

ADHD MANAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL

CLASSROOM ROUTINES & ORGANISATION

- Place pupils in the least distracting place - not near windows or doors.
- Seat children close to the front of the class to improve eye contact with the teacher. Ensure you have the child's eye contact when giving instructions.
- Give one instruction at a time, in a simple, clear sentence. Avoid complex instructions or multiple tasks; this will cause the child confusion.
- Working in pairs rather than in groups and having a separate desk will be easier for the child with ADHD.
- Have a highly visual timetable on the board or wall, so the child can check what is next as they go along. Give plenty of warning of any change in the routine. Colour coding aids the effectiveness of the timetable e.g. blue for PE, Green for Maths, yellow for break time.
- Warn the child 5 minutes before any major changes in routine; "in 5 minutes it will be playtime".
- Use consistent routines. Model and teach routines. Show the child turn taking, sharing and appropriate use of materials.
- If the child is constantly fiddling with objects, tapping or drumming in a manner that disturbs the class, consider giving him/her an object such as a "stress ball" to squeeze and occupy their hands in a quiet way (this strategy is counter-productive in those children who frequently throw objects!)
- Ensure all materials and equipment are available for the child, this avoids the child wandering around searching. If wandering is unavoidable, channel it into helping the teacher; handing out worksheets or equipment.
- Keep interruptions to a minimum.
- Have a homework or communication book to aid parental/school continuity. Include behaviour, attainment and effort. Try to focus on positive achievements.

STRUCTURING LEARNING

- Ensure you have the child's eye contact when giving instructions. Keep it concise and ask the child to repeat directions back to the Teacher (if unsure that they have processed the information).
- Break down tasks into small steps, initially keep them very small but as improvements are made you can increase the complexity. Increase the child's attention span by setting tasks to a timer, (say 5 Minutes) Egg timers and clocks with hands are also useful.
- Incorporate short breaks for physical activity into lessons that involve prolonged periods being seated.
- Combine written and verbal instructions.
- Give frequent feedback to the child, always try to frame it positively.
- Give child alternative media to present their work; written, tape, computer, pictures etc.
- Aid organisation through use of lists, daily task sheets, report cards and charts.
- Use highlighter pens or bright colours to focus attention on key words. Use timers, alarm clocks, or egg timers to signal work completion and end of a lesson.

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOUR

- Remember the behaviour of a child with ADHD is not intended to irritate peers or teachers. They have specific problems that impacts on their learning and attention/impulses, **they are not being deliberately difficult.**
- Frequent use of praise or rewards is essential. These should be given immediately to be most effective. Ensure it is **specific, clear and backed up by positive, open body language.**
- Token or star charts linked to desired reward are helpful if the tokens are given at frequent time intervals e.g. every 15 minutes or half hourly. The chart should be visually attractive to the child and be within the pupils eyesight. Expectations of desired behaviour to gain star/token should be clear and achievable. E.G. DON'T PUT "BE GOOD ALL MORNING" "DO YOUR WORK". Older children may prefer a tick or points system.

- Minor silly behaviour or disruptions should be ignored.
 - Try and be positive in the way you give expectations; e.g. don't say "don't run!" say "please walk in the corridors". The child is more likely to comply with positive requests.
 - If setting limits be CLEAR, CALM AND CONCISE. Avoid shouting, sarcasm or anger. Some children with ADHD find these behaviours reinforcing and will continue with ADHD find these behaviours reinforcing and will continue or repeat the unwanted behaviours. Count-downs are often useful e.g. "Simon I want you to stop shouting or you will need time-out...1...2...3...well done for listening". For older children when countdowns seems inappropriate, utilising the clock or timer may help E.G; "If you are still making all that noise be the time the clock reaches ten past eleven, you will have to have time-out".
 - Be consistent with rules and expectations of behaviour, never make threats you cannot carry through or offer unrealistic sanctions.
 - Involve the child in their own management plan, this is empowering to the child and aids the child to develop self-awareness.
 - Use time-out for inappropriate behaviour that is prolonged or rule breaking/unsafe behaviour. Do this in a quite corner or a designated area. Remember that the child may need some supervision whilst on time out. Keep it brief; 2-5 minutes and give the child a watch, timer or access to a clock to aid them.
- PROLONGED TIME-OUTS ARE INEFFECTIVE AS THE CHILD WILL FIND THEM IMPOSSIBLE.
- Identify problem areas or specific situations and have a Management Plan; e.g. child out of seat, blurting out answers.
 - Transitional times and less structured periods are likely to be problematic e.g. breaks or mealtimes. The child should be closely monitored at these times.
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