



# Autism Spectrum Disorder/ Condition (ASD/ ASC)

## What is it?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that refers to a broad range of conditions characterised by challenges to social skills, repetitive behaviours and communication difficulties. As a “spectrum condition”, we need to take into account that each student with autism is an **individual** and there is **not a “one size fits all” approach**.

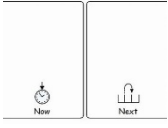
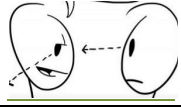
\*\* Please note that girls may present very differently to boys; often autism can go unnoticed. \*\*

Students with autism will mostly struggle with understanding the world around them and will need support in developing strategies to lead their life independently.

## Signs and symptoms (all)

Inappropriate actions towards others, not taking into account age or status of listener	Unrelated accent or repetition of words	Misunderstand facial expressions
May have an obsession with a particular topic	Finds changes to structured day challenging	May find sensory changes difficult (wearing different clothing, particular noises)

## Strategies (all)

Use pupils name before giving instructions	Individual workstation if they wish	Explicit, clear, ordered instructions (maybe one at a time)	Ask student to repeat instruction back you
Don't use phrases such as “do you want to...” Give two options and the student chooses	Visual clues to make information meaningful	Use example of completed work on desk so student knows intended outcome and can magpie	Use a task board (now, next) 
Give small, explicit targets	Do not expect eye contact 	Allow time to process	Clear routine needed at all times
Sit near teacher but not near door	Structured transitions- provide an activity	Changes shared well in advance (use visual timetable)	A visual aid (eg red card) that student can use to alert teacher that they are struggling rather than having to call out
Minimise sensory overload (is your projector making a noise? Is the hall echoing? Use ear defenders)			



<u>Signs and symptoms (Girls)</u>	<u>Strategies (Girls )</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Anxiety from wanting to fit in</li><li>● Likes routine</li><li>● Quiet and shy</li><li>● Compliant and passive</li><li>● Won't ask for help</li><li>● May avoid work in order to mask difficulties</li><li>● Outburst</li><li>● Perfectionists- may not answer a question in case they get it wrong</li><li>● Determined</li><li>● Like to be in control</li><li>● May not have a strong sense of identity</li><li>● Exhaustion from imitation and mirroring</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Select a partner to model behaviours</li><li>● Use social stories to explain any fears</li><li>● Take an interest in any special interests</li><li>● Role play to explain how to respond in social situations</li><li>● Provide structure for break &amp; lunch</li><li>● Be honest about emotions</li><li>● Pre teach basic content of lessons to increase confidence</li></ul>