*The Neurodivergent Classroom*

# ADHD, inattentive type (ADD) at a Glance



ADD is a common name for the mostly inattentive presentation of ADHD. In class, struggles with attention, planning and time can easily go unseen.

## What you may notice in class

- Tasks get started, then quietly dropped.
- Materials and instructions go missing along the way.
- They sit quietly, but the instructions don't sink in.
- Performance can swing a lot from day to day.
- Getting started takes a long time.
- They lose the thread halfway through a task.
- Work stalls even though they look calm.
- With younger kids, quiet inattention easily slips by in the busy school day. (elementary school)
- Older students may struggle to plan, prioritize and manage long-term assignments on their own. (middle and high school)

## Strengths

- Works hard on tasks that are a good fit.
- Often shows more in conversation than on paper.
- Sees connections once they find a way in.
- Finds their own solutions and explanations.
- Persists when goal and method make sense.
- Works carefully when the task is clearly laid out.

## What helps

- Make time visible with a timer, sand timer or clock.
- Break tasks into written steps they can check off.
- Help them get started by naming the first small step.
- Give brief, quick feedback.
- Ask: "What are you going to do first?"
- Plan short movement breaks with a clear end.
- Give materials a fixed home and keep distractions low.
- Show a model answer next to the task.
- Check in briefly, even when they seem to be working quietly.
- With younger kids, use picture cards and a quick check-in as they start. (elementary school)
- With older students, set check-ins to look at plans and progress. (middle and high school)

## What tends not to help

- Lots of spoken instructions at once, with nothing written down.
- Time limits with no clock in sight.
- Reminders like "Just focus."
- Assuming quiet students don't need feedback.

## Words that carry

"Show me how far you've gotten."

"Let's write down your next step together."

"You don't have to be loud to get my help."

"Point to the first step on your plan." (elementary school)

"What's most important to get done right now?" (middle and high school)

## Where to find support

**CHADD** chadd.org/for-educators/overview
US nonprofit with ADHD information for educators and families.

**NHS: ADHD in children and teenagers**
nhs.uk/conditions/adhd-children-teenagers
Clear health information from the UK National Health Service.

**Understood.org**
understood.org/en/articles/classroom-accommodations-for-adhd
Classroom accommodations for ADHD, written for teachers.

**Local organizations**
Many countries have their own ADHD association. Your school psychologist or the student's doctor can point you to one.

**More in the Teacher Portal:** neurodivergentclassroom.com/teacher-portal/add/

Sources: WHO: ICD-11 for Mortality and Morbidity Statistics · NICE: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, guideline NG87 · AWMF S3 guideline ADHD, register 028-045 (in German) · Iznardo et al.: Meta-analysis on daily report cards