BROOKDALE UNIVERSAL ADAPTATIONS

EEF "Five-a-Day" aligned classroom practice

Purpose and principles. These adaptations are structured around the four broad areas of need in the SEND Code of Practice and are designed to support language, attention, working memory, processing speed, independence and emotional regulation. They form part of high-quality adaptive teaching and should be available to all pupils by default, with additional adaptations selected in response to individual strengths, barriers and current learning needs.

The EEF "Five-a-Day" Approach

The EEF identifies five approaches that are likely to support all pupils and particularly many pupils with SEND. These should be visible across everyday classroom practice rather than reserved for separate intervention.

EEF approach	What this means at Brookdale
1. Explicit instruction	Clear explanations, teacher modelling, guided practice, checks for understanding and supported independent practice.
2. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies	Teaching pupils how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning, alongside subject-specific memory and problem-solving strategies.
3. Scaffolding	Targeted verbal, visual or written support that enables success and is gradually reduced as pupils become more secure and independent.
4. Flexible grouping	Short-term grouping based on current shared needs, informed by formative assessment and changed when the purpose has been met.
5. Using technology	Purposeful technology that helps pupils access learning, record learning or practise and consolidate learning.

Responsive implementation. Teachers use assessment, pupil voice, information from families and specialist advice to identify barriers and select the smallest effective adaptation. Adaptations should maintain ambition, preserve access to the same curriculum goals wherever possible, and be reviewed for impact rather than becoming permanent by default.

1. Cognition & Learning (Memory, Metacognition and Independence)

These strategies reduce cognitive overload, support working memory and explicitly teach pupils how to guide and regulate their own learning.

- **"I Do, We Do, You Do" explicit instruction:** Sequence new content into small steps. Explain and model the thinking process, guide pupils through supported practice, check understanding frequently and retain a clear worked example before pupils move to independent practice.
- **Think aloud and model metacognition:** During modelling, verbalise how an effective learner plans, selects a strategy, notices an error, checks progress and evaluates the outcome. Use prompts such as: "What is the task asking?", "Which strategy will help?", "How will I know I am successful?" and "What will I change next time?"
- **Frequent checks for understanding:** Use targeted questioning, mini-whiteboards, retrieval questions, hinge questions and brief pupil explanations to identify misconceptions before independent work. Re-teach or adjust the level of support immediately where needed.
- **Cognitive strategies:** Explicitly teach subject-specific routines and memory supports, including graphic organisers, worked examples, retrieval practice, mnemonics, vocabulary maps, checklists and step-by-step problem-solving methods. Explain when and why each strategy is useful.

- **The "Scaffold Buffet":** Keep number lines, 100 squares, phoneme frames, concrete manipulatives, word banks, reading rulers and other familiar supports readily available. Teach pupils how and when to select a tool so that independent use is normalised and purposeful.
- **Scaffolds are temporary and targeted:** Use verbal, visual or written scaffolds only where they address the identified barrier. Review their impact and gradually reduce prompts, examples, sentence stems or adult support as competence grows, while reintroducing support when a new or more complex task requires it.
- **Clean, accessible presentation:** Use a clear sans-serif font, adequate spacing, strong contrast and uncluttered layouts. Avoid unnecessary decorative features, dense pages and excessive italics or underlining. Use coloured backgrounds or overlays where they are known to help an individual pupil, rather than as a blanket assumption.
- **Segmented worksheets and task boards:** Break longer activities into visually distinct sections or a short numbered sequence. Reveal one section at a time where appropriate and include a clear success criterion so that the pupil can see what to do now and what comes next.
- **Working walls and worked examples:** Display the vocabulary, models, diagrams, success criteria and examples currently needed for learning. Teach pupils to refer to these resources and update them so they remain relevant rather than becoming background visual noise.
- **The "4Bs" checklist for independence**

  1. BRAIN

  What it means: Pause and think.

  Action: Re-read the learning intention or instruction. Recall what the teacher modelled and identify the first step.

  2. BITS AND BOBS

  What it means: Use the environment.

  Action: Check the working wall, worked example, checklist, word mat, number line or resources available.

  3. BUDDY

  What it means: Ask a peer appropriately.

  Action: Use a quiet voice and a precise sentence stem such as, "Can you remind me of the first step?" or "Where could I find that information?"

  4. BOSS

  What it means: Ask an adult.

  Action: After trying the previous steps, explain what you have already tried and ask for the smallest amount of help needed to continue.

2. Communication & Interaction (Language, Vocabulary and Processing)

These adaptations support receptive and expressive language, vocabulary development, auditory processing and participation in classroom dialogue.

- **Processing and wait time:** Pause for at least three to five seconds after asking a question and after a pupil begins to respond. Avoid filling the silence or immediately rephrasing unless the pupil indicates that this is needed.
- **Cold calling with support:** Pose the question to the whole class, allow thinking or rehearsal time and then select pupils. Combine this with "no opt out", partner rehearsal, sentence stems or the option to build on another pupil's answer so that participation remains safe and successful.
- **Chunked instructions:** Gain attention first, use the pupil's name where appropriate, give one or two steps at a time and ask the pupil to repeat or show the first step. Support spoken instructions with a short written or visual prompt and avoid giving additional directions while pupils are starting the task.

- **Dual coding with consistent visuals:** Pair key words and directions with simple, familiar symbols, diagrams, demonstrations or examples. Keep icons consistent and purposeful; avoid adding multiple images that compete for attention.
- **Clear and literal language:** Use concise language and separate multi-part instructions. Explain idioms, figurative language and subject-specific meanings explicitly rather than assuming shared understanding.
- **Vocabulary instruction:** Pre-teach and revisit a small number of essential words. Provide pupil-friendly definitions, examples and non-examples, morphology or word-part links, visuals and repeated opportunities to say, read and use the vocabulary in different contexts.
- **"Say it again, better":** Acknowledge the pupil's idea and support them to rehearse a more precise response using the target vocabulary or sentence structure, without implying that their first contribution had no value.
- **Structured talk:** Display sentence stems and assign clear roles for partner or group discussion. Give rehearsal time before whole-class contribution and explicitly teach listening, turn-taking, agreeing, disagreeing and elaborating.

3. Social, Emotional & Mental Health (Predictability, Belonging and Regulation)

These strategies create an emotionally safe and predictable classroom in which pupils understand routines, experience success and can recover from mistakes or dysregulation.

- **Consistent attention routines:** Use the agreed whole-school non-verbal signal, pause until attention is secured and deliver concise instructions. Apply the routine calmly and predictably, while making reasonable adjustments for pupils who find eye contact, stillness or empty hands difficult.
- **Dynamic visual timetable:** Display the day using text and symbols, mark completed activities and explicitly highlight changes. Where needed, provide an individual now-and-next board or a more detailed sequence for unfamiliar events.
- **Supported transitions:** Give advance warning before transitions using consistent language, a timer or visual countdown. State what is ending, what is next and what the pupil needs to do first.
- **Positive error culture:** Model uncertainty, self-correction and constructive responses to mistakes. Use anonymous misconceptions and worked corrections to show that errors provide useful information for learning.
- **Specific feedback and success:** Notice and describe the learning behaviour or strategy that helped, not only the final answer. Ensure tasks offer meaningful challenge with a realistic route to success, and avoid public comparison between pupils.
- **Co-regulation before correction:** When a pupil is distressed or dysregulated, reduce language, use a calm tone, allow processing time and support regulation before expecting reflection or problem-solving. Reconnect and restore relationships after incidents.
- **Assigned collaboration roles:** Use A/B partners or explicit group roles, with clear instructions about who speaks, records, explains or feeds back. Teach and practise the routines rather than assuming pupils already know how to collaborate.
- **Flexible, non-fixed grouping:** Group pupils temporarily according to current learning needs identified through formative assessment. Make the purpose clear, maintain high expectations and disband or change the group once the shared need has been addressed.

4. Physical & Sensory Needs (Environment, Access and Regulation)

These adaptations modify the physical environment, resources and routines to reduce unnecessary sensory or motor barriers and maximise access to learning.

- **Decluttered visual environment:** Keep displays purposeful, organised and legible. Reduce hanging decorations, crowded surfaces and visual noise in direct sightlines, while retaining the working information pupils actively need.
- **Classroom zoning and seating:** Where appropriate, establish clear areas for whole-class input, focused work, practical activity, reading and regulation. Seat pupils according to the barrier being addressed—for example, proximity to modelling, reduced distraction, hearing or visual access—rather than as a reward or sanction.

- **Planned movement and regulation breaks:** Build in brief, purposeful movement or sensory breaks before attention deteriorates. Teach pupils how to use them and how to return to learning. RMT is used for whole class support.
- **Adaptive writing and recording resources:** Make pencil grips, different writing tools, sloped boards, paper positioning supports, keyboards and alternative recording methods available. Select resources according to the pupil's motor, sensory and learning needs and review whether they improve access and independence.
- **Sensory adjustments:** Consider noise, light, temperature, touch, smell and movement. Offer proportionate options such as a quieter workspace, ear defenders for specific high-noise periods, reduced glare or a low-distraction position, while continuing to support participation and avoiding unnecessary isolation.
- **Accessible movement and practical tasks:** Adapt equipment, positioning, time, adult support and task organisation so pupils can take part safely and meaningfully in PE, practical subjects, play and classroom routines.

5. Purposeful Use of Technology

Technology should be selected because it removes a specific barrier or improves learning—not simply because it is available. Pupils should be explicitly taught how to use it, and its impact on access, independence and progress should be reviewed.

- **Modelling and Editing:** Visualisers, AirPlay or Interactive Whiteboards (as appropriate) are used for direct teacher modelling and editing and also to share pupils' work with the class
- **Accessing learning:** Use text-to-speech, enlarged content or accessible digital resources where these improve access to curriculum content.
- **Recording learning:** Use speech-to-text, typing, audio recording, photographs, digital drawing or alternative input devices when handwriting or transcription creates a barrier to demonstrating knowledge. Continue to teach the underlying literacy or motor skill where appropriate.

Planning and Review Checklist

☐ What is the precise learning or participation barrier for this pupil in this lesson?

☐ Which universal strategy will address it while keeping the curriculum goal ambitious?

☐ Have instructions, models, vocabulary and success criteria been made explicit?

☐ What will the pupil do independently, and what is the smallest scaffold needed?

☐ How will I check understanding during the lesson and adapt in response?

☐ Is grouping based on a current shared need, with a clear purpose and end point?

☐ Could purposeful technology improve access, recording or practice?

☐ How and when will the support be reduced, changed or reviewed?

☐ What does the pupil say helps them learn, and what evidence shows the adaptation is working?