

HOW CAN WE HELP AT SCHOOL? KS2



Social Interaction Skills

Prior to working on strategies to support social interaction skills it is important to consider the following:-

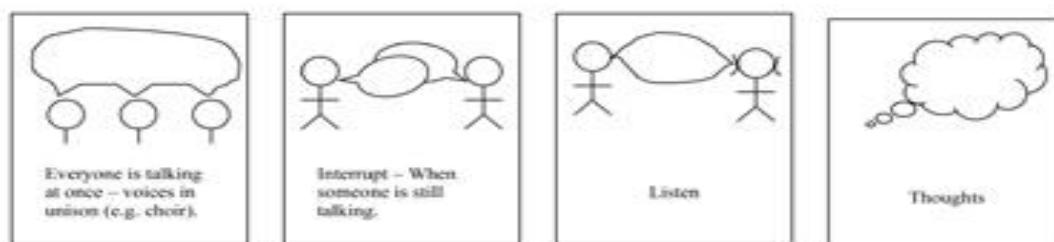
- each young person is unique and will respond differently to strategies and approaches. Always celebrate their strengths and personal interests!
- it is important to work towards mutually agreed goals that are meaningful for the young person. Always link skills to real, tangible situations, referring to examples that the young person can relate to.
- Start with the basics, progress in stages and think carefully about when to focus on social skills. Start practising new skills in environments and with people the young person feels most comfortable with. Gradually increase the number of different people and places.

Use of Social Stories™. These are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity and include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why. Social Stories™ can help the young person to understand how others might behave or respond in a particular situation and also provide strategies that the young person can use.

Use of Comic Strip Conversations. These are simple visual representations of a conversation and use stick figures and symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation.

Comic Strip Conversations can be used as a tool to work through a challenging situation, to understand how the young person viewed the situation and allow for discussion on:

- what was said in a conversation
- the emotions and intentions of the young person and others



Strategies to support conversation skills

- Talk about cues for when / when not to approach a person
- Teach conversation starters like greetings / using the person's name / general questions or comments
- Make a list of topics that are appropriate
- Identify when and how to end conversations
- Consider role playing scenarios that are relevant for the young person. Write possible scripts and a prompt card listing key information. The card may also list ways of dealing with situations that make the young person feel anxious.
- Use tools like relationship circles to help the young person understand different relationships. Explicitly teach the rules of being around different people in the relationship circle, clearly talking about and role playing the ways we address and speak to people as well as the content of what would be shared. Include family / best friends / friends / peers / acquaintances / strangers as well as online relationships.



Understanding Emotions

- Help the young person to identify and recognise how emotions make them physically feel e.g. sweaty hands /heart beating faster when anxious / feeling hot when angry. Develop their emotion vocabulary so that they can express their feelings.
- Support the young person to identify a range of emotions and recognise emotions in other people. A range of resources can be used such as videos/photos/pictures, social stories that target the understanding of emotions in context, as well as modelling and role play.

- Use visual resources like 5 point scales or emotion thermometers. These resources encourage the young person to rate their emotions or status of an emotion using colours or numbers e.g. extremely angry 5 / starting to get angry 2. Scales can also refer to physical cues e.g. feeling hot / sweaty hands and can also include strategies to help support the young person to regulate their emotions.

If you require any further support/advice please contact via the following email

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In the subject line please state **FAO Virtual School SLCN Support** to ensure your message is actioned by the relevant team