



STRATEGIES TO HELP ATTENTION AND LISTENING SKILLS

- Use the rule of Good Looking / Good Listening / Good Sitting / Good Waiting. Remind the children of these rules often. Praise the children when they remember and follow these rules. These rules can be used in a classroom situation, in the form of an attention code e.g. traffic lights (green = free talking; amber = only talk to staff; red = no talking, must listen to teacher.)
- Ensure you have the child's attention BEFORE giving the instruction
e.g. say the child's name first and wait for him/her to look.
- Make sure you look at the child you are speaking to.
- Don't expect a child to listen and write at the same time.
- Use natural gesture and visual cues to help attention as well as retention and recall of information.
- Use short simple sentences with familiar vocabulary and avoid ambiguous language.
- Break long instructions into short steps.
- Give instructions in time ordered sequences e.g. "Wash your hands". "Eat your dinner" rather than "Before eating your dinner wash your hands"



- Slow down your own speech and use pauses. Allow time for slower responding children to process instructions/questions.
- Be prepared to repeat or rephrase messages if you think the child has not understood.
- Set the child manageable goals. Ensure previous task is completed before giving instructions for new one.
- Gradually increase the length of time you expect the child to work for.
- Encourage ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS - where the child asks when he has forgotten or not understood a message.
- In a busy classroom situation it may be necessary to occasionally give the child some 1:1 time to ensure that they are attending and carrying out the task.
- It may be helpful to pair less able children with more able ones for some activities.
- Minimise noise both inside and outside and classroom.
- Minimise visual distractions, such as computer saving screens.
- Minimise other distractions e.g. cooling fans, open windows.
- Try to keep children's desks free of clutter to take away fidgeting opportunities.



- Ensure class layout and teacher's position enables every child to both see and hear what's being taught.
- Set time limits for children to complete tasks (make these more than achievable to start with). Use a timer of some sort to help the children be visually aware of the progress of time e.g. sand timer.

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