



ORGANISATION

Reintegreat School Toolkit

Organisational Skills

Why Organisational Skills Matter

Organisational skills are essential for children to manage both their academic and personal lives effectively. These skills allow children to:

- Care for themselves (dressing, eating, grooming).
- Follow routines and sequence activities logically.
- Engage effectively with academic tasks.
- Prioritise relationships and use appropriate language in social situations.

Organisational skills depend on five key processes:

1. Establishing what needs to be done.
2. Knowing where to begin.
3. Sequencing steps in the right order.
4. Problem solving when challenges arise.
5. Persisting until the task is completed within an appropriate timeframe.

Signs of Organisational Difficulties

Children who struggle with organisation may:

- Appear “disorganised” across most tasks.
- Miss deadlines or lack awareness of timeframes.
- Lose personal possessions or school equipment.
- Struggle with multi-step instructions.
- Find it difficult to recall information.
- Be easily distracted, with poor task focus.
- Have many ideas but find writing them down challenging.
- Struggle to communicate information in a logical sequence.
- Appear “lazy” or avoidant due to task incompleteness.

A Simple Framework: The 3 Steps

Teach children to internalise three simple steps for organisation:

Step 1 – Get Ready

Gather all the materials needed for the task.

Step 2 – Do It

Stay focused and say “no” to distractions.

Step 3 – Finish It

Check that the task is complete, accurate, and meets the original objective.

Strategies to Support Organisational Skills

1. Establishing What Needs to Be Done

- Provide clear, simple instructions.
- Break down complex tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- Write instructions on the board or give written checklists.
- Check understanding by asking pupils to repeat back what they need to do.

2. Sequencing and Planning Tasks

- Provide visual diagrams, task frameworks or flow charts.
- Model the starting point for a task to reduce anxiety.
- Encourage use of peer role models to demonstrate task initiation.
- Give explicit expectations (e.g., “Write 5 sentences” instead of “Write a paragraph”).

3. Organising Materials and Resources

- Use named drawers or storage areas for books and materials.
- Colour-code books by subject and provide a desk reminder chart.
- Provide a clear pencil case or personal stationery pot.
- Pre-organise resources to prevent delays at task start.

4. Problem Solving Within Tasks

- In literacy:
 - Limit reading loads and recap previous content.
 - Provide word banks and visual character maps.
 - Use timelines to sequence stories.
- In maths:
 - Model and chunk problem-solving processes.
 - Provide recall sheets with symbols and methods.
 - Encourage separating literacy from maths in word problems.
 - Use visual supports and games that build sequencing and categorisation.

5. Developing Independence

- Resist doing tasks for pupils—support independence where safe.
- Encourage self-questioning strategies:
 - “Do I have my coat for later?”
 - “Did I pack my PE kit?”
 - “Is my homework in my bag?”

Tools to Support Organisation

- **Analogue clocks and sand timers** – build awareness of passing time.
- **Daily planners** – show how time is allocated across the day.
- **Checklists** – encourage pupils to tick off tasks in sequence.
- **Colour-coding systems** – quickly identify materials.
- **Visual timetables** – support predictability and reduce anxiety.

Additional Considerations

- **Timings:** Give fun, time-bound challenges to build time awareness.
- **Prioritising:** Use repetitive language to help pupils order tasks (“The first thing I need you to do is ...”).
- **Wellbeing:** Sleep, anxiety, stress, and trauma can all impact organisational ability.
- **Self-esteem:** Disorganisation often lowers confidence. Focus on strengths and celebrate small wins.
- **Avoid sanctions:** Use empathy and problem-solving rather than punishment, which may increase anxiety.

Key Message for Staff

Organisational skills don’t develop overnight—they require **explicit teaching, modelling, scaffolding, and consistent practice**. With the right structures, routines, and encouragement, children can develop the confidence and independence needed to organise themselves effectively across both learning and life.

GET READY – DO IT FINISH IT

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS



Step 1 GET READY

Gather all the materials
needed for the task.



Step 2 DO IT

Stay focused and say “no”
to distractions.



Step 3 FINISH IT

Check the task is complete
and meets the original
objective.

