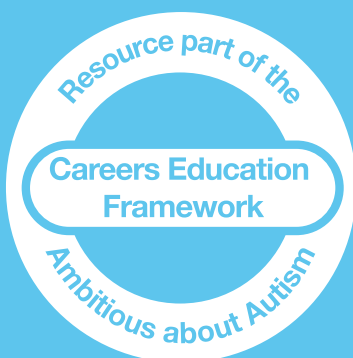




**Ambitious  
about Autism**

# Inclusive classroom checklist



# Inclusive classroom checklist

Your classroom can have a positive or detrimental impact on the learning of your autistic young people. However, it can be easily adapted.

## Why is the environment important?

Sensory differences can affect how an autistic person feels in their environment. A classroom can impact on a young person's ability to concentrate and remain focused and comfortable.

Sensory processing differences can make some environments distracting or overstimulating. This is because:

- autistic people can be over- (hyper) or under- (hypo) sensitive in one or more senses
- autistic people may seek or avoid specific sensory inputs, e.g. they may be unable to cut out background conversations in a busy classroom and become overwhelmed, but use loud, percussive music to relax.

Use the checklist below to consider whether your physical classroom space is as inclusive as possible.

General classroom appearance	Tick (✓)
Are the furniture tops clear?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are cupboard doors closed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the blinds closed when the sun shines in?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all cupboards and boxes labelled clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all resources stored in cupboards or lidded boxes?	<input type="checkbox"/>





## Organisation of the room

Tick (✓)

Is there a clear area for group work?

Is there a designated quiet area or a technique that indicates change of use?  
If you have a time-out space, this should be different to the quiet area.

Are learners' work areas clearly organised with resources labelled so they can access the materials they need?

Are materials/stationery in a good state of repair?

Is there a clear, up-to-date visual timetable for young people to access or see in the room?



## Computer

Tick (✓)

Are wires hidden?

Is the computer area clean and tidy?

Is there a clear timetable for when computers and technology can or cannot be used?

Be aware of unexpected noises from technology, e.g. turn notification sounds off.



**Sensory**

Tick (✓)

Are windows closed if people are outside?

Do chairs have stoppers to minimise noise?

Are draughts and sudden changes in temperature minimised?

Are strong smells, e.g. cleaning products, kept away from the teaching environment?

Is there solid colour block flooring?

Are tables steady when in use? Avoid an autistic young person sitting at a wobbly table.



**Staff**

Tick (✓)

Do staff consider clothing choices? Remember – bright and highly patterned clothing may not be conducive to learning.

Are accessories kept to a minimum?

Do staff avoid wearing strong perfume or hair products?

Do staff have access to support for young people who may need additional communication support, e.g. assistive technology, Makaton training or Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) resources.

Do staff use minimal language where appropriate? (Avoid jargon or language that may not be understood by certain cohorts of young people.)

Are staff conversations kept to essential information only in the presence of young people? This supports low-arousal communication.

Do staff sit at a 45-degree angle or side-by-side when supporting an autistic young person? Standing or sitting directly opposite an autistic pupil can increase anxiety.

Do staff adjust tone and volume of voice to be consistent and low to support autistic young people who may be anxious or overwhelmed?



# We are Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

## Contact us

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