



39. A3 clipboard

Having enlarged copies of the data collection sheets on an A3 clipboard to refer to and write on while in the field can help students to follow your directions. This allows you to mimic the delivery style you might use in the classroom, making students more comfortable and more familiar with the structure of the fieldwork experience.

40. Avoid reliance on expensive personal devices

You might plan your fieldwork with the assumption that students will be able to collect some data digitally on their mobile phones. If this is the case, consider having some devices for students who may not own a smart phone or replan the fieldwork so that data can be collected and recorded in a wider variety of ways.

41. Blue badges

If you have a student who has use of a blue badge permit at home, ask them if they would mind bringing it with them to allow a school minibus to park in accessible parking spaces at a field site. This may allow that student to have a shorter or easier journey to the field site.

42. Create a second hand clothing store

Start a collection of old waterproof jackets and trousers, wellies and backpacks for students to borrow for fieldwork days. Many students do not come ill-equipped to fieldwork experiences because they haven't listened to your advice - it is because they may not have outdoor clothing that fits them.

43. Pack at least one extra packed lunch

Students frequently underestimate how much energy they burn on a fieldtrip and not having sufficient food and drink throughout the day will not only affect their concentration but could also be dangerous to their health and safety. There could be many reasons why a student does not bring lunch but they should not miss out.

Delivery _____

44. Consider alternative ways of recording field data

Does the use of a traditional data recording sheet mean that some students will struggle in the field? Might a digital device help or hinder these students? Could students record data orally? Or through a video diary?

45. Find 'low sensory environments' to use when giving instructions

Avoid addressing students with the glare of sunlight in their field of vision or where there is likely to be heavy traffic generating excess noise. Check your sightlines carefully for distracting views that might take students focus from you.

46. Schedule a 'check-in time' with any student who you feel might need it

Let students know when you will see them for one to one time during the course the fieldwork day - something that is especially important if you are expecting students to be collecting data independently around the field site.

47. Mimic the delivery style you use in the classroom

Make the unfamiliar setting more familiar by acting in the way that students expect of you. This is not just in the way you manage behaviour: how the students are positioned when giving instructions as well as props like a MWB can put students at ease.

Follow Up _____

48. Take some time to reflect and celebrate

On your return to the classroom, take time to talk about what went well during the fieldtrip, any funny stories that you can recount as well as how students overcame particular issues (unconnected to their data collection). Congratulate your students on how well they coped with unfamiliar work patterns on the trip. Think about writing to the parents of students who you know found the day personally challenging.

49. Have a personal debrief and moment of self-evaluation

Make a note on what additional support systems you used with students, how successful they were and what you would change about the trip for the following year.

50. Put your fieldtrip out there

Think about ways you can promote your fieldwork outside of your classroom and timetable. Having a wall display or doing an assembly will show students who were not on the trip what fieldwork is really like and make their own upcoming fieldwork less of a potentially daunting experience.

The big picture _____

1. Know your cohort

You are likely to have a marker in your grade book for students who are SEN statemented but are you aware of all the other ways in which particular students might need additional support? Get to know your cohort and think about how individuals, rather than classes, might work during fieldwork experiences.

2. Don't assume all that students with a shared identity will have a homogenous experience

The lived experience of every student is unique. By assuming that a student will have difficulties in an aspect of fieldwork because one of their contemporaries had difficulties last year is only likely to alienate that student from the fieldwork experience.

3. Normalise a level of anxiety around aspects of the outdoors

Let your students know that it is natural to feel a little apprehensive about certain elements of the outdoors (insects, stinging nettles, livestock, mud, traffic, members of the public) - but that you are there to support them all the way.

4. Lose any toxic culture in the department

Having rhetoric of 'toughening up' against the natural world or an attitude that says that 'real geographers' look or act a certain way is not only outdated but can be a barrier to students making progress in fieldwork and enjoying their experience of it.

Getting organised _____

5. Consider doing a mental health first aid course

In the field you may not have the normal team of staff around you who would support a student - and fieldtrips (especially residential trips) may raise issues that would not normally be seen or even known about in school.

6. Aim to make your staffing team as diverse as your students

Inclusiveness doesn't start and end at the students! Try to make sure you invite a wide range of staff on your fieldtrips - it might just add the level of reassurance your students need to know that they do belong and are valued in the activity.

7. Consult a multi-faith calendar when planning when to do fieldwork

The timings of school terms are rooted in the Christian calendar but other festival and holy days could coincide with your fieldwork. This may make some students uncomfortable or be left having to make difficult decisions about what they prioritise.

8. Reframe your risk assessments

As well as highlighting the risks associated with particular locations or activities, add notes to the RA to include adjustments made for managing the potentially heightened risks that come about for some individual students as a result of their specific needs.

9. Write a fieldwork code of conduct with students

In the time leading up to the fieldtrip it is worth coming up with a mutually agreed code of conduct for students, and staff, to follow which has a primary aim of making sure that everyone is comfortable and included. This can be referred to on the trip and be a source of reflection on return.

10. Expect some barriers to be invisible

You might think you have considered every angle associated with inclusivity and accessibility and so you forge ahead with your fieldwork plan with confidence. However, be prepared for your plans to change at the last minute due to an unforeseen need that your students have, and like your risk assessments, make your fieldwork plans dynamic.

11. Run your plans through a Head of Year

Once you have a plan for the fieldwork experience, show it to someone who knows the students really well and see if they can spot anything that may cause potential issues for particular students. They may spot something that you had overlooked or were not aware of - adjustments can then be made before you head out to the field.

12. Set up a worry box

Students may have concerns and worries that you have not even thought of - an anonymous 'worry box' allows students to post their questions and concerns before the fieldtrip and gives you time to address these in class or to put appropriate support and provisions in place.

13. Time all the walked sections

This not only helps with the planning of the flow of the day but gives you the advantage of being able to advise students with mobility needs how long they might be on their feet for at different times of the day. Many students will benefit from knowing that all aspects of the day are timetabled, including the walks.

14. Go through the weather forecast with students

Take some time to actually explore the type of weather that might be experienced during the fieldwork. Not only is this good geography generally, but it allows students to gain a greater understanding of the sensory challenges they might come up against (such as strong winds) and for them to mentally prepare for that.

15. Brief your support staff fully

If you have students' one to one support staff with you for their fieldwork, make sure you include them as fully as you can in the planning process. If they arrive on the day of the fieldwork with as little understanding of the forthcoming geography as their students then they are unlikely to be able to support them.

16. Have a clear timetable of the day

As accurately as possible, micro-plan the timings of the day and share this with any students who you feel may benefit from knowing this. Students who find comfort in the familiarity of timetables and who like to feel in control of things like toilet breaks and snack times will be able to relax a little more knowing that these events are still going to happen.

17. Practice field techniques in the classroom

If possible set out equipment and allow students to handle it and have a go at some of the data collection techniques they are going to use in the field. This will make the tasks more familiar and remove a lot of the 'unknowns' especially if this is the first time students have been away from school doing this type of work.

18. Take a video on your recce

When you are doing your recce of the field site, take a video to show to students who may be worried about what the location will look and feel like. You could provide an audio commentary too to highlight certain things to students. Students could view this in their own time or you could make a feature of it in class time.

19. Discuss in detail what the field site is like

Avoid using any coy 'elements of surprise' when taking students to a field site. Students will feel more confident if they can picture where they are going and how they expect the landscape to 'behave' while they are there.

Locations _____

20. Look for places with softer knowledge and understanding opportunities

Fieldtrips don't have to only be about intense hours of data collection - take time to explore wider geographical points of interest in the area to give students a break from completing tasks to a deadline.

21. Look for places that can serve as temporary equipment stores

Carrying equipment around a field site all day can be physically tiring for a lot of students. Explore your field site and engage with local business owners to see if they might be willing to temporarily store some of the heavier or bulky equipment while you are doing other aspects of the fieldwork.

22. Avoid, or carefully consider, summits

Whilst it may be true that in upland areas a summit offers students an amazing view of the geography around them, they can also be extremely challenging, and not just physically. Summits can develop uncomfortable feelings of isolation and of being unsafe. Are they really necessary to your fieldwork plan?

23. Think about whether the site is accessible by public transport

Field sites that are close to bus stops and train stations may mean that the overall cost of the fieldwork comes down, which may make it more accessible to more students. Most public transport networks have school or group discounts for trips too.

24. Use local sites as much as possible

Students who find new and unfamiliar locations overwhelming will benefit hugely from doing fieldwork within an area that they may have been to before. Local fieldwork is also likely to be far cheaper for students making it more accessible to all.

25. Identify 'reset' spaces

A quiet space where students can take time out away from the group and the activity is hugely beneficial to students who can easily feel overwhelmed in a new environment. These spaces can also be used for prayer or for self-administration of medicines.

26. Check the direction of the wind across the field site

Wind can affect students ability to concentrate, especially when you are giving instructions. Finding a sheltered area to work in can help students deal with the potential sensory overload that occurs when they are caught in a constant stream of high energy wind.

Activities _____

27. If possible, allow for greater levels of decision-making in the field

If students can choose how and when exactly they collect different strands of data they will be able to plan a data collection day that meets their needs and not feel the pressures of the fieldwork 'hamster wheel'.

28. Use 'fieldwork buddies' and organise your groups strategically

A buddy who understands their partner's needs can develop both students' sense of self-worth on the fieldtrip. Pairings are often best done in advance - let the students know so they are not worried about who they will be working with and they will have the chance to talk about the fieldwork experience together.

29. Use activities where students get to explore their full range of senses

Where students have a sensory impairment, build activities around the nature of sensory data to allow students to explore their own interpretation of the world and most importantly to share those perceptions and senses with each other.

30. If you are doing fieldwork locally, do an observation walk with students first

Rather than catapulting straight into the data collection phase of the fieldwork, take some time to do nothing more than walk the site with the students. This is a good exercise in grounding the students so they know the lay of the land and what to expect of the place during the rest of the day.

31. Slow down

Make sure your schedule is realistic with the time you have. Constantly rushing students and moving them quickly between sites in a single fieldwork day can be an overwhelming experience. Schedule in time for students to orientate themselves fully to each location and each activity.

32. Allow questionnaires to be split between students

Approaching members of the public for questionnaire responses can be quite a daunting task for a lot of students. Pair students so that one student provides the introduction to the MotP and asks the first question and a student who is a little more anxious can then ask the second question, alternating between them.

Equipment _____

33. Ear defenders and / or sunglasses

These might allow some students to block out overwhelming background noise or bright lights and colours which may give sensory overload.

34. Beach wheelchairs / all-terrain wheelchairs

Many local authorities can put you in contact with organisations who have all-terrain wheelchairs to hire in your area. These are designed not just to be able to go over any type of ground or slope but to allow the user to get as close to nature as possible.

35. Telescopic stools

Weighing about a kilogram, these stools fold up into an easy to carry disk but can be set up on any terrain for students who need to take rest breaks in locations without benches. They can also act as a raised platform on which students can rest equipment.

36. Mist sunblock

Many children dislike the idea of having sunblock rubbed into their skin and many creams have strong scents. A mist sunblock avoids students feeling uncomfortable and the novelty of the spray may encourage them to reapply sunblock on days where the risk of sunburn is high.

37. Sensory maps

As part of a recce, teachers might be able to mark on a map any area of the field site where there might be strong sensory experiences for students such as flashing lights, strong smells, loud roadworks etc. This can allow students to plan their own routes around the field site if necessary or at least prepare themselves for the kind of sensory experiences they might have while there.

38. Time out cards

Some students may not feel comfortable announcing to their peers that they are feeling overwhelmed and need support. Issuing them with a card that they can give to a member of staff discretely to let them know that they need a break can help them regain a sense of control in what may be an anxious situation.