

AUTISM AND MY DAUGHTER A SUPPORT JOURNEY FOR MILLIE

WHERE WE STARTED

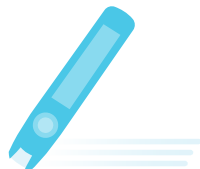
Millie is 8 years old and is a creative, active and inquisitive young lady, who is full of energy and fun. Drawing and creating models using lego are just some of Millie's passions and her curious mind has led her interests towards the environment, history and space.



After a referral and assessment from her GP, Millie was diagnosed with autism and has more recently been diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD. She is a bright and happy little girl but struggles significantly with processing, which impacts on her reading and understanding. She is behind her peers in all areas, and this impacts her self-esteem and confidence with her work- she often comments on her schoolwork being too hard, especially if it's something that Millie needs to read, and the anxiety she feels at school has previously led to school refusal.

Last year, school reported that Millie's lack of self-esteem meant she found getting started with work independently very challenging, she relied on staff working with her to explain and she became very frustrated when making mistakes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE C-PEN READER



Millie had previously seen the C-Pen Reader on some literature I had, so knew about what it was and what it could do and had been asking if she could have one for a while. When she received it, she was so excited and was able to get going with it straight away, it was easy to use, and Millie was able to start using it relatively independently. The buttons were clear and straight forward for turning it on and scanning and once shown she was able to navigate to the dictionary section.

HELPING HANDS DETECTIVE AGENCY



We started using the Detective agency book which really held her attention and she started with learning the names of the detectives. We knew it was something she really liked as at bedtime she took it upstairs and was independently using it with her own reading books. Something she rarely does.



Millie spent the next few weeks using the C-Pen Reader with the activity book and her own school reading books to help her continue to get used to it and implement it as part of her normal way of working.

What has worked well is prompting to her to use it when unsure of words or making mistakes when she is reading. Previously us trying to verbally correct her would be very overwhelming and she would quickly become frustrated. This often resulted in her not wanting to continue with her work, but she has recently been more able to complete activities and reading without becoming frustrated or overwhelmed.

MILLIE SAYS, "MY C-PEN READER HELPS ME, IT READS THE WORDS FOR ME WHEN SOME ARE HARD. IT FEELS NICE AND HAPPY."



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Since using the pen, we have noticed an improvement in Millie's resilience and confidence when reading but also when understanding questions for work — rather than having to guess what a written question might mean the ability to hear it back supports her understanding to enable her to complete her work.

Despite the pen being only used at home, School have commented on the positive changes as she has started year 3. They have said that Millie is more confident at getting started with her work and appears less reliant on staff to complete her work, we hope to see this continue to improve once school secure their own pen.

WHERE WE ARE NOW



There has been a shift with self-esteem. If Millie begins to struggle at school, her self-esteem will dip. However, since having the C-Pen Reader to support her, Millie's self-esteem hasn't taken as much of a hit and her negative thoughts are more outward than inward: she doesn't refer to herself as being bad. In that respect, the C-Pen Reader has become a bit of a buffer for her and prevented her from declining as much as she usually would when she struggles. This is also true of her reading ability. She is slowing down a lot more to check her reading and the Pen reinforces this.

Millie is seeking out books a lot more now with using the C-Pen Reader and is spending time in her room going through books, which she would not enjoy as much previously. It certainly seems to have improved her confidence and the C-Pen Reader is certainly successful in the home environment for Millie.

There has been a massive improvement with Millie's reading ability and her enthusiasm to read for pleasure. Millie can still be resistant to reading at times, but she is using the C-Pen Reader more consistently and is getting a lot more enjoyment out of reading, especially as she is able to enjoy books that are more targeted towards her interests.

For example, she really enjoys Goosebumps and is now more able to confidently read those books, which is very different to what she had been reading previously. The progress being made with the use of the C-Pen Reader has meant that Millie is able to read books that she wouldn't have been able to read before and read books that her peers are reading. This noticeable change in Millie has even led to her wanting to start her own YouTube channel that includes sharing her interests and reading from her books!

“WE ARE SO HAPPY THAT SHE HAS THIS OPPORTUNITY FROM A YOUNG AGE TO ADAPT TO THE PEN AND FEEL THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY HAS SET HER UP ON THE RIGHT PATH TO CONTINUE TO GROW IN CONFIDENCE AND HAVE THE SUPPORT IN A WAY THAT IS MEANINGFUL TO HER NEEDS.”



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