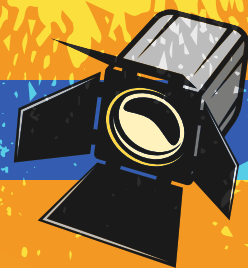




Spotlight on SEND



'Hello everyone!'

I hope you and your family are keeping well and are in good health. Welcome to the second edition of Spotlight on SEND. The last half term was another busy one for our learners at WHS. The GCSE season began for our yr.11 cohort. The Every Child Hub team were on hand to ensure our learners with additional needs were supported and settled well into their exams. Support included providing individual access arrangements, providing breakfast, lending equipment, settling nerves, and making sure every child felt comfortable on entry to their exam room. Our learners showed grit and resilience, leaving the exam room with a smile on their face, proud that they had done their best. There are still exams to be sat and the team will continue to support anyone who needs them – thank you to the team for all your efforts.

Autism Acceptance Conference

Well done to everyone who attended the Autism Acceptance Conference on 10th May. 36 learners attended from years 7-11. Alisha and Eeshani opened the event with a keynote speech that shared their firsthand experiences of Autism and described, passionately, what they hoped the day would achieve – understanding, tolerance and acceptance of differences. All participants engaged fully in the day's activities and workshops and left with a goodie bag containing a WHS water bottle, a fidget toy, a postcard of praise and some sweet treats. As well as this they have all been presented with a certificate and an Autism Acceptance pin badge that they can wear proudly on their blazer. We are already looking forward to next year's event. Alisha and Eeshani will return to support the conference and will be inviting primary school children to spread the word further across our wider community.



Spotlight on Reading

Literacy is a continuum of learning and proficiency in reading, writing, and using numbers throughout life. Ensuring every child has the necessary skills they need to read is an essential component of literacy education. It enables children to learn across the curriculum and access numerous aspects of daily life, influencing the opportunities available to them in the future. At WHS we are aware, particularly after Covid, that some of our learners struggle with word decoding, comprehension, and fluency. Listening to those learners, they do not enjoy reading and rarely read for pleasure. We want every child to be able to read confidently so that it is not a barrier to learning and progress. From September, Reading will be an explicit priority across the school, involving all staff and all learners. Work on this priority will continue during the last half term so that we are ready in September when there will be whole

school strategies, individualised programmes, bespoke interventions, and parent/carer sessions to build and embed a culture where there is a love of reading.





I have decided to focus on working memory (WM) for this edition. This is pertinent to me as I have dyslexia and dyscalculia which gives me a higher rate of WM concerns. It is also a core difficulty for learners with ADHD. WM is an executive function that plays a key role in how we process, use, and remember information daily. Remembering a phone number, recalling directions, or writing an essay are all tasks that use WM. In school I struggle to remember everything I need to remember to function effectively. Some of our children will too. WM is the skill of holding information in our heads whilst doing something else with it and can be super tricky. Children with WM difficulties often struggle with numeracy and literacy because of the amount of information they must hold in their head while working. I have had to create strategies to help me to remember information and let people know that it is a difficulty of mine so they can help too.

How can you help?

Break down activities step by step. ‘Chunking’ larger amounts of information together can help increase the amount of information held in WM. E.g., people often chunk telephone numbers or chunk instructions into bits rather than giving it as a lengthy list. Chunking things that you might have to remember into bits based on a category/their colour etc.

Repetition of instructions, say it repeatedly (verbal rehearsal). ***Encourage the use of ‘memory aids’*** - information is retrieved easier when it is stored using a cue or ‘mnemonic.’ This could be silly rhymes for spellings or phases to remember lists of things (e.g., chemical elements, the parts of the vertebral column). A strength of mine is that I remember song lyrics with ease. I can listen to a song a couple of times before I know it word for word. I use this to my advantage when learning something new – I put it to music in my head. ***Give instructions using visual and verbal approaches*** – presenting instructions in visual (drawings/images) and verbal formats can support their understanding and memory for instructions – draw it! ***Write down each step in Maths problems*** – children with WM difficulties should write down every step when solving Maths questions rather than relying on mental calculations. Jotting it down on a piece of paper when solving word problems can help keep their place and remember what they are being asked to do. ***Teach children to be active readers*** – when reading encourage underlining, highlighting or jotting key words down. Re-reading highlighted and underlined words can help the child to consolidate information in their long-term memory.

Examples of Memory Aids

Writing aids: mind maps, spelling aids, such as wall charts, flash cards, word strips, word clocks, personalised dictionaries

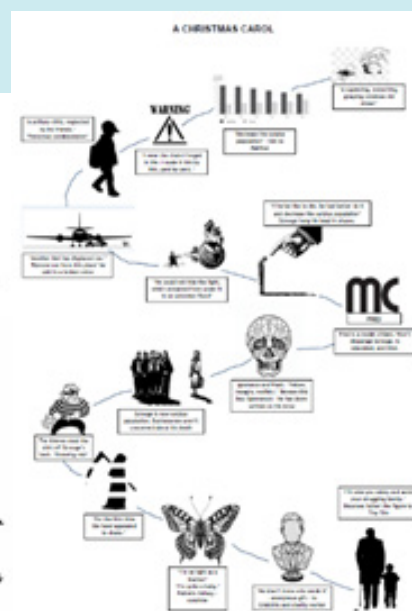
Mathematical aids: cubes, beads, counters, abaci, number lines, fingers, multiplication grids, calculators

Audio device – could help back up verbal information e.g., voice notes on mobile phones

Apps available to help, support and develop working memory

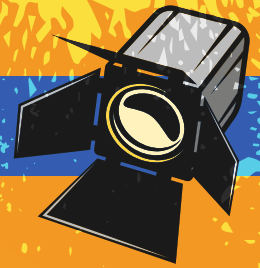
The use of ICT to support memory difficulties can be an exciting and engaging way to boost skills. Below is a list of suggested apps for improving memory and setting reminders.

- Brain School Training
- Lumosity
- Memory Workout
- Flashcards+ Reminders
- Remember the Milk
- Forgetful





Spotlight on SEND



Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and for your continued support. Our vision is that this newsletter will become a collaborative way for us all to explore and celebrate neurodiversity. If you have any suggestions for future publications, please email us. Equally if you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at jparadine@westhoughton-high.org or our Learning Support Lead at jtaylor@westhoughton-high.org

Date for your Diary

I have a date for your diary. The next Parent/Carer Coffee Morning will be on Thursday 6th July 9-11am. This will be led by our Behaviour Support Manager and a representative from Bolton Behaviour Support – if you would like to attend, please email one of the contacts above.

With thanks

‘The Every Child Hub Team’

