

# A Guide to Special Educational Needs

## **Understanding Asperger Syndrome**



Hello. My name is Kelly. I have Asperger Syndrome (AS).



You can't see that I have AS, I look like most other girls. However you may notice things about me that are a bit different. This is because AS can make me behave and talk a bit differently from how you might expect.



Having AS means I have difficulties with some things that most people don't have trouble with. I have problems with what some people call "social sense" - understanding and getting along with others easily.



I find it hard to understand the expressions on people's faces. So it is difficult for me to know how they are feeling and I get confused and very frustrated. This sometimes makes me behave in a certain way, which can be difficult for others.



I sometimes find it difficult to play games or join in happily with other people. I might want to only join in if I decide the rules, people might think I am being bossy. Sometimes I just need my own space to chill out.





You're being mean!

If I'm confused about what people are doing I can get frustrated and angry and I might do or say things which appear unfriendly, it's usually because I'm uncomfortable and muddled.

No we're not!! We're just chatting to Daisy!





Loud noises can feel painful to me. Most people with As have sensory problems, they can be sensitive to what they taste, touch, smell, see or hear. If I'm in a crowded playground or in a noisy place I can feel over whelmed and panicky. You can help me by being understanding and not making any sudden loud noises.







AS can make the world feel like a confusing place that does not always make sense. Routines are very comforting for me, I like to know what is going to happen and when. People with AS don't like surprises. I like to be prepared for new experiences, if someone can write down what is going to happen, this helps me a lot.





People with AS often have some problems with “motor skills”, which means that they can’t always coordinate their body movements as well as they would like to. This often makes sport and PE difficult. If you are showing me a movement, it can help if you don’t face towards me, but face the same way standing beside me or in front.





Most people with AS have special interests. Sometimes I forget that not everyone shares my interests and I might go on about them a bit too much! You might like to remind me that you would like to talk about something different.





So I bet you are wondering why AS is called Asperger Syndrome? It's named after a doctor called Hans Asperger who worked with children in the 1940s. It's not an illness, it's a type of autism, which is a condition that affects the way the brain processes information. No one knows why some people are born with autism. Having AS does have advantages. People with AS are often original thinkers and can become experts in the subjects which interest them. Some famous scientists and artists such as Albert Einstein and L.S. Lowry are thought to have had AS.



Please don't speak too quickly and explain the rules of the games to me. Try not to get cross with me if I don't understand. Please remember t may take things literally and not understand jokes or sarcasm. Let me know in advance if there is a change of plan. Be patient.

So, how can we help?





Thank you for taking the time to listen  
and learn about AS.