



## Supporting neurodiverse pupils with remote learning

By Mike Hussey



### When a student is required to take part in a remote learning environment, some considerations may be needed at home:

- Most parents/carers are not teachers – so how much can be done by them?
- What are the expectations from the school? E.g. work set on a digital platform
- Priority will be the mental health and wellbeing of the young person and the family,
- Is there access to any support that might be on offer? Keeping in touch with the school, other parents/carers for example,
- Can parents/carers understand the work that has been set, as well the young person?

### Useful starting points to consider when learning remotely:

Aim for engagement, by challenging passivity, with different ways to obtain new knowledge and/or demonstrating their new knowledge and understanding – practical / oral / artistry / written form.



Things to consider:

- How does the young person like to learn?
- What does success look like for them?
- What prior knowledge do they already have from their lessons in school?

### The learning environment:

Where is it?

Does it have to be one place? i.e. at a desk or table

Are there distractions to learning that need to be minimised?

Anywhere could be a potential learning environment if set up appropriately

Importance for some pupils will be around movement – consider breaks

If there is one study area, then organise the space before – sort equipment for example.

### Making a plan:

Is there a timetable of lessons from the school?

Such as joining live lessons for subjects

When does 'homeschooling' start?

Is there a potential to start the day with some exercise to increase motivation, wellbeing, and concentration on tasks?

Meals and rest/movement breaks

Exercise

Personal space time

'Protected' family time



### **Memory:**

An effective memory breaks down into two parts: short-term/working memory and long-term memory.

Some young people may have difficulties with memory that may present in ways such as – poor organisational skills, difficulty in retaining and following instructions, difficulty in

recalling prior learning, and difficulty in being able to transfer skills learnt from one area to another (e.g. drawing a chart in maths, and then drawing a chart to represent results from a geography fieldtrip).

**Short-term / working memory:** helps people process and recall newly learnt information so they can tackle the task at hand.

**Long-term memory:** information that has been transferred here helps to develop a deeper understanding of a topic.

## Top tips for memory boosting:

Encourage questions and make learning exciting	Create rhymes and songs	Encourage active learning – discussions around what the young person thinks.
Use of visual aids – flashcards, images to represent ideas	Make your own examples	Creation of mind maps
Key words/ideas for subjects – build up associations between these across topics and subjects	Ask the young person to teach someone else – explain the information they have learnt	Use all the senses, where possible – reading aloud

## Assistive technology:

<b>Text-to-speech</b> – allows people to understand written material and proof-read their work	<b>Mind mapping</b> – helps to plan work more effectively and create links between ideas/topics	<b>Scanning software and hand reading pens</b> – users can store and listen to text found in books or other documents
<b>Spell checker</b> – automatically makes corrections to errors in written communications	<b>Speech recognition</b> – allows children to dictate or talk to a computer that uses software to convert this to text	<b>Smartpens</b> – used to write text but can also track this and create notes in digital form. Pen can then be used to record, play, or upload text to digital platforms
<b>E-Readers</b> – without ads or other distractions, users can better keep their eyes on their reading without interruptions.	<b>Electronic math worksheets</b> – organise, align numbers and solve math related problems	<b>Proofreading software</b> – helps to check spelling, grammar, punctuation and sentence structure
<b>MathTalk</b> – speech recognition software which precludes keyboard use. It comprehends technical vocabulary and transcribes in mathematical notation appropriate for trigonometry, algebra, and calculus	<b>Clicker 7</b> – reading platform, allowing users to create a web of words and emoji-like pictograms, or diagram entire projects. This is quite effective for visual learners	<b>Co-writer/Dragon</b> – programs that transcribe speech. Often they can predict intended words and phrases, along with meaning.

## Other support:

[www.timetimer.com](http://www.timetimer.com) / [www.nightzookeeper.com](http://www.nightzookeeper.com) / [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

<https://freddiesmummy.com/homeschooling> / [www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk)