

How Cosmo supports the Department for Education's Seven Principles of Inclusion

A guide for school leaders, SENCOs and specialist teachers mapping the Cosmo learning system to each of the seven principles, with the independent evidence behind it.

The Department for Education's Inclusive Mainstream Fund supports schools to strengthen inclusive universal provision and provide early support where needs emerge. Schools should identify barriers within their own cohort and select evidence-informed approaches that align with one or more of the seven principles of inclusion. The Education Endowment Foundation similarly describes inclusive teaching as combining strong universal approaches with adaptations and additional support where needed.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES AT A GLANCE

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| 01 Ambitious leadership and governance | 05 A safe and respectful culture |
| 02 Evidence-based early intervention | 06 Strong partnerships with families and services |
| 03 High-quality adaptive teaching | 07 Inclusive environments and accessibility |
| 04 Enriching provision beyond the classroom | |

The Principles for an Effective Inclusion Strategy

Watch our workshop with experts around what makes an Inclusion Strategy actually have an impact in the classroom



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Ambitious leadership and governance that embeds inclusion

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION FOCUS

Inclusion embedded in whole-school planning, staff capability and high expectations for all pupils.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Cosmo can be used as a shared whole-school resource, with the same platform supporting universal classroom provision and more personalised use where required. Independent implementation evidence from Lime Academy Ravensbourne describes whole-staff training, follow-up support, staff matching activities to curriculum and individual learning aims, and subsequent use of Cosmo Dots across the school.

- [LGfL \(London Grid for Learning\) — Cosmo Switch Case Study](https://www.explorecosmo.com/case-study/ravensbourne-lyme-academy/)

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Evidence-based support prioritising early intervention

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Responding as needs emerge through evidence-informed approaches such as flexible grouping, additional practice, small-group teaching and one-to-one support.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Activities can move between whole-class, small-group and one-to-one use while retaining a familiar interface. For example, Missing Numbers can be adjusted by number range, counting direction and task parameters, while its Assessment Mode captures formative responses to inform teacher judgement.

Cosmo has also been examined in peer-reviewed research. Kossyvaki and Curran studied five children with autism and intellectual disabilities using a technology-mediated music-making intervention over five weeks and reported some positive outcomes, particularly in social communication.

- [Journal of Intellectual Disabilities — Kossyvaki and Curran](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1744629518772648)

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High-quality adaptive teaching with curriculum designed for all learners

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High-quality teaching through scaffolding, flexible grouping, curriculum adaptation and technology that supports pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Teachers can adapt both the learning demand and the route through which a pupil participates. Missing Numbers allows a pupil to respond physically rather than through writing or an answer spoken aloud; Guided Reading combines visual stories, structured questioning and physical responses across whole-class, group and one-to-one delivery; and Improvisation provides an accessible route into pitched music-making without first requiring conventional instrumental technique or notation.

- [Department for Education — Inclusive Mainstream Fund: best practice for schools](#)

gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-support-for-school-leaders/inclusive-mainstream-fund-best-practice-for-schools

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Enriching provision beyond the classroom that all children can access

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Removing barriers to wider school life, including creative arts, sport, life skills and opportunities that develop independence.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Cosmo provides accessible routes into music, movement and collaborative activity. Improvisation can move from structured interaction to open musical choice, while Guided Movement uses continuously modelled actions, adaptable movement sets and no incorrect response. Independent guidance from CENMAC (Centre for Micro-Assisted Communication) describes switch technology as an access route to meaningful activities, communication and control when appropriately matched to the learner.

- [CENMAC \(Centre for Micro-Assisted Communication\) — What are Cosmo Dots?](#)

https://cenmac.com/online_training/using-cosmo-in-send-and-mainstream-classrooms-to-enable-learning/

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A safe and respectful culture fostering belonging, attendance and participation in learning

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Creating safe, respectful environments that strengthen belonging and participation and respond to disengagement or withdrawal.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Cosmo Grow includes low-pressure ways to participate and communicate. Mood Checker offers visible response choices and a physical route for indicating a feeling, need or preference, with no timer, score or right/wrong response. Social Scenes uses fictional characters to explore familiar social situations without requiring a pupil to discuss their own behaviour publicly. London Grid for Learning also reports Cosmo being used for collaborative activities involving turn-taking, cooperation, social interaction and independence.

- [LGfL \(London Grid for Learning\) — Cosmo Switch Case Study](https://curriculumblog.lgfl.net/cosmo-switch-case-study)

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Strong partnerships with families and wider services

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Working effectively with families and wider professionals and sharing appropriate information to strengthen support.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Cosmo can complement professional and family conversations rather than replace them. Mood Checker can retain a history of a child's selected responses alongside teacher-added context, providing an additional source of pupil voice or classroom information. The software records what the child selected rather than automatically interpreting what they felt, leaving meaning and next steps to professional judgement. Cosmo is also used within the wider assistive-technology ecosystem alongside education and communication services, such as by [Lifelites](#), a UK-wide chain of children hospices.

- [Department for Education — Inclusive Mainstream Fund: best practice for schools](https://gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-support-for-school-leaders)

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Inclusive environments with continuous improvements to accessibility

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION FOCUS

Removing environmental barriers through visual supports, communication aids, support for sensory and regulatory needs, transitions and carefully selected or adapted technology.

HOW COSMO SUPPORTS

Physical Cosmo Dots offer an alternative or complementary response route to speech, writing and conventional touchscreen interaction. Cosmo Dots change colours, brightness and touch sensitivity, enabling use for those with Physical and Sensory Needs. Cosmo activities feature accessibility settings such as voice-over, adjustable difficulty and audio-visual feedback ensuring comfortable use for all learners.

Our Day provides a persistent picture-based now-next-later representation of the school day, reducing reliance on spoken information alone. Charlton Park Academy publicly identifies Cosmo Dots among the assistive technologies it uses within a best-fit approach for pupils, while London Grid for Learning reports whole-school Cosmo implementation supporting accessible participation and independence.

- [Charlton Park Academy — Assistive Technology](#)

<https://www.explorecosmo.com/case-study/ravensbourne-lyme-academy/>

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