

SEND &amp; INCLUSION · ALL GRADES

# Autism-Friendly Classroom

A practical checklist

## How to use

Walk around your classroom with this list in hand. Tick what's already done. Pick three NOs to address this term. The aim isn't to overhaul everything — it's to make small, concrete, durable changes.

## Sensory environment

Item	Status
Lighting is not flickering or harshly fluorescent	_____
Window areas can be dimmed if needed	_____
Background noise is minimised (rugs, soft chairs)	_____
Children can use ear defenders if available	_____
Strong smells are avoided (perfume, cleaning)	_____
A low-stim 'quiet area' exists in or near the room	_____
Wall display is not overwhelming	_____
The child has space to move to if overstimulated	_____

## Communication

Item	Status
Instructions are given one at a time	_____



Item	Status
Visuals support all spoken instructions	_____
Idioms and figurative language are explained	_____
The child has time to process before responding	_____
I avoid sarcasm and vague language	_____
The child has a clear way to indicate confusion	_____
I check the child has understood, not just heard	_____

## Predictability

Item	Status
A visual timetable is displayed and updated daily	_____
Transitions are warned in advance	_____
Routines are kept the same as far as possible	_____
Changes to routine are flagged ahead of time	_____
The child knows what's happening in each lesson	_____
Supply teachers know the routines	_____

## Social and emotional

Item	Status
The child has at least one positive peer connection	_____
Group work has clear roles and expectations	_____
Unstructured time (break, lunch) has support	_____
Special interests are valued, not dismissed	_____
The child has an exit plan / safe person	_____
Meltdowns are not punished — they're supported	_____
The child has a passport / one-page profile	_____



## What 'autism-friendly' really means

It is not about banning fluorescent lights or never raising your voice. It is about making the classroom PREDICTABLE, COMMUNICATIVE, SENSORILY MANAGEABLE, and KIND. A child who knows what is going to happen, who has clear ways to ask for help, who isn't being bombarded with sensory input, and who feels respected — that child can usually learn well in a mainstream class. This benefits autistic children most. It also helps almost every other child.

