



Whole school communication strategies to support learning:

Strategies to be used by all staff with all pupils

- Ensure you have the pupil's full attention before giving an instruction or asking a question, calling them specifically by name where appropriate.
- Remove as many potential distractions from the classroom as possible. Keep work areas clutter-free.
- Teach and reinforce Active Listening (e.g. good looking/listening /sitting/thinking). Support with use of visuals.
- Don't pretend to understand. Encourage a classroom culture of adults and pupils saying when they don't understand and asking for clarification. Praise and reinforce this.
- Use visual support, such as task boards, timers and symbols, to aid pupils understanding of spoken information and routines.
- Present verbal information slowly, clearly and in manageable chunks.
- The 10 second rule - Allow time for pupils to process instructions, as well as to plan their response to questions. If no response after 10 seconds, repeat the instruction/question or rephrase if you think the pupil has not understood.
- Ask 70% of questions at or below the pupil's Blank's level and 30% from the level above in order to challenge and improve their skills.
- Ask pupils to repeat back instructions in their own words and probe with further questions to check understanding.
- Introduce new vocabulary as more than a label and in a multi-sensory way (e.g. use pictures, act it out, explore attributes, discuss word roots, identify



synonyms/antonyms, put it in a sentence etc.). Relate back to pupils' previous knowledge and experience.

- Explain non-literal language, such as idioms (e.g. "pull your socks up") and sarcasm to avoid misunderstandings. Do not use sarcasm yourself!
- Only use "can you?" or "will you?" if the pupil actually has a choice (e.g. say "sit down" rather than "can/will you sit down?").
- Comment on what the pupil says in reply rather than your original question.
- Use sentence expansion. Repeat back what the pupil says and add to it to give the pupil a model (e.g. If the pupil says "Tower Bridge is in London" you could say "Yes, Tower Bridge crosses the River Thames in London").
- Reduce your language and questioning as a pupil's stress/anxiety increases.
- If you make a deal with a pupil, keep to it.
- Make rules explicit and model appropriate skills. Consistently identify what the pupil should do and record rules visually (e.g. saying "walk" rather than "don't run").