

How do you support a child with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)?

In every class of 30 children it is likely that there will be between one and two pupils with ADD/ADHD.

It can affect concentration and impulsivity – more specific strategies for individuals can be found on the appendix below.

- Seat the student with ADHD away from windows and away from the door to avoid distractions
- Give instructions one at a time and repeat as necessary.
- If possible, work on the most difficult material early in the lesson/ day.
- Use visuals: charts, pictures, colour coding.
- Create outlines for note-taking that organise the information as you deliver it.
- Create a quiet area free of distractions for test-taking and quiet study.
- Create worksheets and tests with fewer items; give frequent short quizzes rather than long tests.
- Divide long-term projects into segments and assign a completion goal for each segment.
- Let the student do as much work as possible on computer
- Make sure the student has a system for writing down assignments and important dates /deadlines
- List the activities of the lesson on the board
- Establish eye contact
- Keep instructions simple and structured.
- Vary the pace of lesson and include different kinds of activities.
- Many do well with competitive games or other activities that are rapid and intense.
- Use props, charts, and other visual aids.
- Allow frequent breaks.
- Let the student use a fiddle toy or tap something that doesn't make noise as a physical outlet and to increase levels of concentration

Appendix 1

INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER / ADDITIONAL NEEDS RELATION TO CONCENTRATION / WORKING MEMORY AND IMPULSIVITY

Strategies are broken down into two parts. Those dealing primarily with attention deficit i.e. limited concentration / working memory and those dealing with hyperactivity disorder i.e. impulsivity and disruptive behaviour.

Limited Concentration	Establish a set seat for the student. Ideally, seat the student near the front with their back to the majority of the class and, if possible, between two settled students who can act as good role models. Present as a supportive rather than punitive measure, "Joe, I am doing this because you concentrate better here."
	Seat student in an area of the classroom free from busy displays and distractions. Try to keep the area around the whiteboard / IWB 'clutter free'.
	During teacher-talk, allow the student to fiddle with a piece of blu-tac, rubber band, squeeze ball or another chosen object (something quiet!) whilst maintaining eye contact.
	Give instructions simply and clearly. Make sure the student is looking at you first. Check that he or she has understood them.
	Ask the student to repeat instructions back to you. Try to ask them to show you what they should be doing, rather than asking them to tell you.
	During class discussions, proactively 'retune' the student back into the lesson by interspersing more challenging questions with simple questions addressed directly to those who tend to 'drift off'.
	Rather than relying on a 'hands up if you can tell me' routine during class discussion, instead put all students' names on cards and pick them at random. This pressure, when used sensitively, can keep students focused who otherwise allow others to take leading roles during class discussion.
	Use a timer to help the student complete a task in a specified period of time.
	Devise a private signal system to let the student know when they are off task.
	Plan in 'settling time' at the start of lessons. Ask for 2minutes of silence at the start whilst they write down the title, learning objective etc. With groups in which you have a good relationship, allow students to put their head in their hands or show a slow moving picture slideshow (ideally relating to the lesson).
	Give clear guidelines: " <u>I expect</u> you to have produced at least three lines by ten past ten; I will be asking you then to share these with your writing partner." Present as though you assume they will complete it, not as a request to complete it.
	Give regular updates on time remaining for tasks to ensure pace. Otherwise the student is likely to 'drift off'. A digital clock / watch will work more effectively than a standard clock as there is a high prevalence of students with concentration difficulties not being able to consistently tell the time on a standard clock.