

Environmental challenges for those with ASD

Below is a list of areas that can be problematic for the student with an autistic spectrum disorder resulting in lowering the students ability to function competently.

Internal

Not being understood

Not understanding

Not having enough information

Not having adequate skill for the job

Not having choices

Making a mistake

Being tired

Being touched

Being hungry

Major changes

Alterations at school, home, community

Daily routine

Time changes

Activity location changes

Change if staff/pupils

Family member coming into school; being late/not arriving

Future event; anticipation of what will happen

Having to wait too long

Time; not having enough and feeling rushed

Environmental confusion

Crowds

Noise

Surrounded by too much movement

Surrounded by competing visual stimuli TOO MUCH

Not having enough space

Loosing things; pets, money, objects, friends, family

Relationships

Being ignored

Being denied

Being interrupted

Being late

Being corrected

Fear of losing people

Being teased

Being left out

Being told off

All these factors can affect your lessons as well as the pupils ability to successfully function throughout the day. Attached is a comprehensive list of different ways you can support these pupils, and reduce the impact on your lessons.

How can we help?

Prepare the pupil for change

Sue the pupils name before giving instructions

Say what you want the pupil to do and make he/she understands what you are asking him/her to do

Use simple clear instructions- this can often be limiting your vocab to 2 or 3 words

Leave time for the pupil to respond

Give the student your full attention if he tries to start a conversation

Model behaviours such as turn taking

Make sure the pupil knows when an activity is finished

Think about organisation of the room

Look for stress triggers- get to know what is going on

Use visual prompts whenever possible

Work to their strengths; visual/auditory/kinaesthetic

What do they need?

Personal space- work area/station

Time out area

A structured and organised classroom

Knowledge of where to find things

Things clearly labelled

New skills/behaviours

Teach social skills; re-educate

Emotional literacy (circle time/check in throughout lesson/day)

Peer awareness

General strategies

Positive praise

Limit language

Acknowledge they are feeling a certain way 'I understand you feel/think that but this is what needs to happen/this is what is happening'

Distract/divert

Obsessions cannot be eliminated but use these to your advantage for rewards/motivators

Positive instructions of what you would like them to do; ASD often focus on the negative

Give them limited choices; you do this you can have this, choice 1 or choice 2