

Planning Inclusive Lessons

A valuable tool to help us plan and deliver accessible, inclusive and aspirational PE lessons for all learners is the C-STEP Principle. C-STEP prompts us to consider how we communicate, use space and adapt the task, equipment and support learners to ensure they participate and thrive in PE lessons regardless of their physical and learning needs.

Communication

Use the learner's preferred communication methods be that verbal, Makaton, symbols or a combination of them all to ensure that lessons and activities are accessible. When teaching new skills in PE it is easy to be quite 'wordy' and technical in our delivery so using key words/signs/symbols/simple language in our instructions can be a huge support to learners with poor receptive language and processing delays. Clear and precise names for strategies and techniques can support learners to acquire the knowledge they need to participate in the activity, e.g., clear names for rules.



An example of symbols/key words being used to support a learner participate in a gymnastics lesson warm up.

Space

Carefully consider the environment to ensure all learners can access PE lessons and sporting activities. By making adaptations to the physical environment and space, we can make all PE lessons inclusive for wheelchair users and learners with a range of physical needs.



Increasing the space and ensuring there is room for wheelchairs to easily manoeuvre can help make a PE lesson fully inclusive and accessible for all.

Task

Changes and adaptations can be made to activities and specific tasks to ensure all learners are able to participate fully. Adaptations can range from small, subtle changes when performing a skill through to larger modifications to the activity or sport itself.



Adapting a volleyball lesson by playing a match of seated volleyball is a great way to practise key skills and make the activity accessible to all learners.

Equipment

The equipment we use can make a big difference as to whether a lesson is inclusive and accessible or not. By making modifications to, and sometimes changing, the equipment we use, we can ensure that all learners are able to participate, enjoy and experience success in our lessons.

- Using balloons with rice in to support visually impaired learners in a tennis session.
- Large, bright, shiny, tactile resources to engage more sensory learners, e.g., a ball wrapped in tin foil/bubble wrap.
- Making adaptations to the size, weight and grip of PE equipment can have a positive impact on learners with a range of physical needs.
- Using assistive resources to support learners in target sports, e.g., ramps to play boccia, cricket and ten pin bowling.

People

The support learners receive from key people throughout a PE lesson can make arguably the biggest impact on their skills, attitudes and progress. A key adult can model skills, break down activities into smaller steps and support with the repetition and over-learning of skills that can be so important for SEND learners. Peers can be a huge support in helping to motivate and model skills whilst ensuring a learner maintains their independence and doesn't become over-reliant on the support of a key adult. Learners working in mixed ability groups can provide aspirational role models and opportunities for the most able to develop their skills further through demonstrating and coaching. As learners' competence and confidence develops, the support being provided can be slowly reduced to enable the learner to participate more independently.

Curriculum Considerations

An inclusive physical education curriculum should both engage and inspire young people to lead healthy and active lifestyles and broaden their experience of sport and fitness activities. Physical education and sport should be accessible regardless of a young person's disability or needs. Basing a curriculum and activities around a broad variety of sports and physical activities helps provide new, exciting experiences that will spark an interest and motivate learners to be more physically active and enjoy the associated health and social benefits this can bring.

Active, Healthy Lifestyles & Long-Term Outcomes

The Institute of Health Equity outlines some very bleak statistics for people with learning disabilities (significantly lower life expectancy and 1 in 2 to suffer from chronic loneliness). In addition to this Sport England (2018) share that disabled adults are twice as likely to be inactive as non-disabled adults whilst Activity Alliance (2020) discovered that 70% of disabled people believe that sport is not for somebody like them.

The above statistics show us how important it is to provide positive experiences in physical education, that support learners with SEND to develop a love of exercise and the skills needed to lead a healthy, active lifestyle. A key role for teachers is to help 'flip the narrative' and support learners in having positive experiences and high aspirations in sport and exercise. An awareness and engagement with groups such as Activity Alliance, IMAS and The Special Olympics can support and inform our practice helping to connect our learners with opportunities to participate and compete in sport outside of school.

Key Stage 1

Learners develop the fundamental movement skills of running, jumping, throwing, co-ordination, balance and agility and begin to develop patterns of movement. As learners develop their confidence and competence these movements can become more complex and linked together. The aim is for all learners to develop their accuracy and fluency of movement execution over time. A big focus is being able to co-operate with others, share and develop strong communication skills. Learners will be taught the basic conventions of games and different activities that have rules and boundaries. This is a particularly important stage for learners with SEND as they build core movement skills that support and shape their physical development.



Key Stage 2

As learners progress, they begin to develop a broader range of skills and start to put sequences of movement together. Some of these movements become more specialised and related to particular sports or physical activities. Competition between oneself and others and rules are introduced with learners beginning to demonstrate more refined technique and improvement in their performance. Learners begin to display a greater control of their skills/movements and start to develop a greater strength and flexibility as they approach the end of Key Stage 2. Skills and more complex movements may need to be broken down into smaller steps for learners with SEND and teachers should make adaptations to activities and sports to ensure they are accessible.

Key Stages 3 and 4

Learners begin to develop a greater appreciation for tactics and strategies for success and start to generalise their skills across a range of sports with participation and performance becoming a greater focus at this stage. Opportunities to experience outdoor and adventurous activities can form a more significant part of the curriculum as learners extend their knowledge of physical activities and sports to more complex situations. Learners build on their earlier knowledge of healthy participation and safe practice and really begin to develop a greater understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and why this is so important. This is a particularly crucial period for learners with SEND as in many cases it will help form their attitude to sport and exercise and indicate how likely they are to lead active, healthy lifestyles into the future.