

Essential Classroom Practices for Students with ASD

Schedules and Visuals

- A daily schedule of activities is posted in the classroom and a system for communicating the activity schedule to students is evident. Individual student schedules are evident when needed.
- The daily schedule is followed as outlined.
- Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.
- Transitions between activities are handled smoothly and efficiently.

Behavior

- Staff demonstrate an understanding of the functions of behavior and respond to challenging behavior accordingly.
- Teacher uses modeling and differential reinforcement to support positive behavior of students.
- Instruction, consequences, and corrections are closely related to those procedures used with typical classmates.
- Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.

Instruction

- Instructional areas of the classroom are clearly defined for students and instructional materials are readily accessible to each student.
- Instructional strategies used are specific to individual students and specific goals.
- Each student spends most of his or her time engaged in active learning activities, with minimal nonengagement between activities.

Social (Communication)

- Direct instruction is used to teach social and communication skills as needed.
- Skill instruction in social and communicative behaviors is embedded into naturally occurring activities and routines.
- Augmentative or alternative communication supports are available to the student at all times and designed individually according to the student needs and learner characteristics.
- Students with ASD are given opportunities to make choices and further develop choice-making skills.

Schedules and Visuals

Indicator	Descriptors	Not in place (0 pts.)	Partial in place (1 pt.)	Total in place (2 pts.)
<p>A daily schedule of activities is posted in the classroom and a system for communicating the activity schedule to students is evident. Individual student schedules are evident when needed.</p>	<p>Whole class schedule on board with picture, photo, illustration, text support as appropriate Individualized student planner on desk, in binder, or on wall Pictures of schedule consistent across campus Schedules may be portable and carried with students Morning meeting/daily review of procedures A student may participate in building/changing schedule For older/higher functioning students "A week at a glance" or monthly calendars Schedules for long term and short term (monthly calendar to steps in a task)</p>			
<p>The daily schedule is followed as outlined.</p>	<p>Pictures/plans for addressing schedule changes (i.e., parties, holiday events, ½ day) Students able to self-manage schedules, carry, check off items Schedule posted and referenced consistently Personal technology devices utilized ✓ when done on planner/schedule/agenda Time allotment is appropriate to activity</p>			
<p>Visual and manipulative supports are used to support learning as needed.</p>	<p>Pics (photos) of Instructional Assistant for transition Pictures illustrating activities at that location Standards & objectives up by subject Items removed to the "done" area Token systems or reinforcers indicate tasks accomplished Graphic organizers, models of completed activities available Noise level charts Label the classroom Room has clearly defined areas and students, teachers, support staff all know "what activity occurs where" Teach augments input w/ visual to explain task Visual timer</p>			
<p>Transitions between activities are handled smoothly and efficiently.</p>	<p>Picture planners for kids to take home illustrating their day – communication for parents/teachers Color coding assigned to schedule/activity Be aware of triggers/reactions to changes in schedules Visual sign of changes/establish routine of change First/then board to communicate steps Start, almost done, stop visual Video modeling as a technique to teach transition skills Social stories – cartooning, behavior mapping Visual timer to count down (sand hourglass, iPad timer app)</p>			

Behavior

Indicator	Descriptors	Not in place (0 pts.)	Partial in place (1 pt.)	Total in place (2 pts.)
Staff demonstrate an understanding of the functions of behavior and respond to challenging behavior accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis plan developed and shared with those in the classroom Training of all staff about behavioral needs of students with difficult behaviors and how to respond Aware of how consequence maintains behavior Uses Functional Behavioral Assessment Operationally define behavior Determine antecedent Behavior Intervention Plan reviewing and revising as needed Repetition, guided practice Fidelity checks of intervention used Behaviors are operationally defined for each area 			
Teacher uses modeling and differential reinforcement to support positive behavior of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual expectations, taught and practiced Consistent consequences Act in a proactive not reactive manner Training to understand how behavior is a symptom Visual supports Video modeling/prompting Cueing Peer modeling Visual sequences (cartooning) Rules & procedures posted, taught and reinforced Use of the incredible 5 pt. scale 			
Instruction, consequences, and corrections are closely related to those procedures used with typical classmates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts (Clear understanding for students) Tiered system of behavior categories with appropriate consequences All staff aware of individual student needs, notebook in central location Individualized behavior response system School-wide expectations (Behavioral Matrix) Peer to Peer reinforcement 			
Positive feedback is provided to students frequently and at a rate that exceeds corrective feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific praise Behavior charts for students/checklist Atmosphere is positive and welcoming Collect data (such as the Motivation assessment scale) Use consistent language iPad apps that track behavior so students can see positive patterns/improvements (share results) 1 corrective for every 4 positive...others say 7 to 1, or 8 to 1 Reinforcers are their choice, e.g., computers, nail polish, Legos Teacher self-observation and tally/count of positive and negative statements to improve frequency of positive statements. 			

Instruction

Indicator	Descriptors	Not in place (0 pts.)	Partial in place (1 pt.)	Total in place (2 pts.)
Instructional areas of the classroom are clearly defined for students and instructional materials are readily accessible to each student.	Bins/labels for materials Specially arranged areas of the room (purposeful) Every area is functional Clear labels & organizers (shelving, bookcases, baskets) Task boxes with data sheets and instructions (for adult) Furniture is used to divide area Labeling of student areas/desks/cubbies Labels on cabinets may include illustrations or photos Labels on floor to assist with lining up, stay in/out of area White boards and markers within reach for students to communicate Materials are accessible to students without impeding others' work			
Instructional strategies used are specific to individual students and specific goals.	Music as a way to teach certain concepts, also, "Brain Breaks" Visual strategies used when students have challenges with language Task Analysis, Discrete Trial Training, Functional Routines Differentiated Instruction Flexible grouping strategies I do, We do, You do Use of data sheet to inform instruction Proximity to teacher Knowing the learning style/needs of student (visual, executive functioning, help w/ details vs. big picture) Using the PLC process to plan for instruction (What do students need to know, etc.?) Paraprofessionals and others are informed and aware of purpose of activity Sensory materials used for calming/alerting (e.g. headphones, fidgets, hat, sunglasses, therapy cushion/ball)			
Each student spends most of his or her time engaged in active learning activities, with minimal nonengagement between activities.	Assessing what motivates students and providing reinforcement for completing assignments Choral response, response cards Small groups/stations Visual: start, almost done, done Teacher monitors own pacing Independent and group work opportunities Recess as learning time Self-management strategies to monitor task completion Whole body listening Opportunities for repetition, distributed practice Transitions are smooth because they are taught First-Then visual supports Choice of learning activity, or choose sequence of activities			

Social Communication

Indicator	Descriptors	Not in place (0 pts.)	Partial in place (1 pt.)	Total in place (2 pts.)
<p>Direct instruction is used to teach social and communication skills as needed.</p>	<p>Student social skill strengths/needs profiles up to date Tiered behavior support models are utilized Social skill interventions used are evidence based (e.g. Naturalistic Interventions, Pivotal Response, Self-Management, Discrete Trial training, Response Interruption, Redirection, Social Narratives, Video Modeling, Peer Mediated Instruction) Visuals (iPad- camera-video) are used to engage students Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) Social Skills curricula appropriate for learning needs of students (e.g., Social Thinking)</p>			
<p>Skill instruction in social and communicative behaviors is embedded into naturally occurring activities and routines.</p>	<p>Peer modeling as a method of instruction (live/video) Social Stories for common socially dependent activities Role playing after instruction or as instructional model, complete with scripts if necessary Push-in Speech Therapy (as opposed to pull-out) Using class plays, theater activities to support communication Buddy Reading Class jobs/responsibilities Lunch buddies/Circle of Friends/Peer Partners/ Friend's groups Recess stations</p>			
<p>Augmentative or alternative communication supports are available to the student at all times and designed individually according to the student needs and learner characteristics.</p>	<p>Accessible to students at all times Available to understand what others say as well as to communicate what student wants to say (expressive and receptive) Cue cards that prompt for or make accessible specific instructional or social vocabulary for periods throughout the day Staff training in using a variety of devices Accessing loaner devices to experiment with what works Picture Exchange Card System White boards for two-way communication Communication devices and assessment for that device Voice volume charts, feelings scales, using word processor/typing of stories</p>			
<p>Students with ASD are given opportunities to make choices and further develop choice-making skills.</p>	<p>Teacher considers offering choice of order, type, length for independent learning activities, reinforcers, assignments Choices are available through visual supports (not auditory dependent) if appropriate Teacher uses motivation assessments and reinforcer assessments that include parent interviews to determine best methods to engage students Opportunity for self-determination given a goal or list of tasks that need to be completed</p>			