Supporting children with SEND in DT

Cognition & Learning		Communication & Interaction	
Barrier	**Steps to Support**	**Barrier**	**Steps to Support**
Difficulty understanding the design brief or knowing what they are expected to make.	• Pre-teach key knowledge, concepts and vocabulary. • Share the design brief using simple, clear language and visual prompts. • Show examples of finished products and real-life objects. • Break the design process into manageable steps using a visual task ladder. • Use photographs and diagrams to show each stage of the process.	Difficulty expressing design ideas, preferences or explaining choices.	• Use visual prompts, photographs and real-life examples to stimulate discussion. • Provide dual-coded word banks and sentence stems. • Offer choices through pointing, selecting images or practical demonstrations. • Model how to explain design decisions using key vocabulary. • Allow additional thinking and processing time.
Difficulty generating ideas, designing or making decisions.	• Provide visual examples, photographs and real-life products for inspiration. • Offer a limited selection of design choices to avoid overwhelming pupils. • Use design templates, labelled diagrams and simple planning frames. • Provide opportunities to handle and explore materials before designing. • Use adult questioning to encourage problem-solving and develop ideas.	Difficulty working collaboratively or sharing ideas with others.	• Provide structured opportunities for paired and group work. • Allocate clear roles and responsibilities during collaborative projects. • Model appropriate turn-taking and sharing of equipment. • Encourage pupils to explain their design ideas and making processes to each other. • Provide adult support to facilitate discussion and teamwork where needed.

Physical & Sensory		Social, Emotional & Mental Health	
Barrier	**Steps to Support**	**Barrier**	**Steps to Support**
Fine motor difficulties affecting cutting, joining, assembling or manipulating materials. Difficulties with coordination, positioning or using tools safely.	• Provide chunky, easy-grip and adapted tools where appropriate. • Offer adapted scissors, hole punches, rulers and other equipment. • Use larger materials and components to make handling easier. • Secure materials using masking tape, clamps or non-slip mats. • Provide pre-cut or partially prepared materials where necessary. • Allow additional time to practise and complete practical tasks. • Model the correct use of tools through clear, step-by-step demonstrations. • Provide additional opportunities to practise individual skills before beginning the main task. • Use visual prompts to reinforce safe working practices. • Provide close adult supervision and support where needed. • Adapt the task or equipment to support successful participation while maintaining challenge.	Lack of confidence when designing, making or trying unfamiliar techniques. Becoming overwhelmed by busy, practical activities or unfamiliar environments.	• Create a positive environment where experimentation and mistakes are part of the design process. • Celebrate effort, creativity, problem-solving and individual progress. • Provide opportunities to practise skills before completing the final product. • Show examples of different approaches and possible outcomes. • Give specific, positive feedback to build confidence. • Maintain clear routines and predictable lesson structures. • Introduce unfamiliar tools and materials gradually. • Explain expectations and safety procedures before practical activities begin. • Provide access to a quieter working space where needed. • Keep activities short and varied to support concentration. • Allow pupils to work at their own pace and take sensory breaks.