

# **Understanding & Supporting ADHD**

## ***A summary of Supporting ADHD at School***

by Jo Alesbrook

### **Strengths of individuals with ADHD**

Creative	Energetic	Positive	Enthusiastic
Adventurous	Rhythmic	Hands-on	Experiential

### **ADHD can reduce executive functions:**

<b>Time management</b>	<b>Flexibility</b>	<b>Planning, organisation and task initiation</b>	<b>Goal-directed persistence</b>	<b>Self-regulation</b>
Being on time, managing deadlines, understanding concept of minutes/hours/days	Need structure, routine and warning of changes	Thinking ahead, prioritizing, estimating how long tasks take, selective focusing and getting started	Sticking to a task until it's finished and staying focused	Managing emotions, feeling overwhelmed by situations and having a short fuse
<b>Response inhibition</b>	<b>Working memory</b>	<b>Metacognition</b>		
Acting first, thinking later – being verbally and/or physically impulsive	Can have excellent LTM but struggle to retain recent info	Ability to observe, self-monitor and evaluate, the ability to read facial expressions and body language, awareness of effect on others		

## Supporting ADHD

Supporting ADHD		
Starting the day positively	In the classroom	
Meet and greet the pupil and check their emotional well-being- provides for any changes to be explained, concerns/worries to be aired, and for the day to start off well	Seating arrangements- seat strategically away from certain pupils and close to teacher/TA to ensure they're concentrating	Visual timetables and daily plan helps reduce anxiety
	Ensure equipment is ready; problems with organisation means they can misplace and forget what they need throughout the day	Give a sense of ownership/responsibility by asking where they feel they may need support
	Reduced blood flow to frontal lobe makes concentration difficult- use simple fidget aids to help stimulate blood flow to frontal lobe	Learning with movement and physical interaction can help keep motivation high
Consider a breakfast club- healthy diet important and can aid concentration	Chunk tasks into small, achievable steps	Regular movement breaks / brain gym
	Timers can help with understanding what is expected and the time frame allowed	Children with ADHD often shout out, so provide a white board to write their answers on, as they are concerned they might forget their answer
	Vary answer responses from hands up/hands down, telling a partner, so they can share their answer	Have pre-agreed prompts with the student so they know what you mean when you want them to start or stop doing something
Provide a calm environment – playgrounds are often noisy and pose a risk; some may have sensory processing issues and noise can cause anxiety and discomfort	As sitting for long periods is difficult, give them errands to provide reasons to move around	Provide clear choices but not too many instructions at once (chunk, task analysis)
	If possible, provide a quiet study area/calm space	Provide a calm box if it helps reduce anxiety; this can include things they fiddle with, touch and play with, and respond well to

## Additional Support

Provide steady support so not to overwhelm students with too much change at once. Home support may need to be provided, as one in three with ADHD will have a parent who also has ADHD.