

Staged Approach: Supporting Learning at Stage 1 Suggested Strategies for Class Teachers

Attitudes to learning

Concentration/attention

Try:

Different seating/group

A quiet working area where child can be encouraged to go to work

Establishing the child's best concentration time – make most demands then

Varying the nature/length of task(s) – practical, paper/pencil, problem solving, physical,

Using music as a 'background' to working

A reward system – child's choice of rewards – for completed task(s)

A private signal between you/child to help him/her re-focus on task.

Quiet work area, work station

Time out, Brain Gym type activity

Find source of reluctance of child /young person to stay on task

Working independently

Try:

Seating beside a work 'buddy'

Use of a timer and personal task chart – each task timed and ticked as completed – record also time taken to complete task chart – can improve on this – set target then beat personal 'best'.

Strategies to cope when stuck

Reduce, alter the appearance of task – more visual, only try every second question

Give responsibility/ ownership e.g. independent activity as follow up to collaborative task

Organising self/belongings

Try:

Rehearsing the daily routine

Ensuring classroom organisation using labels and notices for routine and to highlight forthcoming events

To have a remembering 'blitz' for whole class – with rewards for remembering

Allowing 5 minutes for child to organise him/herself before 'work' begins

Using checklists – devised with the child – he/she collects and ticks equipment listed – concentrate on one curricular area/task at a time

Having a 'Friday tidy time'

Encouraging the child to evaluate and review organisation skills – and set self targets for improvement.

Keep to a class /group routine

Use a visual timetable

Provide rewards for consistency

Learning Style

Try:

Reviewing your teaching approaches/strategies – does your teaching reflect **your** preferred learning style or do the teaching strategies you use reflect the range of learning styles within your class?

Learners whose style does not match yours may be 'turned off' and this could be happening to up to 75% of the class. Find out about the child's learning style and consider how you can adapt your teaching to accommodate this.

Involving the child in reviewing/evaluating how he/she learns best – and in considering what changes he/she - and you – could make to support this. Provide element of choice too.

Ensure teaching strategies incorporate VAK – Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modes. Neuroscientists have proved that different sensory inputs utilise different neural processing structures. Ensure good mixture throughout the day.

Learning is most natural and therefore best when the senses are engaged – see it, hear it, do it. Collaborative work.

Difficult Behaviour

Try:

Observing classroom behaviour, ask the children to observe, then using observations as a **positive** class activity, negotiate classroom rules with the class, display on classroom wall and re-visit periodically;

Have a 'rule of the week' as a means of reinforcing rules agreed with the children – praise/recognise children who follow the rule;

Catching the child being good – see '50 things to catch them being good at';

Separating the child from the behaviour – label the behaviour, not the child;

Rewarding 'good' behaviour – student awarded with 1 minute 'free time' vouchers which can be collected and once e.g. 10 minutes have been accrued, can be swapped for a privilege – the child chooses from a list of privileges discussed and agreed with you;

Finding out more about behaviour which is problematic – when does it occur, how often, where, with whom, doing what, etc. – is there any pattern/does anything start it off/what keeps it going/what stops it?

Alternatively – looking for exceptions – when/with whom/where doing what does the child not..

Decide what you want the child to do instead – be specific – 'I would like you to complete the maths worksheet staying in your seat and without speaking to ...';

Target **one** behaviour at a time – and start with something that is achievable – or limit the time you expect the child to – e.g. sit in his/her seat.

Success is a powerful motivator – but you need to allow the child to succeed in order to be able to build on his/her success by setting bigger targets to achieve;

Agreeing a contract for behaviour in the classroom – specify what you expect from the child and what he/she can expect from you.

Reflection time to think about what they have done and its impact on self and others.

Thank them when appropriate behaviour and routines are followed. Focus on what has gone well. Have a positive conclusion to the end of each day with a statement emphasising desired outcomes.

Literacy

Following instructions

Try:

Checking the child's hearing;
Making sure you have eye contact with the child before giving instructions or information;
Demonstrating what to do;
Breaking up long or complex instructions – open your maths textbook, find page...etc;
Stressing/repeating key words;
Asking the child to repeat what he/she has to do;
Using curricular resources such as 'Listen & Do';
Teaching listening skills – looking, sitting still, thinking etc;
Checking the child's understanding – does he/she understand the vocabulary used?
Visual prompt, wait time.

Comprehension of written information

Try:

Working on text which is easier for the child to decode;
Using picture comprehension resources – 'Looking and Thinking';
Using sequencing cards, cloze activities;
Creating topic specific vocabulary lists;
Checking understanding of key vocabulary.

NB: If a child has difficulty in following instructions and comprehension of written information he/she can 'decode' – consider whether referral for speech and language therapy assessment might be appropriate.

Decoding text

Try:

Considering the optimum teaching level for test – 15% errors is appropriate – use ORT assessment sheets/miscue analysis – establish what strategies the child is using to identify words – what strategies does he/she need to develop?
Teaching key vocabulary Wellington Square information sheet for general reading strategies;
Using computer software – Phonic Code Cracker;
Referring to teacher handbooks for reading/language scheme.

Spelling

Try:

Providing the child with a list of key vocabulary;
Encouraging the child to proof read writing – using a highlighter to identify any words he/she thinks are spelt incorrectly;
To ensure that Look – Cover – Write – Check is being used to learn words;
Using a spell checker or word processing package which highlights wrongly spelt words;
Marking writing for content;
Using computer programmes such as Starspell.
Using acronyms to aid spellings
Word of the week

Teach how to use dictionary, thesaurus
Peer support – spell friend
Common words reinforced through class display

Copying

Try:

Checking the child's eyesight;
Teaching the child to proof-read using a highlighter;
Considering the purpose of a writing task that requires copying from a textbook – word only answers may be enough to allow you to check his/her understanding;
Limiting the copying you ask the child to do – don't ask him/her to copy from the board – are there other ways he/she could receive information you need others to copy – e.g. photocopied notes from another child.

Handwriting

Try:

Checking the child's pencil hold;
Considering if this is part of a wider problem with coordination, visual/spatial skills, movement, etc.
Using a pencil grip;
Checking individual letter formation; sand trays, playdough, whiteboards
Using a computer or scribe for extended writing;
Considering the purpose of a writing task – if it is to check understanding – could the child answer verbally?
Offer choices within tasks

Numeracy

Try:

Using concrete materials or a number line
Interactive games and activities
Cooperative learning approaches, group tasks with built in individual accountability
Repetition in various forms
Explanation of strategies, by children to other children
Reinforce relevance by linking to practical everyday experiences
Pair checking
Breaking down instructions into simple language, asking child or young person to repeat the instruction
AifL strategies to check for understanding eg traffic lights, thumbs up etc
Rhymes and singing for times tables, odds and evens
ICT extension and consolidation, use of interactive SMART board
Visual displays to help learners and remind them of processes
Display strategies for pupils to refer to and scaffold learning
Cross curricular links
Easy access to number squares and multiplication grids
Story books for learning numbers
Verbalising own thought processes to others
Guess ,check , improve

50 Things to 'catch them being good' at

Coming into the classroom quickly and quietly
Looking at the teacher quickly and quietly when asked to listen
Following an instruction the first time they are asked
Helping a classmate
Being polite
Tidying and cleaning up
Working hard on a piece of work
Putting their hand up and waiting to be asked to speak
Holding the door open for someone
Handing homework in on time
Catching up with unfinished work or work missed due to absence
Saying 'please' and 'thank you'
Asking for help when they need it
Walking quietly around the school
Listening well in assembly
Providing a good idea or suggestion in a discussion
Working well with a group of classmates
Listening to another's point of view
Telling a school helper or a teacher of a problem in the playground rather than trying to sort it out by fighting
Letting a teacher know if someone is bullying another pupil
Carrying out a classroom task willingly and doing it well
Looking after a younger pupil or new pupil
Offering help without being asked
Taking turns; waiting for their turn
Treating school books and equipment carefully
Starting work quickly
Keeping own books and possessions tidy
Keeping own physical appearance tidy
Moving from one task to another without teacher reminders

Getting all equipment needed for a task without being told
Telling the truth
Listening quietly, looking at the speaker ('paying attention')
Lining up quickly and quietly
Being a good friend
Willing to answer questions and make contributions to group discussions
Remaining calm during a difficult situation
Sharing equipment or activity with a classmate
Taking a lot of care with/putting a lot of thought into a piece of work
Finding something appropriate to do when they have finished their work early
Speaking well in the school play or assembly
Being willing to try something new or difficult
Asking before they 'borrow' something
Remembering to do something (e.g. taking a message home)
Taking a visitor to their destination rather than just directing them
Bringing appropriate books and equipment to the lesson.

Ways to say “Well done”

Social rewards

Verbal praise, stating what the pupil has done that was good, and why

Making eye contact with a smile, wink or nod of the head

Calling the pupils’ parents to tell them something positive or note home

A handshake: soul shake ‘Give me five’; finger handshake (hook one finger with one of the pupil’s); group handshake

Telling another pupil something positive about the pupil (so that the pupil can hear)

Asking the pupil to show other pupils how to do something he/she can do well

Going out at playtime with the pupil

Telling the Head teacher something positive about the pupil (so that he/she can hear)

Eating with the pupil at lunchtime

Star Moment - a sticker or raffle tickets for good behaviour in playground

Playing a game with the pupil

Letting the pupil spend time with the caretaker, school secretary or Head teacher

Special responsibilities

Escorting visitors through the building

Choosing the next activity for the class; choosing a game for the class to play

Watering the class or Head teachers or secretary’s plants

Reading to the class or to a younger class

Controlling the DVD

Door monitor

Passing out and collecting in special equipment

Being a team captain and choosing a team

Giving the questions in a class test

Being the Head teachers or secretary’s special assistant for half a morning

Putting up a display with an adult or on their own

Choosing the next book for story time; choosing the next song to sing

Taking a note or message to other teachers in the school

Taking a note or the register to the office

Opening or closing the curtains/ blinds

Book monitor

Using some special equipment not normally available for pupil use

Being assistant referee in a game

Taking in the lines at playtime

Doing something only teachers or older pupils are usually allowed to do...

Special Activities

Sitting in the teacher’s chair

Extra free time; free choice activity

Playing with puzzles

Being the leader of the line

Watching a film or television programme

Teacher reading to the class a story the pupil has written

Extra time to read a book to him/herself

Writing on the blackboard

Washing equipment or cleaning

Playing team games within the classroom

Choosing the place to work at

Playing the piano, keyboard or other instrument

Not wearing uniform for a day
Putting head down and resting for 10 minutes
Helping to plan a party
Going to the library
Playing board games
Being the last in the line
Using modelling clay
Using the tape recorder
Cleaning the blackboard
Sharpening the pencils
Enacting a play
Being the chair for the class debate
Going on a field trip or excursion out of school
Extra time on the computer
Choosing a book to read from the 'special' library section
Using a stopwatch

Tangible rewards

Achievement awards
Special badge
Special headband
Special note to Headteacher
Name on roll of honour in class or in the hall sticker
Sticker
Comment on the pupil's work
Item of school equipment (e.g. pencil case)
Nuts, crisps, fruit etc.
Certificate
Special sash
Special armband
Special note to parents
Name on special poster
Stamp on work or on hand
Book, comic, magazine