



Jane Mullen

## What are attention and listening difficulties?

Children with these difficulties may show some of the following characteristics:

- Appears to ignore you
- Struggles to sit still
- Talks when they should be listening
- Often unable to tell you what you have been talking about
- Do not appear to know what to do when given instructions
- Can only concentrate on one thing at a time
- Easily distracted
- Do not settle with one toy but flits from activity to activity

How do these problems affect a child in school?

- Unable to sit still and pay attention in whole class group activities
- Unable to listen effectively in the whole class group at carpet time
- Unable to follow more than one instruction at a time in class
- Child may be easily distracted by classroom noise, affecting ability to work independently
- Unable to maintain attention to a task, or switch attention between activities
- Difficulty learning and remembering new information

What can you do to help?

- Get down to the child's level
- Call their name first—and make sure they are looking at you
- Go to a quieter room or try switching the TV off
- Only introduce one activity at a time
- Use gestures and objects as clues to gain attention and help your child understand
- Use pictures to help them remember sequences of routines or what you want them to do next. We have some printable ones available for you for free.
- Talk about what your child is doing, using short, simple sentences
- Break down instructions into smaller parts
- Repeat instructions if not understood first time and support with images if necessary.

If you have concerns and you want to discuss if further please contact us at Jane Mullen Speech Therapy Ltd.