



Child ADHD Assessment Pathway

What to Expect After Booking Your Child's Assessment

Thank you for choosing NeuroFX for your child's ADHD assessment. This guide explains what happens from the moment you book through to receiving your child's report and next steps. Our assessment process follows NICE guideline NG87, ensuring your child receives a comprehensive, evidence-based evaluation.

We understand that seeking an ADHD assessment for your child can feel daunting. Our aim is to make the process as clear and supportive as possible, giving you and your child the time and space to be heard and understood.

What Happens After Booking

Once you have booked your child's assessment, you will receive access to our comprehensive onboarding process. This is an important part of the assessment and helps us understand your child fully before the appointment.

Onboarding Documentation

You will be asked to complete several questionnaires and provide information about your child. This includes:

- Telling your child's story in your own words, including your hopes and concerns
- Information about your child's physical and mental health history
- Developmental milestones and family history
- How your child is doing at school and in other settings
- Any previous assessments or support your child has received

Screening Tools and Questionnaires

As part of the onboarding, you will be asked to complete several standardised screening tools. These give us valuable information about different aspects of your child's wellbeing and behaviour:

ADHD Screening Tools (SNAP-IV)

You will complete the SNAP-IV ADHD screening questionnaire about your child's symptoms and behaviours. We also ask you to request that your child's school or teachers complete

the same questionnaire. This multi-informant approach is essential for an accurate ADHD assessment, as NICE guidelines require evidence of symptoms across multiple settings.

Educational Setting Questionnaire

We ask that your child's teacher or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) completes a detailed Educational Setting Questionnaire. This document provides critical insight into how your child's symptoms impact their functioning at school and highlights any other concerns or relevant information from an educational perspective. This is a very important part of the pre-assessment documentation.

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

The SDQ helps us understand your child's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, relationships with others, and any difficulties they may be experiencing. This broader picture is important for understanding how ADHD symptoms affect your child's overall functioning. The SDQ is completed by parents, by children aged 11 and over (self-report version), and is also suitable for educational setting informants such as teachers.

Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale (RCADS)

This questionnaire helps us identify whether your child is experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression. These conditions can sometimes occur alongside ADHD or may present with similar symptoms, so it is important to assess them carefully.

Sleep Assessment Tools

Sleep problems are very common in children with ADHD and can significantly affect behaviour, mood, and concentration. We use sleep questionnaires to understand your child's sleep patterns and identify any difficulties that may need addressing.

How This Information Helps

All the information you provide is carefully reviewed by our clinical lead before your appointment. This preparation means that when you arrive for your assessment, we already have an excellent understanding of your child and a strong foundation to build on during the appointment. It allows us to use the assessment time most effectively, focusing on the areas that matter most for your child.

We know that completing these forms takes time and effort. Please be assured that every piece of information you provide is valuable and contributes to a thorough, accurate assessment for your child.

What to Expect from Your Child's ADHD Assessment Appointment

The assessment appointment is where we bring together all the information you have provided with a detailed clinical interview. This is your opportunity to talk in depth about your child's experiences, and for your child to be heard and understood.

The Young DIVA-5 Assessment

We use the Young DIVA-5, a semi-structured clinical interview specifically designed for assessing ADHD in children and young people. This is not a simple tick-box exercise.

Instead, it is a thorough conversation that explores how ADHD symptoms present in your child's life.

The interview looks at various areas of your child's life, including:

- Home life and family relationships
- School performance and classroom behaviour
- Friendships and social relationships
- Activities and hobbies
- Daily routines and self-care

Crucially, we focus on how symptoms affect your child's functioning and what this means for them and your family. We want to understand the real-world impact of their difficulties, not just whether certain behaviours are present.

Duration and Format

The assessment typically takes between two and three hours. We understand this is a long time, particularly for a child who may have difficulty concentrating. We build in breaks as needed and keep the environment calm and relaxed. There is no rush.

For older children and young people (typically from age 14, in line with Gillick competence), we may offer some time to speak with the clinician alone, without parents present. This gives young people the opportunity to share their own perspective in a private space. Whether this happens depends on your child's age, their wishes, and what feels most appropriate.

Throughout the appointment, our priority is that you and your child feel heard and understood. This is your time to share your experiences and concerns in a supportive, non-judgemental environment.

Diagnosis and Next Steps

Reaching a Diagnosis

In many cases, if all the necessary information is available and the clinical picture is clear, we can discuss the diagnosis with you on the day of the assessment. This allows you to ask questions immediately and begin to think about next steps.

However, there are times when we need additional information to reach a clear, accurate diagnosis. This might include:

- Further screening tools or questionnaires
- Additional information from school or other professionals
- Screening for autism spectrum disorder (more on this below)
- A QbCheck assessment (see below)

If we need more information, we will arrange a follow-up clinical update appointment (conducted online) to discuss the diagnosis and next steps once everything is in place. This ensures that your child receives a thorough, evidence-based assessment rather than a rushed conclusion.

The Importance of Differential Diagnosis

A critical part of the assessment is ensuring that your child's symptoms are not better explained by another condition. Many conditions can present with symptoms similar to ADHD, including anxiety disorders, autism, trauma-related conditions, learning difficulties, sleep disorders, and various medical conditions.

We will carefully consider whether your child's difficulties are primarily due to ADHD or whether another condition (either alone or in addition to ADHD) better explains their symptoms. This differential diagnosis process is essential for ensuring your child receives the right support and treatment.

QbCheck Assessment

In approximately 10 to 15 per cent of cases, we may recommend a QbCheck assessment as part of the diagnostic process. QbCheck is a computerised test that objectively measures attention, impulsivity, and activity levels. It is approved by NICE for use in children and young people under 18 as a supportive tool in ADHD assessment.

QbCheck is not mandatory, but it can be particularly helpful in cases where the clinical picture is unclear or where objective evidence would strengthen the assessment. If we recommend QbCheck for your child, there is an additional cost of £129.

We will always discuss this with you before proceeding and explain why we think it would be beneficial for your child's assessment.

If ADHD is Confirmed

When ADHD is confirmed, we will discuss the diagnosis with you in detail, explaining what it means for your child and answering any questions you have. We will also talk about the possibility of medication and how the process works.

If you are interested in medication, we offer a 6-month titration package (£995) which includes finding the right medication and dose for your child, all prescriptions during this period, regular monitoring, and a request for shared care with your GP once your child is stable. More information about this pathway can be found in our separate shared care document.

Medication is not the only option, and we will discuss other support strategies and interventions that can help your child, regardless of whether you choose medication.

What if Autistic Traits are Identified?

ADHD and autism often occur together, and sometimes autistic traits become apparent during an ADHD assessment. If we identify possible autism spectrum disorder (ASD) during your child's assessment, we will discuss this with you in detail.

We can offer a gold-standard autism assessment as an add-on to your child's ADHD assessment. This uses internationally recognised diagnostic tools:

- Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R) - a detailed interview with parents
- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-2 (ADOS-2) - a direct assessment of your child

The cost for an ASD top-up assessment is £950. This provides a comprehensive evaluation following best practice guidelines.

Why Autism Diagnosis Matters in Childhood

Understanding whether your child is autistic as well as having ADHD can be enormously helpful. An autism diagnosis in childhood can:

- Help you and your child understand their differences and strengths
- Enable access to appropriate support in school
- Inform education plans and reasonable adjustments
- Help your child develop strategies that work for them
- Provide access to autism-specific services and support groups

Sleep Difficulties

Sleep problems are extremely common in children with ADHD and can significantly affect their behaviour, mood, concentration, and overall wellbeing. If your child's assessment identifies serious sleep difficulties, we can offer specific help.

Tina Fox, our clinical lead, is a qualified Advanced Paediatric Sleep Practitioner. We can provide a sleep hygiene programme tailored to your child's needs, helping to establish better sleep patterns and routines.

If behavioural strategies do not resolve the sleep difficulties, we can consider prescribing melatonin where clinically appropriate. Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone that helps regulate sleep-wake cycles and is commonly used to help children with ADHD and sleep problems.

This sleep support is available through NeuroFX, and we also offer a specialist SleepFX service as part of our broader support for families.

After the Assessment: Reports and Next Steps

Your Child's Report

Following your child's assessment, you will receive two pieces of correspondence:

- A letter confirming the outcome within 48 hours of the assessment
- A full comprehensive report within 14 days (typically less than 7 days)

The full report provides detailed information about your child's assessment, the diagnostic conclusions, and recommendations for support. It will also signpost you to helpful resources and provide guidance on non-medical interventions and lifestyle changes that can help manage ADHD symptoms and improve daily functioning.

This report is yours to share with your child's school, GP, or other professionals as you see fit. It provides a comprehensive record of the assessment and can be used to support requests for adjustments or additional help.

What if ADHD is Not Confirmed?

We understand that it can be difficult if your child's assessment does not confirm an ADHD diagnosis, particularly if you have been hoping for answers and support. Please know that

this outcome does not mean your child's difficulties are not real or that they do not need help.

There are several reasons why an ADHD diagnosis might not be made:

- Your child's symptoms may not meet the full diagnostic criteria for ADHD
- The difficulties may be better explained by another condition (such as anxiety, autism, learning difficulties, or trauma)
- Your child may have some ADHD traits but these are not causing significant impairment across multiple settings
- There may be insufficient evidence of symptoms being present from early childhood

If ADHD is not confirmed, your child's report will explain the reasons for this conclusion and, where possible, provide information about what might be causing the difficulties instead. We will signpost you to appropriate support services and suggest next steps that could help.

Possible next steps might include:

- Referral to your GP for investigation of other conditions
- Educational psychology assessment
- Speech and language therapy assessment
- Occupational therapy
- Mental health support for anxiety or low mood
- Autism assessment if autistic traits have been identified

We want to ensure that even if ADHD is not diagnosed, you leave the assessment with a clearer understanding of your child's needs and a path forward to get them the support they need. Help is available, and a diagnosis is not the only route to accessing it.

Summary

The ADHD assessment process at NeuroFX is designed to be thorough, supportive, and evidence-based. From the moment you book through to receiving your child's report, we are committed to understanding your child fully and providing you with clear, helpful information.

Whether the outcome is an ADHD diagnosis, identification of other difficulties, or reassurance that things are not as concerning as feared, our goal is that you feel heard, informed, and supported.

Following the assessment and provision of your child's report, NeuroFX's involvement concludes unless you choose to pursue additional services such as medication titration, autism assessment, or sleep support.

If you have any questions about the assessment process or what to expect, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help.

Contact Information

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Document version 1.0 - January 2026

This document follows NICE guideline NG87 for ADHD assessment and management.