

An Chomhairle  
Mhúinteoireachta

**The Teaching Council**



**Title:** Teaching Strategies for use with Children who are Deafblind within the Classroom

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**Relevant key words:** Deafblind; Anne Sullivan; Anne Sullivan Centre; Teaching Strategies; Turn Taking; Tracing Objects; Visual Calendars; Name Symbols; Intensive Interaction; Clear Beginning; Middle and End; Choice Making; Labelling the Environment

**Summary:**

The Anne Sullivan Centre set about investigating the impact of a short training course on classroom teachers and special needs assistants' (SNAs') knowledge of deafblindness and levels of self-confidence, when working with children who are deafblind. The aim of the research was to 1) support teachers and SNAs in their ongoing professional development, 2) to support children who are deafblind and 3) highlight the benefits of working collaboratively. Deaf blindness is a low incidence condition and necessitates children needing meaningful and interactive learning styles, tactile and visual calendars and calming strategies with a sensory focus.

Forty seven participants completed both pre and post training questionnaires which were used to assess the impact of the short course. Some 38% of these were teachers and 60% were SNAs. The training was delivered in 4 locations throughout Ireland; Galway, Mayo, Dublin and Waterford and was of a half day duration. Participants received a copy of the presentation after the training session and were directed to additional resources that could be used at a future stage. Eight specific strategies were presented: turn-taking, tracing objects, visual calendars, name symbols, intensive interaction, clear beginning-middle-end, choice making and labelling the environment.

**Findings:** knowledge and confidence level had increased; length of teaching experience was not a factor, however, specific training was; 79% of those who responded to the follow up questionnaire had implemented at least one strategy; 15% increase in participants confidence in recognising deafblindness; the importance of collaborative approaches and sharing of knowledge was highlighted as was the importance of clarifying "terminology" that professionals use.

To access the full report, click [here](#).