



Inclusive Classrooms for Autistic Children.

Bendigo Autistic Advocacy and Support Service

Support, consultancy & advocacy in promoting inclusion and acceptance in all environments.



1 Listening & learning can look different

Remember that listening for many autistic students and others, may look different. Eye contact can be counterproductive. Asking for eye contact can reduce ability to listen and learn.

Many autistic students and others need to fidget, move and/ or adopt different positions in order to listen optimally and learn meaningfully.

Offer genuine flexibility and adapt your expectations to incorporate different learning styles and needs.



2 Behavior charts harm

Various methods of 'behaviour management' such as name lists, reward charts, stoplight and peg systems are harmful for many children.

These methods demotivate and cause phenomenal anxiety. Everyone's abilities fluctuate and autistic children work extraordinarily hard to 'fit in' and often have unmet needs impacting on behaviour and achievement.

Using these methods promote shame, impact on self confidence, motivation and self esteem.

Instead, identify support needs, acknowledge effort and provide flexible supports by working with students and families.



3 Support ideas for the classroom



Unrestricted access to fidget tools with relevant supported implementation.



Technology can be an invaluable tool in supporting learning-calming/regulating, communication, writing.



Earmuffs/earplugs/headphones can be an important sensory support.



Unrestricted access to breaks, safe space and contact person/s.



Visuals, visual timetables, task lists.



Always work with the student and family.

Respect for a student's preferences is essential for trust and meaningful learning.

4 Interests & Support



Develop an Individual Learning Plan with the student and family. Ensure consistent communication amongst all staff. Prioritise safety and wellbeing.

A one-page Learning Profile can be a valuable tool summarising important supports and information everyone needs to know.

Always have learning materials available in different formats and check in with the student.

Incorporate interests into curriculum when developing programs and events.

Don't use an autistic student's passions to entice them to complete tasks they find particularly hard, refuse or wouldn't otherwise do.

Passionate interests are an important part of wellbeing and shouldn't be used in coercion.

Embrace a child's engaging in their interests. This **IS** learning and wellbeing!

5 Implementation



Any new strategy needs the right implementation, the right timeframe and the right support.

Any new strategy needs a period of adjustment, consistency and genuine commitment.

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We're here to help!

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