

Remember to Succeed



Supporting Children with Auditory Processing Disorder



Guide for parents and carers

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Parent/Carer Guide

What is Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)?

APD affects the working memory. We have different types of memory, including being able to remember facts (Berlin is the capital of Germany), skills (how to ride a bike), and life events (first day at school).

Working memory is the ability to hold information for a few seconds before using it to achieve a task. Examples of this would be following directions in a car, taking an order for food to the counter etc.

In school this relates to how a student hears and follows instructions, responds to feedback, plans their work and answers questions.

How does it affect my child?

Many more students exhibit some characteristics of APD than is commonly thought. Some research has shown it can be up to 35% of students.

If their working memory is not as strong as it should be, students will exhibit some or all of the following behaviours:

- A lack of concentration
- Fidgety
- Unable to follow a sequence of instructions
- Losing track of a task half way through
- Impulsive
- Disorganised
- Starts to speak or write without having a clear idea of where they are going!

How can I help at home?

See below and the next page for activities and exercises which can help develop a stronger working memory.

Routines

Make sure your child has clear routines for school.

For example: they always pack their bag the night before school; always complete certain homework on certain nights.

Try to encourage your child to be able to articulate the routine, rather than tell them what to do. If they can learn a sequence, this will help. For example: *'On Monday evening I do Maths homework and then Art. Then I pack my bag and make sure my pencil case is included'*

Have a plan

If your child has a task to complete, ask them to tell you their plan before they start. Break the task down into smaller steps and write them down as your child decides what to do. For example if they have to learn some spellings, the plan may be:

- Create a 'Look/Cover/Write/Check' grid
- Practise each spelling three times
- Have a 20 minute break
- Ask someone to test me.

The ability to describe what needs to be done is an important skill.

As a parent/carer you should expect your child to take responsibility for explaining the task, but you can help by asking questions such as 'What do you need to do first?' 'How long do you think this will take you?' 'Is there anything your teacher has asked you to concentrate on?' Five or ten minutes spent discussing tasks can have a massive benefit.

Managing Distractions

Make sure that work is done in as calm and peaceful environment as possible. Agree that there should be no television or music playing and no access to social media.

Less is More

If your child is struggling to complete the whole task, allow them to do a smaller amount really well and then congratulate them. If it is a homework task, please write a note in the homework diary

Memory Games

There are a number of short games that can be played that strengthen memory. These are best used little and often.

Kim's Game

Put a number of items on a tray and then cover it. Remove one item and see if your child can remember what is missing. Alternatively do this by reading a list of items and then repeating the list with one item missing.

Following instructions

Take three everyday items. Give a sequence of instructions. When you say 'Go' your child carries out the instructions. For example 'Put the spoon in the cup, after you have put the fork on the plate'. Take it in turns to give and carry out instructions.

Sequencing

Tell your child a random sequence of numbers. Ask them to repeat the numbers. Ask them to put them in numerical order, pick out the even numbers, add the smallest and largest numbers together. You can do the same with letters – put in alphabetical order/reverse alphabetical order, say a word beginning with each letter etc. You can make this more difficult by increasing the number of numbers/letters.

Memory Pictures

The student studies a picture for 10 seconds. Remove the picture and ask 5 questions about it (NB You can borrow 'BrainBox' games from the Library that are based on this).

Odd One Out

Say a list of words (the more words the more difficult the task). The student has to find a reason why each word could be the odd one out. They are only allowed to hear the list once.

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