

Organisational skills

Organisation requires the child to:

- Have an idea.
- Think ahead as to what tools, equipment and materials are required for the task and gather them together.
- Anticipate what may be the difficult aspects of an activity and consider how to tackle them.
- Consider the steps of the task.
- Plan time involved in completing each step.
- Keep work space organised and tidy as they go along.

Work and workspace

- A large see-through pencil case that takes a 30cm ruler is ideal to help the child find tools and materials easily.
- The pencil case should contain the bare minimum to get through the school day, so that there are fewer items to drop, organise, etc.
- Checklists of things needed for specific school activities should be placed in an accessible place, eg inside literacy book, place a list with items needed for that class, such as pencil, rubber, word bank, dictionary, etc.
- Use plastic folders for worksheets to keep work tidy. This then can be placed in a folder with dividers for every subject.
- Post it notes can be used as last-minute reminders from the teacher, but should not be used as a permanent strategy with frequent routines/tasks as they may get lost easily.
- Notebooks, diaries and electronic organisers can help organise more established routines. Keep checklists that needed to be consulted frequently easy to hand (ie stuck to desk, inside diary, etc).
- Colour-code worksheets to help the child know what goes together, what needs to be done first and last, etc.
- Teach the child how to search in a logical sequence, from left to right, top to bottom of page.
- Set vibrating mobile phone alarms as ad-hoc reminders on the child's mobile phone calendar.
- Have a school/home book. Last thing in the afternoon, write what is needed for the next day, ie PE kit, homework to be done, etc. The child needs to read through it at home.
- Take a buddy along to next class so that the child does not get lost.
- Help the child organise his workspace, so he does not waste a lot of energy locating things. Create specific areas on the desk where a few most used items should go, or use a desk tidy.
- Place a box for completed work to be checked on each table.

Timekeeping

- Develop a child's sense of time. Ask how long they think an activity will take and then get the child to time themselves and reflect on how much time was taken and how they used his time.
- Use of egg timers/alarms/sand timers as visual aids; eg work on this exercise until timer runs out.
- Have school timetables/school calendars pinned up on a notice board in the class. Refer to them each day.

- If the child feels rushed and stuffs things away, give the child a timer to set or give a verbal prompt beforehand, so the child can anticipate when an activity will end and can put his things away properly and timely.
- Make a small school timetable on a card that can be carried and kept in the front of a book or diary.

Homework

- A home-school message book to reinforce new strategies and remember messages for parents.
- Another home book can be used to practice difficult words to spell and memory joggers, e.g. tables, sequences (months of the year, days of the week), etc.
- Bull-dog clip (or plastic wallet) in the child's bag to collate loose memos and other papers, letters to parents to take home, etc.

Locker

- Use colour coding for different subjects to help the child identify what is needed for each lesson.
- Provide different boxes, folders or compartments inside the locker that contain all materials for each subject, so this can be easily found and stored. Label this clearly and if needed, colour code it as well according to subjects.
- Provide some time every term for all students to clean out and organise their lockers, so that the child does not feel singled out and can take out unnecessary items and clutter.
- Give sufficient time after one subject is completed to put supplies away, before the next subject is started.

Organising and carrying out activities independently

- To help the child develop a logical approach to activities use the four point plan:

TASK: what do I need/want to do?

PLAN: what is my plan/how can I do it?

TRY: have a go at using the plan you made.

ADJUST: how did I do? Does my plan need changes?

- **Task breakdown:** this method helps children learn to break activities in component steps
 - Name the task
 - Break down the task into small steps
 - Write down the steps onto cue cards
 - Read through the steps aloud
 - Practice the task using the cards as visual prompts