

AI Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com/>) on 28th April 2026 to proofread my work. Using the prompt:

1. Please proofread this work, focussing on spelling and grammar accuracy.

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm that I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

A qualitative report using thematic analysis on teaching assistants' experiences working with children with ADHD.

Abstract

Teaching assistants (TA's) play an important role in supporting pupils with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in mainstream schools, yet limited research has explored their experience in this context. This study aimed to look at how TA's feel about their role working with children with ADHD and what they perceive as facilitating or hindering their work. A qualitative design was used, using semi structured interviews with six female TA's working in mainstream primary schools in Wales. Data was analysed using Braun and Clark's Thematic analysis approach. Three key themes were identified: Knowledge gaps and professional development needs, Emotional impact of supporting pupils with ADHD, and Systemic support and barriers in practice. Participants described limited ADHD specific knowledge among school staff and reported a lack of formal training. While many found the role rewarding and meaningful, they also experienced stress, emotional exhaustion, and feelings of isolation. Supportive SENCO's/ALNCO, positive parent relationships, and external agencies were viewed as helpful, whereas poor leadership understanding, negative staff attitudes and challenging parent relationships were perceived as barriers. The findings suggest that TAs are committed to supporting pupils with ADHD but often do so without adequate training or support. Greater investment in staff development, collaborative school practice, and emotional support for TAs may improve both staff wellbeing and pupil outcomes.

Introduction

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects a person's daily functioning (LaPierre, 2021). As this research is based around the experiences of ADHD in the school setting the report will make reference to ADHD in children, however ADHD is a lifelong condition and so will impact people through their lives. ADHD is characterised by three presentations, primarily inattentive, primarily hyperactive or a combination type which has aspects of both the previously mentioned types (Olive, 2020). Children with inattentive presentation may struggle with difficulties such as having difficulty focusing, getting bored easily, losing or forgetting things often, listening and following instructions and staying organised (Rusick, 2022), whereas children with hyperactive presentation may be unable to sit still and be constantly on the move, they may talk excessively or have difficulty playing quietly and they may run or climb when it is not appropriate to do so (Langwith, 2009) and children with a combination type could display behaviours from both the inattentive and hyperactive presentations. With these in mind it could be implied that many children fit these presentations while of school age due to emotional and social immaturity and understanding, however for a child to meet the criteria for an ADHD diagnosis then six of the nine ADHD criteria need to be met as identified in the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2022), this must also be evaluated against environmental variables which may impact the child's behaviour (DuPaul & Stoner, 2015).

Welsh Parliament have stated that around five percent of children in the UK have a diagnosis of ADHD but have also stated that in 2023 there were 16,812 children and young people waiting for a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or ADHD in

Wales (Hardy, 2024). With so many children and young people awaiting a diagnosis of ADHD or ASD in Wales, it could be suggested that many children in classrooms in Wales have undiagnosed ADHD.

O'Regan (2019) suggests there are two ways of managing a child with ADHD's behaviour when in class, they are to keep the child interested and by reward and punishment. They go on to say that it is the teachers (or teaching assistants) responsibility to ensure that the class content is engaging enough to motivate the child with ADHD. Re et al (2020) contradicted this however by stating that children with ADHD often do not understand the consequences of their actions, therefor having reward and punishment for children with ADHD would not be a suitable management tool when working with children with ADHD. Karlsdóttir, Gudmundsdottir & Sveinbjörnsdóttir (2023) also identified that the use of behaviour management procedures (BPM's) as a treatment for children with ADHD, however they also identify the need for regular check ins and support from staff in the school to sustain their attention level and motivation in work. This checking in would be left to the responsibility of the staff in the room, namely the teachers and teaching assistants based in the classroom, however according to research by Greenway & Edwards Rees (2020) showed that the teachers and teaching assistants that took part had limited to no training on how best to support children and young people with ADHD and highlighted the need for school staff to have training in this area. This is also shown by Domsch, Ruhmland, & Issmann (2022) who found in a study that there is a correlation between the effectiveness of ADHD support and the level of training that staff have received in their role. This could imply that many staff working with children with ADHD are not adequately trained in the role and therefor the support that the children receive can vary in effectiveness (Bosanquet, Radford & Webster,

2021), this supports Russell, Webster & Blatchford (2013) who found that students who were receiving support from teaching assistants made less progress than their peers who received little or no support from teaching assistants. This could imply that this is linked to the lack of appropriate training for teaching assistants, especially as they are often working with the most challenging and vulnerable pupils in the school.

There has been limited research on the role of the teaching assistant when working with children and young people with ADHD and the support that they have available when completing this challenging role. This is of particular importance as many teaching assistants have no formal qualifications for the role. As a result, this research will look at two questions based on these findings.

- 1 - How do TAs feel about their role working with children with ADHD?
- 2 - What do TAs believe facilitates or hinders their work with children with ADHD

The research will be a qualitative nature with the hope of gaining an understanding of the teaching assistants experiences in their role and how this impact them and the pupils that they are working with.

Method

Six teaching assistants have volunteered to take part in the research. All of the participants work in mainstream provision in primary schools in Wales. All of the participants were female, ranging from 22 years old to 48 years old (mean age of the participants – 35.3 years old). The participants had a combined total of 52 years working as a teaching assistant, with individual lengths of time ranging from one year to 12 years (mean length of time working as a teaching assistant – 8.7 years) and have a combined

total of 33.25 years supporting children with ADHD ranging from 8.5 months to 10 years (mean length of time supporting children with ADHD – 5.54 years). None of the participants had completed any ADHD specific training before or during their role supporting children with ADHD.

The interviews consisted of 7 questions which were semi structured to allow for the participants to share in their experiences. Prompts were used during the interviews to further explain questions and to allow the researcher to target the discussion towards a particular topic. Interviews took place face to face and were recorded with the use of a Dictaphone to allow for accurate transcription of the sessions, participants were made aware that the session was being recorded and that their responses would remain anonymous, all participants gave permission for the interview to be recorded.

The research was approved by the ethics committee, and all participants were informed that they could withdraw their consent at any time.

The research was analysed using thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017) which allows for identifying patterns in qualitative research and interpreting them. Following the transcribing of the data the information was then checked for accuracy before the researcher familiarised themselves with the data, these initial findings were noted on the transcripts, then the initial codes were recorded, this then allowed for patterns to form between the interviews. These initial codes were then turned into themes and reviewed to ensure that they were a clear representation of the transcripts and experience of the participants.

Results

The results were based on the qualitative data that was collected from the six interviews that took place with teaching assistants who work with children with ADHD. From the thematic analysis that took place three main themes were found, with each theme having two sub themes.

Table 1

Themes, subthemes and supporting quotes from TA interviews

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Sub-theme</i>	<i>Example quotes</i>
Knowledge Gaps and Professional Development Needs	Staff Misconceptions About ADHD	“Some class teachers don’t interact with me or the children with ADHD” (TA1) “Oh, off he goes again” (TA2) “Look I’ve got these kids to teach can you sort this problem” (TA3) “Why can’t he just sit down or why can’t he just do this” (TA2)
	Need for Targeted ADHD Training	“It would be good to have some training. So that I could have that foundation before, because I was blind going into this”. (TA2) “I knew nothing about the kind of needs children with ADHD had. I thought it was made up” (TA5) “There’s no training available” (TA6) “I just wish I knew more about ADHD. I think teachers especially need to be educated more on it because I know there is a spectrum, but we don’t understand” (TA2)
Emotional Impact of Supporting Pupils with ADHD	Reward and Fulfilment	“Satisfying” (TA6) “It’s so rewarding” (TA5) “I think everyone should work with ADHD, I have learned so much” (TA4) “I love it because I love the challenge of it” (TA3) “It’s a rewarding job, I love it” (TA1)

	Stress, Isolation and Emotional Exhaustion	“Very draining, you do go home and just cry... how could I have done that differently” (TA1) “Physically draining” (TA2) “Impact on me emotionally” (TA3) “Feel like I am on my own most of the time, fighting for my child. It’s a constant battle” (TA4) “Feel like a failure when things don’t work” (TA3)
Systemic Supports and Barriers in Practice	Positive Support Networks	(Parents) “If you have them onboard it’s half the battle” (TA1) “I have a really supportive SENCO. She’s fantastic, she makes sure that we have everything we need for dealing with our everyday role” (TA6) “The outside agencies... they’re always in” (TA3) “Support network was good” (TA2)
	Leadership and Parent-Related Challenges	“My school, you know, the management there, they don’t get it” (TA4) “The mother, is making it extremely difficult for us to work with a child” (TA6) “Some parents make more problems than there should be they love attention on themselves” (TA3)

Theme one – Knowledge gaps and professional developmental needs.

The participants on the study frequently discussed a lack of understanding of ADHD within the school environment, alongside insufficient access to formal training. Many felt that both TA’s and teachers required greater knowledge to meet the needs of pupils with ADHD effectively.

Staff Misconceptions about ADHD

Several participants described attitudes from staff that suggested limited understanding of ADHD and its behavioural presentation. For example, TA2 recalled hearing comments such as, “Why can’t he just sit down or why can’t he just do this,”

implying that some teachers interpreted ADHD related behaviours as deliberate non-compliance rather than manifestations of need.

Similarly, TA2 also reported dismissive comments such as, “Oh off he goes again,” indicating frustration or normalisation of behaviour without consideration of underlying causes. TA1 noted that “Some class teachers don’t interact with me or the children with ADHD,” suggesting that pupils with ADHD, and those supporting them, may at times be marginalised within the classroom context.

Misconceptions were not limited to teaching staff. TA5 reflected, “I knew nothing about the kind of needs children with ADHD had. I thought it was made up,” demonstrating how wider societal misunderstandings may influence professional assumptions.

These findings suggest that stigma and limited awareness of ADHD may negatively impact inclusive practice and collaborative support.

Need for Targeted ADHD Training

Participants consistently highlighted the need for more structured and accessible training. TA2 stated, “It would be good to have some training... because I was blind going into this,” indicating feelings of unpreparedness when entering the role.

Another participant stated plainly that “There’s no training available” (TA6), suggesting that opportunities for professional development were either absent or insufficient.

Participants also felt that training should extend beyond TAs to include teaching staff.

TA2 explained, “I just wish I knew more about ADHD. I think teachers especially need to be educated more on it because I know there is a spectrum, but we don’t understand.”

This quote reflects an awareness of the diverse presentation of ADHD and a recognition that current staff knowledge may be inadequate.

Overall, this theme suggests that participants perceived professional development as essential to improving both confidence and pupil outcomes.

Theme 2: Emotional Impact of Supporting Pupils with ADHD

Participants described the emotional impact of the role as complex and often contradictory. While many experienced reward and satisfaction, they also reported stress, exhaustion, and feelings of isolation.

Reward and Fulfilment

Despite challenges, participants frequently spoke positively about their role. TA6 described the work as “satisfying,” while TA5 stated that “It’s so rewarding.” Similarly, TA1 commented, “It’s a rewarding job, I love it,” demonstrating strong commitment and enjoyment.

Some participants also described personal growth resulting from the experience. TA4 stated, “I think everyone should work with ADHD, I have learned so much,” suggesting that supporting pupils with ADHD had broadened their professional understanding. TA3 added, “I love it because I love the challenge of it,” indicating that some TAs valued the dynamic and demanding nature of the role.

These responses suggest that many participants derived meaning and satisfaction from supporting pupils and witnessing progress.

Stress, Isolation and Emotional Exhaustion

Alongside positive experiences, participants described considerable emotional strain.

TA1 stated, “Very draining, you do go home and just cry... how could I have done that differently,” reflecting emotional fatigue and self-questioning.

TA2 described the role as “physically draining,” while TA3 referred to the “impact on me emotionally.” These responses indicate that the demands of the role were not solely psychological, but also physical.

Feelings of isolation were also evident. TA4 explained, “Feel like I am on my own most of the time, fighting for my child. It’s a constant battle,” suggesting a lack of shared support and ongoing pressure. TA3 further stated they “feel like a failure when things don’t work,” highlighting the emotional burden associated with challenging situations.

This subtheme suggests that although rewarding, the role may involve significant emotional labour and risk of burnout.

Theme 3: Systemic Supports and Barriers in Practice

Participants emphasised that their ability to support pupils with ADHD was strongly influenced by the wider school system, including relationships with colleagues, leadership, parents, and external professionals.

Positive Support Networks

Where supportive networks were present, participants reported more positive experiences. TA6 stated, “I have a really supportive SENCO. She’s fantastic, she makes sure that we have everything we need for dealing with our everyday role,” suggesting that effective leadership and resource provision can strengthen practice.

Other participants valued support from external professionals. TA3 commented that “The outside agencies... they’re always in,” while TA2 noted that the “support network was good.”

Parents were also considered an important source of support. TA1 explained, “If you have them onboard it’s half the battle,” implying that successful collaboration with families can significantly improve outcomes for pupils.

These findings suggest that multi-agency cooperation and positive working relationships are viewed as key facilitators.

Leadership and Parent-Related Challenges

Participants also identified barriers linked to leadership and family relationships. TA4 stated, “My school, you know, the management there, they don’t get it,” indicating a perceived lack of understanding or prioritisation of ADHD at senior levels.

Some participants described difficulties working with parents. TA6 stated that “The mother is making it extremely difficult for us to work with a child,” while TA3 commented that “Some parents make more problems than there should be.” These responses suggest that conflict, resistance, or poor communication with parents may hinder consistency of support.

In addition, some comments from teaching staff implied that responsibility for pupils with ADHD was shifted onto TAs. TA3 recalled being told, “Look I’ve got these kids to teach can you sort this problem,” which may reflect exclusion from shared classroom responsibility.

Overall, this theme highlights how systemic factors can either enable or obstruct effective support.

Summary of Findings

The findings indicate that TAs experience their role supporting pupils with ADHD as both meaningful and demanding. Participants reported significant knowledge gaps and a need for targeted ADHD training for both support staff and teachers. Emotionally, the role was associated with reward and fulfilment, but also stress, exhaustion, and isolation. Finally, wider systemic factors including leadership, parent relationships, and support networks were perceived as central to whether TAs could perform their role effectively. Collectively, these findings suggest that successful support for pupils with ADHD depends not only on the commitment of individual TAs, but also on informed, collaborative, and well-supported school systems.

Discussion

This study explored teaching assistant's experiences of supporting pupils with ADHD in mainstream primary schools in Wales. The findings indicate that Tas experience their role as both meaningful and challenging, with their effectiveness shaped by individual, interpersonal, and organisational factors. Three themes were identified knowledge gaps and professional development needs, emotional impact of the role, and systemic supports and barriers in practice. These findings contribute to the limited literature focusing specifically on TAs supporting pupils with ADHD.

The first theme, knowledge gaps and professional development needs, highlighted participants perceptions that both Tas and teachers often lacked sufficient

understanding of ADHD. Several participants described misconceptions from staff, including interpreting ADHD related behaviours as intentional disruption rather than manifestations of a neurodevelopmental condition. This supports previous research suggesting that school staff frequently report limited ADHD knowledge and require further training (Greenway & Edwards Rees, 2020). It also aligns with Domsch et al (2022), who found that the effectiveness of support for pupils with ADHD was associated with the level of staff training. In the current study, participants repeatedly emphasised the need for ADHD specific training for all staff, suggesting that inclusive practice may be hindered when responsibility for ADHD support is placed on underprepared professionals.

The second theme, Emotional impact of supporting pupils with ADHD, reflected the dual nature of the TA role. Participants frequently described their work as rewarding, satisfying, and valuable, indicating a strong sense of purpose and commitment. This suggests that TAs may derive intrinsic motivation from helping pupils make progress and managing challenging situations successfully. However, these positive experiences were accompanied by reports of emotional exhaustion, stress, self-doubt, and feelings of isolation. Some participants described going home upset or feeling like failures when strategies were unsuccessful. These findings are consistent with broader educational research linking support roles with emotional labour and burnout, particularly when staff work with high levels of behavioural need but limited support (Karlisdóttir et al., 2023). The findings therefore suggest that while TAs value their role, the emotional cost of sustained support work should not be underestimated.

The third theme, Systemic supports and barriers in practice, demonstrated that TAs' experiences were strongly influenced by the wider school environment. Positive relationships with SENCOs/ALNCOs, parents, and outside agencies were perceived as essential in enabling effective support. This reflects ecological perspectives of inclusion, where pupil outcomes are shaped by collaborative systems rather than individual staff members alone. In contrast, participants described barriers including poor leadership understanding, limited collaboration with teachers, and difficult parent-school relationships. Some TAs reported that responsibility for pupils with ADHD was delegated to them rather than shared within the classroom. This is notable, as previous research has raised concerns that TAs can become the primary support for pupils with additional needs without sufficient guidance or teacher involvement (Russell et al., 2013). The current findings suggest that ADHD support is most effective when responsibility is shared across the school system.

Taken together, the findings answer the study's research questions. First, TAs felt positively about their role in terms of reward and fulfilment, but also experienced stress and emotional burden. Second, facilitators included supportive leadership, parent engagement, and multi-agency input, whereas barriers included poor training, misconceptions, weak leadership understanding, and strained relationships. This demonstrates that TAs' experiences are shaped not simply by the child's needs, but by the quality of the systems surrounding them.

Implications of the study

Several practical implications arise from these findings. First, schools should provide regular ADHD specific professional development for TAs and teachers, including

training on behavioural understanding, classroom strategies, and inclusive practice.

Second, schools should promote collaborative working models where responsibility for pupils with ADHD is shared between teachers, TAs, SENCOs/ALNCOs, and parents.

Third, consideration should be given to staff wellbeing through supervision, reflective practice opportunities, or emotional support mechanisms, particularly for TAs working intensively with high-needs pupils.

Strengths and Limitations

A strength of this study is that it gives voice to a group whose perspectives are often underrepresented in ADHD research. The qualitative design allowed participants to describe their lived experiences in depth. However, limitations should be acknowledged. The sample size was small (6 participants), all participants were female, and all worked in mainstream primary schools in Wales, which may limit transferability to other settings or demographics. Additionally, participants self-selected to take part, meaning those with stronger views or experiences may have been more likely to volunteer.

Future Research

Future studies could include larger and more diverse samples across primary, secondary, and specialist settings. Research comparing teacher and TA perspectives may also be valuable, as would studies examining the impact of ADHD-specific training on staff confidence, wellbeing, and pupil outcomes.

Conclusion

This study found that teaching assistants play a vital but demanding role in supporting pupils with ADHD in mainstream schools. Although participants reported high levels of reward and commitment, they also described emotional strain, inadequate training, and systemic barriers that limited their effectiveness. Positive support networks, knowledgeable leadership, and collaborative relationships were seen as crucial facilitators of successful practice. Overall, the findings suggest that TAs are often willing and motivated to support pupils with ADHD, but require greater recognition, targeted training, and whole-school support to do so effectively. Strengthening these areas may improve both TA wellbeing and educational outcomes for pupils with ADHD.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Initial codes

1. Many benefits to working with children with ADHD

Rewarding job

Loves it

Satisfaction from seeing children develop

Learned so much from working with children with ADHD

Good for other children to learn about ADHD

Not all the children develop the same

All different

Students are very accepting of the student with ADHD

Patience

Working with children with ADHD has taught her to be patient

Has benefited her and the other children in the class

Exhausting

Have to be patient and concentrate more

Goes home exhausted most days, more than when they have supported children with different additional learning needs

Having to stick up for children with ADHD

Negative attitudes

People thinking ADHD is not real

Negative attitudes make them cross

ADHD children try their best under very difficult circumstances

Children with ADHD don't always make friends

Problems with funding

The TA feels like they need more support from the school

Less funds means less equipment

Some class teachers don't interact with the TA or the children with ADHD

Teachers saying that it is the TA's job to "deal with them"

Teachers getting cross if the child with ADHD disrupts the class

Even when the teacher can see the TA is trying to calm down the student with

ADHD, make it clear they are not happy

Teacher undermines them – doesn't look good in front of the other children

Child with ADHD notices and apologises for getting the TA in trouble

Child with ADHD not being disruptive on purpose

Hard to keep the child and the teacher happy

Parent relationship – current student's parents are great, very supportive

Good relationship with parents

Previous pupil – parents were difficult, demanding, argumentative, difficult

Wanted more support for their son

Didn't have the resources in school

Constantly wanting to meet with teacher and head teacher

One TA was not enough support

TA felt they were "piggy in the middle" between parents and teachers

TA found this very stressful

TA's time spent most of their time worrying about pleasing the teacher and parents

TA's priority is the child

ADHD training can be a barrier

TA enjoys reading about ADHD

People think that she is just a TA, not a teacher

Assume TA doesn't know anything about ADHD

It is the TA's job to "keep the naughty ones quiet"

Barrier of no training is from other people's perspective

Times have changed because you hear more about ADHD now

ADHD has bad press

Children get used to having children with ADHD in their class

Learn to ignore the disruptions

Don't bother with the children with ADHD

Parents know we are doing the best for their child

Many children could not stay in mainstream education and were moved to behavioural units

Behaviour was extreme

Peers' parents complaining

Childs needs were too complex for what they could offer

People are gaining more knowledge of ADHD and learning difficulties

Communication is easier now (home contact book, chat at the end of the day)

Supportive head teacher

Need to have a supportive head teacher and class teacher

Very draining

Go home and cry when not been able to do something or child kicked off

How could I have done that differently

Could be annoyed before school which impacts the day

Rewarding

Knowing they made a difference

No one tells you that you have made a difference (No recognition)

Seeing that you have had a positive impact on the child

Always wanted to work with children with behavioural difficulties

Wanted to make a difference

I chose a difficult path

See the gains

Everyone in school needs to have knowledge of ADHD

2. Need to have problem solving skills

Patience

Reactions no be methodical

Learning from situations

Pupils' academic skills have improved

He would not stay in the class. Then would go back in and play on the ipad

No control from the teacher

Try to keep the pupil happy or try and get him to do something and then he would flip

Pupil benefitted from their relationship, academically and socially

Mum was happy

Stressful

Frustrating because couldn't fix his behaviours by problem solving

Job is all positive, seeing the outcomes
Advantages outweigh the disadvantages
Barriers of no ADHD training
Had no foundation before starting the role – going in blind
Not fair on the pupil
Feels supported by the ALNCO
Someone to fall back on
A lot of the teachers did not understand
This affected the teacher's behaviour – negative
Barrier between the pupil and the teachers through lack of understanding
90% of the teachers are not understanding
No empathy
Head of the school does not understand or does not want to understand causing
a barrier
Only the TA that the child could go to
Barrier as there was no trust in anyone else
Support from parents
Parents could see the progression
Mixed responses from peers, brushing it off or frustrating
Teachers still not understand the behaviours
Now improvement in behaviour the negativity has lightened
Pupil became more approachable to the staff
Lack of knowledge in the start
Felt intimidated in the start
Worried about the terms anger, aggression and violent behaviour
First week worried the pupil would lash out
Did not read up on ADHD
Believed it was a naughty syndrome
In beginning pupil had his guard up because he did not know her, had to build a
relationship
Ed Psych was supportive
Parents were good, no statement so happy was getting support

Mum just wanted child to be happy

On whole peers were supportive

Knew to get me if there was a problem with the pupil

Peers got to know his traits

Some boys got frustrated with his behaviours whereas the girls became more understanding over time

Physically draining

Constantly waiting for the pupil to kick off

On pins all the time

Stressful

Rewarding seeing his progression

Two steps forward, ten steps back

Wish they know more about ADHD

Teachers need to be educated on ADHD

3. I can help others to understand that they are not just a naughty child

I always defend those children

A lot of professionals put it down to naughtiness

Stressful

Behaviour can have a negative impact on the other children that are in the class

Unfair for the child with ADHD what they are going through

Stressful for everyone

Tiring and challenging for your brain

Balance between removing the child with ADHD and the negative impact on their peers

Integrate the child rather than segregating them by removing them from the room

Unless you ask for support it is not given to you

Not had formal diagnosis

Perceived as naughty

Move the child out of mainstream and into a nurture group for it to be managed there

Have to think of the other children in the class as well

Training and support need to be given to the teachers along with interventions

TA had no formal training

Researched themselves

ALNCO did not know how to support the TA or child

Teachers pass the buck

Sometimes a teacher's support is not helpful

Refer to the child as a problem

Staff need to be trained

Some parents make more problems – they love the attention themselves

More about the parents than the child

Some parents don't know what to do for the best

Some parents in denial or scared to admit the behaviours

Negative behaviour in the classroom does affect the other children

Peers can be frightened

Behaviour would escalate

The behaviours have taken the staff away from the other children which is unfair

Some people do not know how is best to support

Support from outside agencies

Support is there if you are interested, need to go and research it for yourself

Funding for training would benefit the school

Child was dominating the classroom

Love the job

Enjoying the challenge

Because I had a passion I went and did the research myself

Physically exhausted

Impact on me emotionally because of the pupil's behaviour

Feel like a failure when things don't work

Emotionally draining

Stressful

4. Lots of benefits for the child

Before, child was in a small group and wasn't thriving

He has learned so much

The children should be in mainstream class

Think everyone should work with ADHD, learned so much
Patience
More tolerant
Others don't understand the behaviours
Hard
When pupil does not want to work it is like banging your head against a wall
Days can be tough
It upsets me in class
Class gets fed up with their behaviour
Teacher asks me to take the child out of the classroom
Sometimes taking him out of the room causes more problems
Sometimes the teachers won't allow me to calm the child down
Piggy in the middle of the teacher and the child and the other children
Biggest barrier is the classroom
Teacher undermines them and what they are doing
Management in the school do not get it
Only one child with ADHD so no call for training or money for the child
"That's your job"
You have to keep him on and get him through the day
He is your problem
They have no patience with the child
They don't understand
Think it is just bad behaviour
Managers and teachers can be barriers
Gotten worse over time
Feel like they are on their own most of the time
Fighting for the child is a constant battle
Work closely with mum
Mum knows I am not getting supported by the school
His mum helps and that makes the job easier
Learnt more about ADHD over the years
No official courses, own research

Teachers have become less tolerant and more negative about behaviours

It affects how they deal with him

I always have to fight for him

Makes me unpopular

Loves the job

Enjoy working with the child

See big improvements

Tiring

Biggest impact emotionally is the lack of support from the teacher and head

Frustrating

Hard work

Constant battle with them

Cry through frustration

Frustrated with self, could have done better for the child

No support

Get on with it for the sake of him because that is what counts

5. Lots of benefits

No prior knowledge of ADHD

Thought it was made up/Did not think it was real/Just naughty children

Child blossomed with support

Able to stay in the classroom for most of the day

Relationship with the one to one is important

Only seeing me and spending time with me

The pupil does not integrate well with others

Hard for the TA

Feeling isolated

I don't interact with the other staff

He is my problem

Tiring

I am on my own

I love the job

No one else cares

School system is not set up for children with ADHD

Don't get much support

No money for training

Left to get on with it

No support or guidance from the school

School does not involve the family

It tough

Gran is a barrier, she makes things harder, she isn't interested

"That's your job to sort him out not mine"

No real training with ADHD

Was terrified I would do something wrong

Did not know any strategies for ADHD

Stressed

Couldn't sleep because I was worried about how to support the child

No training was a barrier

The more I learnt the easier my job is

More respect now that I know what I am doing

Teachers have started to understand you cannot manage the behaviour by removing them from the class

Teachers' attitudes have changed towards the child

Teachers are helping

Stressed

No one to turn to/no help

Ill/drained and exhausted

Couldn't sleep or eat

Own research

Loves job now

Praise from the teachers

Rewarding

On toes all the time

6. Main benefit is seeing how the children react to the work I do with them

Satisfying

Improves my self esteem knowing I am doing something right
The children suffer a lot with stigma
It's not easy
Exhausted
I get upset when the child is upset
Feel like I have been 10 rounds with Mike Tyson
Behaviour is often aggressive
Behaviour can cause disruption to the class
Frustrating for the other children and the class teacher
Can lead to animosity and exclusion
Parental interference is a barrier
Mother is making it difficult to work with a child
Talk between the teachers about ADHD is negative
Disruption and naughty behaviour
I am sad because I know these negative attitudes affect the way they treat the children
Not the child's fault
Need more training
No training available
Would go on training if one was available
They do not understand ADHD
Children in the class get used to the behaviours and get on with it
Over time their peers get fed up with the behaviours and withdraw from the child
Parents expect more from teaching assistants and expect miracle cure
Very supportive SENCO, she is fantastic
She makes sure we have everything that we need
Extremely experienced
Great support for the TA's
Don't think I would be half as good at my job if it was not for her
She is knowledgeable about ADHD
School is supportive
Head teacher is supportive

Previous SENCO made things very difficult

Staff are happy

Lots positives of the job

Seeing the children's progress

Encourages me that I am doing something right

With more understanding comes tolerance

Fight the battles for the children with ADHD

My job to combat negative attitudes