

Strategies to support age 7+ students with listening, attention and understanding of language.

Consider the environment:

- Where possible, reduce background noise.
- Consider a student's sensory preferences, i.e. is there anything in the environment that the student finds challenging to tolerate such as a draft, flickering light, visually distracting display boards.
- Consider the student's position in the classroom – do they prefer to sit at the front, back or at the side?

Consider your language and how information is presented:

- Use the student's name before giving an instruction. This will help to focus the student on the information being given.
- Find out about your student's level of language and modify your language to meet their level of skill, e.g. using smaller sentences so there is less information for the student to process.
- Give long/complex information in smaller chunks with a pause in between – this will allow the student time to process what they have heard.
- Ask the student to repeat back what you have told them to check they have understood the information. Avoid asking, 'do you understand?' which gives a yes/no response and may not always reflect what information has been understood.
- Encourage the student to ask if they would like information repeated.
- If information being given contains new vocabulary, or is long/complex, use visual strategies to help support what you are saying verbally, e.g. using diagrams, objects, word maps.

Support your student to learn strategies that work for them:

- Talk to your student about what could help them with remembering and understanding information/instructions they hear.
- Could your student use a tablet or phone to take pictures of what is written on the board in the classroom instead of copying/writing down information?
- Explore whether taking notes or drawing pictures could help remember information.
- Repeating information back to yourself in your head can help some students remember the information/instructions given.