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Laura is recognized internationally as an expert in the field of Parenting. She has 20 years of experience in working with children, adolescents and their families. This includes working at the Institute of Psychiatry in London and also the National Specialist Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health. Having four children herself, Laura understands the demands and dramas of raising a family!



Tips for pupils with Aspergers.

Please remember that these are just tips and that all children with this diagnosis can be effected in different ways and to greater or lesser degrees, they may well have another diagnosis as well.

1. Communication is the key! Children with Aspergers will not make eye contact unless reminded, they are not just "not paying attention". Unlike other kids in the class who may be listening, just not looking at you, for these kids they are unlikely to "hear" you unless they are looking at you.
2. Try to allow sometimes when your Aspergers child is able to pick a team of people, these children are used to being picked last for things and it is hurtful for their self esteem.
3. When asking children in the class to pair up to work on a project the child who gets "stuck" with the Aspergers child often makes a fuss etc, try dividing the class in ways that allow for a natural mix. E.g. by birthdays, tickets in a jar, names in a jar etc all are ways to allow a fair opportunity to mix.
4. Aspergers children can be their own worse enemy as they love rules and games need to be played exactly by the rules. This can cause problems in the playground if the child is always correcting other children, helping the other children to understand is best as the Aspergers child simply cannot understand why rules can be broken!
5. All children respond to praise and praising behaviour that you want to see more of helps the Aspergers (as well as the rest of the class) understand what is expected of him/her. 'well done, Tom, you are waiting your turn', 'good job for asking if you can play', 'fantastic listening' etc are all great ways to help a child that in normal situations would have learnt all these skills at pre school. Imagining that is the level of this child might help to remind you when you have a class of older children.
6. Ask if the family use social stories at home to help their child. These can be very useful and might be an idea to help foster friendships and independence at school.
7. If you notice a fledgling friendship ask the parents to make a social story book. These are simple stories about a place or person, with easy "hints" to remind the child of topics to talk about. E.g. This is Simon, he has 2 sisters and a dog called Ben. Simon likes to take Ben to the beach.
8. Try not to be too infuriated if this child constantly 'dobs' other children in. To them they are simply pointing out that someone broke a rule. The effect on the other child is lost on them. Try explaining why you are not too cross with the other children, or, sometimes more effective, just thank them for telling you and distract them.

Everyone needs a little help sometimes ...

The Stamp Out website at www.stampout.com.au provides articles, tips and help for parents in any location! For those local to the Central Coast (NSW, Australia) Stamp Out is located at Erina, providing one to one and group consultations.