

# **Thrive Approach Pen Portraits**

## **Pen Portrait for SKILLS AND STRUCTURE - Childhood Years**

### **The inner world of the child:**

A child with a SKILLS AND STRUCTURE interruption doesn't see her/himself as capable. They anxiously observe other children acquiring skills and feel themselves to be so inferior that they won't even engage in the tasks.

This feeds their belief about themselves that they are a failure and what they do is 'rubbish'. They don't think they fit in or alternatively they over adapt to others' expectations - either way their sense of personal ability is undermined.

Unlike other children who enjoy contributing to, negotiating and challenging rules, they remain confused and disengaged, as they are insecure in themselves and limited in their experience of the world beyond themselves. Some make these limitations into ways of defining themselves or belonging.

Others can become agitated and may hassle or get into fights with the rule makers. The child's poor sense of self inhibits their ability to understand or develop their own set of values or appreciate others. The child is unlikely to value or be willing to try new skills, needing to stay with what has worked for them so far rather than finding out what they really like and care about.

### **Body language:**

Often the children will whine in a passive unproductive way: this way of being can irritate others. Sometimes the children are nervy, clumsy and lack physical robustness. Others are hyperactive and uncoordinated.

The way forward to help these children is to acknowledge their fears and help them to properly assess their abilities in a comprehensive way. They need to be gently introduced to new ideas and activities so they can be helped to choose what is right for them.

Some will need safe spaces in which to try out new ways of being and learn new skills without being exposed in front of their peers or familiar people.