

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

The terms ADD and ADHD are medical terms and describe a syndrome of emotional or behavioural difficulties, which may include extreme impulsiveness, inattentiveness and continuous motor activity. There are two sub-groups of childhood ADD.

ADHD – the impulsive-hyperactive type.

ADD – without hyperactivity – the inattentive-impulsive type.

This is a complex condition. Children with ADD or ADHD may sometimes be on medication which the school may be asked to administer during the day. More boys seem to be affected than girls.

Key Characteristics

A child with ADHD/ADD may:

- Display impulsivity in all areas of school life.
- Murmur, talk or call out continuously because they are unable to internalise speech.
- Get up and wander about.
- Lash out physically or verbally with no thought for the consequences.
- Be easily distracted and therefore find it hard to focus on one activity.
- Avoid tasks that require sustained attention.
- Often move from one incomplete activity to another.
- Find it hard to make and keep friends.
- Find it hard to follow instructions.
- Often make mistakes because of an inability to attend to detail.
- Have poor organisational and self-help skills, e.g. getting dressed, finding tools for a task.
- Forget daily routines.
- Be unable to concentrate during tasks involving turn taking.
- Be unaware of danger when running and climbing.
- Have constant fidgety movement of hands and feet.
- Have difficulty in waiting and allowing others to take turns in a game.

Strategies we Use in the Classroom

We may need to:

- Be consistent in using an organised set of rules and routines, but we make sure that the child is notified of any changes in routine well in advance.
- Praise small achievements and set up an agreed reward system for good behaviour rather than using too many sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for children to move in the classroom, e.g. brain gym, practical activities and responsibilities.
- Explain to others that it is the behaviour that is the problem, not the child as a person.
- Use time out as a benefit rather than a sanction, as a time to calm down and be away from distractions.
- Try to use direct eye contact when talking to the child.
- Give short, simple instructions and encourage the child to talk through a task before attempting it.

- Let the child work in an individual or paired situation rather than expecting them to work in a group.
- Explicitly teach social skills rather than just expecting the child to pick up acceptable social behaviour.
- Focus on effort rather than achievement.
- Be realistic in our expectations – setting short, clearly defined targets.
- Use a variety of specialist equipment to calm the senses, for example, move n’ sit cushions, Theraputty, weighted jackets.

Specific Interventions we provide at Claremont School

- Sensory Circuits.
- The Incredible 5 point scale.
- Lego Therapy.

Useful Websites:

adhdfoundation.org.uk

www.anger-management-for-children.com

www.adhdtraining.co.uk

www.livingwithadhd.co.uk

www.addiss.co.uk

www.chadd.org

www.add.org

www.adders.org

www.teachernet.gov.uk

www.tes.co.uk

www.ocdfoundation.org (OCD)

Finton O’Regan is a leading specialist – try Googling his name

Books in school:

ADD The Parents Support Book

ADD in Education

All Dogs have ADHD