

# Inclusion

## Art and Design



## Everybody learning!

When we use the phrase 'Quality First Teaching', we refer to key principles that underpin best practice. In this section, we will focus on the principle of **inclusive pedagogy**, addressing the values, attitudes and approaches that ensure mainstream classrooms are geared towards supporting those who find learning difficult.

Inclusive pedagogy is an approach to whole-class teaching that is accessible to **all learners**. It should enable learners to keep up, feel included, progress and be successful. This approach should foster an open-ended view of each individual's potential to learn and recognises the difference between individuals as a given and a strength. It challenges deterministic approaches that exclude certain learners from a positive classroom experience because of adverse labelling by ability, or by diagnosis.

As teachers we can feel disempowered by the expectation to teach learners with such a variety of needs.

However, we do not need to become experts in every SEND diagnosis to succeed. We do need to seek to know each learner, to find out how they learn best, and then seek to create classroom strategies that maximise their learning. By thinking about quality in this way, mainstream classrooms can become environments where teachers can plan, teach and assess for **all their learners** with equal confidence.

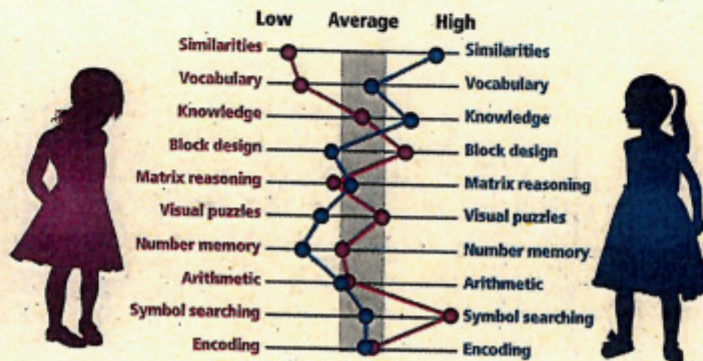
*The notion of inclusive pedagogy is not a call for a return to a model of whole-class teaching where equality is notionally addressed by providing identical experiences for all. Instead, it advocates an approach whereby the teacher provides a range of options which are available to everybody. Human diversity is seen within the model of inclusive pedagogy as a strength, rather than a problem, as children work together, sharing ideas and learning from their interactions with each other. The inclusive pedagogical approach fosters an open-ended view of each child's potential to learn.<sup>1</sup>*

## Why Inclusive Pedagogy is prerequisite for Quality First Teaching

We are moving away from an approach that views learners with SEND as outliers that always need to be catered for and taught differently. Separating learners with SEND out for numerous interventions or over-relying on teaching assistants to deliver teaching to a group of learners with identified SEND, can in fact be detrimental. Evidence tells us the most important contribution to improved outcomes for learners with SEND is quality teaching.<sup>2</sup>

We are also seeing an increase in the co-occurrence of needs exhibited by children and young people. Research tells us there are increasing numbers of learners in mainstream who demonstrate complex SEND profiles due to a number of factors (e.g., better neonatal care and more complex conditions affecting neurodevelopment).<sup>3</sup> More and more learners have what might have been described as spiky or jagged learning profiles.

The new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) reflects this shift too. It no longer looks at SEND as a department or additional provision within the school, but reviews teaching of learners with identified SEND within each subject area and every classroom. It requires evidence of SEND teaching that permeates curriculum delivery, 'built in' not bolted on.



*There is a new generation of children with complex learning needs, who do not fit neatly into an understandable category.<sup>4</sup>*

Professor Barry Carpenter

## What do we need to change?

We need to focus on academic engagement for learners with SEND to achieve genuine inclusion and strengthen learner achievement. Learners with SEND need access to the best teachers and the strongest teaching. Currently, many mainstream school processes focus on the social and emotional aspects of inclusivity rather than zooming in on the teaching and learning process.

Inclusive pedagogy can improve this. Responsibility for effective teaching and assessment of learners with SEND should not be the isolated preserve of the SENCO. Teachers are the key to progress. Teachers are generally supportive of the principles of inclusion, yet anxious about working with an increasingly diverse range of learners. Adopting an inclusive pedagogy offers a way of thinking about effective whole class teaching and meeting the needs of individual learners. Research has helped highlight the reliance on planning and teaching for the majority of learners who learn typically, and then doing something slightly different for the outliers: those at the top or bottom of the distribution curve (who are sometimes described as lower or higher attainers). Inclusive pedagogy highlights the flaws in this teaching, that default thinking of planning for most of the class and then doing something additional or different for some. 'Most' and 'some' thinking risks limiting our belief in what young people can achieve. Inclusive pedagogies encourage us to build in, not bolt on.

# Inclusive teaching and learning approaches

Let's move away from stereotyping and fixed-ability thinking about what learners with SEND can achieve. Where differentiated lesson planning leads to learners recognising, they are forever stuck on the red table for low prior attainers, or consistently given the bronze activities for in-class completion never the gold, (or the 'mild' never the 'spicy' or the 'hot') then we limit expectations of what these learners can achieve. Consideration of learners with SEND who find learning tricky must be core to planning and teaching, not peripheral.

*It is tempting to talk about the challenge of SEND as a specific and distinct issue. Yet, far from creating new programmes, the evidence tells us that teachers should instead prioritise familiar but powerful strategies, like scaffolding and explicit instruction, to support their pupils with SEND. This means understanding the needs of individual pupils and weaving specific approaches into every-day, high-quality classroom teaching – being inclusive by design not as an after-thought.<sup>5</sup>*

## 1. Ban the average

Banning the idea of 'average' is an important step towards adopting a more inclusive approach to teaching. Instead of quickly categorising learners with SEND as 'below average', the successfully inclusive teacher realises the notion of an average, above average or below average learner **is not helpful**. The inclusive teacher challenges that mindset that seeks to predetermine the capacity of each learner, replacing it instead with a **curiosity** about what the learner can achieve.

As teachers we should approach teaching with a sense of openness, looking to be surprised by our learners and what they can achieve. We cannot develop quality teaching unless (and until) we challenge this oversimplification.

## 2. Think about transforming learners' lives as the job

Reframe how you approach your role as teacher. It is one that transforms lives, rather than simply 'topping up' knowledge. Plan and teach based on the belief that futures are not predetermined by innate ability, and that every learner can make progress given the opportunity. Work with learners as co-agents in learning. Commit to nurturing trust between you as the teacher and your learners.

*'Success for all ...depends in large part on a belief that children learn to high levels'.<sup>6</sup>*

## 3. Difficulties in pupil learning are a professional challenge

As teachers we can be influential change agents in transforming schools if we regularly reflect on our pedagogical practices. Look for improvements that will help all learners reach their full potential. Barriers to learning simply present an opportunity to develop new ways of working, rather than a 'problem with the learner'. A complex learner presents a professional opportunity to learn!

## 4. Learners are pilots, not passengers

A study of 4000 fighter pilots to identify the 'average size' for cockpit design discovered that on a ten-point criteria, not a single one was the same on every dimension. These 'jagged profiles' are applicable to learners in the classroom. Difficulty with maths does not mean a struggle in literacy; poor working memory might not mean poor articulation. When you recognise these spikey or jagged profiles, there is less risk of labelling and a greater opportunity to identify learner potential.

## 5. Less deficit labelling, more ability profiling

Good teaching requires adopting an individual, holistic view of each learner. Be wary of labelling learners with their diagnosis or behaviour trait, or by assumptions of what they cannot do, particularly learners with SEND. Such labels reinforce stereotypes and lower expectations of what they can achieve. Instead of describing learners with autism as having difficulties making friends, or dyslexic learners as reluctant writers, profile learners by what they **can achieve** and how they **can learn**.

Catch yourself quietly if you label or limit a learner by the language you use, but positively reinforce yourself and your colleagues when remarks are made about what a learner can do (rather than what they cannot).

## 6. Ask better questions (be a detective in classroom)

Adopt an inquiry mind-set. This is about asking investigative questions around the learner. What do I know about how this particular child or young person learns? What are their strengths in maths and how do they differ in geography? What are successful hooks to get them interested? What motivates them to learn? What aspects of their learning behaviours need to be developed? This helps break the cycle of starting with questions about what we know about a learner's diagnosis or condition.

## 7. Catch your learners doing the right thing

Notice a learner's strengths and build on these, however small.



## Planning Inclusive Lessons

Art and design is an essential means of creative expression that can boost self-esteem and give learners the agency needed to develop and communicate their personal ideas, observations, and creations. It lends learners opportunities to develop both individually and collaboratively, the latter highlighting the importance of working together for a common purpose to demonstrate to learners that their contribution is important. Thereby art and design connects learners to the wider world in ways that other subject areas cannot.

When planning schemes of work, teachers need to consider how to make the curricular goals in art and design accessible and inclusive for all learners. Potential barriers to learning for individuals should be anticipated alongside a pathway to ensure these learners can actively participate in the best possible way. Planning should clearly identify what children and young people will learn. Teachers should consider factors that support each learner's needs, and factors that may inhibit or prevent learning such as use of equipment, environmental sensitivity risks, gaps in knowledge of vocabulary or processes. Teachers should also be mindful of how to balance adult support alongside opportunities for independent learning, ensuring that tasks are broken down and build incrementally.

The range of pedagogical approaches that art and design can offer, is useful for many learners to overcome some of the barriers that may present themselves in other curriculum areas. Indeed, some learners may thrive, enjoying the prospect to express their ideas in a way that is unique to them.

## Creating an Inclusive Environment

The benefits of art and design can have a profound effect on learners, not only through developing knowledge of art and its associated practices but, in addition, the cultivation of self-confidence that the nurturing of creativity can bring. In this sense, it is vital to carefully consider the classroom spaces and the learning environment to ensure all learners can fully access this curriculum area. There can be challenges for learners with physical and sensory issues, as well as for those with self-regulating behaviours.

Consider the practical layout of the room and seating. Do learners with a physical disability have the appropriate space to work? Do learners who struggle with fine motor skills have a broader resource base? Do learners with more sensory needs have access to adapted visual or auditory aids? Some learners' needs can lead them to struggle to work as part of a group and they may benefit from working more individually. Build in plenty of discussion time where all learners feel safe to voice their ideas. Explain how experimentation is an opportunity to develop ideas and that there is not one correct way to do this. Provide a variety of model examples to support learners and develop their skills and confidence. As a further part of planning, always test a practical task before a lesson, as this can pinpoint techniques that may need to be adapted. Sharing these findings as part of modelling a task to learners will be a valuable learning opportunity for them.

There may be circumstances when pre-teaching can be planned to ensure a learner or group has access to new vocabulary, information or resources before the lesson takes place. This will help those who may struggle to engage, in that they are prepared for the lesson experience.

## Curriculum Considerations

Art and design teaching and learning should offer a progression of knowledge and through a range of pedagogical approaches, access a wide range of processes, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, collage, textile and digital art. Learners should have the opportunity to learn about a range of artists, craft makers, designers and architects from across the genres, as well as across the wider historical and contemporary cultural world. Learners should be given opportunities to develop ideas, experiment with techniques and processes, and present their findings through evaluating their own work and that of others. Sketchbooks are paramount opportunities for capturing these learning journeys. Another consideration is the cross-curricular opportunities that art can bring.



## Key Stage 1

Key Stage 1 builds upon what was learnt in EYFS with further opportunities given to develop fine motor skills, experiment with a broader range of media and become more independent artists. There should be regular opportunities for learners to practise their fine motor skills through making using a variety of media, as well as regular opportunities to experiment, for example mixing primary colours. Practical activities should be accompanied by visual resources including videos, photos or examples of artwork. Additionally, any new vocabulary should be introduced, displayed and used in context by adults regularly. Equipment should be broad-based, so that all can access the lesson. Independence should be nurtured. Although sketchbooks are not mandatory until Key Stage 2, they are beneficial to use throughout the primary phase and all learners will enjoy using them.

## Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 builds upon and expands learners' knowledge of art and design, providing them further opportunities to learn the subject. Sketchbooks are used to record observations and experiment with ideas; all learners benefit from being taught and modelled how to use a sketchbook, including annotations, sketches, collages, mock-up and final outcomes. The contextual side of art is expanded upon to include architects in the range of artists and designers. Learners will start to develop an appreciation of artists and designers as they look at similar and different ways artists have worked across time and contexts. Learners will continue to experiment and revisit art and design techniques and methods to improve their mastery allowing them to be confident with their experimentation and expression of ideas.

## Strategies to Scaffold Learning

### *How can I support learners who struggle to access lessons because of literacy difficulties?*

- Provide visual aids to enable learners to identify artists and their work, as well as to identify equipment and media.
- Provide a word and/or picture bank for the learner to refer to during guided and independent activities.
- Use strategies such as modelling, demonstrating and imitating to support learners in understanding the step-by-step processes.

### *How can I support learners who struggle to retain vocabulary?*

- Learners will hear and use a range of specific vocabulary including pattern, colour, tone, texture, line, shape, form and space. Discuss and display any key vocabulary together with its meaning. Practise saying them together.
- Provide visual word banks that are accessible to the learners.
- Ensure that the vocabulary becomes embedded by referring to it regularly during lessons and whilst modelling.

### *How can I support learners who struggle with fine motor skills?*

- Consider using frames or adhesives (e.g., masking tape) that hold down learners' work to surfaces in cases where learners may struggle to hold a resource in place. Provide learners with larger scale materials to work on and gradually decrease the scale as they acquire greater control.
- Encourage learners to experiment with different media, for example when drawing offer chunkier graphite sticks as well as soft 'B' range pencils. Similarly, offer a range of painting application media – some learners may prefer a sponge to a brush or may even use their fingers at times.
- Plan each lesson well in advance, to consider points where learners may struggle and allow for adult guidance accordingly. Use of scissors can be a source of frustration for some learners and wider-handled or easy grip scissors can be a useful aid.
- Engaging in art and design activity is great for helping build fine motor skills for all children. Learners will enjoy and benefit from using malleable media such as clay or air dough.

## Case Study

***A learner in Year 3 has a range of complex learning needs, including a language disorder associated with social communication difficulties. His speech was late to develop and he struggles with expressive language. He finds using fine motor skills challenging and can react to loud noises. Despite his communication difficulties, a safe and nurturing learning environment has enabled him to take part in discussions and offer his thoughts.***

*The learner has previously found art lessons challenging due to his struggles with fine motor control. He has an EHCP and therefore has an adult working alongside him to familiarise him with processes through pre-teaching. This pre-exposure has allowed him to explore any new media in a safe and sensory way, and the discussions stimulated have been instrumental in giving him confidence to fully participate in lessons. The adults that support him have worked on removing any pressures and ensuring he is comfortable; these actions have enabled him to grow in confidence and to see art as an enjoyable activity.*

*Nurturing a learning environment in which Child A can feel comfortable is at the root of his participation. This is alongside ensuring he has the practical means to do so – the correct choice of equipment, the right space and any extra sensory resources to support him. For example, when undertaking a lesson on portraits in the style of Picasso, Child A benefitted from having a selection of 2D shapes to hand so that he could feel and visualise the properties before drawing them. These supports are all the more crucial, given his propensity to prefer to work alone. Art gives him the opportunities to express himself and develop his own ideas.*

## How can I support learners who struggle with attention?

- Reflect on the positioning of learners within the classroom to maximise their engagement. Some learners will benefit from working and interacting with selected others. A calm environment will help minimise distractions.
- Consider adapting the lesson to break it into chunks that permit time for paired or group talk and allow tasks to be completed across manageable stages.
- Pre-expose learners to the content of the lesson by sharing with them any resources to be used as well as the content of the lesson, perhaps the work of an artist they are learning about or an example of the kind of outcomes they will produce. This will support learners to engage in the processes.
- Giving time for learners to look back through their sketchbook to make connections to what they already know, which in turn can help nurture motivation.
- Allow movement breaks if and when necessary and give learners classroom jobs such as handing out a resource. This will support learners who struggle with self-regulation.
- All learners should routinely clean and tidy away the equipment they have used and time for this needs to be built into lessons, as it is a useful tool for encouraging independence as well as managing transitions.

## How can I support learners who need additional time to develop conceptual understanding?

- Provide opportunities for small group learning either before (pre-teach) or during the lesson. This will support learners and allow time to ask questions or explore resources alongside adult intervention. These opportunities are part of the repetition process needed to maximise capacity to build up conceptual understanding.
- Take time to model and demonstrate each element of a process, allowing learners to develop their understanding through a step-by-step approach. This will benefit all learners as it allows for an active participatory approach.
- Showing outcomes from the previous lesson's work can be a useful memory aid.
- Have visual aids in the form of worked examples that the learners can have to hand when completing independent tasks.



## These strategies scaffold learning across all year groups for practical art lessons:

- Share information visually as well as through discussion.
- Allow sufficient talk time to encourage thinking and idea sharing.
- Key vocabulary should be clearly displayed and used repetitively throughout lessons.
- Introduce each piece of equipment – name it, explain what it does, model how it can be used or applied.
- Model processes on a step-by-step basis, allowing learners time to do practical tasks alongside the teacher. It is important the teachers' thought processes are shared aloud.
- Ensure any equipment to be used is fully accessible to all and adapted for individuals as necessary to ensure all can fully participate.
- Support learners to develop their fine motor skills through regular opportunities.