

Memory

What is 'memory'?

Memory can consist of three different types:

- ⇒ **Working Memory** – holds information we need for a few seconds up to a few minutes e.g. remembering the sum $2 + 4$ while we work out the answer
- ⇒ **Long-term Memory** – where information is kept for a few minutes up to years. Information can move between the Working Memory and Long-term Memory
- ⇒ **Auditory Memory** – the ability to listen to, retain and recall spoken information without additional prompts

Memory & Learning

Difficulties with working memory can impact upon language and learning. This is because information may not be stored for long enough in order for the child to be able to process what they hear and to associate what they can see with the words heard. This can impact on many areas including:

- remembering the beginning of a spoken or written sentence, paragraph or story in order to make sense of it as a whole
- planning articulation of sounds, words, sentences and paragraphs and stories
- planning thoughts and actions to write sounds, words, sentences, paragraphs and stories
- learning new words and concepts because they can't be retained for long enough to process them for sound, meaning and grammatical information
- problem solving

Top tips to support memory

- Break down long instructions into manageable 'chunks' of 1 or 2 elements and present one at a time.
- Provide visual clues (demonstrations, pictures, objects, face to face speaking);
- Encourage the child to repeat back the key elements of what he/she is expected to do.
- Use a Pause, Repeat, Check strategy: give the instruction, pause, repeat it and then encourage the child to repeat the key information back to you. This will enable them to think about the information long enough for it to be transferred to the long-term memory store.