

Return to School Plan for Students with ASD

Focus Area	Considerations	Strategies
Uniform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with ASD often have sensory issues – they may be under or over-sensitive to any of the seven senses. May be sensitive towards feelings on skin. May not care about 'grooming.' May have difficulty with co-ordination. May require support to organise school uniform. May need school uniform expectations spelled out very clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Social Stories to teach uniform expectations. Task Analysis to breakdown and teach grooming skills. Use photographs to support sequencing and organisation. Discuss possible adjustments with the school if the uniform is a sensory issue.
Contact with someone at school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have difficulty holding conversations. May have difficulty interpreting social cues about what is expected of them in situations. May prefer to spend time alone. May have a good ability to follow rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the names and pictures of the teachers who will be working with them. Specifically teach social skills. Use a model like 'Gradual Release of Responsibility model.' Develop a culture of inclusion. Be predictable – Use a visual schedule. Use First/Then. Use definite start and end times. Use a timer.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be good with facts figures and details. May like having things written down to help remember. May have difficulty understanding social rules. May have difficulties with noisy environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach social conventions for travel training using Social Stories. Develop a Help Card with problem solving strategies. Provide headphones to use on the bus.
Sleep routine (e.g. get up time being 7.30 allowing for minimum 8 hours sleep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have habits or rituals. May prefer things to stay the same or have a routine. May have a good ability to follow rules. May have difficulty with sleep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Social Stories to teach night routine/expectations. Provide definite start/finish times for sleep time. Develop a sleep routine/ritual with the student. Use a visual schedule to support this Have clear rules around screen time before bed
School Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be a logical thinker. May be good at visualising things. May have specialist knowledge in certain areas. May have difficulty with abstract ideas. May have a strong vocabulary. May be very focused or have intense interests. May prefer things to stay the same or have routines. May have habits or rituals. May find handwriting laborious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use interests to motivate. Provide visual supports and cues to enhance learning. Use symbols software E.g. Boardmaker or Writing with Symbols. Use a multi sensory approach. Use ICT. Provide choice boards. Use templates, graphic organisers or planning tools. Provide clear transitions. Order work tasks using visual schedules. Develop routines. Use buddy systems. Set simple and achievable goals and provide some control over the work (special interests).

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School Work		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide help seeking tools. ▪ Present the same concept in many different ways. ▪ Make tasks functional and relevant wherever possible. ▪ Ensure the student can predict what will happen next in a sequence of activities. ▪ Use statements of what you want, rather than what you don't want.
Attending school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May have a good ability to follow rules. ▪ May have difficulties with visually 'busy' environments. ▪ May prefer things to stay the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a map of the school and an opportunity to move through the school when it is quiet (after-hours, or when classes are in progress). ▪ Provide a photo book of different places within the school such as the office, sick bay, toilets, classroom/s, the bus stop, etc.
Engaging in the class & learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May have difficulties with visually 'busy' environments or learning activities. ▪ May avoid specific activities due to the sensory component. ▪ May have a preference for visual and kinesthetic learning. ▪ May have an excessive need for sensory input such as finding it difficult to sit still or keep their hands or feet still. ▪ May have poor fine motor skills. ▪ May have difficulties hearing or tuning into verbal instructions. ▪ May have difficulties with posture and endurance and associated handwriting and sitting difficulties. ▪ May have difficulty with organizing themselves – getting to class on time and remembering all the equipment required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ De-clutter learning environments. ▪ Decrease amount of text/images on activity sheets. ▪ Adjust activities to meet the sensory needs of the student. ▪ Be visual. ▪ Provide fidget toys. ▪ Minimise output that requires handwriting, allow the student to type using a laptop or iPad. ▪ Provide an explanation of what to do if feeling overwhelmed or anxious. ▪ Write down instructions. ▪ Provide student with built in movement breaks. ▪ Be mindful of the timing of lessons. ▪ Provide a copy of the school rules (in a visual format if text is not appropriate). Ensure rules are stated positively. For example, rather than “no running”, say “walk safely when you are inside buildings” ▪ Demonstrate, rather than explain. ▪ Provide colour-coded equipment for each subject area.
Recess & lunch routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May have difficulty with noisy environments. ▪ May find the playground overwhelming. ▪ May have difficulty with social interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a visual schedule of activities to do in the playground. ▪ Check In with the yard duty teacher. ▪ Provide a Chill Out Space. ▪ Plan alternative environment/activities. ▪ Develop Buddy System for the student. ▪ Social Stories to teach strategies for managing commonly experienced issues.

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Home routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ May prefer things to stay the same, therefore the change in home routine may be challenging.▪ May find big picture concepts difficult. E.g. clean your room v's step-by-step instructions.▪ May prefer to do things a certain way.▪ May have poor organization skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Use Task Steps to breakdown specific skills. E.g. Making the bed.▪ Use visual schedules with specific start/finish times.▪ Use a timer.▪ Incentives Program to positively reinforce expectations.▪ Demonstrate completing the task rather than explaining.
Screen routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ May have very focused or intense interest in technology. Screen routines may take many hours per day.▪ May find the change in routine challenging.▪ May avoid new or different activities.▪ May have difficulties initiating activities (knowing what to start, where to start, how to start)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Incentives Program to positively reinforce desired behaviour.▪ Use technology as a motivator/reinforcer.▪ Develop a screen time visual schedule.▪ Use a timer.▪ Provide student with a choice of other activities to do instead of screen time.

References:

- Strategies for teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other students with special needs: www.learninglinks.org.au
- Adolescents, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Secondary School: www.learninglinks.org.au
- Differentiation considerations for students with ASD: <http://education.qld.gov.au>
- Master of Education (Special Education, Inclusion and Early Intervention): Socio-Communication and Autism Spectrum Disorder