

These tips are shared by Teaching Assistant Emma Langton who cares for two young children with Dravet Syndrome.



Handy Tips for Teachers and TAs

Supporting children with Dravet Syndrome



Hope for families with life-limiting epilepsy

Dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by Dravet Syndrome through support, education and research.

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Registered charity number: 1128289

This activity/material has been made possible through an independent grant from Lundbeck Ltd. Lundbeck Ltd has had no role in the development, content or delivery of the material.

Getting to know your pupil



Every child with Dravet Syndrome is unique. Take time to understand their needs and strengths.

- Learn their care plan & meds
- Know triggers & early signs
- Find out what they enjoy
- Build trust with consistency
- Share information with parents
- Notice what helps them feel calm
- Celebrate their strengths

Inclusion

Children with Dravet should be able to join in the same activities as their friends.

- **Plan ahead** – Risk assess so activities can be made safer rather than avoided.
- **Adapt, don't avoid** – Small changes (shade, breaks, extra support) mean pupils can join in.
- **Equal opportunities** – Encourage peers to see that everyone can take part, just sometimes in a different way.
- **Buddy system** – A trusted friend can help with confidence and safety.
- **Breaks and pacing** – Short bursts of activity followed by rest breaks work best to prevent fatigue.
- **Celebrate participation** – Focus on effort and being included, not comparison.
- **Work with parents** – They know what adjustments help their child.

Common seizure triggers

Specific triggers for children with Dravet Syndrome will vary from child to child, it's important to know your pupils triggers.

Heat related

Is the classroom too hot or too cold? Air conditioning during summer is great to avoid overheating.

Sudden temp changes

For example, playing in the snow to then going into a warm classroom.

Food related

For children with Dravet, some seizure medications can seriously suppress the appetite. The pressure to eat can be distressing.

Tiredness

Being tired is a big trigger, it's really important to allow rest periods, you could consider having a quiet area within the classroom where your pupil can rest or nap. Children with Dravet can get tired easily and quickly!

Illness

If your pupil appears to be unwell, seizures can be more likely. Contact parents and administer medication (e.g. Calpol) if required, as per your school policy.

Toileting

Using the toilet can bring on seizure activity, don't leave your pupil unattended on the toilet.

Demands of learning

Consider short sessions of good-quality learning when seizure activity is low and your pupil isn't tired. Retention can be very difficult for children with Dravet.

Essential Checklist

A list of items you should have to hand in case your pupil has a seizure.

- ✓ Care plan
- ✓ Emergency meds
- ✓ Bumbag to carry rescue meds
- ✓ School address written down
- ✓ Foil blanket
- ✓ Stopwatch/timer
- ✓ Pen & paper
- ✓ Parents contact details
- ✓ Change of clothes for your pupil
- ✓ Plastic bag for soiled clothes
- ✓ Wipes

After a seizure

After a seizure recovery looks different for every child. Give them time and support.

- Stay calm and reassuring
- Allow rest or sleep if needed
- Record details of the seizure
- Follow the care plan
- Let parents know what happened

It's really important after supporting a seizure you get together as a team for a check in. Seeing a seizure, especially if it's the first time, can be upsetting – and that's ok! It's good to reflect and talk through anything that could be done differently next time.

