



Tips for Learning and Teaching

- [Severe / Profound General Learning Disability](#) [1]



- There should be detailed individual assessment of all areas of functioning and an individualised, structured, step by step programme of instruction with regular and detailed reviews, to be implemented with the assistance of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Students will need a high degree of guided learning and the students' own experiences, strengths, interests and preferences should be integrated into learning and teaching activities.
- A responsive classroom environment should be created in which students' actions are always acknowledged, where students are provided with a wide range of opportunities to respond to their environment and where students are encouraged to initiate interactions.
- Objects of reference representing activities, places, people, etc should be used to mitigate the difficulties experienced by students in understanding the symbolic nature of communication (e.g. a spoon can be used to signal meal-time). Objects should be meaningful and individualised for each learner.
- Alternative communication systems that employ objects of reference – the manual Lámh signing system, the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and electronic communication devices – may be used as alternative/augmentative communication systems.
- When giving oral instructions consider also using alternatives such as using objects of reference, picture cards or signs.



Every effort should be made to allow the student to have the greatest possible control over their work and to enable them to make choices (this may involve waiting for a prolonged period of time to allow the student to demonstrate a response).

Students generally require the stimulation of their basic sensory, perceptual and cognitive abilities.

Consider intensively teaching for as long as they can address themselves to a stimulus and concentrate on a task.

The provision of a flexible timetable should be considered that takes account of students' periods of non-attention, sleeping and rest-patterns.

Particular attention should be directed to the development of perceptual and cognitive skills, language and communication, self-care, fine- and gross-motor abilities, and social and personal development.

Students should be enabled to develop self-esteem and increased independence. They should be encouraged to make choices, express preferences and be active participants in their learning; to gain communication skills and to access a wide variety of resources (e.g. information and communication technology and multimedia); to develop awareness of themselves and others; and to have opportunities for socialising and socialisation.

Classroom layout should reflect a consideration of the student's identified need for medication, special diets and/or specialist equipment.

Cognisance of student's medical and physical needs must inform curriculum planning.

Communication between home and school is vital to ensure that curriculum access is appropriate, reflects the student's interests and needs, and enables the student's meaningful engagement.



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