

# What's new in education?

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Technology, learning in reverse and following methods best suited to the student are just a few of the developments to be found in education for 2016.



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## 1. Monitoring

Tracking students' progress through accurate assessment, often with the help of web-connected technologies. It is important to note that a teacher's tracking of progress is not an end in itself, but a means of monitoring and promoting positive learning outcomes.

## 2. Touch, sight, sound

Allowing students to follow a method that helps them learn to the best of their abilities. One such model of learning style is to divide students into three modalities: visual, auditory and kinesthetic (tactile).

## 3. Keeping ahead, in reverse

Learning in reverse, where students read up on the next day's topics and watch YouTube clips about them, only to head into the classroom to complete traditional assignments, which would in the past have taken the form of homework. This reverse-learning technique also assists the student to become familiar with personal research.

## 4. Altogether now

Students of different abilities being accommodated in the same classroom, by means of assistive technology that supports those with learning disabilities. New terms refocus attention from an overall deficiency to a narrow developmental disorder that affects how the student learns. Two terms, specific learning disorder (SLD) and specific developmental disorder (SDD), emphasise that these disorders are highly specific in nature, suggesting unique coping strategies for the individual

disorders. This change in terminology highlights that a student may have difficulty in one particular aspect of learning, while at the same time mastering and excelling in others. Therefore, many SLD students may not need major modifications to succeed, but rather minor accommodations to meet their specific and differing learning needs.

## **5. Safety first**

Safety to be improved in schools, using video surveillance and security guards. It is a fact of life: bad things can happen in schools. Each child and their parents needs the security of knowing that a network of experts is committed to making schools safer through an education-based, all-hazards approach.

## **6. Describing difficulties**

The way we label children who struggle at school is finally changing. However, there is still a long way to go. In the past, those who did not perform well were labelled 'lazy', 'disobedient', 'slow' or just plain 'stupid'. Many were shamed, punished or written off as hopeless. Today, improved labels take the form of diagnoses such as LD (learning disabled), ADHD (attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, which can cover a multitude of difficulties) and many others. Of course, we cannot ignore the identified difficulty, but can rather move towards using a more specific description ie. "He has a short attention span; is always moving; learns better by 'doing' than by 'reading'."

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Sandy heads up the Winning Wayz team, which has a presence in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. She is qualified in the field of Interactive Metronome\* therapy, a customisable programme that works at fine-tuning the brain's internal clock in order to build new skills and tackle learning and attention difficulties. For more on Sandy's work, visit [\[www.winningwayz.co.za\]](http://www.winningwayz.co.za), follow [@WinningWayzIM](https://twitter.com/winningwayzim) on Twitter or call 082 658 4300.

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