



Celebrating Neurodiversity in Schools by supporting the Umbrella Project 2019



<https://youtu.be/ElkdAOh0iuY>

What is Neurodiversity?

The Neurodiversity paradigm is part of a movement that is growing across the world to increase understanding of those individuals who live with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia and Dyspraxia.

Misunderstanding and cultural prejudices blind us to the unique and dynamic contribution neurodiverse people play in our lives. Successful neurodiverse individuals are hiding in plain sight as 12 per cent of the population are neurodiverse. 1 in 67 are on the autistic spectrum, 1 in 20 have ADHD and 1 in 10 have Dyspraxia or Dyslexia. We believe in the value of neurodiverse people have in all walks of life and want to increase everyone's understanding of these conditions. At school neurodiverse children can see themselves as somehow 'less than' or lacking in intelligence and employability. We want to change that with a curriculum for the 21st century that celebrates the gifts and talents of every neurodiverse individual, empowering and enabling the next generation of children.

Introducing the ADHD Foundation

The ADHD Foundation is an award-winning, unique and pioneering UK charity, based in Liverpool. The largest 'user led' ADHD agency in Europe, the Foundation is credited with influencing policy and provision in the UK for those living with ADHD and other neurodiverse conditions.

We provide life changing psychoeducative and psychosocial programmes for families to thrive, enabling them, through a 'strength based' approach, to live successfully with ADHD+. Through our work with NHS trusts across the UK, local authorities, professional agencies and politicians we have improved outcomes in education, health and employment, reduced dependencies, improved resilience and enabled every child we have worked with to realise their potential.



One such example is 11-year-old Marcus, excluded from school at 8 years of age and overwhelmed by the world around him, following help from the Foundation he achieved one of the top ten SATS scores in the UK. In this video from our annual international conference, he demonstrates how the right support can transform the lives of children with special educational needs and related anxiety.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1XL1_zqxSM

He is just one of many individuals who we have helped, but there are many more like Marcus who we still need to reach.

The Umbrella Project & National Neurodiversity Week - Two campaigns, one mission!

To bring about a change in how we perceive, understand, educate and relate to individuals who are neurodiverse.

The Umbrella Project

In June 2019, we will celebrate our third annual Umbrella Project with four public art installations that will see hundreds of brightly coloured umbrellas suspended above the streets and public spaces. Building on the success of installations in Liverpool and MediaCity, Salford, in 2019 the umbrellas will also be in Dublin and Manchester. All the umbrellas are signed and decorated by neurodiverse children stating their gifts, talents and abilities – their ‘super power’. The project makes visible what we often do not see because it doesn’t fit with the narrow stereotypes and disabling perceptions of those with cognitive differences.

The Umbrella Project has attracted national news coverage over the last two years and 2018 saw children performing beneath the umbrellas at BBC MediaCity and Liverpool city centre not just for the launch but also as part of BBC Music Day – a partnership which will continue in 2019. Videos and pictures of the colourful canopy have so far enjoyed over 30 million hits on social media in addition to the extensive media coverage.

Watch this short film and listen to what children and sponsors have to say...
<https://youtu.be/ElkdAOh0iuY>

An exciting development for our 2019 Umbrella Project is an invitation to every school to have their own Umbrella Project and display umbrellas suspended from the classroom ceilings and educate their classmates, school governors and local community leaders about their ability, talent and achievements.

National Schools Neurodiversity Week

This year we are working with ADHD Foundation Young Patron, Siena Castellon, to launch the UK's first National Schools Neurodiversity Week in May. The campaign invites every school to simply take a pledge and offer some form of celebration in schools to highlight the intelligence, success and employability of those school children who have special educational needs.

We know that the best way to reduce stigma is to start with young people and teach them a different way of seeing the world. National Schools Neurodiversity Week aims to change the way schools, teachers and other students perceive neurodiverse people, creating a positive perception through assemblies, classes and specially developed learning packs.

The project is supported by the Department for Education, CEOs of national charities and leaders in industry and we will be working alongside local authorities to bring as many schools on board as possible.



What both campaigns have in common is to celebrate the many strengths and advantages that come from thinking differently and perceiving the world differently. Both create engaging, innovative ways to raise awareness, understanding and reduce the stigma, myths and misconceptions associated with having these conditions; demonstrating how and why neurodiverse individuals contribute to our lives, our families and our economy.

Previous supporters include:



How you can your school be involved?

Our key objectives for the Umbrella education programme are:

Challenge the narrow view of intelligence as measured in standardised tests and shine a light on the many successful role models in public life who are neurodiverse (ADHD Autism, Dyslexia, dyspraxia etc) who are hiding in plain sight – the scientists, researchers, university lecturers, Tech pioneers, creatives, entrepreneurs artists, creatives etc who are driving our economy in a technology and innovation led 21st century.

Raise awareness among education providers that 2 out of 5 neurodiverse pupils leave education at 16 never having been identified and 'enabled' to achieve their educational potential thus impacting on their employability

Celebrate the gifts abilities and employability of those who are neurodiverse

Reduce the bullying and social exclusion and loneliness of neurodiverse pupils in schools (70% report being bullied & 7 out of 10 exclusions are neurodiverse children)

Launch the Umbrella Project to coincide with the National Schools neurodiversity week May 13th-17th (backed by the Dept for Education).

How schools can encourage children to participate?

Participating costs £350 per school which supplies you with the specially designed 25 Umbrella's and access to the education pack and resources. This sum can be raised through support from local business and parents or funded through school art and enrichment budgets

Encourage children with learning needs to work with their friends to decorate brightly coloured umbrellas, signing their names on them and writing about their gifts, talents and 'superpowers' that drawn attention to their 'ability'

Access our downloadable education packs, film clips, power point presentations and posters for schools to use in school assemblies, lessons and after school clubs.

Encourage performances of dance, drama, poetry or indeed choirs involving children and their parents

Art and photography projects on the Umbrella and 'Neurodiversity'.

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