

Attention and Listening

Some children find it difficult to listen and stay focused to the level that is expected for their age. This can either be on a 1:1 basis or in a group setting. If children are not able to listen well and focus on activities this may affect other areas of their learning.

This pack provides some activities to help develop these basic skills.



It is important to keep the activities fun and only do each one for about 5-10 minutes.

1. Ready Steady Go! - Encourage the child to sit and wait for 'go' before they do an activity e.g. knocking down a tower, passing a ball, rolling a car down a track, letting go of a balloon. Increase the amount of time between you saying 'ready, steady' and 'go' when the child becomes familiar with the activity.



2. Taking turns - Sit in a circle and take turns to play motivational games such as fishing, lotto, choosing something from a feely bag, passing a clap or hand squeeze around a circle. You could also try throwing a beanbag around a group of children and when the child catches it they have to shout their name.

3. Animal Noises - Place some animal figures in front of the child. Play a recording of an animal noise, or you can make the sound of one of the animals. The child has to point to the animal that they have heard.



4. Songs and Rhymes - Encourage the children to sit in a group and join in with songs or stories. Start by singing a song to the children/saying a rhyme and pause at the end of a phrase....see if they can finish it off.

For example - "the wheels on the(bus)"



5. Copy the beat - use shakers or drums to make two or three sounds in a sequence. Ask the child to copy the sequence once you have finished. You might have to repeat it a few times for them to listen first.



6. Listening walks -Talk about sounds that you can hear around the nursery/school. Make a list or a drawing of all the sounds the child can remember e.g. children talking, bell ringing, singing, aeroplane etc.



7. Musical games - Play musical statues or musical bumps and when the music stops the child has to do an action e.g. clap hands, stamp feet etc.



8. Traffic Lights - Tell the children to run around and listen for the colours red, amber and green. When you say green the children must run. Red means stop and amber means sit down or clap hands.



9. Start and Finish Boxes - These can be used to extend the amount of time spent on one activity that the adult leads. The use of boxes or baskets helps the child visually see what they are expected to do before a reward. Take items out of the start box in turns and once completed put them into the finish box.



10. Timers (sand or egg) - This helps visually show the child how long you want them to listen or join in for.



11. Silly stories - Read a story that the child knows well and see if they can spot any mistakes e.g. using the wrong character name or wrong action to the picture.

12. Story games - Read a short story to a small group. Change characters names to the children's names in the group – let the children stand up if they hear their name.



TOP TIPS

- Gain eye contact with the child before giving them an instruction.
- Get down to the child's level.
- Say the child's name to gain their attention.
- Slow down your rate of speech and use pauses.
- Allow time for slower responding pupils to process instructions / questions.
- Minimise noise and visual distractions.
- Use simple sentences.
- Break down instructions into smaller parts.
- Use class rules such as good looking / good listening / good sitting / good waiting. Remind children of these often.
- Praise children when they remember and follow the rules.