

A Classroom management strategies for AD(H)D pupils

1. Physical arrangement of the classroom.

- Use rows for tasks which do not require interpersonal contact. Avoid the use of tables with groups of pupils as this maximises interpersonal distractions for the AD(H)D pupil.
- Ideally a classroom should provide flexibility of seating with several tables for group work and rows for independent work.
- Arranging desks in a horseshoe shape has been found to promote discussion without impeding independent work.
- Sit distractible pupils near the teacher - as close as possible without being perceived as punitive.
- Locate the more distractible pupils away from windows and corridors to minimise visual and auditory distractions.
- Keep a part of the room free from obvious visual and auditory distracters.
- Seat peer models with good study skills next to children showing attentional difficulties and overactivity.

2. Lesson organisation

- Provide an outline, key concepts and essential vocabulary prior to lesson or topic presentation.
- Vary the pace of lesson presentation.
- Include a variety of activities during each lesson.
- When appropriate, intersperse in-seat tasks with more physical activities.
- Use multisensory presentation, but make sure that interesting pictures and sounds relate directly to the material to be learned.
- Set short achievable targets and reward task completion promptly. Allow a short break before the next target is set.
- Actively involve pupils in lesson presentation.
- Encourage pupils to develop mental images of the concepts or information being presented. Ask them about their images to be sure they are visualising the key material to be learned.
- Use co-operative learning activities particularly those that assign each child in a group a specific role or piece of information that is needed to complete the group task.

3. General organisation

- Establish a daily classroom schedule and ensure that routines are known and practised particularly for beginnings, endings and transitions.
- Give five minute warnings before ending a session for the completion of the task and putting away equipment, etc.
- Use individual assignment charts or home-school book to go home with the pupil and be signed daily by the parent if necessary.
- Be clear about when pupil movement is permitted, when it is not allowed and when it is discouraged.
- Use a kitchen timer to indicate special periods of intense independent work and reinforce the class for appropriate behaviour during this period. Start with briefer periods (5-10 minutes) and gradually increase the length of time as the class develops success.

4. Behaviour

- Keep classroom rules simple and clear, with examples of keeping and breaking the rule modelled and role-played.
- Actively reinforce desired classroom behaviours.
- Praise specific behaviour, for example: "I like how you correctly wrote down all the things you have to do" rather than "well done!"
- Frequently move about the room so that you can maximise your degree of proximity control.
- Set short measurable goals for behaviour with lesson by lesson reinforcement.
- Tackle only one target behaviour at a time.

B Strategies to address specific behavioural issues individual pupil

1. Inattention

- Provide frequent, immediate and consistent feedback on behaviour and redirection back to task.
- Seat pupil in a quiet area.
- Seat pupil near a good role model.
- Increase distance between desks.
- Seat pupil away from distracting stimuli.
- Give assignments one at a time.
- Gear assignments to attention span.
- Break long assignments into smaller parts.
- Include a variety of activities during each lesson.
- Assist pupil in setting short term goals.
- Restrict homework to that which is essential.
- Give clear, concise instructions.
- Provide written outline of lesson.
- Cue pupil to stay on task, e.g., using a private signal.
- Let pupil share recently learned concepts, e.g., with a peer still having difficulty with them.
- Pay careful attention to design of worksheets and tests.
- Use large type and provide only one or two activities per page.
- Keep page format simple.
- Avoid extraneous pictures or visual distracters that are not specifically and directly related to the task.
- Have white space on each page.
- Use dark black print and avoid hand-written worksheets or tests if possible.
- Write clear, simple directions.
- Provide alternative environments with fewer distractions for taking tests.
- Allow pupil to use tape recorder sometimes rather than always requiring written work.
- Shorten assignments. If the pupil can demonstrate adequate skill mastery in 10 or 20 questions do not require completion of 30-40 items.

2. Excessive motor activity

- Choose the AD(H)D pupil to be the one who writes keywords or ideas on the board, etc.
- Allow opportunities for pupil to move around the room.
- Provide short break between assignments.
- Remind pupil to check work if performance is rushed or careless.
- Plan ahead for transitions, establish rules and supervise closely.

3. Poor organisation and planning

- Establish a daily classroom routine and schedule.
- Organise desks and folders daily. Check for neatness.
- Persuade parents to use organiser trays at home marked with the day of the week so that books and work required at school that day are all together.
- A personal visual timetable may be helpful in view of the difficulty with time concepts.
- Fasten a checklist to the pupil's desk or put on in each subject folder/exercise book to outline the steps to be taken in following directions or checking to ensure that a task is correctly completed.
- Give notes to the pupil about key elements in the lesson.
- Use individual homework assignment charts that can go home to be signed daily by parents.
- Provide rules for getting organised.
- Give assignments one at a time.
- Supervise recording of homework assignments.
- Check homework daily.
- Assist pupil in short-term goals in completing assignments.

4. Impulsiveness

- Keep classroom rules clear and simple.
- Ignore minor inappropriate behaviour.
- Increase immediate rewards and consequences.
- Use careful reprimands for misbehaviour (criticise the behaviour not the child).
- Attend to positive behaviour with compliments.
- Seat pupil near a good role model or near teacher.
- Encourage the pupil to verbalise what must be done: aloud to the teacher in a one to one setting at first, then whispering quietly to self and finally saying silently to self.
- Teach verbal mediation skills to reduce impulsive behaviour by modelling. Practise a structured routine of stop/listen, look/think, answer/do.

5. Non-compliance

- Praise compliant behaviour.
- Provide immediate feedback about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- Use teacher attention to reinforce positive behaviour.

6. Difficulties with peers

- Praise appropriate social behaviour.
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- Organise social skills training to teach concepts of communication, participation and co-operation.
- Define social behaviour goals with pupil and implement a reward programme.
- Encourage co-operative learning tasks with other pupils.
- Praise pupil frequently to increase esteem within the classroom.
- Assign special responsibilities to pupil in presence of peer group so others observe pupil in a positive light.

7. Poor self-esteem

- Provide reassurance and encouragement.
- Frequently compliment positive behaviour.
- Focus on pupil's talents and accomplishments.
- Reinforce frequently when signs of frustration are noticed.