# New Hanover County Schools
Special Education & Related Services
Occupational Therapy

## CLASSROOM STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS
FOR STUDENTS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH:
FOLLOWING CLASSROOM Routines/protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IF YOU SEE:</th>
<th>TRY THIS:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHILD HAVING DIFFICULTY STANDING OR WALKING IN LINE.</td>
<td>● Tape line on floor&lt;br&gt;● Have child check that they are arm’s length from the person in front of them&lt;br&gt;● Have that child be the engine or caboose&lt;br&gt;● Minimize the amount of time spent standing vs. walking in line&lt;br&gt;● Give them something to do with their hands: interlocking fingers, crossing arms across chest, put in pockets….</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD NOT STAYING SEATED</td>
<td>● Move and sit cushion&lt;br&gt;● Take movement breaks&lt;br&gt;● Allow to stand/lay prone on elbows/work on knees while working&lt;br&gt;● Send on an errand for the teacher&lt;br&gt;● Have alternate work space available&lt;br&gt;● Use a timer&lt;br&gt;● Let them chew gum or other chewy foods</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD NOT FOLLOWING ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE ROUTINES or BATHROOM PROTOCOL</td>
<td>● Post daily picture schedule&lt;br&gt;● Post picture sequence of required task&lt;br&gt;● Make expectations clear&lt;br&gt;● Number “stations” in order of task (turn in home folder, make cafeteria selection, sign in, etc…)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD NOT KEEPING HANDS TO SELF</td>
<td>● Seat child at end of table or row&lt;br&gt;● Give them something to do with their hands: hands in lap, provide, fidgets, interlocking fingers, crossing arms across chest….&lt;br&gt;● Develop reward system for short periods of compliance&lt;br&gt;● Designated boundaries of personal space on carpet: tape lines, carpet squares. . .</td>
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## New Hanover County Schools
### Special Education & Related Services
### Occupational Therapy

### CLASSROOM STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS
FOR STUDENTS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH:
PERSONAL CARE AND ORGANIZING MATERIALS

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| A MESSY DESK, LOCKER OR CUBBY | ● Schedule 15 minutes/week to organize desks  
● Separate books on one side of the desk and papers on the other  
● Specify desk contents  
● Give a weekly “Clean Desk” award |
| ASSIGNMENTS ARE OFTEN MISPLACED | ● Color-coded turn-in baskets and tabs in 3 ring binders for different subjects  
● Have the child maintain a “Work in Progress” folder  
● Require name, date, and subject on all work  
● Try alternatives to 3 ring binders (accordion files, pocket folders)  
● Suggest family invest in a zipper binder |
| HOMEWORK IS OFTEN MISSING | ● Maintain a homework log by subject; have teacher and parent initial daily  
● Make sure students have time to copy assignments from board and ask clarifying questions  
● Require name, date, and subject on all work |
| A MESSY FACE AFTER MEALS | ● Incorporate looking into mirror after mealtime  
● Provide additional napkins  
● Assign a hygiene buddy |
| A CHILD IS UNABLE TO TIE SHOES | ● Do not consider this a concern before the end of 1st grade  
● Provide practice shoe with different colored shoe laces  
● For younger students, double knot shoelaces at beginning of school day |
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<td>CHILD CONSISTENTLY PLAYING BY SELF ON PLAYGROUND OR FREE TIME</td>
<td>● Provide child with bottle of bubbles to encourage interaction with others</td>
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<td>● Provide child with container of sidewalk chalk to distribute and share with classmates</td>
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<td>● Set up an organized peer buddy group to help the child and others on the playground</td>
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<td>● Start a game that requires multiple players</td>
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<td>CHILD WHO IS RELUCTANT TO JOIN IN GROUPS</td>
<td>● Set up an art/play scheme where children need to share materials (i.e. scissors, glue sticks) to complete an activity</td>
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<td>● Explain rules of a game individually to child before a group game begins</td>
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<td>● Start with smaller groups and add members over time</td>
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<td>● Avoid chase-like activities; this can lead to chaos</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILD WHO IS HAVING DIFFICULTY SHARING SPACE/ MATERIALS AND TAKING TURNS</td>
<td>● Model or set up trade and barter situations</td>
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<td>● Use timers to indicate length of turn</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Make rules and expectations clear before the activity begins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Provide enough equipment so the time required to wait for turn is reduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIGID PLAY SCHEMES</td>
<td>● Slowly incorporate additional themes into their existing play schemes</td>
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<td>● Use preferred play scheme as reward for participating in other play scenarios</td>
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## CLASSROOM STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS
**FOR STUDENTS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH:**
**POSTURE AND POSITIONING**

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| CHILD LAYS HEAD ON ARM OR DESK WHEN WORKING | ● Make sure chair and desk height match child’s size (feet on floor, knees and hips at a 90 degree angle, desk top at elbow height, straight back)  
● Provide movement breaks  
● Provide a move and sit cushion  
● Provide blocks for feet (taped phone books), if chair height is not adjustable  
● Have child position work near edge of work surface, tilted higher on dominant side |
| CHILD LAYS ON FLOOR OR NEIGHBORS DURING FLOOR ACTIVITIES | ● Allow child to sit on knees with ankles crossed under them  
● Position child with wall at their back  
● Allow child to sit in bean bag chair  
● Mark personal space with tape or carpet square  
● Limit length of time on floor |
**IF YOU SEE:**

**CHILD WHO DOESN'T SEEM TO KNOW WHAT TO DO AFTER GIVEN DIRECTIONS**
- Have student repeat directions before starting task
- Write the directions on the board or provide a desk copy
- Give one direction at a time
- Give the child extra time to respond

**CHILD HAS DIFFICULTY COMPLETING TASK**
- Provide a system for checking off steps as they are completed
- Limit amount of content on worksheets
- Remind student to complete worksheets left to right and top to bottom
- Remind student to gather all necessary materials before beginning task
- Minimize environmental distractions
- Use a timer
- Make sure task if appropriate to developmental and cognitive status
- Develop a reward system for task completion

**CHILD WHO HAS DIFFICULTY COPYING**
- Limit amount of material to be copied
- Position child near board
- Provide a paper copy
- Use large print/font
- Make sure vision is normal

**CHILD WHO HAS DIFFICULTY FOLLOWING DEMONSTRATIONS OR COPYING MODELS**
- Demonstrate one step at a time
- Assign a work partner
- Provide illustrated or written sequence of steps
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| LETTER REVERSALS                    | ● Teaching letters in groups. EXAMPLE: c,d,g,o,q are the "magic 'c' " letters to teach together; t,l,f,h,b are the "firepole" letters to teach together  
                                          ● Use different colors to visualize differences in strokes  
                                          ● Trace letters using color-changing markers  
                                          ● For right-handers with number reversals, use left hand as anchor on paper to show how numbers like 3 and 5 go around index and/or middle finger |
| POOR LETTER FORMATION               | ● Use adapted paper (raised line, only dotted middle and baselined, drop spaced) or graph paper underlays  
                                          ● Use Handwriting Without Tears materials/strategies  
                                          ● Tape letter formation models to desktop  
                                          ● Practice accurate multisensory formation: in the air with a "magic wand"; with finger against a ziplock bag filled with colored glue or hair gel; with playdoh snakes; with wikki stix; with foil rolls; on chalkboard; on magna-doodle; on dry erase board, in cookie sheet covered with thin layer of sand  
                                          ● Trace over letter models with tracing paper |
| POOR SPACING                        | ● Use graph paper--one letter or space per box  
                                          ● Use popsicle stick spacers (can decorate)  
                                          ● Use non-writing hand index finger as spacer  
                                          ● Highlight spaces in between words of text student is copying  
                                          ● Highlight margins to increase visual impact of where writing begins and ends |
| ERASES OFTEN OR PRESSES TOO HARD    | ● Try variety of pens, mechanical pencils, fine point pens with no erasers  
                                          ● Encourage structured error repair (EXAMPLE: do not fix mistake until entire sentence is complete)  
                                          ● Put something soft or textured under paper, like thin sheet of styrofoam, sandpaper, padded notebook, carpet square  
                                          ● Allow for spelling errors  
                                          ● Write on tracing paper or carbon paper |
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<th>Solution</th>
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<td>Tape paper to wall and have student stand to write in vertical plane</td>
<td>● have student hold small ball in writing hand while writing with ring and pinky fingers</td>
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| OFTEN DOES NOT PRESS HARD ENOUGH                                     | ● put sandpaper under writing paper  
● have student write with a squiggle pen  
● have student write with markers  
● try a #1 pencil (has softer lead) |
| AWKWARD GRASP ON WRITING UTENSIL                                      | ● try a very short pencil  
● try a variety of pencil grips, pencil girths, and grasp styles  
● write on slantboard  
● use rubberband on wrist and hook on end of pencil to pull down into webspace |
| SLOW, LABORED, OR MESSY WRITING                                       | ● increase time allowed for completion of work  
● reduce amount of work  
● space work sessions with short breaks  
● set time limits for specific writing tasks  
● allow use of either manuscript or cursive  
● set mutually agreed upon expectations for neatness  
● accept key word responses vs. complete sentences  
● reduce amount of copying from board; provide written version of board content  
● allow student to type or give answers orally  
● use appropriate height chair and desk; if chair is too high, place prop under feet  
● use dycem or non-skid material under elbows |
| CHOPPY, MESSY SCISSOR USE                                             | ● remind student to hold scissors in "thumb-up" position all the time—the scissors do not change direction, the paper being turned by the non-cutting hand is what turns  
● encourage student to cut as slowly as possible  
● pretend scissors are alligators and they only like to "eat" the line  
● use child-size Fiskar scissors |
| COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES AND/OR NOT COLORING IN COMPLETELY         | ● make the outline thicker and/or darker  
● encourage child to use finger vs. arm movements to move the crayon  
● encourage child to "make all the white disappear"  
● encourage child to watch crayon as it moves |
| SLOPPY FOLDS OR INCOMPLETE CREASES WHEN FOLDING PAPER                | ● ensure that child understands what it means to match corners or edges  
● put dots on corners/places that need to meet, and tell them to "make the dots kiss"  
● have child use side of pencil to smash the crease |