



Little acts, great love, big difference



St Catharine's
Chipping Campden



St Joseph's
Nympsfield



Catholic School of St Gregory The
Great, Cheltenham



St Peter's
Gloucester



The Rosary
Stroud



St Thomas More
Cheltenham

Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Spring Term Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Parent Newsletter. We are pleased to share this edition with you as part of our continued commitment to providing clear, supportive and practical Information for families of children with SEND. We recognise that navigating SEND systems can sometimes feel complex, and our aim is to ensure you feel well-informed, listened to and confident in the support available for your child.

A key priority across the Trust this year remains strengthening our relationships with parents and carers. We firmly believe that parents are experts in their children, and that the most effective support is built through strong, trusting partnerships between home and school. When we work together openly, respectfully and with a shared understanding of a child's needs, children are more likely to feel secure, understood and supported to achieve their potential — both academically and emotionally.

Spring Term edition focuses on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), recognising that many children across our schools experience differences in attention, impulse regulation and executive functioning, whether or not they have a formal diagnosis.

Transition to Secondary School



- This term, we will be strengthening transition planning for children moving between phases, working closely with the Advisory Teaching Service and our local secondary schools to ensure clear, well-informed plans are in place. Transition planning will focus on understanding each child's individual strengths, needs and anxieties, with practical strategies agreed in advance to support a smooth and positive move. Parental insight is welcomed and vital in this process; your knowledge of what helps your child feel safe, confident and regulated plays a key role in shaping effective transition plans. We will actively seek your views and encourage open dialogue to ensure transitions are carefully planned, consistent and supportive.

National News

£200 Million National SEND Teacher Training Programme

The Department for Education has announced a £200 million national SEND and alternative provision teacher training programme aimed at strengthening staff confidence, knowledge and practical skills in supporting children with additional needs, including ADHD, autism, speech and language needs, and social, emotional and mental health needs.

The programme focuses on improving inclusive classroom practice, supporting earlier identification of need, and equipping staff with evidence-informed strategies to meet a wide range of needs within mainstream settings. This investment is intended to improve outcomes for children and reduce reliance on specialist placements by ensuring support is timely, appropriate and responsive.

SEND Reform Timelines

National SEND reforms have been delayed, with full implementation now expected from 2026. While this reflects the complexity of reforming the SEND system nationally, the legal duties set out in the SEND Code of Practice remain unchanged. Children and families continue to have the same rights and entitlements. Schools and local authorities must still use their best endeavours to meet children's needs, follow the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review, and work in partnership with parents and carers, regardless of whether a child has a diagnosis or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).



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Spotlight

This term, our SEND focus is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects attention, impulse control and activity levels. Children with ADHD may experience difficulties with focus, organisation, emotional regulation and sustaining effort — but they also often have strengths such as creativity, enthusiasm, problem-solving and determination.

Support for ADHD works best when it is consistent, relational and strengths-based. Strategies that often help include:

- Clear routines and predictable expectations
- Visual supports and reminders
- Movement breaks and opportunities for physical regulation
- Chunking instructions into manageable steps
- Positive reinforcement and emotionally attuned responses

Schools across the Trust continue to develop inclusive approaches that support children with ADHD by recognising behaviour as a form of communication. Rather than attributing difficulty to poor choices, we focus on understanding underlying need and supporting the development of self-regulation skills over time. We will continue to share practical strategies with parents and welcome ongoing conversations about what works best for your child.

Your child isn't choosing to be "difficult" — they're having difficulty.

NICE guidance is clear that support should be **multi-modal**: understanding + environmental adjustments + skills teaching + (where appropriate) clinical input and medication. Parent-training and education programmes are strongly recommended, because they improve outcomes for children and reduce stress for families.

Many children with ADHD can focus **very well** on high-interest tasks (games, LEGO, favourite topics) and really struggle on low-interest or high-demand tasks (getting dressed, homework, transitions). This is not laziness — it's the ADHD brain's **interest-based nervous system** plus weaker executive functioning.

Common "hidden" difficulties:

- **Transitions** (stopping one thing to start another)
- **Time** (underestimating how long tasks take)
- **Working memory** (forgetting instructions mid-task)
- **Emotional regulation** (big feelings, quick escalations, shame afterwards)
- **Impulse control** (blurting, grabbing, risky choices)
- **Sleep and appetite patterns** (often impacted)

Reduce words, increase visuals

Use **1-step instructions**, delivered calmly, at close range, with eye contact *if tolerated*.

- Instead of: "Tidy your room, then bring your laundry down, then do your reading."
- Try: "First: laundry." (*show basket, point, hand over item*)

Use "connection before correction"

When emotions rise, learning drops. In escalation, your child cannot access logic.

Script:

"I can see this feels really big."

"You're safe. I'm here."

"We'll solve it together."





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Helpful Website

Local

- [SENDIASS Gloucestershire](#) – free, confidential, impartial advice (SEN support, EHCP processes, meetings).
- [ADHD Hub Gloucestershire](#) – support for adults and parents of children with ADHD (including those exploring diagnosis).
- [Stroud ADHD Collective \(peer support\)](#) – community peer support (listed on the Glos Families Directory).
- [Gloucestershire Youth Neurodiversity Project](#) – youth councils, campaigning, youth voice and community work.
- [The Music Works \(SEND & inclusive provision\)](#) – inclusive music opportunities and disability programmes in Gloucestershire

National

- [NICE ADHD guideline \(NG87\)](#)
- [ADHD UK](#) – resources, campaigns, and system advocacy.
- [ADHD Embrace](#)
- [ADDISS](#)

SEND Information Fair for Parents of Children with SEND



- Monday 9th February 2026 (10am—2pm)
- Leonardo Hotel Cheltenham, Gloucester Rd, Cheltenham, GL51 0TS
- Over 40 advisors on stalls, providing information, guidance and support.
- Keynote speeches from Education, Health and Social Care will start at 10:30am
- Drop in Clinics with SENDIASS, EHCP Casework Team, Social Care and Early Help Team

To reserve a spot click [here](#)

Helpful books

- ***The Parent's Guide to SEND*** – Gary Aubin & Stephen Hull A practical UK-focused guide to understanding the SEND system, your child's rights, effective partnerships with schools, and strategies for day-to-day support.
- ***The SEND Handbook for Parents and Carers*** – Sarah Alix Accessible and clear overview of the SEND system, helping untangle assessment, support, and how to advocate for your child with confidence.
- ***Your Child Is Not Broken*** – (various authors / compiled perspectives) A compassionate, affirming read emphasising neurodiversity, rejecting deficit narratives, and offering supportive strategies for behaviour and identity
- ***8 Keys to Parenting Children with ADHD*** – Cindy Goldrich Highly practical, strengths-based strategies to reduce chaos, improve cooperation, and support executive functioning and self-regulation in ADHD

"I have come that they may have life, and have it in all fullness." – John 10:10