or a glossary for a unit of work (which the student can add to themselves); a symbol/picture alongside each key word will be effective. If possible, it may be appropriate for the student to use a bilingual dictionary (hard copy best but the internet also has this function) and/or Google Translate when using a computer.
- ✓ Sometimes (particularly at EAL steps 1-3), it is appropriate to allow the student to write in their first language first, which shows also that their first language is valued.
- ✓ Display key words and phrases around the classroom.
- ✓ Some short verbal responses may be dictated to a 'scribe' on some occasions, although if this is done it should be to enable a pupil to move forward with the next learning block.
- ✓ Reinforce and test key words during starters and plenaries.
- ✓ Written work needs to be differentiated. The following are examples:
  - cloze procedures (filling gaps in sentences)
  - matching sentences or paragraphs to a sequence or set of pictures
  - matching halves of different sentences
  - sequencing sentences to produce a piece of text
  - providing word cards, which they use to construct sentences
  - re-writing sentences by changing underlined words
  - collaborative writing exercises, providing the student has a meaningful role
  - provision of writing frames
  - expect/prepare shorter pieces of writing than their peers



## Cognition and Learning Top Tips Students who are less academically able

Under the **SEN/D Code of Practice**, as part of your responsibilities as a teacher of students with SEN/D, the planning, preparation and delivery of **Quality First Teaching** for students who are less academically able may include some of the following strategies:

- ! Ensure that any sanctions for inadequate work or poor behaviour are only put in place after implementing all necessary differentiation.
- 📖 If the student is listed as a netbook user and they are about to undertake a substantial writing task, please send them to collect a netbook.
- 📖 If the student can be trusted with their work book and they can complete their work to a higher standard if given extra time, allow them to take the work out of class to complete after school (e.g. in a supervised classroom, Study Club or at home), for return in the next lesson.
- ✓ Pre-teach and then keep reinforcing new vocabulary – this is really important!
- ✓ Know how the student feels about reading aloud in class (it may or may not be an issue).
- ✓ Lessons should start with an immediate, and achievable, activity.
- ✓ Consider what interests and motivates the student and try to incorporate these interests into lessons as often as possible. Incorporate games and competitions into some activities.
- ✓ Keep language simple and familiar. Avoid any language that is likely to confuse the issues.
- ✓ Keep instructions short and concise, and say things more than once. Minimise the number of key points the student has to remember.
- ✓ Ask for instructions to be repeated to ensure the student has understood.
- ✓ Ensure that learning activities are broken down into small steps and are clearly focused.
- ✓ Simplify, differentiate or abbreviate class tasks.
- ✓ Break the class into 'mini' classes that do a rota of activities.
- ✓ Provide a multisensory approach to learning – this includes visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (practical and concrete) activities.
- ✓ Provide alternative methods of recording, e.g. labelled pictures, diagrams, flow charts.
- ✓ Allow extra time to complete a task.
- ✓ Ensure that each small achievement is recognised.
- ✓ Organise activities to develop listening and attention skills.
- ✓ Practise a range of sequencing activities, e.g. pictorial activity or story sequences, word and sentence sequences.
- ✓ Make use of role play and drama activities where possible.
- ✓ Encourage the student to consider using simple cue cards, e.g. when giving presentations.
- ✓ Provide explicit, logical links using different colours, cue lines, diagrams and known symbols when appropriate. Colour-code your interactive whiteboard/whiteboard presentations.
- ✓ Relate text to illustrations, photographs and video clips. Model meanings or concepts in drawings or diagrams.
- ✓ Use display references in the room as regular prompts and reinforcements.
- ✓ Provide regular opportunities to talk about/through their work as they progress through the lesson – it is useful to verbally rehearse before writing.
- ✓ Help the student organise their written work by using writing frames and prompt sheets.
- ✓ Written work needs to be differentiated. Try, for example: cloze procedures (filling gaps in sentences); matching sentences or paragraphs to a sequence or set of pictures; matching halves of different sentences; sequencing sentences to produce a piece of text; providing word cards, which they use to construct sentences; writing sentences using choice tables, where there are a number of possible responses to choose from to complete a sentence; re-writing sentences by changing underlined words; and collaborative writing exercises (providing the student has a meaningful role).
- ✓ Make use of mini-whiteboards – students often have a better attitude about these than recording in their books or on paper all the time.