

# Top Tips

## Start and Finish boxes

Start and Finish boxes are often introduced for children with a range of needs. The focus of the session could include; developing acceptance of structure and routines, following adult directed tasks, developing attention and concentration, early turn taking and/or the acquisition of new skills.

Two boxes are set out to the left and right of the table top, with the child sat in front of them. Ideally the basket on the left should be labelled '**Start**' in green, and the basket on the right labelled '**finished**' in red.

A visual task strip with 'symbols' of each activity can be placed in between the 2 boxes. This shows the order in which the activities will take place.

### HOW...

- The child should be supported to look to the task strip and select the 1<sup>st</sup> activity from the **Start** basket, placing it directly in front of them.
- The adult should support the child in carrying out the activity. Once completed, the activity and corresponding symbol should be placed into the **Finished** basket and the next symbol should be referred to.
- Each activity should be completed by the child, however if they are struggling to maintain attention the task could be drawn to an end by the adult e.g. by placing most jigsaw pieces into position with the child inserting the final piece.
- The above sequence should be continued until the task strip is empty.

When establishing the routine of the session, activities should be motivating and focus on the child's strengths and interests. Gradually activities that the child is less keen on/are skills which we want to develop, can be sandwiched between the motivating and fun activities.

A session may initially only consist of 1 or 2 short activities, building to up as the child's skill level increases.

