**Differentiation for Pupils with Down Syndrome**

(Secondary)

**Get to Know a Pupil’s Learning Profile**

Knowing your pupil’s learning profile will help you to plan and implement meaningful and relevant activities and programmes of work

You need to know:

* Strengths & challenges
* Literacy level
* Understanding/comprehension level
* Writing & spelling level
* Attention span
* Listening skills
* Visual and/or auditory memory skills (following directions)
* Sequencing skills (auditory & visual)
* Learning style:
	+ auditory learner
	+ visual learner
	+ kinaesthetic learner (hands on)
	+ experiential learner
* Communication skills

- expressive

* + receptive
	+ social language

When you know your pupil’s learning profile you can set up your differentiated programme.

**Planning Your Goals & Objectives**

Once you have set up your class environment, you will need to plan your goals & objectives.

You need to decide:

* What is essential for your *pupil with DS* to learn?
* What do you want your pupil with DS to learn, *based on the objectives for the whole class?*

ie:

* What is the fundamental objective for your pupil with DS for this topic/programme of study?
* What is possible for your pupil to learn based on their learning profile?
* What is necessary for your pupil to learn?
* What is useful for your pupil to learn?
* How many goals/objectives is it realistic for your pupil with DS to learn in the time scale?

**Planning the Steps Needed to Reach This Goal**

The next step is to break down the steps your pupil with DS will need to take in order to reach their goal.

* Use your knowledge of their learning profile
* Feed these steps into their IEP
* Use a variety of short tasks, varied in nature so that your pupil will stay focussed for longer
* Set tasks which are appropriate to the pupil’s level of skill and learning profile

ie: visual, concrete, hands on and experiential activities

* Vary the level of difficulty of tasks, which can also help boost concentration.
* Find or prepare additional differentiated materials for teaching & learning

Use: Visual

 Concrete

 Hands on materials

* Use materials which reflect a pupil’s LIFE

 UNDERSTANDING

 & SKILL LEVEL

* Interact with your pupil in ways that help a pupil enjoy and participate in learning activities.
* Use teaching strategies which work for your pupil!

**Teaching Strategies**

* Use teaching strategies which complement the pupil’s learning profile and will therefore help a pupil with DS to learn
* Use teaching strategies that will enhance a pupil’s strength & build skills from weaknesses

**General Principles:**

1. Don’t assume the pupil with Down syndrome will transfer knowledge automatically
2. Reinforce the learning of abstract concepts with visual & concrete material
3. Offer additional explanation & demonstration
4. Offer extra opportunities for additional repetition
5. Build in continuous checks to establish that previously learned material has been retained!

**Lesson Structure:**

Prepare the pupil for any changes to their timetable

Make sure the pupil is aware of their next activity

**To support comprehension**:

* Sit at the front of the class
* Simple & clear instructions
* Speak directly to the pupil
* Reinforce speech with

Visual backup (photos and pictures where possible)

Gesture

Concrete material

* Write all new vocabulary on the board
* When others from the class answer, repeat their answers aloud
* Rephrase and repeat words & phrases that are central to their understanding.
* Give enough time for a pupil with DS to process language & respond
* Check their understanding – ask the pupil to repeat back an instruction
* Emphasise key words, reinforce visually wherever possible
* Avoid ambiguous vocabulary

**To support memory**:

* Limit the amount of verbal instructions given at any one time
* Allow time for pupils to process and respond to verbal input
* Repeat individually to pupil any instructions given to the class as a whole

**To support written work:**

* If copying off the board select or highlight a shorter version for the pupil with DS to copy, focussing on what is essential for the pupil
* Use the cloze method
* Decide on any alternative methods of recording – scribe, cloze, laptop

**To support a short concentration span:**

* Build a range of sort focussed and clearly defined tasks within a lesson
* Vary the level of demand from task to task
* Use peers to keep pupil on task
* Vary the type of support
* Consider the value of double lessons: would the second half be better used for consolidation?

**Enhancing Communication**

a) In class

* Check the pupil’s level of understanding of what you say
* Gain the pupil’s attention before you begin to speak
* Use simple sentences
* Use simple questions – the question ‘why?’ is generally difficult
* Use visual cues
* Use gesture, sign & symbol to support understanding

b) Social Language Skills

* Set up a social language/communication group
* Role playing
* Teach greetings,

turn-taking

staying on topic

endings

c) Expanding Language: *imitate, expand, repeat*

* Imitating the pupil’s language level, (“I see-dog”)
* Expand a level, (“I see *a* dog”)
* Have pupil repeat what you say: I see *a* dog.

**Behaviour Management**

How to build positive behaviour

* Lots of praise
* Small steps
* Build in tangible rewards – favourite activities work well
* Reward charts with stickers or charts
* Praise & rewards should be given in a range of situations, 1:1, small group & whole class.
* Use rewards that motivate! Find the reward your pupil likes!
* Let the pupil know what you are rewarding him/her for – name the success or the behaviour

How to manage negative behaviour

* Take attention away from the inappropriate behaviour
* Make explicit the consequences of the poor behaviour

Loss of reward

* Use time out – a quiet time of ‘no attention’ as sanction.

Thanks

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