



In the run up to the Christmas you will have planned lots of exciting activities for your pupils. Parties, games, music, decorations, noise, flashing lights, Christmas plays and assemblies are all part of the fun. However, for some children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder Christmas can be a confusing and frightening as well as an exciting time.

Children with ASD can be upset and become highly anxious, due to:

- Changes in routine.
- Sensory stimulation, e.g. noise, lights and smells.
- Unstructured time, e.g. playtime, games and Christmas activities.

They can also have difficulty managing their excitement.

You can help by:

- Preparing pupils for any changes to their normal routine.
- Limiting/ avoiding situations and environmental factors that you know will cause anxiety, e.g. excessive noise.
- Looking out for signs of anxiety/over-excitement.
- Providing a quiet area or 'safe haven', for pupils to use at times of stress or over-excitement.
- Be patient and understanding of your pupil's needs.

