

Project background

A submission to the DFES by Kent LEA sought additional support for a collaborative project on inclusion. It focused on the Thanet and Dover District and involved Advanced Skills Teachers from both special and secondary mainstream schools.

Following consultation with the mainstream project schools and Local Learning Groups, the priority focus was identified as pupils with language and communication difficulties. Various key issues were highlighted, particularly Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Social Communication and Behaviour Management. Nevertheless, the main philosophy was based on the belief that:

If children cannot learn the way you teach,
you have to teach the way they learn

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Resource materials

With this philosophy in mind, the team produced a set of strategies that can be used by teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) in mainstream schools. Some schools may choose to keep the booklet in a central location although it was primarily devised as a practical resource for use in the classroom.

There is no right or wrong way to use this booklet and we would advise teachers and TAs to dip into the resource as they feel necessary, adapting any ideas they wish.

Our aim is to enable professionals to make sense of the differences these children in your class present.



Photographic project

As a result of the work carried out in both mainstream and special schools, it was agreed that it was necessary for schools to create an environment that encouraged the valuing of individuals and recognised differences.

This must be based on enhancing everyone's understanding of the differences presented by these children and the reasons why they behave the way they do, in order to 'make allowances'. This is true for both staff and pupils so that everyone has a shared understanding of the difficulties experienced.

In order to create such awareness, the team have produced a Photographic Pack that includes high quality images for use in discussion. The aim of the images was initially to provide a visual exhibition on what it was like to have communication difficulties but there soon arose a greater potential for the pack. It can be used in the classroom to promote discussion and open up debate for pupils to understand what it means to have these difficulties. For pupils with communication difficulties, the images can provide a useful starting point for exploring their feelings. Their ability to communicate verbally may be inhibited and a visual form is more appropriate for them. However, understanding is only the first step and suggestions and guidelines have been included to promote discussion and ideas of strategies.