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## Advice Sheet 34

### ***TEACHING SELF-MANAGEMENT***

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Self-management is a similar skill to self-responsibility but doesn't have the same moral undertones. Westwood (2003, p. 56) defines self-management as the ability of each pupil *"to function independently in any given learning environment without the need for constant supervision, prompting or direction"*.

#### **There is a five-step procedure:**

- 1. Explanation:** discuss why self-management is important
- 2. Demonstration:** teacher / peer models the behaviour
- 3. Role-play:** pupil practices and gets clear feedback
- 4. Cueing:** prompt pupil when appropriate to carry out this behaviour or praise if no prompt needed
- 5. Maintenance:** can pupil maintain behaviour over time?

Example: Peter is unable to keep his workspace / books / resources in a tidy fashion. When asked to find something he gets frustrated and angry because he can't find it. This then can lead to ongoing tensions between Peter and his teachers, who think he is lazy, disinterested and being deliberately defiant.

- 1. Explain:** Peter needs to develop a system for filing and organising his work and resources. This will help him to keep up with the class and lessen the need for inappropriate behaviour.
- 2. Demonstration:** show Peter what a tidy folder / desk looks like. Ask him to note where everything has a particular home.
- 3. Role-play (Practice):** Set up a folder and a desk area for Peter. Ask him to file / organise his notes, handouts, books, resources etc. in the correct place.
- 4. Cueing:** When Peter gets a new worksheet / pencil / book note if it stored properly or thrown on desk / into bag. Remind if he does not do it properly / throws everything into his bag. Ask him what the appropriate behaviour is. Praise if he does it without being prompted.
- 5. Maintenance:** Check that the behaviour doesn't slip back to previous disorganisation once he has it mastered.

Other strategies which can help pupils develop effective self-management: colour coded books, copies and folders; map of school / classroom; individualised timetable / organiser with details of teachers' names, rooms for each class, lists of equipment required for each subject etc.

Special Needs Assistants can play a vital role in overseeing a pupil's attempts to become self-managing – a guide on the side who gives prompts and support as required.