

## The Pause Button Strategy



- Hitting the pause button is essentially a way of taking a step back and remaining calm, for both adult and pupils.
  - When you sense a situation could get out of control try saying *'Let's pause a minute and think about what is happening'* or *'I'm not sure what is happening now, let's hit the pause button and think'*.
  - With younger children, a shorter *"pause, think"* comment would work best.
- It may give you both time to:
  - Pause, think and tune in to what is going on (i.e. *'Let's rewind what happened there?'*).
  - Calm down and think of an alternative together (i.e. *'what can we do differently?'*).
  - With younger children the pause can simply provide a space to prevent a negative reaction and shift the situation.
- It can help model a helpful way of dealing with a potentially stressful and/or distressing situation to the pupil.
- It may also be helpful to have a concrete prop available so pupils can actually press pause (on an old remote control). The action itself may help them learn to stop before they react.
- A visual symbol of a pause button may also be helpful if a pupil gets overwhelmed by someone talking to them when situations get difficult for them. Showing the pause button symbol could be a non-verbal prompt for them to pause and think.
- For the pause button strategy to work effectively time will need to be taken to explain the purpose of the pause button to the pupil. This may need to be repeated and/or modelled by the adult so the pupil can learn and integrate the strategy and potentially internalise it so they can use it independently (with or without a prop/prompt).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Smith" or similar, enclosed within a circular scribble.