



Lostwithiel School

Strategies for supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs in Art and Design

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL MENTAL HEALTH

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH (SEMH)

Strategies for supporting learners who struggle with attention, lack confidence, or find change and transition difficult in Art and Design:

Adult Support:

- Build consistent, supportive relationships with learners and provide calm reassurance during lessons.
- Assign roles (e.g. material distributor, art station monitor) to promote responsibility and engagement.
- Offer encouragement and praise to build self-esteem and reduce fear of failure.

Strategies for Scaffolding Learning:

- Break down tasks into manageable steps and use checklists or task boards to support focus.
- Avoid frequent task changes; allow enough time for pupils to immerse themselves in their creative process.
- Provide visual cues, demonstrations, and models to aid attention and reduce anxiety.

Learning Environment:

- Organise the space to reduce clutter and overstimulation.
- Seat pupils in quieter areas with minimal distractions if needed.
- Allow for flexible seating or standing arrangements depending on sensory and focus needs.

Pre-warning of Change:

- Notify pupils of any changes to lesson structure, materials, or groupings using visuals, social stories, or verbal prompts in advance.
- Use consistent routines to help pupils feel safe and prepared.

Supporting resources available include:

- Now & Next boards
- Visual timetables
- Reward charts
- Spot cards
- Time to talk
- Social stories or scripts
- TIS support (group or individual)



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- Home/school communication tools

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

Strategies for supporting learners who struggle to retain vocabulary and/or comprehension in Art and Design:

Adult Support:

- Introduce and repeat key art vocabulary (e.g. texture, tone, blend) throughout the lesson.
- Use gestures and visual prompts when explaining new terms or techniques.
- Check for understanding frequently and rephrase instructions where necessary.

Strategies for Scaffolding Learning:

- Use a Visual Lesson Plan with step-by-step pictures of the creative process.
- Provide visual word banks and image prompts to support understanding of art-specific language.
- Take photographs of the pupil completing steps of an artwork to help with recall and sequencing.

Cues and Communication Aids:

- Encourage use of a 'help card' if a pupil is confused or needs additional support.
- Offer opportunities for non-verbal responses, such as pointing or demonstrating.

Supporting resources available include:

- Talking tins
- PECs symbols
- Visual timetables
- Now & Next boards
- Talking books or whiteboards
- SALT support
- iPads for video/photo modelling
- Visual step-by-step guides



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SENSORY AND PHYSICAL

Strategies for supporting learners with sensory and/or physical difficulties in Art and Design:

Strategies for Scaffolding Learning:

- Offer adapted materials (e.g. chunky brushes, scissors with spring support, textured surfaces).
- Reduce sensory overload by offering choice of media (e.g. dry media vs wet paint).
- Allow choice in materials and methods to increase comfort and reduce stress.

Learning Environment:

- Reduce glare or overly bright lighting.
- Provide workspace with reduced noise and movement where needed.
- Allow learners to wear aprons or gloves if they are sensitive to texture.

Pre-teach and Sensory Regulation:

- Pre-teach any unfamiliar techniques in a quieter space to reduce anxiety.
- Provide sensory breaks or access to a calm corner when needed.
- Avoid activities with strong smells or messy textures unless prepared in advance.

Adult Support:

- Support motor skills with hand-over-hand guidance if needed.
- Reinforce positive effort rather than focusing on the outcome.
Supporting resources available include:
- Adapted tools and equipment (e.g. grips, left-handed scissors)
- Sensory diet tools (e.g. movement breaks)
- Ear defenders
- Fidgets or calming tools
- Chew bangle
- Voice-activated software
- Laptops/tablets for visual prompts or drawing
- Move & sit cushions



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COGNITION AND LEARNING

Strategies for supporting learners with literacy/numeracy-based difficulties or those who require additional time to develop conceptual understanding in Art and Design:

Adult Support:

- Model processes clearly and repeatedly.
- Use demonstration, scaffolding, and guided practice.
- Provide time and encouragement for learners to explore at their own pace.

Strategies for Scaffolding Learning:

- Break tasks into steps and support with visuals or written checklists.
- Provide pictorial or photographic guides to show the sequence of a task.
- Encourage verbal or visual planning (e.g. sketching ideas) before beginning a final piece.

Pre-teach:

- Introduce tools, materials, and techniques in advance using visual resources or videos.
- Prepare pupils with examples or partially completed models to build confidence.

Supporting resources available include:

- Task boards
- Word and image mats with key vocabulary
- Talking tins/whiteboards
- Visual timers
- Now & Next boards
- Pre-teach and post-teach sessions
- Coloured overlays
- Visual step-by-step instructions
- iPads for photographing or videoing creative processes
- Dyslexia-friendly print materials