**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** teacher, urban, south, state school, female

## General introduction

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so if we just start off, do you wanna tell me a bit about your personal experience, and how you’ve ended up in the job that you’re in now.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Oooh OK, um I…did Geography as a degree in university then couldn’t decide what I wanted to do with Geography…um…and couldn’t quite see whether I wanted to be, I’ve- interested in being a town planner but then I was like I don’t know if I could do that for the rest of my life, so decided to [laugh] do a teaching degree…um…PGCE…and…then have been in teaching ever since for…18 years. I think we just said.

**INTERVIEWER:** Wow, so you’re a class teacher now?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yes, and-…

**INTERVIEWER:** In primary school

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** …have been all the way through. In two different schools. I started off in XXXX…Primary and then, we don’t need names, and then I’m now in another school.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, and can you describe a sort of typical classroom where you are now?

**INV-010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Typical classroom?...um…thirty children with very different need…always seems to be more boys than girl [whispers ‘I don’t know why’]…um…ummm…ts…they…I’m in year three at the moment so…they are generally just on the edge of being-…they-…so they’ve…through the course of this year, they’ve lear-…they’ve changed from being infants to being juniors so they now sit at their tables rather than the carpet…um…is that the sort of thing you want? [laughs]

**INTERVIEWER:** yeah, yeah, and…do you have a teaching assistant in with you?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** oooh I do this year but not next year. So due to funding cuts, there’s a whole loads lots less TAs next year, but I do at the moment.

**INTERVIEWER:** So, do you have any children that require one to one and then would you get additional stuff in if you did…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yes, the third one. I don’t have any children in my class that require one to one… because..I’m a job share and generally speaking they don’t put one to one children in with a job share…but…because of the ki-…lack of consistency and most of those are children that require...like…absolute consistency…umm…but yes, if I had a child with an EHCP, then I would have an additional adult as well.

**INTERVIEWER:** Ok, but you don’t have that at the moment?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** No [laugh]

## ADHD as a disorder and its symptoms

**INTERVIEWER:** Umm…so we’re particularly interested in ADHD.

**INV**-**006-T-U-S-STA-F:** yeah

**INTERVIEWER:** So could you describe to me what you think ADHD is.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Ooohhh, well…um…er…I’d say that depends completely on the child…umm….so…children who are…fairly hyperactive, they might not be able to concentrate…um…sometimes the classroom is a really difficult place for them to be cause of a whole set of rules that they don’t…find it very easy to follow…umm [pause 2secs]…th-…yeah generally children…who…I would say don’t necessarily get on with the rules and regulation of…what…we expect them to do and their behaviour doesn’t necessarily conform…to…the other children?

**INTERVIEWER:** So you said its sort of quite…dependent on the child. So do you think it’s…quite individualistic? Like the different children you’ve seen with ADHD, have there been…have there been similarities, but have there also been differences, would you say?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Um…I guess that they’re all quite similar in that they all seem…bubbly and lively at times but they can us-…usually most of them are able to be calm, depends whether they’ve got medication or not as to…whether…I guess you see two sides of them completely…umm…but yeah…I guess…there are similarities, yeah, that they’re…um…less able to concentrate, more fidgety [laugh], jump around all the time [laugh]…but…not…[pause 3 secs]…but…so…yeah…I…it…dd…diff…it presents differently in each…in each…in different children I would say.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, there’s sort of…three ways it’s often described which is hyperactive…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** yeah

**INTERVIEWER:** …impulsive…you know sort of acting without thinking…and…being inattentive. So, would you say they’re quite accurate descriptions from your experience?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, yeah, I think those are three things I just…said. Impulsive you maybe don’t see quite [exaggerated] so much in the classroom…but… definitely hyperactive, definitely in…ability to concentrate kind of thing.

**INTERVIEWER:** And when you mentioned medication, you said sometimes it helps them, so have you seen that…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Sometimes? [laugh]

**INTERVIEWER**: So have you seen it help them, have you seen it kind of…what…what experience have you got?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** I’ve seen it change children’s personalities completely.

**INTERVIEWER:** Oh OK, in what way?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Subdue them from…uh…like…chatty happy child to…I don’t know, like just sort of zombiefied child.

**INTERVIEWER:** Ah OK, so has that not been so positive?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** [laughs] Parents seem to like it! I don’t know, it just seemed to…change what they were like. I’ve also seen othe-…seen other children that it doesn’t affect in quite the same way so…I-...it helps them to be able to get on with their learning, but it doesn’t change their personality completely.

**INTERVIEWER:** Ah OK, so it has been…sometimes positive.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** yeah, I guess actually the ones which were less positive are probably further ago in my teaching experience. I’m thinking they’re probably at the previous school I was at. So wonder if there’s been a…change in medication over the years. Probably. I don’t know.

## The diagnosis and treatment of ADHD

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, yeah. And do you know what causes ADHD, or what caused it for those particular children?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Not generally no, I don-…we don’t generally find out…about medical history. You just get told ‘this child has ADHD’. You don’t know a lot more…about…it.

**INTERVIEWER:** And can you describe a bit about like the impact has on your classroom if you have a child with ADHD in there?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Um…yes, the children have to learn to adapt basically to a child that…doesn’t necessarily...conform in behaviour in the same way as they do. I mean, yes they all have boundaries and yes, they all have to…abide by the same rules but there has to be a bit of give and take for…jumping around the classroom [laugh] and that sort of thing…but within the kind of scope of learning as well.

**INTERVIEWER:** And has it impacted you, in terms of like maybe what you’ve had to plan or the way that you’ve set up the classroom and physically, or anything else?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Not generally cause children like that generally would…like…it’ll be the TA that was kind of with them…a bit more. I’m tryna think, like [laugh], years I’ve ever done anything particularly. Um…I think…So I’ve definitely had a child who needed their own workspace, their own like…so…sittin-…sharing a table with someone else was just not possible cause you’d just…just get in their way. Um…so…that they’ve-…they’ve had their own space where they could go to…umm…and…But some-…sometimes they like to be with their friends as well so they’ve-…I’ve definitely done ones where we’ve kinda have ability to be on your own OR working with the class, kinda depending on what you were doing and depending on what…mood they’re in. Thinking we’ve got one in…our year three at the moment who’s…yeah very much like that, that he’s got his own workspace, and sometimes he needs to be there, that sometimes he’ll be like ‘No I’m sitting over there with the rest of the kids.’ Um…and so…yeah, we had to…well the other teacher [unintelligible] I haven’t got any in my class this year…has had to accommodate for that as well.

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, so you have to be quite flexible...

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** yeah, I think so [laugh]

**INTERVIEWER:** …on the…on the job as you’re going along.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** BUT then you have to be flexible with quite a lot of children’s…needs so I guess it’s just one need in a…sea of others kind of thing.

**INTERVIEWER:** And do you find that…that it’s just part and part of the job or is…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah

**INTERVIEWER:** …or is it a massive challenge?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** More and more so, more and more so…and like as years have gone on.

**INTERVIEWER:** So it’s got more of a challenge, do you think?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** More of a challenge. I guess more children are diagnosed with different things, I think that’s probably the answer that even as…even…I mean eighteen years ago doesn’t even seem that long…but…definitely there was less like labelling of what children have got, I think.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, do you have any opinion on that? Good, bad or different…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** No [exaggerated], I guess…I guess in a way it’s good, cause if you know they’ve got…certain things then you can…its easier to know what things will help them. But then in some cases, it makes children much worse if they have a LABEL attached to them that they think they can then perform…up to or…

**INTERVIEWER:** Ah OK.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** …and we’ve got a couple who…were really well b-…or generally fairly well behaved until they were given a diagnosis of tha-…the-…this is autistic rather than ADHD, but who then changed completely almost overnight because they had something to…like ‘oh well, I’m autistic I can do this’…so I guess in some ways, I’ve not seen that happen with a child with ADHD but I guess it could do in the same way.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah…and do you get asked either by parents or…doctors…or the other school staff for any information about a child, if they are looking to get a diagnosis or if-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F: T**hrough CAMHS usually yeah [unintelligible]-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Would they come to you?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Um…They don’t come to us, they send us things [laugh]. Um…they would send like, an assessment form where you have to…fill it, usually on a sc-…scale from like one to five-…rate where would this child fit on these. They’re usually double sided with different questions…um…and then…usually, for an ADHD one they would usually come in and observe the child. I think they observe them at home as well but I’ve not…I’ve not directly been involved in a diagnosis of one…um…so…but th-…the one in year three that we’ve got at the moment is definitely going through…some sort of-…but they’ve definitely spoken to parents and the school.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, and can you think of any of the sort of questions they might ask, are they all directed about behaviour or some about learning or like other?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Uh no th-…th-…they cover all those things you just said like impulsiveness, and…um…I’m trynna think, I did one for a child that is not ADHD but it’s a very similar survey [whispers ‘what did they ask?’]. Things about friendships, where would they see their friends…um…where di-…what did they see themselves-…their opinion of themselves, how confident are they…umm…to…like are they able to interact in the classroom, do they respect the teacher-…I mean it covers quite a lot of things…but then I’m guessing maybe they’re forms used for a wide range of…diagnostic stuff.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, and then have you had any experience of…information then coming back to you saying either I’m-… um education health per-…healthcare plan or something else, these are now the kind of interventions you need to put into place or these are the actions you need to take or-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** I don’t think I have directly for ADHD, I’ve had it for other ones…um…but then if they were going to send them back, usually…the educational psychologists are involved then and they would sort of come in and meet with you about it rather than sending you back points, they would come in and say ‘this is what needs to happen.’

**INTERVIEWER:** But you haven’t had…direct experience of it?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** I haven’t done it no. It’s-…I think it’s the thing of being-…well certainly recently being a jobshare, they don’t tend to put complex cases in your classes cause it makes it much harder when you’re sharing between…two people. But no and-…I’ve not actually been involved in it.

**INTERVIEWER**: OK-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Sorry [laugh]

**INTERVIEWER:** No, that’s fine.

## Training and support for teaching children with ADHD

**INTERVIEWER:** Um so…thinking about…we’re interested in ADHD training-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah

**INTERVIEWER:** So, can you think back over the years, have you had any specific training on ADHD?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** I don’t think so no-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Have you had any information…or-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** It might’ve…umm…we’ve probably had information. So usually in the staff room there are v-…various resource books that you can go and access if you wanted stuff…um…definitely at the school I’m at now, there’s a teacher who’s kind of responsible for…like all the children with different needs and so you could go and speak to her and she would have any number of books on her shelf that she could lend you or point you to the right websites. So individually, yeah you can easily get stuff…collectively I…[pause 2secs] it might’ve come up in a staff meeting as like a ‘this is a…’ sort of, but not on a very specific manner just a kind of range of…this might be useful for kind of thing.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, so kind of…more generic, general ideas you could try-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, yeah. Which would probably cover a wide range of behaviours of autistic children, like all sorts of things across the spectrum rather than just ‘This is something you can do for children with ADHD’.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, and do have a SENCO at school?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yes

**INTERVIEWER:** Would they offer…some kind of support if you wanted?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, so we have a SENCO and an inclusions team…um…and also another teacher who kind of specialises in speech and language stuff but she’s…just seems to know everything basically. So that’s between-…and that’s four different teachers who all have got different experiences across the thing, and none of them are class teachers specifically. They all work out of class, particularly with the SEN children. So yeah, any of those would have…information that you could ask about.

**INTERVIEWER:** And would you say for you, is ADHD a priority if you were looking for training in-…for your job. Would you pick that as a priority or do you think that…it’s quite low down in your priority list?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Not at the moment because I haven’t [laugh] got any children with ADHD in my class…um…but I guess it’s the kind of thing where, if you have a child it would be really useful and if you don’t then it’s kind of a bit like ‘ok, do I need to be here?’ kind of thing. Although I guess…like…I suspect-…like autism, it’s a kind of spectrum and you can be…further along than…others so I guess it would be, if there was training on it, then I guess it might be useful to some children who weren’t necessarily diagnosed but just bouncy bubbly kind of personalities. Maybe there’ll be things in there that you could use for other children.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, so it’d be more of like a direct need, if you have a child-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** I think so. Yeah. Although as I said**,** there could be-…maybe if there was direct training then it would-…you could u-…apply it to-…um…there is-...there’ll be skills that you could use for others even if you didn’t have a child with ADHD in your class.

**INTERVIEWER:** Can you think of any training that you have done at school, like on any topic that you thought was particularly good and why you thought it was good?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Generally, the stuff that’s interactive, where they don’t just stand and talk at us all the time. They’ll-…like they get you into groups and say like think of a particular child. How would you deal with this situation with them? Or…and we’ve done some stuff where…like across year groups so have one from year R, one from year one, one from year two all the way up to year six cause…year R teacher’s perspective is very different from year six’s teachers and sometimes it helps to kind of…put it all together and just see that it’s different…from different children. So yeah, interactive, and like actually talking about stuff rather than someone talking at you.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, um…so again like thinking about ADHD training, if you were to have it, can you think of what you would want included, what kind of information or what kind of…sessions would you want?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Umm…I guess it’ll be useful to know like wha-…what it is medically kind of thing. So…but not…not, not like a doctor’s level! But enough to like kinda cover what you’re dealing with. Then…I guess the most useful thing would be practical ways to help them in class. And maybe…practical advice to offer parents as well, like at home if their children that are really difficult at home cause…parents quite often seem to think that we know what we’re doing. Um…so yeah, in lesson time, parents…yeah…I…those… a yeah, I think those would be the main thing, like practically what you could do for them in class…what sort of support-…or what sort of support there is out there as a…a like as a teacher if you need more information, where could you go kind of thing.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, and maybe a bit of information you said about the…what it is

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Just to understand-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, I think it’s always help-…

**INTERVIEWER:** …where we’re coming form.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, basically

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah…and would you…think it would work best as a kind of one off, like an insert day training or…more like…a few twilight sessions where you could go on and try…some ideas and come back and say ‘actually that didn’t work’ or ‘that did work’ or-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah retu-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Or would you prefer just an online resource or a book that you can…look at?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Um…I think it’s probably always better if someone comes in and like starts it off-…maybe a-…with a-…maybe there’s an online resource to back it up afterwards that you could go to. So we’ve done quite a lot of training in the last couple of years where…yeah we’ve done it as twi-…so we had one insert day to introduce it, and then we’ve done-…then we’d almost got tasks to do that we then went back and talked about, so that’s been quite useful. I’m not sure there’d be enough information for a whole insert day [laugh] and then that. But no, maybe like yeah, one twilight and then a-…s-…then time to try it and then time to bring back questions or things that didn’t work for maybe someone to…or all the teachers to come up with ideas, as well as whoever’s leading it kind of thing. So…share knowledge.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, a bit collaborative-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah and a second one-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Sort of…learning. And what about-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** And just…or I guess share things that work really well so maybe someone else could try it-…

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** …as well. So yeah, collaboration.

**INTERVIEWER:** I guess as well if that child, for example, is now moving to another class, for those two teachers to be able to talk and-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, to share what they’ve done. Yeah. Almost make a list to pass up ‘this works’ [laugh], ‘don’t bother with that’

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, yeah. Um…I was just thinking in terms of like the support that you might want as a teacher from the SENCO or the headteacher-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah

**INTERVIEWER:** Anything you have had that’s been good or anything you would like…to be missing?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Umm…in our school, the headteacher wouldn’t have anything to do with that of-…that would be SENCO and inclusion team. He wouldn’t know…about that…um…but [sigh]…I think generally they’re pretty good the-…at knowing-…like if they don’t know the information straight away, they’ll know people to either ask or information online or books and things that they can give you. They’re relatively good, when he doesn’t forget, the SENCO, at like emailing you back stuff that you’ve asked or like finding out about resources and then telling you later on.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, so-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** So generally-…

**INTERVIEWER:** [unintelligible]…seem approachable?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** Yeah, I’ve not had-…yeah, yeah. He’s very-…fair-…he’s fine.

## Conclusion

**INTERVIEWER:** Ok…um…I think that was probably covered pretty much everything that I wanted to cover. I mean is there anything else you wanted to say about ADHD or about-…anything we’ve talked about?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** No-…

**INTERVIEWER:** …No?

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** No, I don’t think so. I think it was all good [laugh]

**INTERVIEWER:** OK, well thank you very much. That’s been very helpful. I will give you the debrief sheet and then if there’s any issues afterwards-…

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** [laugh]

**INTERVIEWER:** …you can contact me or the university.

**INV**-**010-T-U-S-STA-F:** OK.

**INTERVIEWER:** Thank you very much.

[End of interview]