

Introduction

This guide briefly explains autism, describes the principles of good autism practice, and provides some practical tips and tools for improving the accessibility of the secondary English curriculum for autistic pupils.

It should be utilised to enable you to support your department staff to improve teaching and learning for autistic pupils. The SEND Code of Practice, the Ofsted Framework and the Teachers Standards emphasise your duty, as a Head of Department, to ensure consistent good practice in making the teaching and learning of English accessible, so that all pupils make progress.

Ofsted describes an **outstanding school** as one that “...shows a consistently high quality of teaching and learning in the great majority of its classrooms. **In outstanding lessons, all the students make progress**”.

Understanding autism

The AET approaches autism as a different way of being. The Autistic Young Experts¹ state that:

“Autism is a difference not a deficit. Differences are to be valued not ‘fixed’. My normal is different from your normal and the aim shouldn’t be conformity but wellbeing.”

This is not to suggest that autistic pupils do not experience significant barriers to learning and wellbeing. It is simply that those barriers are external – the sensory and social environment, inflexible systems, being misunderstood by others, etc.

[Why Autism Is a Difference, Not a Deficit](#)

