

SUPPORTING NEURODIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

A CASE STUDY

Neurodiversity

- learning outcomes

- **Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust** – our mission and relevance to neurodiversity
- **What is Neurodiversity?**
- **Supporting neurodiversity in the workplace and at OHC&AT** – including the role of Occupational Health
- **Case Study** – Communication, Assessment and Good Practice Adjustments

**“Orchard Hill College & Academy trust (OHC&AT)
exists to support, enable and champion the talents skills and rights of
the most complex and vulnerable people in our society in
order that we can release their potential, promote their
wellbeing and transform their lives”**

<https://www.ohcat.org>

1983 Orchard Hill College (OHC) established in a hospital setting – FE for students with moderate, complex and profound disabilities and learning needs (physical, mental, neurodiverse, social emotional mental health)

2003 moved to a community venues – Achieved and currently maintains Ofsted rated Outstanding

2013 OHC created the Multi Academy Trust (OHC&AT) to share its expertise, provide services and support to specialist schools

2023 6 colleges 16 special schools with ongoing growth – nursery to 16 plus SEN provisions /work place initiatives

2000 employees working together as experts to provide these student services and colleague support

‘Work together to transform lives’

which includes in house OH

A small red house icon with a white ampersand inside, identical to the one in the logo, positioned at the bottom right of the slide.

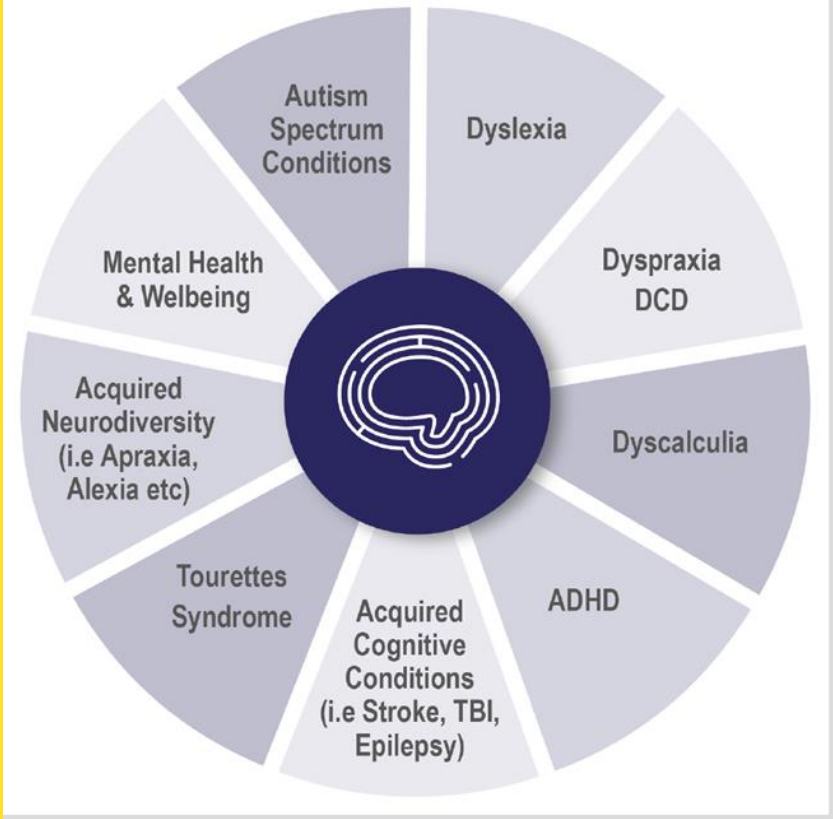
Neurodiversity

neurodiversity refers to a world where neurological differences are recognised and as respected as other human variations

neurodiversity takes a balanced view of an individual's unique strengths, challenges and support needs, instead of labelling people with 'deficits' or 'disorders'

Value different types of people

Value different types of brains



Neurodiversity can bring many talents

The infographic consists of seven icons arranged in two rows, each with a corresponding text label below it. The top row includes: a lightbulb with a checkmark (Innovation), a paint palette (Creativity), and a target with an arrow (Hyper-focus). The bottom row includes: a cube with a lightbulb and an arrow (Thinking outside the box), a brain with a hand pointing to it (Big picture thinkers), a person with three checkmarks around them (Visual, spatial and lateral thinking skills), and a speedometer (High levels of stamina).

- Innovation
- Creativity
- Hyper-focus
- Thinking outside the box
- Big picture thinkers
- Visual, spatial and lateral thinking skills
- High levels of stamina

2019 Goggle report a 7.5% self identified themselves as having a disability through staff survey

2021 Google report intention to prioritise employing people with autism together with The Stanford Neurodiversity Project which promotes and prioritises specialised employment support programs for adults with autism. Source: VeryWellMind | [Google Launches Initiative to Hire More Autistic People](https://www.verywellmind.com/google-launches-initiative-to-hire-more-autistic-people-5197356), <https://www.verywellmind.com/google-launches-initiative-to-hire-more-autistic-people-5197356> | © 2021 About, Inc. (Dotdash)

Neurodiversity

Autistic Spectrum Conditions

- ASC is a lifelong developmental condition (i.e. from birth) that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people and the world around them.
- It is a spectrum condition, which means that, while people with autism share **certain areas** of difficulty, their condition will affect them in **different** ways.
(National Autistic Society)

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

- ADHD is a condition that affects people's behaviour
- People with ADHD can seem restless, **may** have trouble concentrating and **may** act on impulse (NHS)

Neurodiversity

Early intervention and Person centred support in the workplace

- Importance of early conversations
- Get adjustments to work environment and working practices in place before difficulties arise
- Avoid confidence or wellbeing issues
- Creates a supportive culture
- Allow individuals to do their job and to protect them and others against risk
- Equality Act 2010 – legislative compliance

[20.Duty to make adjustments](#)

OHC&AT Early Intervention Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Process

- **New Starters**

opportunity to share any health / wellbeing needs
identify those who may need adjustments to allow them to
their job, or to protect them or others against risks arising
from work

- **Existing Employees**

Where a Manager /Colleague is concerned for another
team member's health, general wellbeing or is alerted to any
change in physical, mental, neurodiverse support needs
OHC&AT OH encourages referring and using the **early intervention
support process** [Occupational Health - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
Training – Induction / Maintaining H&WB sessions/FA4MH/OH Ref

SENSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Before the meeting / early conversation

- Be prepared for the conversation
- Choose time and place in partnership with employee

At the meeting

- Be prepared for their response
 - Be aware of ND characteristics and body language
 - Ensure you are clear on the next steps
 - Give clear and concise information
 - Write down important information or send a follow up email
-

COMMUNICATION AROUND SUPPORT

- Never make assumptions
- Each candidate/employee is an individual
- Actively listen to your candidate/employee, and what support THEY need aligned with needs of the job role and organisation
- Open and clear communication –in both directions
- Provide new starters with workspace preference questionnaires

CASE STUDY

- 22 year old man – ‘Tom’
- successful interviewee for Teaching Assistant post in a SEN Senior school - Job Description (JD) available
- opportunity to complete HAQ as part of clearance process
- disclosures: Aspergers Syndrome, ADHD, Short term memory, Dyspraxia – no other information included
- established preferred contact method – email
- email request made by OH for a supportive discussion as willing and able prior to submission of fitness for work – email /call /face to face
- Tom responded with a telephone call
- established required consultation support needs, needs following assessment to review and manage recommendations
- telephone consultation assessment

CASE STUDY

Through assessment Tom shared he can do his work to his potential with the following support, temporary and permanent adjustments;

- extra time to learn and revise procedures
- instructions / tasks to be broken down into bite sized chunks (JD)
- use of check list for manual handling using hoists which he will refer to a list on the back of his lanyard, initial buddy system - competencies
- use of a computer / lap top where written work has been required in the past
- a scribe and a reader in the past during exams – may require support with formal documents and formal processes
- Tom has been working in a similar classroom support role in and SEN setting which he reports as 'there were no problem once reasonable adjustments were in place' (as above)
- Fit for work with permanent and temporary reasonable adjustments

CASE STUDY

Recommendations

- **Managers, and HR as felt appropriate, meet with Tom to review need for, complete and agree;**
 - **set objectives in the probationary period aligned with**
 - role requirements
 - required support
 - permanent and temporary reasonable adjustments in workplace
 - attendance
 - **Wellness Action plan (WAP) – attached and consider including**
 - use of written and verbal instructions (i.e. use of text speech packages, dragon-speak)
 - flexible time lines
 - coloured overlays
 - meeting management - notes / scribe/ buddy / coach
 - refer to IT , purchase resources as appropriate
 - any specific self-management techniques Tom currently uses
 - support needs which may be offered by managers
 - flexible working hours

CASE STUDY

Recommendations continued

- **Risk Assessment** – attached and consider including
 - any specific permanent or temporary safety measures required in the role which may be impacted by abilities (i.e.manual handling buddy / use of checklist)
 - agreed support of potential change behaviours
 - any agreed increased support
 - training needs

- **Tom confirmed he has parent support who will be able to read through this clearance and support Tom to review and manage recommendations**
- **Tom reviews eligibility and support in the workplace which may be available from** [Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- **LEXXIC are available to provide further funded advice/ support as agreed with Managers** lexxic.com
- **Equality Act 2010 - It is likely EH conditions are covered by the Equality Act 2010**
[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)
- **Tom consented to share information with HR and Managers**

CASE STUDY

Recommendations

- **Reasonable adjustments**, temporary or permanent are recommended to be flexible, consider the needs of the employee and employer, be agreed, include set objectives and be monitored regularly
- **Risk assessments at OHC&AT:** documents which belong to the employee and employer. It is recommended they are created, agreed, stored and reviewed accordingly. It is advisable they are shared with HR also as consented with OH advice considered where available

Toms feedback



LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- **Equality Act 2010** [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- **British Disability Forum** [BritishNeurodiversity Toolkit - BDF \(businessdisabilityforum.org.uk\)](https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)
- **Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges** [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- **Work adjustment passports used in civil service**
[Neurodiversity in the workplace - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
[Health Adjustment Passport - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- **National Disability Strategy 2021 (Dec 2022)** - Jobs: making the world of work more inclusive and accessible

Thank you for listening

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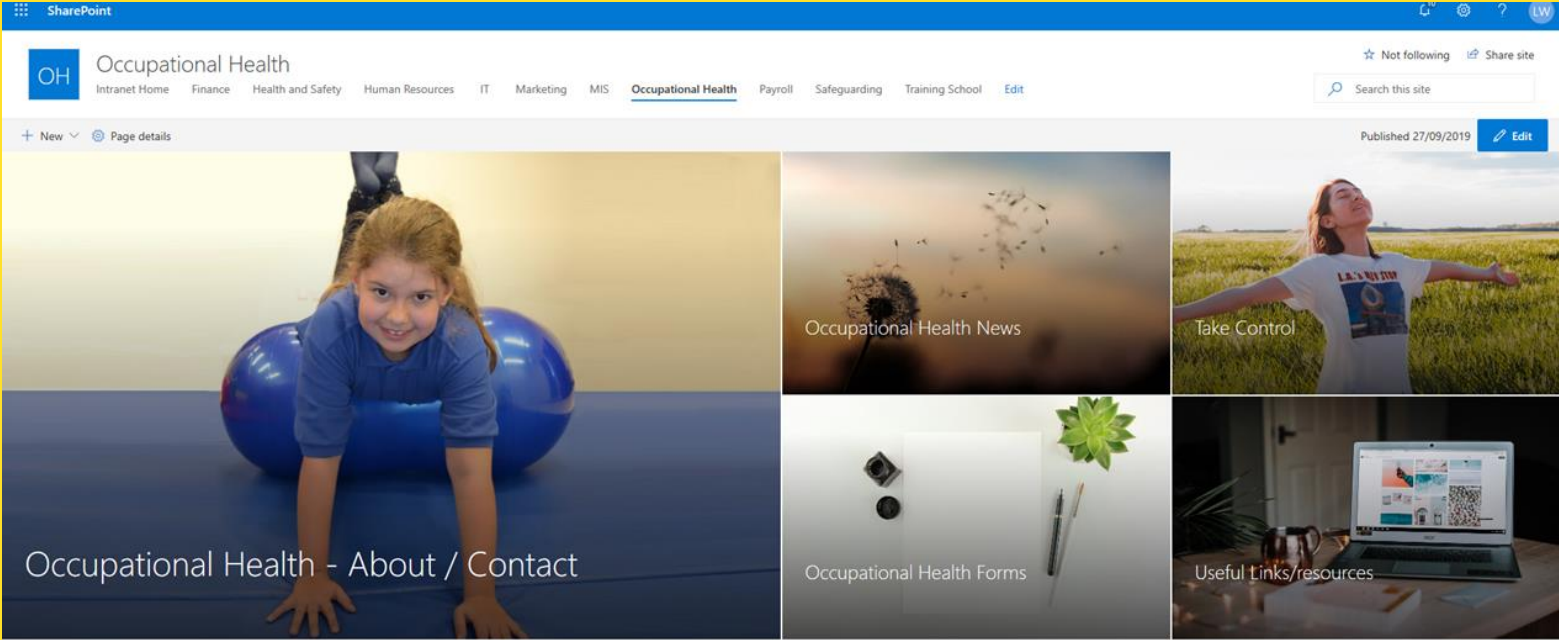
APPENDIX REFERENCES AND NOTES

Reading and Reference notes

- [Google workforce and projects Google Launches Initiative to Hire More Autistic People - CHC Resource Library | CHC | Services for Mental Health and Learning Differences for Young Children, Teens and Young Adults | Palo Alto, San Jose, Ravenswood \(chconline.org\)](#)
- [Google diversity report 2019](#)
- [Stanford Neurodiversity Project | Stanford Neurodiversity Project | Stanford Medicine](#)
- [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [National Disability Strategy, Part 1: practical steps now to improve disabled people's everyday lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Neurodiversity Toolkit - BDF \(businessdisabilityforum.org.uk\)](#)

OHC&AT OH SHAREPOINT PAGE

– signposting resources process forms










Occupational Health Forms

Risk Assessment Forms

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 ASTHMA RISK ASSESSMENT FOR...	Yesterday at 18:30	Lisa Watkins (O)
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 Health and Wellbeing Awareness ...	August 9, 2019	Matthew Nallial
 OH REFERRAL PROCESS AT OHCA...	Yesterday at 19:21	Lisa Watkins (O)
 OHCAT 2020 Consent Form for O...	April 26, 2021	Lisa Watkins (O)
 OHCAT 2020 OH Management Re...	May 21, 2021	Lisa Watkins (O)