

# ***Working Memory Overload Observations***

Some things you might see if children in your class are getting overwhelmed with information (verbal or visual):

- Asking you for what to do, even after an explanation (“hasn’t listened”)
- Avoidance of tasks (water bottles, pencil sharpening, prevarication, etc.)
- Can do it today, but not tomorrow (or vice versa)
- Copying others
- Difficulty transferring learned processes to new material – e.g., adding with new numbers
- Difficulty with tasks that involve more than one thing at a time
- Disengaging from tasks
- Forgetting to use strategies
- Involving others, attempting to gain peer support.
- Looking confused
- Looking like they’re “busy” completing the task but do not produce anything
- Looking round a lot (for cues what to do)
- Losing necessary information for a task
- Losing their place halfway through a task
- Making random errors or just getting muddled
- Making up/nonsense responses
- Not picking up a whole task or series of actions
- Only focusing on one part of the task
- Problems learning sequences (days of week, times tables, etc.)
- Reduced performance (short sentences, easy words)
- Rubbing work out/ scrunching up their work
- Visual signs of anxiety, e.g. tears
- Wriggling around to self-regulate

NB – these do not identify a disorder, but rather natural variations in working memory capacity relative to the demands of a particular situation