

## Strategies used in St.Peter's C.E. Primary School to support Autism

- We have a range of resources being used in school, not all children will need these resources at one time.
- Different resources are used to support different strategies.

# Organisation

- Visual Timetables
- All classrooms from Nursery up to Year 6 have visual timetables.
- Autistic children like routine and the visual timetable helps the child to focus on what is happening during the day.
- Some children need individual timetables where the teaching assistant goes through it with the child first thing in the morning and then again after lunchtime.
- As the children move up the school they move away from pictures and the teacher will write the subjects that they are going to access during the day on to the white board.
- During unstructured sessions in the Infant department some children need to be directed to different activities. They have their own activity board. Instead of flitting from one activity to another and becoming bored, the child refers to the activity board to see which activity to complete next. This also makes them more independent and not relying on the teacher or teaching assistant to direct them to different activities.

### Now and Next Board

- Some children find it difficult to focus/ concentrate for a whole lesson on one thing, to focus the children more we explain to the child they are going to complete this piece of work now, and next we will.....

### Keyrings

- If we want the children to continue to show good sitting, we keep showing the good sitting card to the child. We also have larger symbols in the whole class setting in both departments to focus the whole class.

- Some children find it difficult to visualise or understand how much writing is expected of them in a lesson. We use a board with examples on of how much we expect the child to complete.

- Learning Breaks

- If a child is showing signs of fatigue they are able to go out of the classroom with an adult for a couple of minutes to either walk around school, go to the toilet, they then go back into class.

- Task boards

- These are for individual purposes, eg how to begin a lesson, changing for P.E. or what to do when a child first comes into school in the morning.
- They are also used with older children to organise themselves for the start of a lesson, to become more independent and not rely on a teacher or teaching assistant to tell them every step they have to complete.

# Behaviour

- Traffic Lights
  - Children have the traffic lights on their table in front of them. They start on green, if their behaviour deteriorates the child moves to amber, teaching assistant puts the amber coloured circle on the card, if their behaviour deteriorates even more they move to red, teaching assistant puts red circle on the card and child is then given a consequence.
- Help Hand
  - To stop children from shouting out for help and disturbing the rest of the class, they show the teacher or teaching assistant a help hand, as some children find it difficult in communicating their needs.
- Cards in assembly
  - Some children find it difficult to sit quietly or sit still in assembly this results in finding it difficult to concentrate. Child is shown good sitting card to focus them in, can also give child a couch ball or a fiddly toy.
- Behaviour and reward charts
  - Some Autistic children have behaviour problems, child is given 2/3 targets to work on. We have various designs of behaviour charts and children can choose their tokens that they would like to use to go on their chart.
- Melt Down
  - When children are unable to cope with the classroom environment for any reason, e.g if they are feeling anxious, sensory overload, change in teacher, the child is taught how to use the time out card, they will hold the card up and the teacher then knows they need to go out to a designated place in view of an adult. After melt down the teacher/ teaching assistant will talk to the child about what triggered it off and what we can do next time to avoid it. Some children prefer to draw a picture of what happened and talk it through with teacher or teaching assistant.

# Sensory

- Classroom Audit
  - This pre-empts any possible triggers for individual children
- Individual Sensory Profile
  - If a child has sensory issues the profile is done before the child moves up to the next class and teachers are then made aware of any triggers, eg some children have scribble pads where they can scribble whilst the class teacher is talking. The child is still listening but by scribbling it's sending a message to the brain to give sensory feedback.
- Screen
  - This is to block out any distractions from other children or any environment distractions.

# Social Skills

- Social Groups

- We run 4 groups, 2 in the Infant department, 2 in the Junior department.
- The social groups help the children to focus on good sitting, good listening, turn taking and talking to peers.
- The groups usually run for a 6 week programme with 4 children in a group, one area of concern is addressed at one time.

- Social Stories

- Some children are unable to understand social rules i.e. lining up at playtimes, listening to the teacher etc. Social stories are written around the behaviours of the child. The children have the stories read to them everyday usually before a particular time i.e. before playtime (for lining up) to remind the child of the expected behaviour.

# Understanding Language

- Plan do and review - Infants
- Mind Maps - Juniors
- This is a simple strategy for helping children to organise their thinking and increase their vocabulary, help children who have difficulty ordering their thoughts or expressing their ideas. They benefit from talking with an adult about their activities.
- Barrier Games
- These can help to develop a range of oral language skills, giving and receiving instructions, asking and answering questions, developing descriptive vocabulary, developing auditory memory.



# Transition

- Some children find it difficult to move into next year group and get very anxious, fearful, mixed emotions.
- For these children we do a transition book which children take home over the holidays.
- The book contains photographs of their new classroom, class teacher, teaching assistant, where the children line up in the playground, where the children hang their coat, put their lunch box.
- For Year 6 children we do a transition period over 6 weeks. We have a group of 6 children that we feel are anxious about starting secondary school. We discuss the timetable, homework, expectations of the school, uniform, P.E.kit, how they will get around the school building, what equipment they will need, how to be organised.

