

Listening



Young children are filled with excitement, everything intrigues them and they cannot wait to explore! It can be very difficult for them to focus on what we want them to do as they are so engrossed in their own activity.

What are the common difficulties?

- Children not following instructions
- Children not joining in for whole group activities
- Children refusing to follow individual instructions

Why do listening difficulties occur?

- Children have hearing difficulties/ear infections/glue ear
- Children have delayed development and find it very difficult to follow an instruction
- Children are used to a noisy home environment and find listening very difficult
- Children are engrossed in what they are doing
- The setting environment is very noisy
- Staff have unrealistic expectations of how long children can sit still and listen



How can we help?

- Ask parents when their child last had a hearing test. If it was over 6 months ago, suggest they make an appointment with their GP to check for glue ear/ear infections. A hearing test may be necessary
- Introduce a visual timetable so all children are clear about the session routine
- Introduce fun, small group activities to develop children's attention and listening skills (ask you Area SENCO for activity ideas)
- Make sure your expectations are realistic. If a child isn't able to listen on a 1:1 basis with a member of staff, they will be unable to listen in a whole group situation
- Introduce good looking/good listening prompt cards
- Use songs and rhymes to gain attention
- Have realistic expectations of how long children are expected to sit still. No more than 5 minutes for 2 year olds, 10 for 3 year olds and 15 for 4 year olds. (Work at the child's developmental level)