

STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE THE EFFECTS OF AN AUDITORY PROCESSING DIFFICULTY (PRIMARY SCHOOLS)



- Acknowledge the problem! Reassure the child that listening is difficult, but there are things you are going to try that will help
- Consider a trial of an assisted listening device www.phonak.com .
- Seek advice on improving existing listening conditions
- Seat child close to the teacher so that distance and “noise” do not interfere with his/her ability to listen to speech effectively.
- Encourage child to watch *and* listen so that he/she has visual as well as auditory clues, so provide visual aids and prompts.
- When addressing the child use name first so that you gain attention before speaking an instruction.
- The child’s auditory memory is probably weak. The first part of an instruction may be heard, but not the rest. “Chunk” information/instructions. Give written directions to which the child can refer. Praise each completed stage.
- Give time to process what is heard (thinking time) without prompting straight away.
- Consider delivering spoken tests – particularly mental maths - at a slower pace – i.e. 10 seconds instead of 5 seconds per question. Perhaps the child could be part of a small group with a teaching assistant out of the main classroom to minimise feelings of isolation and being “different”.
- Give child the opportunity to work in a quiet environment where possible – perhaps with a small group and an assistant.
- Consider implementing a “listening programme” of 10 minutes a day, delivered by a TA. See suggested resources on presentation.
- The level of concentration needed to keep up in order to listen effectively will be high and it will need to be sustained. Greater than average effort is required. This is exhausting and the child may “switch off” and day dream. Give “time out” in a quiet place if necessary/possible.
- Written instructions to support the verbal – but staff should also check child’s understanding of tasks.
- As the curriculum becomes more complex and demanding, guided use of a lap top computer will help organise and order thoughts and ideas more easily.
- Ask child discreetly to repeat back what he/she has been asked to do. This will build comprehension skills and ensure messages have been understood correctly.
- Give written instructions in clear bullet pointed steps.
- Some older students find it helpful to record the lesson for review later – teacher instruction parts only! This is especially useful when new information is being given.
- Teachers help by making it physically, visually and audibly clear when they are about to begin something important.
- Revision – Some children find it easier to remember if they record their own voice as they revise, then listen back on headphones..
- Teachers work in partnership with parents to prepare child for lessons – pre-teach new vocabulary, remind him/her what has been learned before. This will help the child to feel more secure and confident.

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