

AUTISM TOOLKIT FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This Autism Toolkit has been produced to support Secondary schools to further develop their understanding of strategies for pupils on the autism spectrum.

These strategies are offered as a starting point. There are numerous further strategies that schools can use.

The strategies in this toolkit can be used to support pupils on the autism spectrum. However, they are equally applicable for pupils with social communication & interaction needs.

This toolkit was initially produced for Bristol City Council by: -

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Permission has kindly been given for editing for South Gloucestershire Council

For further information regarding local organisations, groups and advice, please see South Gloucestershire “Local Offer”

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



Photo with permission from member of Bristol Autism Team

Contents

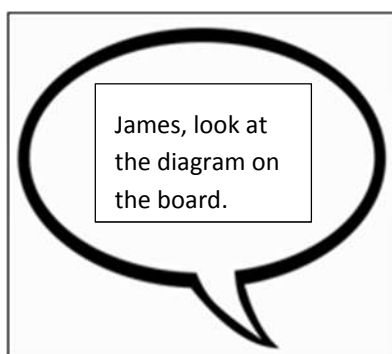
Page reference	Strategy
5 - 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication
9 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Autism Friendly Environment
13 - 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visuals
17 - 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differentiation
21 - 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Skills
25 - 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emotional Understanding
29 - 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Anxiety
33 - 35	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meltdowns
37 - 38	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One page profiles
39	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further reading and useful websites



- Pupils on the autism spectrum may have a wide range of communicative ability. It is very important not to make assumptions about an individual pupil's skills solely on the basis of their diagnosis.
- Unusually verbal ability may well be ahead of their understanding eg using words and phrases that have been learnt or heard in one context.

Pupils

- may not understand the need for communication
- may not initiate communication
- may fail to communicate clearly what they want or need
- may have difficulty with attention and listening skills, particularly in relation to verbal communication
- may have difficulty understanding language
- may have difficulties processing language, especially when combined with maintaining eye contact and non- verbal communication (gestures, body language)



Attention and Processing

- Use the pupils' name and wait until they give you their attention. (Some pupils may not be able to look directly at you)
- Pupils may not recognise instructions given to the whole class. Give individual instructions.
- If you are pointing at the board or at a resource, make sure the pupil is looking at the right thing – highlighting can help with this.
- Allow time to process verbal information – this can vary but may take up to 20 seconds.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



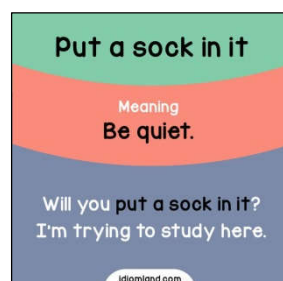
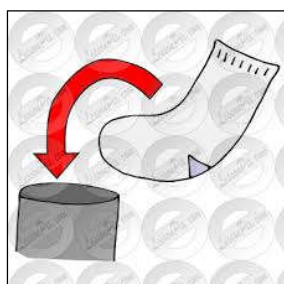
Use clear, non-ambiguous language

- Language should be as concrete as possible.
- Say what you mean – and mean what you say.
- Put in pauses to regulate the pace of verbal delivery. Teacher nervousness may communicate itself.



Supporting a pupil

- When supporting a pupil in class use MINIMAL language supported with the use of a mini white board, post its, mind maps, bullet points and visuals.
- Do not talk when the teacher is – model good listening behaviour.



Sarcasm, humour, idioms

- Pupils with autism can be very literal and phrases such as 'Put a sock in it', 'That's sick' or 'I'll be back in a minute' may be interpreted in a different way.
- Sarcasm can be very confusing and pupils may not understand your intention.
- Analogies can be useful eg does it help if we talk about the brain as if it is a computer?

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



Facial expressions

- Pupils with autism may not look directly at faces or correctly interpret facial expressions and body language. Don't assume they will know the names of others in their class or who different teachers are. This can be interpreted as rude behaviour.
- Pupils may not understand your subtle body language ie the look, tut, sighs.
- Make your expectations clear and explicit.



Other comments

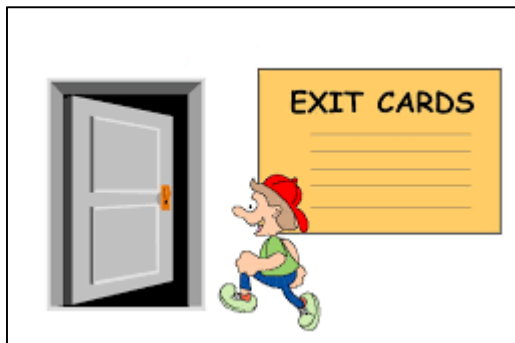
- Poor language skills are not necessarily an indicator of ability across the wider curriculum.
- Pupils with autism can have a very uneven profile of skills.
- All pupils with autism will have communication differences – they may also have additional language impairments.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

Autism Friendly Environment

(Being aware of Sensory issues)

- Pupils with autism spectrum may find noisy, crowded spaces highly stressful
- Some hotspots include stairs, corridors, canteen, changing rooms and toilets
- Schools can make their environment autism friendly by using clear visual signposting



Reasonable adjustments

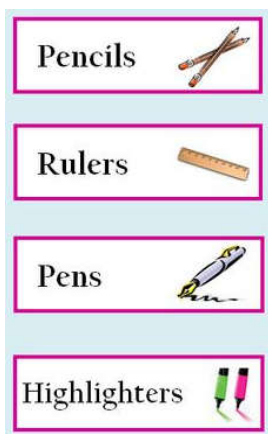
- Being allowed out early or late from a lesson to avoid crowds
- Having an early or avoid the queue pass
- Alternative changing arrangements for PE
- A quiet area for break and lunch time
 - To eat lunch
 - Structured games
 - Books
 - ICT



MEAL
PASS



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Preferential seating

- Seating next to good role models
- Give the pupil additional space if needed
- Could be sat at the front or back
- May need their own desk/space
- **Discuss with the pupil**



Labels

- Label areas/equipment clearly

Movement Breaks

- Eg. Walking across the classroom to hand out books, sharpen pencil, open a window or taking messages



Many pupils with autism spectrum will have sensory challenges which mean they may:

- Rock
- Fiddle with equipment (chew pen or taking things to bits)
- Hum, make repetitive noises (verbally or with equipment)
- Doodle

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



Sensory Challenges cont.

- Give the pupil a doodle pad
- Planned ignoring of low level/distraction behaviours
- Move the student to a position against the back wall or give a him/her a movement break
- Make the pupil aware that they are disturbing others. Think together how they can be minimised
- Allow fiddle objects, this could be blue tack, wristbands
- Some pupils will have 'Chewlery' (a specific chewy item)

Other comments

- Challenging behaviour which is driven by sensory need is best managed by using a graduated response ie finding a more appropriate replacement or modifying the environment.

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Visuals

- Visual prompts can be used to help pupils on the autism spectrum. They are adaptable, portable and can be used in most situations
- We see and use visual prompts every day, for example road signs, maps and shopping lists
- Visuals help us understand the world around us, and provide us with valuable information
- Many pupils on the autism spectrum are thought to be visual learners, so presenting information in a visual way can help to encourage and support communication, language development and ability to process information
- Visuals can also promote independence, build confidence and raise self-esteem



“How are you feeling” prompts

- A pupil on the autism spectrum does not always understand the hidden meaning to facial expressions used by others
- Prompt cards can help to support in understanding their own and others’ emotions
- Some pupils can manage to identify a range of emotions, whereas some may be ready to identify only a few



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I NEED A BREAK

I really need to stop working for a few minutes and take a break. Once my body and brain calm down I can re-join the group and get back to work.

- During my break I can go to.....
- I can do the following things
.....
.....
.....
- I need to

Visual Prompts

(To remind about Expected Behaviours and Language)

- Let me think about that
Excuse Me
Sorry about that
- Key phrases for communicating with different staff ie: office staff
- Exit Card
- Take a Break Card
(These cards must always be rehearsed when the pupil is calm. It should be part of a clear behaviour plan)



Visuals through an Interactive White Board

- Countdown Timer
- Noise Levels—colour change

RED=too noisy, YELLOW=working noise
Green= silent
- Lesson outline—to show progress through the lesson
- Highlighter and coloured filters

SATURDAY Day 8 23rd	SUNDAY Day 9 24th	MONDAY Day 10 25th	TUESDAY Day 11 26th	WEDNESDAY Day 12 27th	THURSDAY Day 13 28th	FRIDAY Day 14 29th	SATURDAY Day 15 30th
FULL DAY EXCURSION ENTER	09.00-11.00 Free Time	09.00-10.30 English Study Skills	09.00-10.30 English Study Skills	09.00-10.30 English Study Skills	09.00-10.30 English Study Skills	09.00-10.30 English Study Skills	Departure Day
	11.00-12.30 Discussion Group	11.00-12.30 History	11.00-12.30 Art	11.00-12.30 ICT	11.00-12.30 History	11.00-12.30 English Literature	
PACKED LUNCH	PACKED LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
FULL DAY EXCURSION ENTER	09.00-10.30 English Literature	09.00-10.30 English Literature	09.00-10.30 English Literature	09.00-10.30 English Literature	09.00-10.30 English Literature	09.00-10.30 English Literature	
	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	10.30-12.30 Sports and Games	
YOUNG group activity e.g. Team Building	10.00-11.00 1:1 tutorial & sign	10.00-11.00 Review through games	10.00-11.00 SPARTAN & homework	10.00-11.00 Review through games	10.00-11.00 Supervised Homework	10.00-11.00 Review through games	
11.00-12.00	10.00-11.00 Free Time	10.00-11.00 Free Time	10.00-11.00 Create group activity	10.00-11.00 Create group activity	10.00-11.00 Free Time	10.00-11.00 Free Time	
12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	12.00-12.30	
22.00 Lights Out							

Timetables

(in addition to standard issue)

- Colour coded
- Pocket size and Laminated
- Daily, weekly, fortnightly, depending on pupil

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

Quote Id:	Text:
Page: **	Page: **
Page: **	Page: **
Page: **	Page: **
Page: **	Page: **
Page: **	Page: **
Page: **	Page: **
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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
PE Football <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorts and top Football boots 	Library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading book 	Gym <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor Gym kit trainers
DT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apron 	Maths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maths book 	Cooking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cheese butter flour

Organisation

- Bag packing, equipment check list
- Organising help with writing (graphic organiser), mind maps, templates, vocabulary boxes, sentence starters, focus questions
- Task Breakdown (post It notes/white board)

Exams Revision and Homework

- It is useful to use visuals to show the time needed for revision. Pupils with autism spectrum find it hard to manage time and put the workload into perspective
- It is necessary to show 'down time' and periods when the pupil can do their choice of activity
- It is useful to plan in additional time for unexpected events (such as: being ill or mum taking me shopping)
- Using abstract terms like 'Revise' are not helpful

Revision Calendar			
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
10.00	Maths		
11.00	TV		Blank
12.00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1.00	Blank	Computer	
2.00		English	

Maths Task

Nov 2014
Paper 1
Answer question 2-6

Blank

Catch up time unexpected interruption

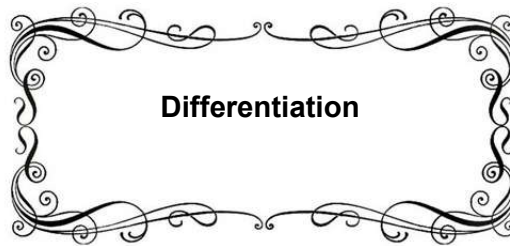
English Task

Read chapter 3 of 'Of Mice and Men'
Summarise Key..

Other comments

It is important that school matches the level of visuals used (symbols or words) to the pupil's age and understanding and preference.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



- Pupils with autism can have a very uneven profile of skills and challenges
- Writing is often a problem and reducing demands may be necessary
- Organisation of thoughts, ideas and seeing the purpose of the task can be difficult
- Many pupils with autism spectrum struggle with flexible thinking and being able to consider things from another's perspective



Questions

- Use questioning techniques such as think, pair, share
- Allow thinking time
- Avoid open-ended questions
- Use mini white boards to write answers down on

Examples of Lesson Structure

Learning Objective

Starter/ Activity/ Warm up

Teacher input

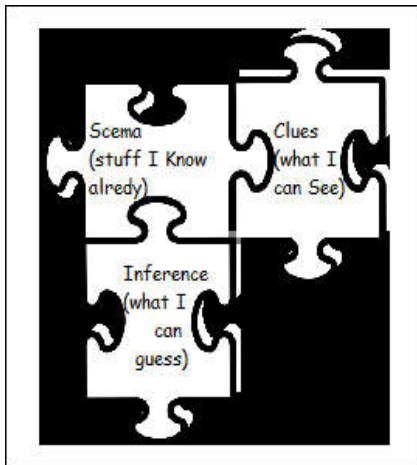
(What you're going to teach - main task details)

Follow up tasks (details)

Plenary games + rewards

Using Structure

- It is helpful for teachers to show a written outline or overview of the topic
- Show why the learning is important – relate to real life and the pupils interest
- Have success criteria explicit from the start
- Help pupils structure learning and writing using templates, writing frames, graphic organisers IT
- When setting home learning/independent work ensure tasks are specific and larger projects are broken down into bite size chunks



Outside Appearance	Inside Characteristics
<p>My Character Analysis</p> <p>Character: _____</p> <p>Book Title: _____</p>	
Problems Faced	Important Actions

Perspective

- Imaginative work will need much more scaffolding. Factual work will be easier
- Pupils may find it hard to understand, infer and interpret emotions from text
- They may find it hard to understand the whole story/picture and how parts of the narrative relate to each other
- Use of character cards and plotting the story on a graphic organiser or mind map will help pupils make sense of the information
- Actively teach the importance of showing your thinking
Eg. Working out or planning stage in English
- Explore/prompt re. what the pupil knows about the subject
- Look for clues
- Make a guess (inference)
- Many pupils are perfectionists and hate to get things wrong, so are reluctant to make a guess and risk failure
- Making a Mistake Social Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oh42WldyHUw>

Quality conversation standards

- **Listen** to what others have to say
- **Take turns** in the conversation
- **Speak** (don't shout)
- **Ask questions** when it is your turn
- **Offer suggestions** and say what you think when it is your turn
- **Try to say positive and kind words** about other pupils' ideas.

Organising Group Work

- It is better for the teacher to choose all groups and allocate pupils roles
- Visual role cues will help remind pupils what their role is and make the task specific
- Quality conversation standards



Targets

1. Arrive in school by 8.30am ☐

2. Have equipment for lessons ☐

3. Complete..... ☐

My Targets

Name: _____
Class: _____

1. ☐

2. ☐

3. ☐

Token System

- Earning time tokens to spend on a special interest can be an effective motivator
- Consideration needs to be given to where on the timetable this can be given—some flexibility will be required but is usually worth it
- This system can be linked to academic, social or behaviour targets
- Some pupils are motivated by seeing a larger reward being built up in steps
- Clear targets to be met are essential
- You will need to consider how you might deal with disappointment if the pupil does not earn many tokens

Rewards

- Pupils with autism spectrum may not respond to or see the point of whole school motivators such as house points, positive points, certificates or praise
- Linking a pupils special interests to rewards can be highly motivating
- Reward systems need to be reviewed frequently to monitor impact

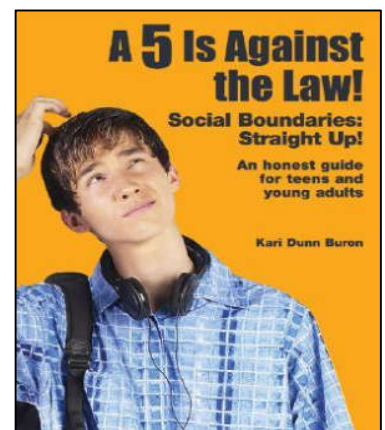
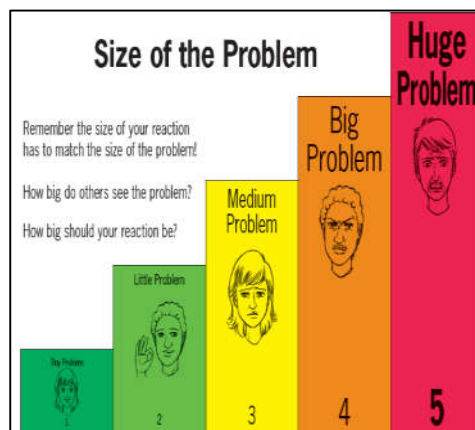
I'm Working for ☐

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

laptop coffee stationary

Social Skills

- Social skill differences are a key challenge for pupils with autism spectrum and will occur across the curriculum.
- Direct teaching of a social skill can occur within subject lessons, during specific social intervention, during tutor/form time, lunchtime clubs, around the school and through peer support

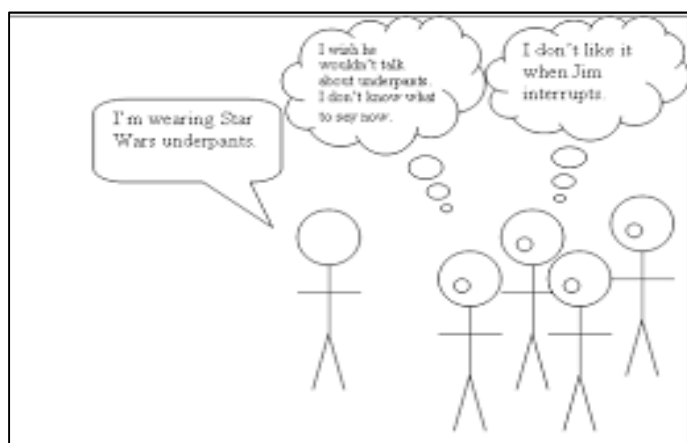
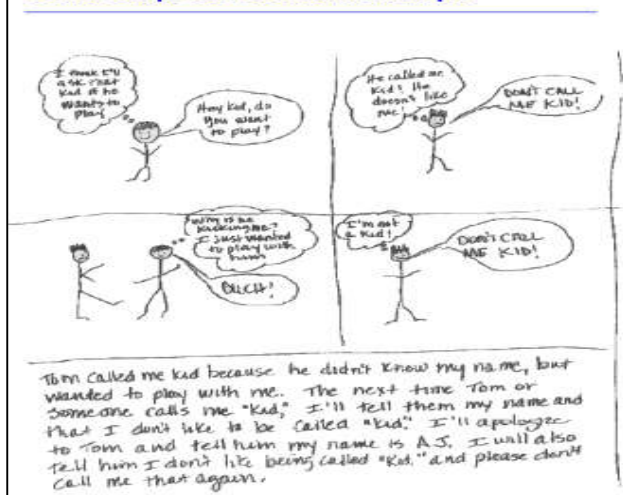


Using a Scale

- A 5 Point Scale can be used to categorise behaviours and rate 1-5 according to seriousness and intensity
- When used as a whole class or group activity it can show perspective ie: a pupil may rate a behaviour as a 2 when the rest of his peers would rate it as a 4
- It can also show, the size of the problem should match the size of the reaction
- It can be used to show hierarchy and describe levels of intimacy

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

Comic Strip Conversation: Example



Using Speech and Thought Bubbles

To facilitate the understanding of perspective it can be extremely effective to add speech and thought bubbles onto drawings of stick people to show social situations in a range of contexts:

- Post incident debrief
- Understanding a pupil's perspective
- Correcting pupil's mistaken perspective
- Showing the thoughts/feelings of others
- Solutions and problem solving eg distinguishing between an accident and a deliberate act
- Showing that thoughts and beliefs lead to actions
- Can be used to gather information to write a social script

Social Scripts

- Aim to remind the pupil about social information they may not be using in their interactions
Eg that it is the teacher's responsibility to deal with issues and decide when a situation is over.
- Can be used to help a pupil problem solve social issues
Eg friendship issues
- Can be used to prepare a pupil for change
eg school trip, and remind them about routines
eg handing in homework
Can show the perspective and thoughts of others

Examples of social scripts

What does 'Being on time' mean?



Often when we are meeting someone we say, 'I'll meet you at 'such and such' a time.

We can be very specific about time and say 2.45pm or quarter to 3 or we can be more vague and say, for example, when I have finished my ice cream.

When we give an exact time to meet someone we usually mean we will see them close to that time. It is quite hard to be exactly on time.

It is polite to try and get there a bit earlier than the time rather than later.



HOWEVER

Sometimes things happen which make us late. These can be unforeseen things for example: **unusual traffic, an emergency call, the car breaking down, your watch or phone not saying the correct time or something else.**

If we are going to be late it is polite to call and let the other person know that you have been held up. It can be irritating when others are late but it is rarely deliberate or planned.

It is expected that if you are late you should apologise to the person who has been waiting.
It is expected that the person who has been waiting accepts this apology and knows that it was not deliberate but that it is difficult to be on time sometimes.

What does see you later mean?

When friends or peers are saying goodbye they often use a phrase 'see you later' or 'catch you later'

Some people even shorten this to 'laters'

This means that they expect to see the person again sometime soon. This can be later on in the day, the evening or even the next day or week after.

It is just a way of saying "I'll see you soon".

Both of these social scripts were written for a Year 10 pupil who could not cope with others not being exactly on time. If they said they would be there at a specific time, that's when she would expect to see them.

Other comments

- Involving peers with social understanding can be beneficial for pupils with autism spectrum eg transitions between lessons, modelling expected behaviours
- Where peers have been educated about autism, social outcomes are more favourable both for pupils with autism and their peers
- Whilst counselling services (***a talking therapy***) can be very helpful, it is important for the councillor to know the pupil has a diagnosis of autism spectrum. Pupils may not be able to self-refer and may take what is said very literally

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

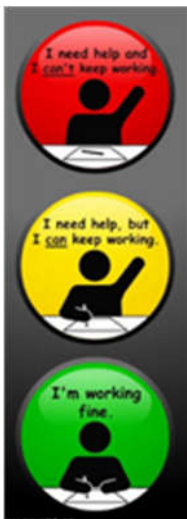
Emotional Understanding

- Pupils on the autism spectrum often experience heightened stress levels in comparison to their peers. They may have reduced coping strategies and fail to recognise their anxiety before it becomes overwhelming.
- Pupils on the autism spectrum may need encouragement to:
 - Ask for help
 - Recognise their emotions and those of others
 - Talk about their feelings
 - Manage their emotions
 - Develop coping strategies and calming techniques



Independent working cards

- These cards allow pupils to communicate their understanding/confidence of a task
- Card is double sided and placed on desk where the pupil is working
- The pupil displays “ok” or “I need help”
- Adults can quickly check how the pupil is getting on without constant questioning
- Make the cards so they are unobtrusive and discreet
The cards can also be used as a whole class resource for all pupils



Traffic Light systems

- These work in a similar way to independent working cards offering a visual way to communicate understanding or anxiety
- Green = OK
- Amber/Yellow = I'm Unsure or I can give it go
- Red = Help
- An arrow or object can be placed on the colour to indicate how the pupil is feeling
- Coloured pencil can also be used in a similar and more discreet way, with the pupil drawing on a piece of paper to indicate how they are feeling

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

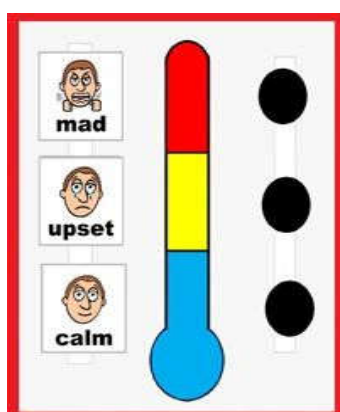


Feelings board

- Feelings boards allows a pupil to communicate how they are feeling to others
- They are particularly useful when discussing incidents that have occurred

How to use:

- Encourage the pupil to point to or verbalise the emotion which is relevant to them at the time using the board as a visual support
- Use the board in conjunction with emotions books (see below) to enable the pupil to increase their understanding of emotions



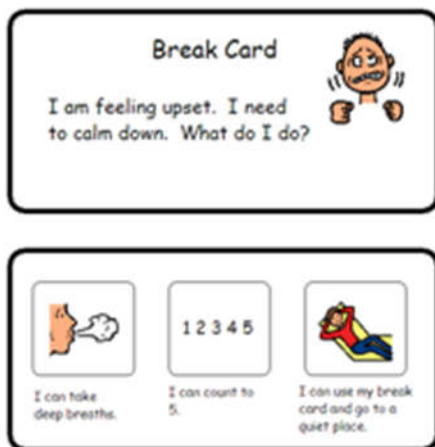
An emotions thermometer

- These encourage a pupil to think about changes in how they are feeling
- The pupil places their name or photograph on the thermometer as a visual indicator to show their level of emotion, or indicate the emotion that they are experiencing at that particular time
- Ensure that the thermometer is accessible to the pupil at all times
- It can also be used as a whole class resource.



Feelings Book

- Create an 'emotions book'. Explore basic emotions first, such as happy, sad and angry before moving on to more complex ones
- Focus on one emotion at a time. Take photographs of the pupil or other pupils showing a particular emotion in different situations and contexts, or cut out photographs from a magazine
- Stick these in a book, exploring and recording how a pupil is feeling
- Ensure that the pupil is also taught how to manage emotions, for example, ways to calm down if feeling "angry"



I need a break cards

- “I need a break” cards allow a pupil to communicate that they need downtime or access to a safe haven/safe space
- All staff need to know that a pupil has a “break card” and responses by staff to these needs to be consistent



Safe and quiet place

- It is useful for pupils on the autism spectrum to have an agreed safe and quiet place for them to go to when they feel anxious or are overloaded by sensory stimuli
- A safe haven room situated outside the classroom might be beneficial

Other comments

- Visual tools help pupils on the autism spectrum to communicate their emotions and adults working with them to identify/recognise these emotions.
- A pupil’s facial expressions may not reflect their true feelings and a change in behaviour may be mistakenly attributed to another cause, such as a sensory sensitivity, heightened anxiety etc.
- It does not always occur to pupils on the autism spectrum to talk to others about their emotional wellbeing, and therefore their responses to anxiety may be individual and unexpected.

Managing Anxiety

- Almost all pupils with a diagnosis of autism will experience anxiety in school and this should be regularly assessed using tools such as the 'stress in school indicator' (<http://www.do2learn.com/activities/SocialSkills/Stress/StressTriggers.html>)
- Where pupils present differently at school and home, schools need to be aware that the source of the stress is as likely to be from school as it is from home, even though the pupil may not show this.



Emotions Toolkit

This is a collection of different strategies that aim to reduce levels of anxiety. Different tools can be used in a range of contexts. Each pupil will have different tools that work for them – their own personal toolbox.



Physical tools- Energy management 'letting off steam'

- Running, walking, fresh air
- Exercise, sport
- Punch bag or pillow
- Drumming

Relaxation tools

- Drawing, reading
- Music – listening and playing
- Solitude – a quiet space
- Repetition and routine (tidying and ordering)
- Visualising a calm, happy place
- Using picture cards, photos of family, cute animals,

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



Social tools

- Enjoyable interaction either with a key person, mentor, friend or animal.
- Playing cards, chess or a structured game
- Going for coffee, tea or equivalent

Thinking tools

- Positive affirmations
- Social scripts
- Positive thought cards eg (I can do it)
- Mantras

Special Interest tool – a quick way of preventing escalation and providing distraction

- Fan magazine/catalogue
- Special box containing sensory objects (lavender, material, fabric, pictures, bands, koosh ball, feathers etc)
- Timetabled period for special interest.

Common sources of anxiety

- Pupils with autism can easily become overwhelmed and overloaded due to having academic work and social pressures.
- It can be easy to get things out of proportion (calendars, timetables and charts can help)
- Homework can be a point of major stress and anxiety. It helps to have time limited tasks that are well structured and scaffolded. Long term projects will be particularly challenging.
- Access to a supported homework club (not in lunch time) can help pupils to manage workload more easily.
- Having open channels of communication with parents regarding homework is useful.
- Timetabling in some 'down time' during the week is often necessary – remember that many pupils with autism find unstructured break and lunch times most stressful.
- Frequent key working sessions including a check in and check out can pick up and monitor levels of anxiety avoiding possible meltdowns.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

Tests and exams

- Use available exam and assessment concessions eg additional time, rest breaks, separate room.
- Ensure there is revision planning and make sure this is on a timetable that includes free time and rest breaks. Plan this well in advance.
- Ensure that revision is well explained and specific ie Complete summer 2014 History paper 2 questions 3, 4 and 5 rather than revise some history.
- Make exams part of the natural way of things so that GCSEs become thought of as tests that year 11 do.



	English	Maths	Biology	French	Geography	TOTAL
Mon.		Fractions (1 hour)			Settlement (1 hour)	2 hours
Tues.			Enzymes (1 hour)	Transport (1 hour)		2 hours
Wed.	Travel writing (1 hour)				Trade / Aid (1 hour)	2 hours
Thurs.		Vectors (1 hour)		Sport (1 hour)		2 hours
Fri.	Attending Open Day at Stonebridge FE College					0 hours
Sat.	Poetry (1 hour)	Triangles (1 hour)			Volcanoes (1 hour)	3 hours
Sun.			Disease (2 hours)	Holidays (1 hour)		3 hours
TOTAL	2 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	14 hours

Other comments

- Some pupils may have unusual fears and phobias which can cause intense anxiety (eg fear of Ribena, tomato ketchup, getting wet). Ensure this kind of information is included on the pupil's profile.
- High levels of anxiety are often linked with poor sleep patterns.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

Meltdowns

- It is important to understand that a meltdown is not a tantrum, so we need a different approach to managing them.
- A meltdown is triggered by an overwhelming experience from which the pupil cannot escape, such as a confusing social situation, a change of plans or sensory overload.
- Pupils on the autism spectrum have great difficulty regulating their feelings and working out solutions when things go wrong, and so can quickly escalate to a meltdown.
- Once a meltdown has been triggered, this is a complete system overload, which the pupil cannot control or manage, no matter what the consequences

Trigger

Note the Triggers

- Being aware of what triggers a meltdown is absolutely key to avoiding these in the future
- Also, help the pupil learn how to identify the triggers themselves when a meltdown happens.

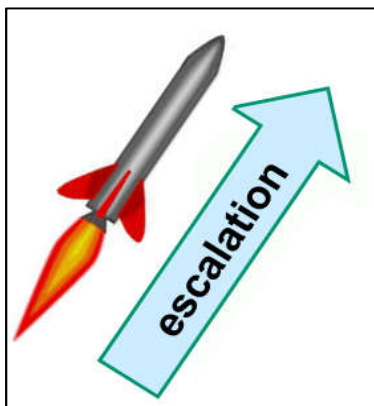
Keep a record

- ABCC charts are a good way to record meltdowns, so that patterns can try to be identified.
- Once the meltdown has been managed, it is best to record it while the incident is still fresh in people's minds.

ABCC Behaviour Diary

Date	A (Antecedents) Setting/task/who else was around/other.	B (Behaviour) What did he/she actually do? Describe without interpreting. Include duration of behaviour.	C (Consequence) How did you and other adults respond? What did you and they do?	C (Communication) What is the behaviour communicating?	Initials

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



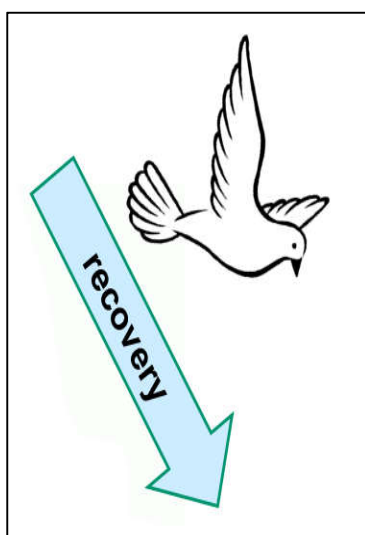
Action Plan

- Once a “meltdown” has been triggered, a pupil can escalate rapidly into a full meltdown
- It is important to have a clear Action Plan in place that all relevant staff have been made aware of, and which has been discussed with parent/carers in advance
- The primary considerations should be:
 - Keep the pupil safe
 - Keep other pupils safe
 - Keep yourself safe



Safe place

- Ideally, when experiencing the overwhelming physical and emotional symptoms of a meltdown, the pupil needs to be removed from the situation, and taken to a safe place where they will feel enclosed and sheltered, and can begin to recover
- This should be an already established and familiar place to the pupil, and needs to be clearly identified in the Action Plan
- It may not be possible to safely move the pupil, in which case you should create a safe place where s/he is. You may need to remove other pupils from the situation



Give it time

- Meltdowns have a huge impact, both physically and emotionally, and the pupil will need time to recover
- The amount of time needed will vary depending on the individual pupil and the severity of the meltdown – it can be as little as 30 minutes, or as much as the whole day
- The pupil will not be ready to talk about what happened when they are feeling emotionally and physically drained. Recovery may include any of the following
 - Time in their safe place
 - Time spent engaging in a low-level classroom activity
 - Re-joining peers but with reduced expectations and with support

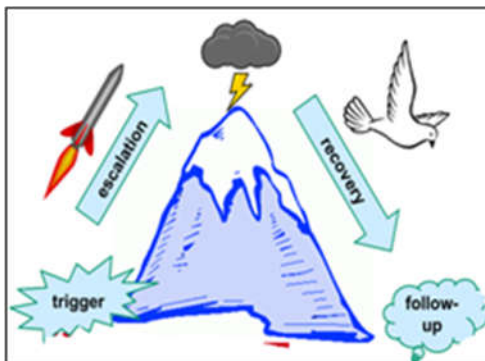
AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)



After the “Meltdown”

- The pupil will experience a variety of complex feelings after the “meltdown”

They may not be able to tell you why the meltdown happened, and it is for adults to reflect on the triggers, and to put in place strategies to help the pupil avoid or manage that situation better/differently in future.



Remember

- When a pupil has escalated to a meltdown:
 - keep them safe
 - give them time
 - reflect on the trigger
 - decide how to support the pupil in future

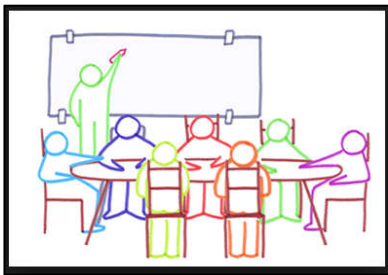
Other Comments

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a deep breath and remember that however hard this is for you, it is hard for the pupil too. • Make sure other members of staff have been informed of the situation, so that the pupil can be monitored and supported by adults during the period post meltdown. • Stay quietly with the pupil, and use short, soothing phrases that offer reassurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't get angry and raise your voice. It just adds to the noise and stress. The pupil is not being naughty or trying to get his/her own way. • Don't attempt to deal with the “meltdown” on your own, but also don't have too many adults in close proximity as this may cause further distress to the pupil. • Don't try to reason with the pupil, issue reprimands or ask what's wrong while they are in the grip of the meltdown. Their system is in shutdown and they will not be able to respond

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

One page profiles

- A one page profile is a summary of what matters to the pupil and how best to support them.
- It can capture important information about a pupil's strengths, challenges and interests as well as detailing specific support (DOs and DON'Ts).
- One page profiles can also include targets and data such as reading age and attainment levels in core subjects.
- They are a way for the pupil to have a voice in how they might be supported in school.
- They are a highly effective way to share information between staff and in particular at times of transition.



- A one page profile is developed using contributions from parents, carers, teachers, support staff and other professionals but most importantly the pupil themselves.
- Profiles need to be updated at different points throughout the year.



Example of a one page profile

What other's like and admire about me?

- Kind and caring, good with younger children
- A good and loyal friend
- Truthful
- Hardworking



What's important to me?

- Getting to know the school quickly
- Knowing where to go if I need help
- Having time to just be with friends and relax
- Access to a phone to call mum when stressed
- Taking classes that are fun but also help me to work toward a career in child care
- Getting through compulsory courses
- Help with maths when I need it – it's my weak spot
- Staying away from situations where I may be influenced to make poor choices
- That both of my parents are involved in my education
- I have a consistent person to go to for emotional, stress management
- Learning good study habits

How best to support me?

- I don't like to ask for help; please offer it if you feel I need it
- After a visit to my dad's house, it takes me some time to get into the swing of things, be patient and offer your support
- If I get overwhelmed I tend to give up, please help me to stay on track
- I like to write stories or in my journal when I am frustrated or sad, sometimes I need the freedom to do this
- I like to be a leader but sometimes get caught up in the drama of a situation; I might need a motivational reminder
- In primary school I did not have a lot of homework. This will be a huge adjustment to me, please support me developing good strategies
- Stress is not my friend. My anxiety raises and I need reassurance or comfort from someone I love or am comfortable with
- Public speaking makes me physically ill, my anxiety level rises until I am physically sick and cannot function. Please limit that where possible.

AUTISM TOOLKIT (SECONDARY)

If schools would like to find out more about the autism spectrum, there is a vast range of material available. The following are a few recommendations:-



- Asperger Syndrome – a practical guide for Teachers by Val Cumine.
- The Teaching Assistants' guide to Autistic Spectrum Disorders by Ann Cartright & Jill Morgan
- Asperger's Syndrome: a guide for parents and professionals by Tony Attwood
- Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome by Luke Jackson
- Ten things every child with Autism wishes you knew by Ellen Notbohm
- Can I tell you about Asperger Syndrome? by J Welton
- Understanding and Managing Autism by Andrew Powell
- Why Do I Have To?: A Book for Children Who Find Themselves Frustrated by Everyday Rules by Laurie Leventhal-Belfer
- Survival Guide for Kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders by Elizabeth Verdick
- The Asperkid's (Secret) Book of Social Rules: The Handbook of Not-So-Obvious Social Guidelines for Tweens and Teens with Asperger Syndrome by Jennifer Cook O'Toole

Regulating emotions

- The Incredible 5-point Scale: Assisting Children with ASDs in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses by Kari Dunn Buron
- A 5 is Against the Law by Kari Dunn Buron
- Managing Feelings – A CBT programme for managing anxiety – Tony Attwood

Social thinking

- Social Fame v Social Fortune – Michelle Garcia Winner
- Think Sheets for Tweens and Teens – Michelle Garcia Winner

USEFUL WEBSITES:-

- <http://nassouthgloucestershirebranch.webeden.co.uk/>
- <https://www.sglospc.org.uk> (South Gloucestershire Parents and Carers)
- www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/en-gb.aspx (Autism Education Trust)
- www.supportiveparents.org.uk (Supportive Parents)
- www.autismteachingstrategies.com
- <https://jillkuzma.wordpress.com>