

the school years toolkit

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Perceptual skills

You have been directed to this Advice Sheet to help develop perceptual skills.

Visual perception is the ability to make sense of what we see, so that this information can be used purposefully.

Visual perception helps a child recognise and recall colours, shapes, sizes and forms as well as helping to understand the relationship of objects to other objects and to oneself in space.

If you have implemented these strategies and not seen improvement after four months, please contact CYPIT.

What you may see

Visual perception will affect a child's ability to cope in their everyday activities, eg a child with visual perception difficulties may not be able to recognise which way round their T-shirt goes on. It also affects their ability to manage school, eg they may experience difficulties with handwriting, copying from the blackboard/whiteboard or be disorganised with their classroom equipment.

Compensation Strategies

- Present smaller units of work at a time.
- Make sure the whiteboard or chalkboard is regularly cleaned and that only the information needed is written up. Use pens in colours that clearly stand out and pens that make firm/clear lines eg black on white.
- If using worksheets, don't make them cluttered with needless information or decoration. Make sure they are good quality photocopies that are clear.
- Cut off any black edges etc.
- Encourage the child to keep their workspace clear of clutter, tidying away each piece of work as it is finished before moving onto the next task.
- Use colour on the chalk/white board to help the child find their place.
- Consider the position of the child's desk within the classroom eg. Directly in front of the teacher and in front of the board.
- Use green margin on left side of writing page and red on right side to help position their script.
- Use hand-outs to supplement copying from the blackboard.
- Use different colours for each line on the board to aid copying.

Section 5 **advice** sheets

Activity Ideas:

- Play Scrabble and other word based board games.
- When reading with the child, occasionally cover part of the picture/word and ask the child to predict what that picture or word might be.
- In maths, play prediction measurement games in the classroom, eg “Is the window further away from where you are sitting compared to the door?”, “Who is taller, John or Sally?”
- Practice using maps, mazes, and simple orientation games around the school.
- Show the class a geometric shape (eg a circle) and ask them to find everything in the classroom/outside that is also the same shape (eg a clock).
- Play preposition games in PE eg “place the beanbag under you”, “place the beanbag to your left”, “place the beanbag on top of your back”.
- Also in PE, play Simon Says and Imaginary Mirror – children work in pairs and pretend there is a mirror between them. One makes a pose and the other copies as if they are the reflection.
- Play memory games where the child looks in one area of the classroom for one minute, the child then turns their back or closes their eyes and has to tell the rest of the class what was in that area of the classroom. The rest of the class can then give the child clues about the objects they have missed, eg “It’s red and cube shaped”.
- Identify chosen letters in a text of writing and mark them with a highlighter pen.