**

# Generic Tips

# Pupils with Learning Difficulties

## Generic Tips for Learning Difficulties

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| classroom_tip | Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods) |

1. **Use ICT technology in your class and visual means of presentation of information where possible.** These could include PowerPoint presentations, UDL, videos and interactive whiteboards (IWB).
2. **Plan experiential learning sessions for your pupils.** This will assist them to feel part of a team, practice their group work skills, and interact and socialise with their peers.
3. **Avoid ‘a one size fits all approach’.** Adapt the intervention to meet the individual or particular group needs. Pupils who speak English as a Second Language might need intensive social skill instruction to promote acculturation and peer acceptance. Children with disabilities might need adaptive curriculum and learning strategies. Most children will need a combination of different strategies that are matched to their particular strengths, needs and backgrounds.
4. **Monitor your pupils’ behaviour during the lesson and during school breaks in order to determine if there are signs of bullying.** Types of bullying could be either verbal or physical. If any of these signs are brought to your attention, inform the head teacher immediately and take action.
5. **Encourage teamwork in the class and pair up these pupils with more able peers.** This will help pupils feel valued and included and enhance their participation in the class.
6. **Use differentiation techniques in your class.** For example, differentiate the tasks for the pupils who are struggling to acquire the literacy skills. Provide single worksheets which gets progressively more difficult so as to respond to the various learning needs of your pupils.
7. **Monitor the progress of pupils not only academically but also socially** in terms of marginalisation, social interactions with peers, behavior at home and self-esteem (McCaleb, 2013).
8. **Make sure that you accurately identify the pupils’ talents and strengths, so that you can utilise them appropriately during your lesson.** For example, if a pupil is talented in theatre, introduce more role-playing activities into the lesson.

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| school_tip | School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods) |

### **Announcement / Sign at School**

### Equip the school with visual prompts and signs which are related to school life, events, daily schedule and national days (Hall, Meyer and Rose, 2012; BBC active, 2010)

### **Community**

1. **Create an inclusive culture within your school,** for example by organising workshops and seminars with academics. Such efforts will raise awareness on cognitive functioning and will provide teachers with the necessary teaching tools and inclusive practices, which will in turn contribute in enhancing pupils’ cognitive skills (Hoppey, & McLeskey, 2013).
2. **Organise awareness days and education events** in which parents and teachers are invited to get information about the diversity of educational needs and abilities of pupils.

### **Curricular Adaptations**

1. **Create an inclusive culture within your school,** for example by organising workshops and seminars with academics. Such efforts will raise awareness on cognitive functioning and will provide teachers with the necessary teaching tools and inclusive practices, which will in turn contribute in enhancing pupils’ cognitive skills (Hoppey, & McLeskey, 2013).
2. **Provide additional class support, such as teaching assistants.**
3. **Εquip the school with tablets and personal computers for teachers and pupils.**
4. **Make necessary curricular adaptations:** differentiate the resources, allow extra time for those pupils with learning differences to complete their work, make appropriate adjustments to their homework and workload, and invest in on-going assessment rather than summative.

### **Discipline**

### Make sure that before you make any decisions about pupils’ behaviour, you gain more information about their history from appropriate persons in the school.

### **Other (Planning and Timetabling)**

**Schedule special education collaboration meetings, “vertical” planning across primary, secondary, and post-secondary, and school-wide goal planning with all school stakeholders.** These highlight the various levels of planning involved to support inclusive teaching efforts for pupils with disabilities.

### **Scheduling Events**

**Organise awareness days and education events** in which parents and teachers are invited to get information about the diversity of educational needs and abilities of pupils.

### **School Celebrations / Events / Activities**

**Organise awareness days and education events** in which parents and teachers are invited to get information about the diversity of educational needs and abilities of pupils.

### **School Purchases**

1. **Εquip the school with tablets and personal computers for teachers and pupils.**
2. **Make necessary curricular adaptations:** differentiate the resources, allow extra time for those pupils with learning differences to complete their work, make appropriate adjustments to their homework and workload, and invest in on-going assessment rather than summative.

### **Student Council**

**Organise extra-curricular activities** such as sport clubs and activities in order to include all pupils during this time.

### **Pupil Support**

### Provide additional class support, such as teaching assistants.

1. **Ensure that pupils who appear to be anxious, depressed or may present with low self-esteem are referred to a counselor or school psychologist** based on your country’s educational system and available resources.

### **Teacher Professional Development**

1. **Create an inclusive culture within your school,** for example by organising workshops and seminars with academics. Such efforts will raise awareness on cognitive functioning and will provide teachers with the necessary teaching tools and inclusive practices, which will in turn contribute in enhancing pupils’ cognitive skills (Hoppey, & McLeskey, 2013).
2. **Provide training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which can help teachers to adapt their materials and practices to the needs of all pupils to develop cognitive skills (Hall, Meyer and Rose, 2012).**

***For instance:*** workshop on UDL’s three principles (see below):

Principle 1: Provide multiple means of representation (recognition network).

For example, this workshop will include how to use different means for interdisciplinary lessons. E.g. the use of videos for representation of historical events in history, digital storytelling movies

* Principle 2: Provide multiple means of action and expression (strategic network).
* For example, you can use different means of communication such as tablets, mobile devices, forums, and social media so as pupils to feel more comfortable to express themselves.
* Principle 3: Provide multiple means of engagement (affective network).
* For example, the workshop will consider on how to take pupils’ interests in technology into account in order to engage them in the learning process. This might be on how to make use of social media effectively, the use of mobile devices and tablets or software applications based on the purpose of the lesson.

Useful resource: <http://www.udlcenter.org/print/371>

Guidelines: [UDL Guidelines – Educator Worksheet](https://sites.google.com/site/udlguidelinesexamples/) available at <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines/downloads>

1. **Provide ICT training to teachers**, so they can use the technology with their pupils. Teachers must be in a position to use ICT before using it to teach their pupils. (Jung, 2005).
2. **Arrange one-day workshops for teachers** to which you can invite external agencies such as drama therapists and educational psychologists to demonstrate how to create experiential learning and support the pupils.

### **Technology**

### Εquip the school with tablets and personal computers for teachers and pupils.

1. **Make necessary curricular adaptations:** differentiate the resources, allow extra time for those pupils with learning differences to complete their work, make appropriate adjustments to their homework and workload, and invest in on-going assessment rather than summative.