



Responding to and processing instructions.

Pupils with SEMH difficulties find it hard to process instructions. Using the following strategy can support them.

Keep your voice calm and display open, relaxed body language

Cue the pupil in by saying their name first. You might have to repeat saying their name.

“Emma”

Keep your language clear and short

“Emma. Shoes on.”

Say thank-you at the end of the instruction. This implies that the young person is going to conform

“Emma. Shoes on, thank-you.”

Leave the young person to process the instruction for a period of time. They may not respond straight away. We all have different processing times

Emma may react, but she may be distracted by the glitter ball.

If the young person does not respond, repeat exactly the same instruction. It is tempting to add more

“Emma. Shoes on, thank-you.”

language, but, it only gives the pupil more information to process and it is confusing

When the instruction is carried out, thank the child or young person. This gives the pupil a sense of achievement and raises self esteem.

Emma puts her shoes on and the adult says thank-you to Emma.

