



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE

## UK'S LEADING SEN EDUCATION PROVIDER COMMITS TO ADHD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

Witherslack Group, the UK's leading provider of specialist education and care has become the first to commit to making all of its schools 'ADHD Friendly' before the end of June 2021. The step was announced today at Witherslack Group's Lakeside School, as it became the first of its locations to achieve the accreditation. During the event, Paula Stock, Operations Director at the ADHD Foundation presented representatives from the school with a plaque to commemorate the milestone.

ADHD Friendly Schools is an award given by the ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity, to create environments in schools where proven methods of teaching and learning are implemented effectively so that young people can achieve their academic potential in a safe, nurturing, welcoming and exciting place.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodiverse condition that affects people's ability to concentrate, retain information, control impulsivity - and in some, be a cause of hyperactivity. ADHD causes a delay in brain development in children of up to three years but does not correlate with low IQ. Students with ADHD often underachieve in education, especially in school exams. By creating ADHD Friendly School environments, staff can better respond to challenges faced by students and can support young people to achieve their academic potential and positive outcomes in mental health and employment prospects.

To qualify for the award, schools need to sign up to a six-point pledge, collaborate closely with the ADHD Foundation, and provide additional training to all staff on an ongoing basis. All of Witherslack Group's 25 schools and learning centres have signed up to the pledge and are undertaking the necessary training before the end of June 2021, with an additional cohort of 25 staff who have become the first 'ADHD Advanced Practitioners'.

The move by Witherslack Group to become the first major UK provider to commit to this is seen by many as a catalyst, with others set to follow suit.

Commenting on the award, Phil Jones CEO of Witherslack Group said *"We've worked in partnership with the ADHD Foundation for many years to both further the skills and understanding across our Group and also support parents, carers and professionals across the SEN sector. Achieving the ADHD Friendly School status for all of our settings and the pledges we've made will ensure that our staff are even better equipped to support our children and young people and ultimately help them to achieve amazing outcomes. I can't express how proud I am of all of our teams across the country for achieving this!"*.

Tony Lloyd, CEO of The ADHD Foundation said *“We are delighted that Witherslack Group has become the first multi-school education provider to achieve ADHD friendly School Accreditation for all 25 of their schools across England. Their pioneering multidisciplinary, holistic, health and education provision is an exemplar in enabling children to achieve their academic potential with outstanding teaching underpinned by quality mental health support for some of the most disadvantaged children. That 25 have also achieved advanced practitioner diplomas in teaching students with ADHD sets a new standard of excellence for learners with ADHD. We offer our congratulations to all their staff team and the executives of Witherslack Group for their innovative approach to improving educational attainment and life chances for children”*.

**Ends**

**17<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

## **MEDIA INFORMATION**

### **Contact:**

Greg Deak, Marketing Manager, Witherslack Group

**E:** [greg.deak@witherslackgroup.co.uk](mailto:greg.deak@witherslackgroup.co.uk)

**M:** 07787 750899

### **Notes to Editor:**

#### **About The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity**

The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity are the leading national agency advocating for a neurodiverse paradigm in education and health to improve the well being, education, and economic prosperity of children and adults with ADHD and related neurodiverse conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, dyscalculia and Tourette’s syndrome.

The Foundation provides a pioneering multi-modal lifespan service in North West England supporting over 6000 families every year. The Foundation is also the leading provider of training for the education sector in the UK and Europe on ADHD, as well as a provider of training for NHS clinicians. The Foundation campaign for a strength-based approach to enabling the invisible 1 in 5 people who are neurodiverse, to achieve their potential across the lifespan. This is celebrated through the annual Neurodiversity Umbrella Project that showcases the unique contribution neurodiverse people make to our lives, our culture, our economy, and workplace. Learn more about the Foundation’s work at [www.adhdfoundation.org.uk](http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk) Contact Dr Tony Lloyd [tony.lloyd@adhdfoundation.org.uk](mailto:tony.lloyd@adhdfoundation.org.uk) 0773 439 4589 Public Relations at [www.thisisgoodwork.org](http://www.thisisgoodwork.org)

#### **About Witherslack Group**

At Witherslack Group, everything we do revolves around a single, essential thing - Providing inspirational education and care to young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Our aim is to provide life-changing experiences and aspirational futures. Across our Group, in our 18 schools, 32 children’s homes, 7 specialist learning centres and at our head office, 1800 passionate individuals work together to realise this goal.

We’re constantly expanding our reach and are now the UK’s leading provider of SEN Education and care, thanks to our sector-leading Ofsted judgements, and dedicated staff teams who work tirelessly and never give up on a single child.

To find out more about our story visit: [www.witherslackgroup.co.uk](http://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk)