



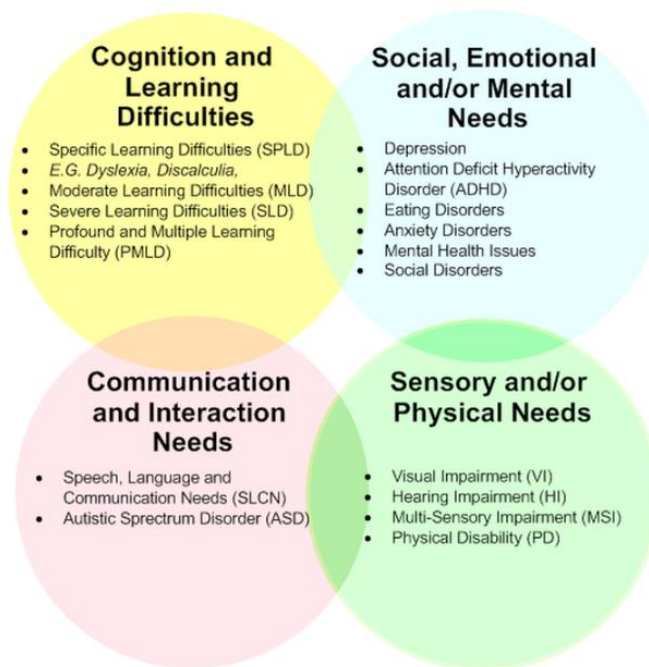
At St. Anne's we love, learn and grow together as part of God's family. We foster a growth mindset so our pupils have bold aspirations to live life in all its fullness. We let our light shine brightly - continually asking God to show us how best to shine so we can be beacons of His life.

St Anne's CE Primary SEND Newsletter

November issue – ADHD awareness

Welcome to our third newsletter and welcome to all! Remember, these newsletters are for everyone, not just those whose child has special educational needs. Your child may not have a diagnosis of ADHD - or be on the SEND register, but if you have concerns that your child may potentially be displaying ADHD traits, then please read on!

ADHD falls into one of the four main areas of need, social and emotional mental health.



Throughout this newsletter, I will share practical tips, advice, and local resources that can help you support your child. I hope that you find these insights valuable and as always, if you have any feedback or questions, please do get in touch!

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1. What is ADHD and how can I support my child?

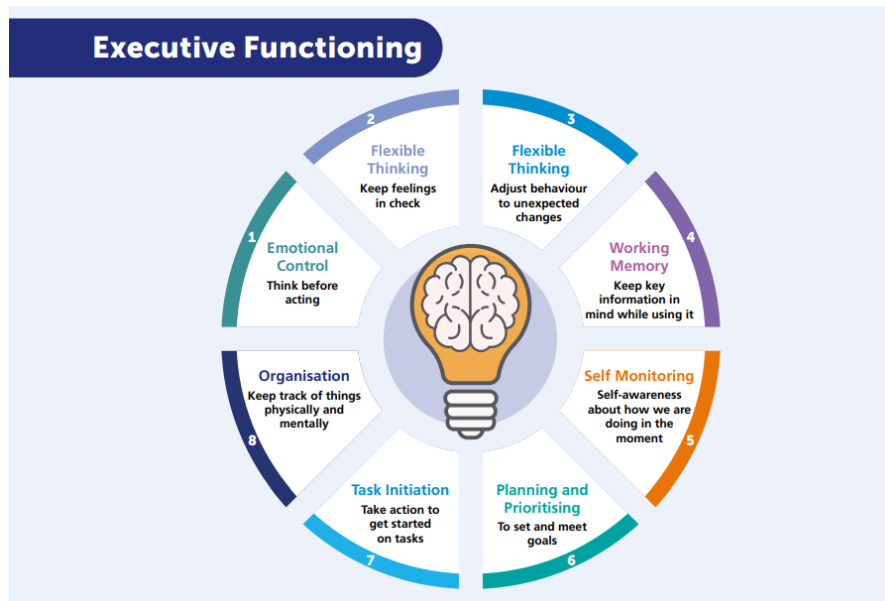
ADHD is a lifespan condition that impacts upon people to varying degrees throughout their lives. The way in which ADHD impacts upon a person may change during their lifetime. The condition we now know as ADHD was first documented over 100 years ago. It has undergone several name changes over the years as scientists and clinicians have gained more knowledge of its characteristics and how this can appear in different ways in different children. Anyone with a diagnosis of ADHD can be described as being "neurodiverse" meaning there is a difference in the way in which the brain functions

A lot of resources I will share with you in this month's newsletter are taken from the ADHD Foundation's website - this is the charity supporting our school to complete the ADHD friendly aware award this year. They have a fantastic video explaining what ADHD is all about which you can watch by clicking here: https://youtu.be/oQNk_S0ywUU



Executive functioning skills

ADHD can also have an impact on your child's executive functioning Skills. Our executive functions are the processes that happen in our brains that help us to plan and organise what we have to do. They help us to control our attention, our impulses and emotions so that we can focus upon what we have to do and sustain our focus so that we can complete tasks. Our executive functions also help us to retrieve information from our memory, organise this information so that we can use it and continually self-monitor ourselves and manage time effectively. Our executive functions also enable us to make changes or adjustments to what we are doing in real time if the demands of an activity change



Is every child with ADHD the same?

No, ADHD is a spectrum of traits and there are many variables and complexities. Some people like to describe children with ADHD as having a "mild" or "moderate" or "severe" presentation. This is quite unhelpful and doesn't explain the variety that we can see between different children with ADHD, for example, one child can be very inattentive and not listen to the teacher explaining a task, whereas another child may have listened and understood the task but then finds it difficult to plan and organise their work and so not complete the task successfully. Therefore, every child is made up of different abilities, both strengths and challenges. We all have innate abilities and we all find some tasks and activities more difficult than others. Our abilities are the result of a combination of our genes, our experiences in childhood and what we have learned so far in our lives. Hence, every child is different. Our brain is as unique as our fingerprint.

ADHD and tics

ADHD by itself doesn't cause tics, but many people with ADHD have another disorder that does cause them. Tic disorders, including Tourette syndrome, can co-exist with ADHD. OCD and autism spectrum conditions frequently occur with ADHD, and these conditions can also cause tics and repetitive movements. For more information in tics, please see below:

What are tics: <https://vimeo.com/764540979>

Living successfully with tics: <https://vimeo.com/764547100>

Supporting children with tics: <https://vimeo.com/764549697>

Parent top tips to support your child with ADHD:

- 1) Don't waste time with self-blame - learn all you can about ADHD:

ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental conditions in children, affecting up to 5% of the population. It is caused by certain differences in brain function and is often inherited. It is not caused by poor parenting. Learn as much as you can about the different ways that it could affect your child, both in school and in their life in general. Act soon, research has shown that early diagnosis and treatment can have very positive outcomes for children with ADHD. Understand that there are myths and misconceptions about ADHD i.e. that it's about naughty children. If you're reading information online, be aware of the source of the information and stick to reputable medical or charity websites. Learn what the myths and misconceptions are and then ignore them in terms of how you relate to your child and challenge them when others try to put those misguided "labels" on your child.

- 2) Develop an ADHD Friendly parenting style:

Provide clear, consistent expectations and boundaries. Children with ADHD succeed more if they know exactly what is expected of them. Consistency is crucial and always follow through with consequences. Be proactive. Constantly reward appropriate behaviours and adopt a choices and consequences system in which you respond to poor behaviour with alternatives, for example, loss of privileges or time outs. Discuss your parenting style with all other key adults in your child's life so that everyone is interacting with your child with the same consistent boundaries and expectations.

3) Build your child's self-esteem:

There are going to be challenges ahead for your child, such as in relationships with peers and in learning environments. Help your child to be resilient by building their competencies in interests and hobbies they enjoy. Identify their strengths, facilitate their changing interests and notice their successes, however small. Build upon these strengths and provide your child with opportunities to be successful in the pursuit of their interests. Do not withhold these activities as a consequence for poor behaviour. Share your child's achievements with your wider circle. Create a daily "special time" with your child. Let your child take the lead in deciding how this time will be used to ensure that every day, despite the challenges that they have experienced, there is time that is about enjoyment, fun and your relationship. Finally, tell your child that you love them unconditionally, often.

4) Work with the school:

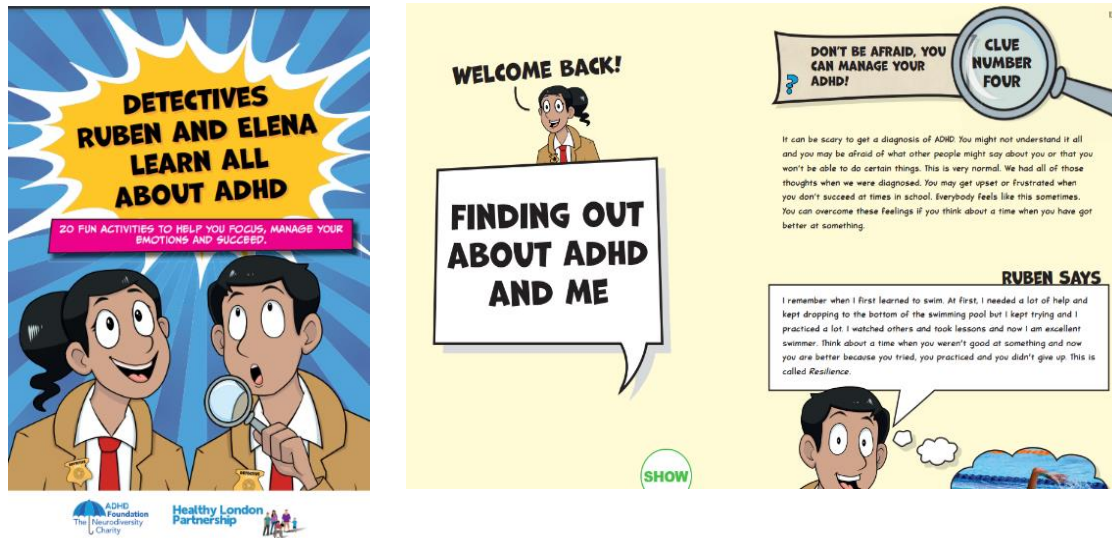
Develop a relationship with your child's teacher(s) and SENCO. Talk to them about how ADHD impacts upon your child. It doesn't matter how many children they have taught with ADHD over the years, every child is unique and let them know as much as you can about your child and challenge any misconceptions the education professionals might have. Let them know what works for you at home and explore together how you might develop a consistent approach. Be clear about how much information you would like from school and negotiate how often and how information might be communicated. Encourage the teachers to let you know when your child has done well. Your ability to further affirm your child's school achievements at home will help to build your child's self-confidence. Whatever happens, always try to retain a working relationship with the school.

5) Teach your child about ADHD:

Let them know about their ADHD as soon as you feel that it is appropriate. Encourage the school to explore and discuss neurodiversity in academic environments. Challenge the idea that your child might feel from a young age that there is "something wrong" with them. Teach them respect for diversity and encourage all of the adults in their lives to do the same. When you feel it is appropriate, share with your child examples of public figures who have ADHD and talk to them about the unique strengths and qualities of ADHD. Counter the feeling that your child may develop that they are "stupid" and "can't do many things" and "will never be successful." Rehearse social skills with them and support your child to eventually feel empowered to be able to tell others with confidence that they have ADHD.

How should I talk to my child about ADHD?

A question I get asked a lot is, 'how do I explain to my child that they have ADHD?' Hopefully, with an increase of whole school awareness and a culture of 'neurodiversity is a positive' - we will have given your child a basic understanding of ADHD. At home, you could share the kid's comic, 'Detectives Ruben and Elena learn all about ADHD.' This is a fantastic resource to explain ADHD further and offers a really personalised approach to your child, highlighting self-help strategies. To access the activity book, please click [here](#)



For lots more useful tips on supporting your child with ADHD, please click [here](#).

Breakfast and ADHD

Click [here](#) for some top tips to help at breakfast time



2. Being active and supporting learning outdoors

As a school, we have many opportunities for active learning throughout the day. Lots of these opportunities are shared via Class Dojo, so please do keep a look out for your child's class story. Opportunities to learn outdoors could include a visit to the local allotment, planting vegetables in the school grounds, taking part in a brain break, completing drama in an RE lesson, a sensory activity as part of a reading lesson, a science lesson outdoors or even a practical maths lesson! The options are endless - we love to learn outdoors at St Anne's! This a great approach for all children but especially those with ADHD.



If the weather does not allow for us to be active learners outdoors - we endeavour to provide opportunities within the classroom for the children to move around. This may be a responsibility to hand out books, completing a job for the teacher, using a standing desk or a wobble stool, or being active within a lesson using a Kagan technique.

How can I support my child in being more active at home?

Try to ensure your child takes part in at least one extra-curricular activity per week. This could be at school or in the community. A great place to look is Trafford's Local Offer as they often advertise specialist classes which cater to children with SEND. For example, Star Fish School of Swimming has specialist swim tutors for children with ADHD. Please click here to see a range of activities available in Trafford:

<https://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/kb5/trafford/fsd/family.page?newfamilychannel=1>

3. Self-soothing and calming techniques

As a school, we use a whole school approach to The Zones of Regulation. I will create a newsletter wholly focused on The Zones in the near future as there is so much to share. The children all have a good understanding of the four zones which they might find themselves in. We teach that no zone is a bad zone, but the green zone means we're ready to learn! If a child finds themselves in a zone other than green, they have discussed and selected a range of tools to help them get back to green. In each classroom, we have a range of 'tools' available to help with this. These tools are available to every child.



Figure 2: Wall Posters of the Zones

Talk to your child to see which tools they have chosen to use to help them 'get back to green,' and whether these would be helpful to duplicate at home. Perhaps set up a 'calm corner' in your child's bedroom with some of the resources they know help when they're feeling a little anxious, upset, agitated or excited.



Top tips on how to create a calm home for children (and adults) with ADHD can be found [here](#)

4. Tactile resources at school and at home

We have a variety of resources for all children who are observed to need particular tactile resources to support with their learning. We have wobble cushions, wobble feet, screen dividers, weighted blankets, fidget toys, resistant bands and ear defenders. If your child has access to these items, they will be listed on their One Page Profile and/ or Individual Provision Map.

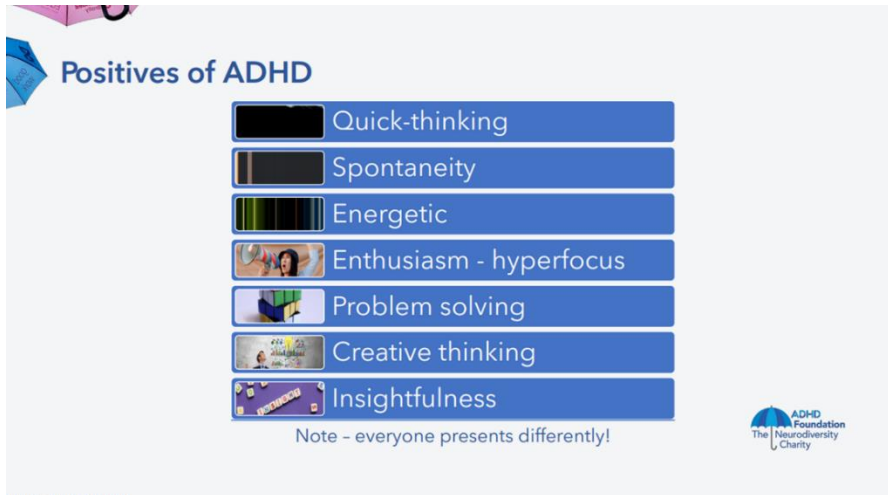
You might want to invest in some of these resources, which are helping your child in school, to have at home. For example, a resistance band at home might really help when your child is trying to complete their homework or ear defenders may be great when out and about at the local supermarket. If you're not sure which tactile resources your child has access to in school, please talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.



A note about fidget toys.

Fidgets are quite controversial and must be used correctly so that they are successful. Your child's class teacher will help to select an appropriate fidget which will be given to your child and reviewed on a termly basis. Fidget toys from home should not be brought in. A fidget contract will be signed by the child and parent to ensure proper use.

5. Celebrating ADHD



Positives of ADHD

- Quick-thinking
- Spontaneity
- Energetic
- Enthusiasm - hyperfocus
- Problem solving
- Creative thinking
- Insightfulness

Note - everyone presents differently!

ADHD Foundation
The Neurodiversity
Charity



Did you know
that climate
change activist
Greta Thunberg
is autistic and
has ADHD?

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Why we love Justin Timberlake, Simone Biles, Emma Watson, Channing Tatum, Trevor Noah and many other inspiring celebrities and famous people with ADHD.

1. **Michael Phelps** - One of best swimmers ever, Phelps has won more Olympic gold medals than anyone else. His tips for managing ADHD include finding mood boosters, exercising, spending time outdoors, and eating a balanced diet
2. **Adam Levine** - Known as the front man for the band Maroon 5 and also as a prominent judge on the reality television show The Voice, Levine says that even though his parents helped him find treatment, his symptoms persisted into adulthood. He continues to deal with ADHD on a daily basis and credits his songwriting, reading, writing and relationship skills for helping him through each day.
3. **Justin Timberlake** - The multifaceted singer, actor, and designer has revealed that he has ADHD mixed with OCD (similar to Howie Mandel). While Timberlake is reserved on how he deals with his conditions, his work and long-running career seem to be proof that he's managing his symptoms to lead a fulfilling life.

Have a look at moany more celebrities with ADHD [here](#) and share this with your child. Can they find someone who inspires them?

Please take 2 minutes to watch this motivational video of drummer Clint Pulver!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjzC-aOMcLU>



Who can I talk to if I have concerns?

All staff have received ADHD training in September 2023 as part of the ADHD friendly aware school award so you should talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance to share any concerns you may have. Your child's class teacher will be confident in how to support you and answer any questions you may have.

There may be more specialist advice and support that you need, and in that case, please contact myself to arrange a meeting to discuss this. I am contactable via the school office, Class Dojo or in the playground via the Year Two door.

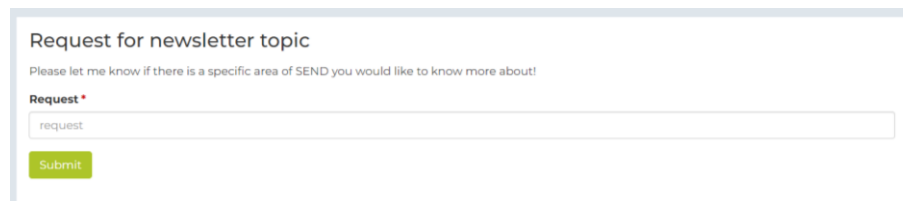
Making a referral

There is a new ADHD pathway primarily for children aged between 6 and 18 years old. It includes a new service called Trafford Combined ADHD Service (TCAS). This is jointly provided by Community Paediatricians and Healthy Young Minds who provide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The pathway encourages schools to identify children with behaviour difficulties, address any learning and training needs, and put the appropriate behaviour strategies in place based on your child's needs and without waiting for a formal diagnosis.

If you would like to make a referral for your child, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance who will start a cycle of assess, plan, do review. This will be reviewed on a termly basis and if, after two terms of intervention, we have not seen an impact, we will have a meeting to discuss making a referral to TCAS.

Thank you for the feedback about the SEND newsletters so far - I am glad so many of our St Anne's families are finding them useful. There is now a quick and easy way to request any future newsletters by submitting your request online on the school website:

<https://www.st-annes.trafford.sch.uk/curriculum/send>



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Request for newsletter topic". Below the title is a sub-header: "Please let me know if there is a specific area of SEND you would like to know more about!". The form contains a label "Request" with a red asterisk, followed by a text input field with the placeholder text "request". At the bottom of the form is a green "Submit" button.

Best wishes,

Mrs McLoughlin

SENCO