

Staff Knowledge and Understanding



Working with children with special educational needs or additional needs can be daunting for anyone. The one thing to keep in mind is that a child is still a child. Their additional need or disability should not define them as a person.

The key to making a successful transition into a new activity or club is very much based around you knowing your customer.

A **one-page profile** can capture the information you require.

- Have you spoken to the parent/carers or young person?
- Do you understand the child and young person's support needs?
- Do you know how the child communicates?
- Do you know what they like and dislike?
- Do you know what triggers unwanted behaviours?
- Do you know which de-escalation techniques work best?

Knowing your customer prior to them attending the session is essential.

One-page Profile

A warm welcome means greeting the child or young person in a **calm, friendly and reassuring way**, taking into account their individual needs.

This may include:

- Using clear, simple language
- Giving extra time to process information
- Using visual supports (e.g. symbols or pictures)
- Being mindful of sensory needs (e.g. noise, lighting, space)



Providing guidance and routine on where their bag goes and other daily routines should be:

- **Explicit and consistent** (e.g. showing exactly where to put belongings)
- Supported with **visual cues, labels, or colour coding**
- Repeated if needed to build familiarity and confidence

This helps reduce anxiety and gives structure.



A warm welcome

Routine and structure will help as soon as the child walks through the door as well as extra support or time to process any information that you give to them.

Timetables and routines are so important and can help children and young people feel less anxious and stressed because this gives them a clear structure and lets them know what to expect. This makes them feel safe and secure, which is very important for their well-being.

Visual timetables or photographs can help reduce anxiety and concern, and having a familiar face and someone that they know to turn to is also helpful.

Routine and Structure



Reducing anxiety

Many children will be anxious when they attend a new setting until they get used to how the sessions run and the staff that are around them.

Have a safe/quiet space: a timeout area. These areas are designed to help children manage strong emotions such as anger, frustration, or if they are overwhelmed. It supports emotional regulation, which means learning how to recognise feelings, calm down, and ask for help when needed.

It is essential to have routine, familiarity and structure to help them settle and thrive in your setting.



All the information in this slideshow is a structure to help children and young people settle in and enjoy your activities.

The links to the following videos and information pages should help you to further understand what you and your organisation can do to support children to enjoy your sessions.

This list is non-exhaustive.

Videos:

- [Understanding Autism - National Autistic Society](#)
- [Understanding Neurodiversity in all formats - Neurodiversity Support UK](#)
- [Assume I Can - Down Syndrome International](#)
- [Support for young people and families/ good resource - The Source](#)
- [Equity Vs Equality - Understanding the difference - This vs That](#)
- [Talk Pants - NSPCC](#)

Online Resources

Web pages:

- [Cyberbullying - Virtual Network UK](#)
- [Inclusion free resources - Suffolk County Council](#)
- [Inclusions sensory resources - Suffolk County Council](#)



Thank you!

If you have any questions or wish
to provide feedback, please
contact us:

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