

## Behaviour management strategies for children with speech, language and communication difficulties

Quick and immediate strategies to help children get back on task!

- ❖ Praise the child nearest who is modelling good behaviour/doing what you want  
e.g. *well done \_\_\_\_\_, for sitting on your chair.*
- ❖ Give praise to the child for what has already been achieved  
e.g. *well done for getting your book, now sit on your chair.*
- ❖ Reduce the task  
e.g. *I've got your book, now sit on your chair.*
- ❖ Reduce the language load and give clear and simple instructions  
e.g. *shouting is finished, sitting down now.*
- ❖ State consequences clearly. These must be enforceable  
e.g. *stop shouting and you can go outside to the playground.*  
Avoid complex expressions such as conditional expressions (if-then-else) as these can be difficult for children with language difficulties to understand  
e.g. *If you don't stop shouting then you won't be able to go outside*  
*Stop shouting or else you won't be able to go outside.*
- ❖ Look away.  
Sometimes reducing attention can be more effective than giving attention. State the consequences/deliver the sanction and then quickly move on. Do not wait for the child to change their behaviour as they may need a bit more time to consider their actions. This also reduces the chances of power struggles.
- ❖ Model.  
Provide clear examples of what you want the child to achieve.
- ❖ Give, specific immediate praise. Keep language positive and focused on desired behaviour in order to avoid looking like you are shaming/judging the child.  
e.g. *good sitting*
- ❖ Use direct language. Consider your tone of voice, facial expression and body language when giving instructions. Avoid sarcasm.  
A child with speech, language and communication difficulties can find indirect language and non-verbal communication very difficult to understand.  
e.g. Direct: *Sit on your chair, please.*  
Indirect: *why don't you sit on your chair? / would you mind sitting on your chair? / we sit on our chairs at lesson time etc.*