

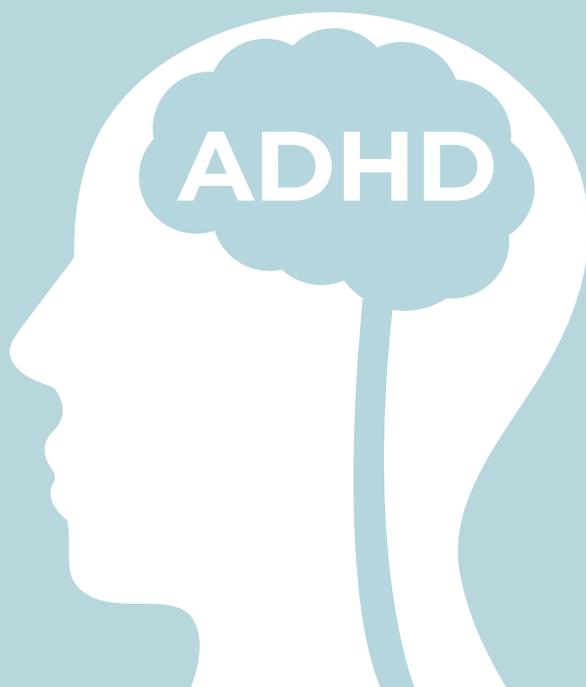
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# ADHD HANDBOOK

## FOR PARENTS

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is classed as a neurodevelopmental condition that includes symptoms such as inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness.



## TYPICAL SYMPTOMS OF ADHD

Typically symptoms of someone with ADHD would be noticed at an early age or become more noticeable when a form of change occurs, for example starting school.

So what does this look like?

### INATTENTIVENESS

**The main signs to look out for are:**

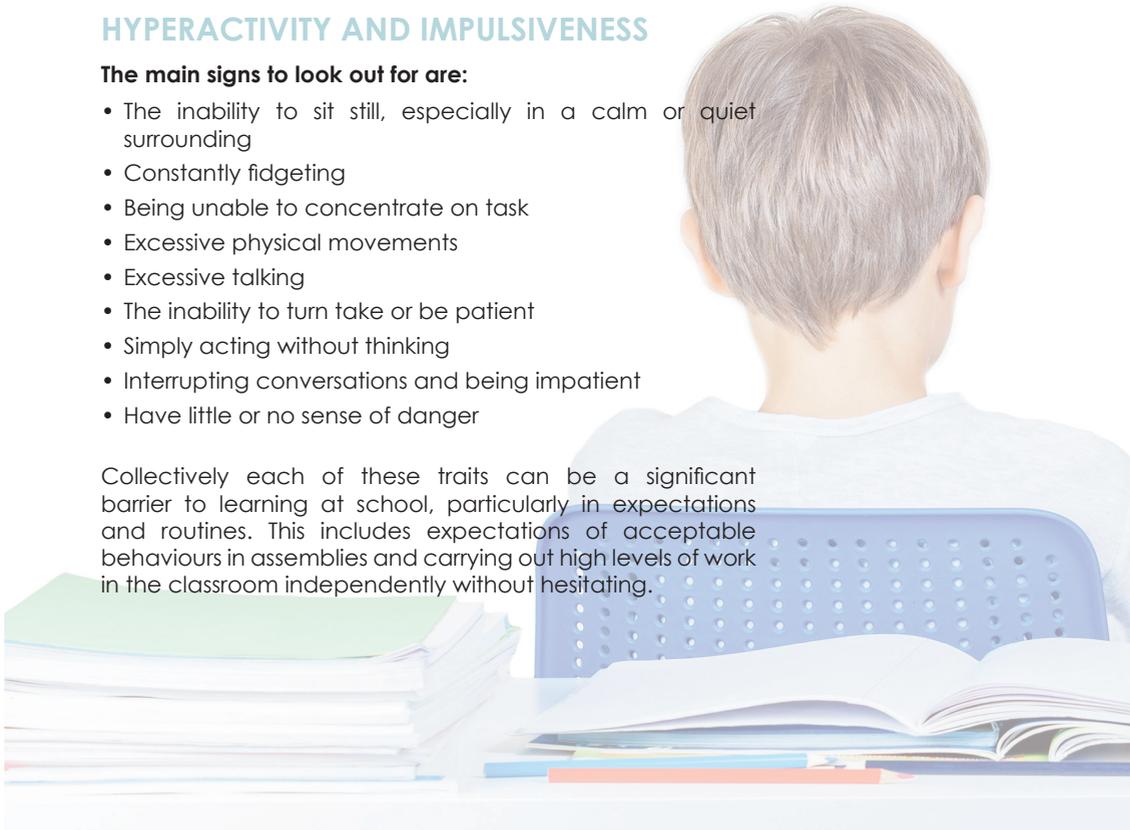
- Having a short attention span and being easily distracted
- Making careless mistakes e.g. in their school work
- Appearing forgetful or losing things
- The inability to stick to tasks that are time consuming or deemed as boring
- Appearing to be unable to listen or carry out instructions
- Constantly changing activity or task
- Lack of organisational skills throughout home and school life

### HYPERACTIVITY AND IMPULSIVENESS

**The main signs to look out for are:**

- The inability to sit still, especially in a calm or quiet surrounding
- Constantly fidgeting
- Being unable to concentrate on task
- Excessive physical movements
- Excessive talking
- The inability to turn take or be patient
- Simply acting without thinking
- Interrupting conversations and being impatient
- Have little or no sense of danger

Collectively each of these traits can be a significant barrier to learning at school, particularly in expectations and routines. This includes expectations of acceptable behaviours in assemblies and carrying out high levels of work in the classroom independently without hesitating.



# WHAT BARRIERS TO LEARNING DOES ADHD PRESENT IN THE CLASSROOM?

## 1. There is a constant need for movement

As children with ADHD have a hard time regulating the movements of their bodies, it can be difficult to sit still for extended periods of time. To combat this, students may create excuses to leave the classroom. As a result, they miss out on important instructions and lessons that may make it easier to complete assignments later on.

## 2. Classrooms have too many external distractions

In a room full of other children, the number of external stimuli increases. It is rare to find a completely quiet moment whether that be in the classroom or outside. Children with ADHD are easily distracted and the constant squeaking of a chair, tapping of fingers, or voices in the hallway can make it hard for the child to hold their undivided attention to the task at hand.

## 3. Their thoughts outrun their bodies

For students with ADHD, it usually isn't the failure to learn that creates an issue, but rather the gap in the ability to carry the

understanding into their school work. This may result in failed tests or low scoring, trouble completing homework or writing assignments and an inability to complete assignments on time.

## 4. Challenges with filtering thoughts (and choosing the right time to share them)

Hyperactive-impulsive children tend to blurt their thoughts out before others have finished speaking. This can create an issue with other classmates, especially during group projects, and may interrupt the teacher during important time delivering instructions therefore affecting not just the child's ability to hear instructions, but the classes as well. Beyond that, this may have an effect on your child's social life as a result.

## 5. Thoughts tend to drift

ADHD affects learning by inhibiting the child's ability to hold focus. Not paying attention makes it hard to remember what the teacher says regarding lessons, assignments and due dates. Therefore, the child's ability to learn the material and complete homework may suffer.

This is where the needs of a child with a diagnosis of ADHD are looked after at Erdington Academy. A plan is drawn up and specific targets are set for the child to focus towards. Communication is kept with the teacher associated with the student and specific measurements can then be put in place to cater for the needs of the child; for example the need for a fidget toy to help them maintain focus or simply looking at the seating plan and placing the child at the front of the class closest to the board. Not every child with ADHD presents in the same way and coping strategies may be different for each child.

Specific interventions are also offered as an additional support whereby the student can come away from the structured timetable and focus work on specific struggles and how better to deal with them, looking at alternative strategies in moving them forward.

## WHAT HAPPENS WITH EXAMINATIONS?

Obviously for most children with a diagnosis of ADHD the thought of facing exams can be proven to be very challenging. As we understand that each child is different and has a very different way of working that works for them. Provisions are offered for those if they need it. It is not expected for the child to accept any access arrangements if they don't want, it is simply an option with recommendations on what we would feel is best for the child.

Some of these arrangements may be that the child gets to sit their exams within a smaller group in a different room to try and limit the amount of distraction. Depending on the child's way of working, they may even be granted to take a small break in between the exam so that it is split up to meet the needs of the child.

This will be talked through and a plan in place nearer the time of their exams. However if you have any queries then don't hesitate in contacting Mrs Amelia Heath (SENDco).

## WHO SUPPORTS YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL?

**It is important to know who is in school to support your child and where the child can access this help.**

In school your go to people are Mrs Amelia Heath (SENDco) and Miss Yasmin Dodd who is the designated key worker for students with ADHD.

These members of staff are there to help and offer support for not only the students but you as the parents too. With the guidance and right support plan put in place, this will then be passed onto all the teaching staff that teach your child so that the support is consistent across all areas of school. Miss Dodd will check in with these students on a regular basis and make sure that their needs are being met at all times.

In order for a support plan to be put in place as a school it is essential that we have copies of ALL medical notes and letters of official diagnosis for our systems. It is important that as soon as you receive this you send any copies to Mrs Heath the SENDco.



**Mrs Amelia Heath**  
SENDco



**Miss Yasmin Dodd**  
Designated Lead for ADHD



## SO WHAT CAN YOU AS A PARENT/CARER DO TO SUPPORT?



### Set clear boundaries

Make sure that everyone knows what behaviour is expected and reinforce the positive behaviour, giving immediate praise and rewards when it is shown. Be clear with the negative behaviour and enforce suitable consequences when this is pushed.



### When you are asking a student to do something

If you are asking a child do something try and make this instruction as simple and brief as possible. Instructions need to be direct with the wording and straight to the point rather than giving them flexibility to think about it. For example avoid saying "can you" or "would you be able to".



### Making allowances for physical exercise

The child often needs to stimulate their physical needs, although there will be elements of their school day where they can do this, it wont be enough for them to let off all their steam. However avoid doing this closer to bedtimes.



### Keeping consistent routines

Routines are key for children with ADHD and sticking to them so that they know what is expected throughout the day.



### Be positive

Give specific praise rather than generalised praise. Including the specifics of what they have just achieved which helps to make it personable and clear to the child. For example, rather than just saying "well done", you could say; "well done on that fantastic piece of writing, your conclusion was amazing". Giving praise is key to boosting the child's confidence and self esteem so the more you do it, the more positive reactions you'll see back.

## WHERE CAN YOU AS A PARENT ACCESS EXTRA SUPPORT?

As a school we will always support as much as we can, however there is available support outside of school as an alternative if you feel you need it. Here's where you can look:

[www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/information/parents/](http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/information/parents/)

General Info on ADHD - [www.adders.org/info170.htm](http://www.adders.org/info170.htm)

Self esteem – [www.adders.org/info79.htm](http://www.adders.org/info79.htm)

Managing ADHD - [www.adders.org/info58.htm](http://www.adders.org/info58.htm)