

Strategies for Developing Understanding

Lots of parents will now be having to think about how they can best support their child's learning within the home. This may be a daunting process for all parents, particularly those of children with special educational needs.

Some children have difficulties following instructions. In which case, we need to think about the way we give verbal information.

Below are some helpful strategies from "Elklan: Language Builders for Verbal ASD".

When giving instructions:

- Turn off any unnecessary background noise (radio, television, iPads...)
- Use short and simple sentences with your child
- Give one instruction at a time
- Use pauses between your sentences → this allows your child to process the information
 - It may be helpful to count to 10, in your head, between sentences if your child is struggling to respond
- Use clear language
 - Also be mindful of the concepts you know your child can understand
- Avoid using metaphors and figures of speech
e.g. 'beat around the bush'
- Try to introduce a concept in lots of different contexts. This will increase a child's overall understanding of a concept.
e.g. concept: 'same and different'
 - same and different colouring pencils
 - same and different items of food
 - same and different actions
 - same and different sizes
- If unsure that your child has understood an instruction
 - Ask the child to repeat back the instruction
 - Use further questioning to check their understanding
e.g. if you have given the instruction 'put the book on the table' and the child has not responded. You could say 'point to the book' 'pick up the book' 'put it on the table'
- Use visual strategies to support understanding