



Strategies to maximise Concentration

Correct Positioning

Is a fundamental requirement for concentration, good posture and good fine motor skills

Position child in the classroom so that they are:

- Facing the teacher/whiteboard etc (i.e. not viewing it on an angle).
- As near to the front as possible.
- Sitting with peers who are not likely to distract and who can assist if necessary.
- Sitting away from distractions (e.g. not too close to classroom equipment shelves, or a cluttered wall, or near a main door).
- Sitting with the correct posture at a chair/table of suitable height. Feet should be well supported on the floor, knees and hips at approximately 90 degrees, table at tummy button height.

Giving Instructions, Activities and Tasks

A child may appear not to be concentrating if he/she has not understood or retained information. Is this child always clear about what to do?

- Present work in small achievable blocks, with an achievable end (e.g. completing a jigsaw).
- Include short rest breaks when child can physically move around and stretch themselves.
- Include a variety of tasks where possible – sitting activities and moving around activities.
- Give instructions in short bursts – with a maximum of 2 instructions.
- Give instructions in correct sequential order.
- Check child's understanding of instructions.
- Provide visual cues to accompany auditory instructions, e.g. picture cards or mime actions.
- Write instructions on the board so the child is clear about what to do.
- Use a multi-sensory approach for teaching new information e.g. visual, auditory, kinaesthetic cues.
- Use simple language – avoiding sarcasm, idioms, abstract ideas.
- Use real-life examples to illustrate points rather than abstract examples.
- Use activities that are meaningful to the child.

Expectations

- Be realistic about how long the child can concentrate for.
- If 5 minutes is the target, praise the child after 5 minutes and do NOT extend to 7 minutes.
- The expectations can gradually be extended to 10 minutes and beyond.
- Try not to nag constantly about concentration if the situation demands an unreasonable amount of time or effort for the child.
- Start with short quick achievable activities.
- Gradually increase demands. Encourage the child to compete against themselves – e.g. expecting one extra brick on a tower or going a tiny bit faster than last time
- Children are much more likely to want to please you if you are positive.
- Children need lots of praise for good concentration
- Try a target system – using a star chart or similar - with rewards for good concentration.

If you would like more information, please contact the Therapy Department

Vranch House School & Centre Tel 01392 468558

Leaflets/concentration/updated Dec2015