

UNDERSTANDING ADHD IN THE CLASSROOM



WHAT IS ADHD?



ADHD is a neurodevelopmental difference that can affect:

- Attention and focus
- Impulsivity
- Activity levels
- Organisation
- Emotional regulation

ADHD affects how a person pays attention, manages impulses and regulates activity levels.

With the right support, pupils with ADHD can thrive, learn and achieve their potential.



REMEMBER

- ✓ It's not a behaviour – it's how their brain works.
- ✓ Strengths exist alongside challenges.
- ✓ Small adjustments can remove big barriers.
- ✓ Consistency, patience and understanding build confidence and success.
- ✓ Inclusion benefits everyone.

♥ Different, not less.
Every pupil.
Every day.
Every opportunity.



WHAT THIS CAN LOOK LIKE



Easily distracted or daydreams



Restless, fidgety or finds it hard to stay seated



Difficulty with time awareness and organisation



Acts or speaks impulsively



Forgets instructions or misplaces items



Finds it hard to wait their turn



Starts tasks but finds it hard to finish



Overwhelmed by too much information or choice



WHAT HELPS

- ✓ Use clear, short instructions and check understanding
- ✓ Break tasks into smaller steps
- ✓ Provide movement breaks and active opportunities
- ✓ Use visual supports (timetables, checklists, timers)
- ✓ Give advance warning of changes
- ✓ Offer choices to increase motivation and independence
- ✓ Create a calm, predictable environment
- ✓ Use positive, specific praise and celebrate effort
- ✓ Allow extra time to process and complete tasks
- ✓ Build strong, trusting relationships

STRENGTHS OF PUPILS WITH ADHD



Creative thinkers



Curious and inquisitive



High energy and enthusiasm



Think quickly and problem solve



Fun, engaging and great team members



See things from different angles



Resilient and full of potential

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES YOU CAN USE EVERY DAY



VISUAL SCHEDULES

Use timetables, checklists and now/next boards.



SHORT, CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS

Keep language simple and focused.



MOVEMENT BREAKS

Build in regular movement to reset and refocus.



REDUCE DISTRACTIONS

Minimise noise, clutter and visual distractions.



TIMERS & REMINDERS

Use timers, alarms and visual prompts to support time.



GIVE CHOICES

Offer meaningful choices to build ownership.



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Connect, listen and show understanding.



DO

- ✓ Focus on strengths and effort.
- ✓ Be consistent, calm and patient.
- ✓ Use positive, specific feedback.
- ✓ Give processing time.
- ✓ Collaborate with families.
- ✓ Celebrate progress, not perfection.



Support builds confidence. Confidence builds success.



DON'T

- ✗ Label or make assumptions.
- ✗ Give long explanations or too many questions.
- ✗ Punish for lateness or forgetfulness.
- ✗ Ignore or dismiss their struggles.
- ✗ Compare to others.
- ✗ Expect perfection.



Behaviour is communication. Try to understand the message.



QUICK CLASSROOM CHECKLIST

- ☐ Are routines clear and consistent?
- ☐ Are instructions short and easy to follow?
- ☐ Are visual supports in place?
- ☐ Do I allow movement and brain breaks?
- ☐ Do I give advance warning of changes?
- ☐ Do I offer choices?
- ☐ Do I celebrate effort and progress?
- ☐ Do I connect and collaborate?



Small changes can make a huge difference.



Inclusion is everyone's responsibility.



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Stronger minds.
Stronger futures.