



# Executive Function

**Executive function skills are vitally important for success in all aspects of life**

**They stem from the coordination of key cognitive processes:**



## **Cognitive flexibility**

which enables us to switch our attention from one thing to another



## **Working Memory**

which allows us to hold information in our minds while we use it



## **Inhibitory control**

which equips us to inhibit our impulses and respond appropriately

**Executive function skills are essential for:**

- **Paying attention**
- **Learning to keep track of our possessions**
- **Following instructions and planning activities**
- **Starting and maintaining focus on tasks**
- **Monitoring and regulating what we do**

**Teachers can support executive function development by:**

- **Playing games that build these skills, like *Musical Statues* or *Sleeping Lions***
- **Helping children to know when they are using their executive function skills to regulate their thoughts or behaviour**
- **Explicitly modelling the use of executive function skills**
- **Creating organised and well-structured spaces**
- **Teaching children about their emotions and how to regulate them**