

Peer information sheet: cerebral palsy

All of us are unique. We all have strengths, and we all have areas where we are still learning. We are all born with different hair, eyes, personality, and fingerprints. We can always find something we have in common with someone else like an interest, hobby, or activity we enjoy.

Some students have cerebral palsy. Just like hair, eyes or fingerprints, this is a part of them, but not who they are. When you take the time to get to know them, you'll find there are lots of things you have in common.

About cerebral palsy

Muscles are what help our body move, balance, and write – they even help us to eat and to talk. The muscles of students with cerebral palsy are affected so that it might be hard to do some of these things. Each student will be affected differently. Students with cerebral palsy enjoy making friends and can be good at overcoming challenges so they can join in.

Moving around at school

Some students with cerebral palsy might get tired at school. They might move slowly, or they might be shaky sometimes. They might walk a little differently, or they might use a frame or wheelchair to move around. Balancing can also be a bit tricky for them. You can help by staying with them when walking somewhere instead of rushing ahead. You can help by carrying their books for them if they would like your help. You can help by keeping your classroom and other areas tidy so that they can move around safely.

Talking

Some students with cerebral palsy might not use words to talk. They might use pictures, hand or head signals, or a computer to talk. They like to talk and play with other students – you can help by learning how to understand them. Your teacher can tell you how best to communicate with a student with cerebral palsy.

Play

Students with cerebral palsy like to join in games and have friends – just like all students. Games that have lots of running, movement or balancing might need to be changed. You can help by choosing games that include everybody, or by thinking of ways to change the game to include everyone (like having two goalies when playing soccer).

School Learning Support Officer (SLSO)

Some students with cerebral palsy might work with an SLSO in the classroom. You can still talk and work with them when the SLSO is there. After all – an SLSO is not quite the same as having a friend the same age to talk to during class.

Just like you

Students with cerebral palsy have lots of ways in which they're just like you. They can feel happy, sad, excited, or worried – just like you. They are learning, growing and exploring – just like you. And they like having friends, going to parties, and being included – just like you.

