

## **Autism, ADHD, Irlen syndrome and dyslexia, how to make lessons more accessible for students.**

Here are some of the things I have noticed that help my neurodivergent students, although each person is different:

- **Ask the student or their parents if they know what would help them**, so they have the support they need during lessons.
- **Colour of paper** - not bright white paper, using yellow, blue, green or purple coloured paper or coloured overlays could be very helpful.
- **Environment**  
Check for any sensory things that could be distracting for the student:
  - are the lights too bright
  - any overwhelming noises
  - is it too hot or too cold
- Giving students **extra processing time**, by slowing down the pace of the lesson. Not forcing them to read music fast if they are struggling as it may be totally overwhelming and put them off for good.
- **Allowing the student to move around during the lesson** or leave the lesson for a breather if they need this to help them focus and learn.
- If the student doesn't understand something explain it in different ways and demonstrate.
- **Make it multisensory**
  - **Visual** - give them something clear that the individual understands, and works well with them to take away, so they can process what it means after the lesson if needed and then they will really understand it later on if they are interested. This often means creating individualised resources.
  - **Auditory** - Allow them to audio record what has been played, or video it, if it will help with recall later on.
  - **Verbalising** - for verbal processors, discuss and explain to confirm comprehension. Just explaining things to the student in words is often not enough. Students may struggle to understand, or even worry that they don't understand because they haven't understood things in the past when they haven't been explained in a way that they understand. Sometimes verbalising along with demonstrating either visually or auditory is what's needed.

### **Sensory experience in autism and ADHD**

**Understand that a person's internal experience is very different to yours, try to imagine this if you can.**

**Probably the most important thing is - being kind and respectful to neurodivergent students, and having plenty of patience with them and letting them be themselves without pressure to act differently.**

