

Supporting home learning when your child has ASD/ADHD

- Remember a routine is doing things in a certain order every day – that's what's important, not timings. Respond to your child and include breaks when they're needed. If it helps – show the order for activities visually, using pictures (e.g. wash, get dressed, exercise, work at computer, read, eat lunch, etc)
- Be kind to yourself – working from home at the same time as supporting children working from home is a new challenge for everyone. If your child needs additional support to stay focused, it's even more of a challenge and that needs to be factored in.
- Don't get overly focused on what you think they 'should' be doing and remember that competitive parenting can still happen online! Just start with what they can do and take it from there – learning is as much about building confidence and resilience as it is about skills.
- Work in 15-minute chunks. Some children work best standing up, or with headphones on – as they're at home, you can go with what works! Variety and little and often is key.
- Remember that in an average school day, there will be 'down times' when pupils aren't learning, for example when they're moving between lessons, when it's tidy up time, when they're getting set up for the next lesson. It will likely be more intensive at home when they have an adult watching over them all the time.
- Between each mini session, allow time for staring out of the window, a chat, walking around or some dancing in the kitchen! Try to avoid TV or gaming/technology between sessions, as once they're engrossed in this it can be hard to get them back on track!

- Online quizzes and activities work well because they're engaging, short and there is instant feedback.
- Make sure you put a timer on to remind you to verbally praise the effort they've put in every 5 minutes (it's so easy to forget, but ADHD and ASD often go hand in hand with low self esteem and so your constant reinforcement and encouragement will make a huge difference).
- Go with their interests. If they love cars/tractors/animals/Pokemon – research them, find some pictures and make a booklet. Cutting and sticking the pictures help to develop the fine motor skills needed for writing. They can also write captions or bits of information under each picture.
- Make a list together of all the snacks in the house. Agree on sensible prices for each snack (for example an apple – 5p, a bag of crisps – 15p). Give them an amount of money at the start of the day and once they've spent it all – no more snacks! A sanity saver for parents being constantly pestered for food, it teaches money management and you can recycle the same money day after day!
- Writing recipes, weighing out the ingredients and baking together, or writing step by step instructions for how you would make a sandwich and then following them to the letter to see if any steps are missing!
- Get outside when you can – pull up weeds in the garden, play keepy-uppies, race, make a map of the habitats in your garden and what insects live there, count how many birds visit – whatever takes their interest that encourages some fresh air!