



Tips for Managing ADHD in the Classroom

Teacher's perspective – ADHD is hard work!

A child with ADHD can place many demands on your time, energy and sense of competence. The constant interruptions, need for repeated instructions and close supervision can be taxing.

Remember that children with ADHD are:

Curious	Creative	Energetic	Entertaining
Not trying to be disruptive	Regret their behaviour but are unable to stop	Often unaware of their disturbing behaviours	Not mounting a personal attack on you

Students with ADHD do best with teachers who:

Are flexible	Follow clear routines	Are consistent	Provide a range of activities
Recognise and support individuality	Maintain a positive teaching environment	Present information and tasks in steps	Set firm limits on student behaviour

Physical environment

Children with ADHD work best under close monitoring and with minimal distraction. The following strategies may be helpful:

- *Place them closest to you. This can enable discreet interaction between you and the child and help keep the child on task.*
- *Being at the front of the class often diminishes many visual distractions, including the movement and activities of the other students.*
- *Place the student next to quiet, hard working peers.*
- *Avoid seating children with ADHD in large clusters of tables with many students at each.*
- *Staying in a seat for any length of time can also be difficult for these children. Consider allowing children to stand for periods, as long as they are not too disruptive to others.*
- *Use displays to outline the classroom rules, assignment tasks, daily schedules or celebrate individual student's good work.*
- *Containment of talking can be achieved with the use of a "traffic light" on a poster:*



RED light means **NO** talking

ORANGE indicates **LOW LEVEL** talking allowed

GREEN indicates **OPEN** talking

Private reminders - place individual "traffic lights" on cards on their desk.

Teaching and learning strategies

The challenge is to find strategies that enable you to teach the curriculum in a way that also assists in managing the behaviours of the child with ADHD. This may mean modifying the curriculum and the mode of delivery.

Some practical teaching and learning strategies include:

- *Clear and concise instructions will enhance their ability to comply.*
- *Ask questions to actively engage the student.*
- *Being the teacher's assistant will help them to participate in the lesson.*
- *A daily routine that outlines timing and stretch breaks will assist with staying on task.*
- *Using a computer helps to maintain interest and attention for longer and adds motivation.*
- *Break tasks down into small manageable pieces to be submitted at regular intervals. Give feedback at all intervals.*
- *Homework - good planning and communication with parents will help.*



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Managing behaviour

The following strategies may be helpful:

- **Clear rules and expectations:**
 - ✓ Children with ADHD require regular reminders of classroom rules to consolidate them as part of every school day. Frequently praise those children who are following the rules, especially those with ADHD.
- **Strategic praise:**
 - ✓ Students with ADHD deserve praise for achieving seemingly simple things other children can do without much effort, for example staying in their seat or putting up their hand before speaking. Positive attention is powerful - "Catch them being good".
- **Corrective feedback**
 - ✓ Give corrective feedback immediately after the negative behaviour is noticed.
 - ✓ Be "matter of fact" in attitude rather than dramatic.
 - ✓ Use a brief and specific statement outlining a clear consequence.
 - ✓ Balance with rewards and positive reinforcement for acceptable behaviours.
- A **triangle of communication** between parents, teachers and allied health professionals.
- It is not productive to attribute blame either to the parents for being "disorganised, bad parents", the doctors for "medicalising the issue" or the teachers for "not knowing how to cope". An **optimistic, non-judgemental team approach** is essential.

Communication is vital!

Communication within schools

- Hand over information from one teacher to the next in subsequent years of schooling.
- Keep a resource file for the child. Store it in a safe, confidential location that all relevant staff have access to.
- Instigate a Student Support Group (SSG). The SSG provides a school/home management team to plan, implement and monitor learning in the short and long term.

Communication with parents

- Discuss the options with parents and agree about which strategy/s will work best.
- Explain to parents the types of strategies you are using in the classroom to support their child to respond to classroom rules and to learn.
- It is essential to remember to tell parents when their child has had a good day and tried very hard or when some positive progress has been made in regard to a specific intervention. Home-school communication diaries can be really helpful for this.
- The area of homework presents a challenge for many parents. You may want to give parents some guidance about how to support their child to complete their homework.