

Teachers' resources: Inclusive Practice

Relationships and interactions

In all teaching situations, inclusive practices are underpinned by good relationships. These can be enhanced by:

- taking time to get to know each other, and appreciating each others' abilities and skills
- demonstrating - and expecting - mutual respect
- understanding and valuing the diversity within the group.

The classroom environment

Some learners will be affected more than others by various physical aspects of the classroom:

- the lighting (might be too bright or too dim), the acoustics (too echoey, too noisy)
- the furniture (unpleasant textures, too hard, wrong size), the layout (too cramped, too untidy).

Teachers need to observe, and if they notice any individual showing discomfort, they may find ways to mitigate it (e.g. wearing ear defenders, putting a cloth over a 'scratchy' table).

The online environment

When working online, there are a number of issues to consider, too:

- checking the compatibility with the online platform of any assistive technology that learners are already accustomed to using
- clarifying the protocols for speaking / listening / turn-taking (e.g. hand up to say something).

Materials and resources

It is vital that all learners can access the materials being used in the class. It is worth taking time to think about:

- the lay out and presentation of handouts (clear, uncluttered pages, large font)
- which format is most appropriate, or perhaps which options to offer the group (paper-based / video / audio materials)
- how to ensure accessibility to learners with sensory impairments (e.g. subtitling videos, or providing audio description, or transcriptions).

For more information and resources, see these websites and organisations:

SEN Magazine <https://senmagazine.co.uk/>

IATEFL Inclusive Practices and SEN SIG: <https://ipsen.iatefl.org/>

ELT well: www.ELTwell.co.uk

The National Down Syndrome Society: [Human Rights Organization for Individuals with Down syndrome | NDSS](http://www.ndss.org/)