



This NEPS Handout has been developed by educational psychologists and is based on current knowledge in this area. It is intended as a guide only. Not all the advice here may apply to any one student or situation. Teachers and parents may wish to identify the strategies that will work best for them.

Supporting Students with Attention Difficulties- Strategies for Primary School Teachers

Have you given consideration to where the pupil is sitting and with whom?

Pupils with attention difficulties vary in what works for them, so it may be necessary to play around with the seating to get it right.

Have you considered whether there is a match between the task and the child's ability?

It is important that the child can experience success in their learning to help them to remain on-task. See the *NEPS Special Educational Needs Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers*, pages 50 and 51, for additional information on differentiation.

Have you discussed the attention difficulties with the child's parents?

There are many influences on a child's attention difficulties and information gathering is a key element of a problem-solving approach to understanding and managing these difficulties in school. See pages 19-22 of the *NEPS Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties Continuum of Support* for additional information.

Is the timetable for each day clearly displayed?

While you may know what your plan is, the child may not. Understanding the structure of the day can be helpful for children with attention difficulties. A clear timetable may be useful when encouraging on-task behaviour. See pages 25 & 26 in the *NEPS Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties Continuum of Support* for additional information.

Do you have a quiet work area in your classroom?

An example of a quiet area could include a desk where children can choose to go if they want to do quiet, focused work. This is a proactive strategy to aid concentration, as opposed to a Time-Out consequence for behaviour. For information relating to A Systematic Approach to Responding to Behaviour, see page 28 of the *NEPS Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties Continuum of Support*.

Have you developed a reward system for the child and is it rewarding to them?

The use of a reward system can be helpful. For further information on reward systems, see pages 115 and 116 and page 125 & 126 of the *NEPS Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties Continuum of Support*.