

# BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS

Crafting a successful start to the new school/college year for pupils who have Down's syndrome



Arrange a check in meeting with the family fairly soon into the term; give it a couple of weeks to get to know their child first and then you will have something to talk about. This meeting can be used to:

- Find out more about their child for instance their personal interests, what support they might need and what strategies work for them.
- Ask any questions you might have.
- Discuss and agree short term targets.
- To put an intimate care plan in place if needed (eg if the child is not fully continent).
- Talk to parents about how they would like you to communicate with them.
- To discuss and plan for how the child can be included in the whole life of the school, eg extra-curricular activities, sports, school plays and trips/residentials.
- To discuss the curriculum for the next few weeks and agree how the parents can support with pre-learning and homework.
- To discuss how progress will be measured and reported against individual targets  
Schedule future meetings for progress updates and target setting.
- Prepare a one-page profile with the pupil and their family to share key information with your colleagues (including non-teaching staff) to enable them to be included in all aspects of the school. A one page profile might be helpful for this. [You can see an example here.](#)



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- Read the pupil's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and any professional reports, making a note of anything you need to ask the parents or your colleagues/SENCO about.
- Think about how you will share information about inclusive practice and why this is important with your colleagues, including non-teaching staff. Inclusion is the role of everyone in the school not just the class teacher or SENCO.
- Consider the terminology you use when discussing or writing about your new pupil who has Down's syndrome (see [the DSA's terminology guide](#)) and share information about this with your colleagues.
- Ensure that you have had a really good handover meeting with previous staff/SENCO before the start of term (or as soon as possible in the new term).
- Familiarise yourself with any specialised ICT/tech/requirements for worksheets, resources etc to support your planning for the pupil's learning in your classroom.
- Meet with the child's Learning Support Assistants and agree how you will work together, ensuring that there is sufficient time for you to plan the curriculum and your teaching, and for them to produce differentiated resources to support this.
- Always presume competence: children who have Down's syndrome have the capacity to learn and continue to do so throughout their lives, where they have received good teaching with the right support from educators who expected them to be able to succeed.
- Practise an air of confidence that will reassure the children - even if you don't feel like you know what you are doing inside!
- Check out what [resources are available from the Down's Syndrome Association that will help you welcome the pupil to your classroom.](#)



Thank you to Nancy Gedge (SEND specialist/teacher) for contributing to this checklist.