



## Strategies for supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Music lessons

Individual Need	Here's how we help everyone shine...
<b>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the child's need for physical activity and plan Music lessons with a range of movement and hands-on learning activities.</li> <li>• Help children to manage their arousal levels, but allow children 'time out' when they show they are in need of a break from the lesson.</li> <li>• Allow children time to 'let out' their impulsiveness when handling new instruments – these may be introduced prior to the lesson so that they become familiar.</li> <li>• A 'stress ball' or other fiddle object agreed by the SENCO may help children concentrate and stop them using musical instruments inappropriately during a lesson.</li> <li>• Reward children for joining in and completing tasks – both individually and as part of a group.</li> </ul>
<b>Anxiety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit the child where they feel most comfortable.</li> <li>• Let the child know who is there to support them. This may be particular friend, group of friends or an adult.</li> <li>• Be aware that anxious children may not have the confidence to perform in front of others.</li> <li>• Learn to spot a child's triggers and what the child looks like in a heightened state of anxiety.</li> </ul>
<b>Autism Spectrum Disorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep daily routines (e.g. seating plans) as normal as possible and consult the child beforehand if there is going to be a change. Give the child options from which to choose.</li> <li>• Allow time to process information, and don't put the child on the spot by asking questions publicly, unless you know they are comfortable with this.</li> <li>• Be aware that a child with autism is likely to experience sensory processing difficulties where they may be either over-responsive or under-responsive to sensory stimuli e.g. singing or noises/sounds from instruments.</li> <li>• Allow children to have planned and unplanned sensory breaks or use fiddle toys that won't disrupt other children when necessary.</li> <li>• Pupils may struggle to work in a group and prefer to work on their own due to communication difficulties.</li> <li>• Prepare the child for what is coming – picture cues and discussing what the lesson will be like is helpful.</li> <li>• Provide ear defenders for those children who may be sensitive to the noise of singing or instruments.</li> </ul>
<b>Dyscalculia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace passive teaching methods with experiential</li> </ul>

	<p>learning for children – ‘doing’ will bring more interaction and success than just ‘watching’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow children to demonstrate and teach others what they can do.</li> </ul>
<b>Dyslexia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastel shades of paper and backgrounds will reduce ‘glare’ when reading music or following musical notations.</li> <li>• Use large font sizes and double line spacing where appropriate.</li> <li>• Avoid ‘cluttered’ backgrounds with unnecessary images.</li> <li>• Colour code text or musical phrases – e.g. one colour for me to play/sing, another colour for my partner.</li> </ul>
<b>Dyspraxia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure children have a large enough space to work in.</li> <li>• Allow children extra time to practise, with movement breaks where needed.</li> <li>• Don’t choose these children to go first – they may need to pick up on cues from other children in order to process how to do something correctly.</li> <li>• Pair children with a sensitive partner who knows what they’re doing.</li> <li>• Clearly demonstrate how to handle equipment, and don’t draw attention to awkward movements.</li> </ul>
<b>Hearing Impairment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to the lesson, ask the child where they’d prefer to sit.</li> <li>• If they have hearing loss in only one ear, make sure they have their ‘good ear’ facing the teacher where applicable.</li> <li>• Discreetly check if the child is wearing their hearing aid.</li> <li>• Clearly demonstrate or play sounds that are loud enough to hear. Repeat any questions asked by other students in the class before giving a response, as a hearing-impaired child may not have heard them.</li> <li>• Remove all barriers to lip-reading. Make sure the child can clearly see the teacher. Do not stand in front of windows or light sources.</li> <li>• Share the lesson using a laptop with headphones or other assistive technology e.g. radio aid.</li> <li>• Provide lists of subject-specific vocabulary or song lyrics. This could be before the lesson to allow for pre-teaching.</li> </ul>
<b>Toileting Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit children close to the door so they may leave the room discreetly to go to the toilet and not draw attention to themselves. Use toilet passes or prior permission.</li> <li>• Be aware that anxiety associated with public music performances may trigger pain or a need to go to the toilet.</li> <li>• When a school trip or concert is coming up, talk to the child and parents about specific needs and how they can be met.</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition and Learning Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work will be carefully planned and differentiated, and broken down into small, manageable tasks.</li> <li>• Use picture cards and visual prompts to remind them</li> </ul>

	<p>what to do and keep children on track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically demonstrate what to do rather than just relying on verbal instructions. Use visuals and speak slowly.</li> <li>• Avoid children becoming confused by giving too many instructions at once. Keep instructions simple and give specific, targeted praise so children know exactly what they are doing well.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Speech, Language &amp; Communication Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of the level of language that children are using, and use a similar level when teaching to ensure understanding.</li> <li>• Use signs, symbols and visual representations to help children's understanding and ability to follow a piece of music with different notes or instruments.</li> <li>• Respond positively to any attempts pupils make at communication – not just speech.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to communicate in a small group and be fully involved in the activity.</li> <li>• Use non-verbal clues to back-up what is being said e.g. gestures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tourette Syndrome</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware that tics can be triggered by increased stress, excitement or relaxation – all of which may be brought on by music.</li> <li>• Ignore tics and filter out any emotional reaction to them. Instead, listen and respond with support and understanding.</li> <li>• Manage other children in the room to avoid sarcasm, bullying or negative attention being drawn to a pupil's tic.</li> <li>• Avoid asking a child <i>not</i> to do something, otherwise it may quickly become their compulsion. Instead, re-demonstrate how to do something correctly.</li> <li>• Be sensitive to how noises/music affect a pupil's sensory processing capabilities. Find out what does and does not lead to a positive response and work with these in mind.</li> <li>• Provide ear defenders for those children who may be sensitive to the noise of singing or instruments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experienced Trauma</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand behaviour in the context of the individual's past experiences.</li> <li>• Always use a non-confrontational, trauma informed approach that shows understanding and reassurance, using playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy (PACE).</li> <li>• Actively ignore negative behaviour. Praise good behaviour and reward learning.</li> <li>• Incorporate opportunities for humour and laughter in Music lessons (laughter reduces the traumatic response in the brain).</li> <li>• Adults to support and coach traumatised children in ways to calm themselves and manage their own emotions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow children the use of a pre-agreed breakout space when something in the classroom triggers an emotional outburst.</li></ul>
<b>Visual Impairment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sit children where they have the best view of the teacher and the board/resources.</li><li>• To help children who are sensitive to light and glare, use window blinds and screen-brightness controls to regulate the light in the room.</li><li>• Add more light to an area if necessary.</li><li>• Children may benefit from high-contrast objects and pictures.</li><li>• Ensure children wear their prescribed glasses.</li><li>• When using instruments, describe them as they are being used in terms of the material they are made from and what they look like.</li><li>• Children could have access to the instruments before the lesson so that they become familiar with them through touch first.</li></ul>