

THE ADVENTURES OF THE UMBRELLA GANG VOLUME 3



WELCOME TO HURDLETON HIGH - THREE YEARS AFTER THE EVENTS OF UMBRELLA GANG 2.



THESE TWO NEW PUPILS, RUBEN (S2) AND ELENA (S1), ARE SIBLINGS. BOTH ARE NEURODIVERSE AND NERVOUS ABOUT STARTING A NEW SCHOOL.



BUT ON THEIR FIRST DAY, THEY ARE GREETED BY THE KINDLY MRS KELLEY.



Ah, Siena - would you mind showing these two around the school?



YOU REMEMBER SIENA, RIGHT? SHE'S IN 4TH YEAR NOW (S4).

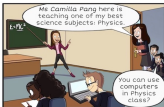


SHE HAPPILY SHOWS THE TWO AROUND HURDLETON HIGH.



This is the art department, with art teachers Mr Monty Hitchcock and Mr Rossie Stone.





It's a great space for encouraging each other and boosting confidence. And nobody's better at inspiring others than J Grange over there.



Come on - I'll introduce you to him.

ALL THIS WAS POSSIBLE IN THIS SCHOOL BECAUSE THE SCHOOL LEADERS

WERE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS FROM THE PUPILS.

UMBRELLA ROOM

LIKE HEADTEACHER MR LOYAL CARNER, AND THE NEWLY-APPOINTED DEPUTY HEADTEACHER MR RORY BREMNER.

AND SO RUBEN AND ELENA SETTLED INTO SCHOOL IN NO TIME.



THEY FELT COMFORTABLE IN THE UMBRELLA AND FORGOT ALL ABOUT FEELING NERVOUS.

BUT NOT LONG AFTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR HAD BEGUN, MR CARNER RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES.



You're wanting me to start this month? For how long?

THEY WANTED HIM TO SERVE AS HEAD TEACHER FOR ANOTHER SCHOOL THAT NEEDED HIS HELP FOR A SHORT WHILE.

MR CARNER ACCEPTED AND ANNOUNCED THE NEWS DURING SCHOOL ASSEMBLY. HE SAID IT WAS TEMPORARY, AND ASKED THE PUPILS TO BE RESPECTFUL TO WHOEVER WOULD BE FILLING HIS PLACE.



MR CARNER WAS LOVED AND RESPECTED BY BOTH PUPILS AND STAFF. HE WOULD BE MISSED.



Come back soon, sir!

Don't worry, I'll be back as soon as I can.

THE DAY AFTER MR CARNER LEFT, THE SCHOOL'S NEW TEMPORARY HEADTEACHER ARRIVED. A MAN KNOWN FOR MAKING A "LASTING IMPRESSION" ON EVERY SCHOOL HE'D WORKED AT.





THE FOLLOWING MONDAY:

Good morning pupils of Hurdleton High.

I am your new headteacher while Mr Corner is away.

While I'm here, this will be an important time for many of you.

Half-term mock exams are coming, and it is my job to help you pass them.

To accomplish this, it is evident to me that certain "changes" will be necessary.

And mark my words: these changes will come hard and fast.

For the good of you, of the school, and of education in general.

THE NEXT DAY:

The new head sounded like he wasn't happy with the school yesterday.

I'm sure he just wants us to work hard for our exams.

UMBRELLA ROOM

Let's go to the Umbrella Room...

STUDY ROOM

Huh?! Study Room? What's going on?

Where are the posters? All I can see are textbooks, tables and chairs!

THE DAY AFTER...

What?! Drama is now just a period for "extra study time"?

What do you mean Drama is an "extracurricular activity" from now on?

AND NOT LONG AFTER...

EARNING SUPPORT

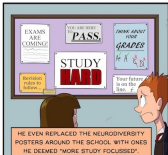
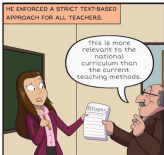
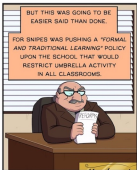
I can't have access to the new learning-support tech?

Sorry - Mr Snipes won't let us order new assistive technology unless he approves it.









EVERY ASSEMBLY, HE WOULD ANNOUNCE MORE CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL'S VALUES.

There are too many pupils with Special Educational Needs in this school.

I am restricting how many SEN pupils are given places here.

I have cause to believe that it's affecting the school's place on exam tables.

There are some here who I would encourage to go to a different school more suited to your needs.

but... I require SEN support. Am I one of the ones he's talking about?

Do I not belong here? Do my "needs" mean there's something wrong with me?

BUT DESPITE THIS, THE GANG WERE GOOD AT THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX.

Is he mad or something?

Don't worry. We can host umbrella activities in the park after school.

SO THEY POSTED A BULLETIN ON THE "SCHOOL SOCIAL" FOR A WEEKLY AFTERSCHOOL UMBRELLA MEET-UP.



THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WAS A SECURE PUPIL-COMMUNITY WEBSITE MARCUS HAD HELPED SET UP FOR THE SCHOOL A YEAR AGO.

MR STONE TAUGHT THEM HOW TO MAKE COMIC STORIES OUT OF EXAM REVISION NOTES TO MAKE THEM FUN AND MEMORABLE.



THE PUPILS WHO SAW THE BULLETIN ALL TURNED UP IN THE PARK AFTER SCHOOL.



THE GANG SHARED THE TECHNIQUE FROM MR STONE WITH THEM, AS WELL AS THEIR OWN ONES.

IT WAS FUN AND RELAXING, UNLIKE SNIPES' RIGID WAY OF STUDYING.



This isn't like him. He usually loves the Umbrella.

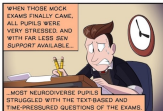
Huh? J Grange isn't coming to the Afterschool Umbrella?

WHILE THE UMBRELLA GANG DID THEIR BIT, MR BREMNER AND MR FRY TRIED TO TALK TO SNIPES.





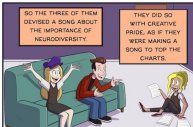












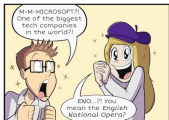


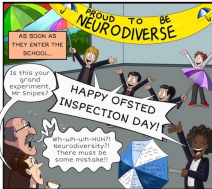
NOT THAT MR SNIPES KNEW ANY OF THIS WAS HAPPENING...



MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE LEARNING SUPPORT ROOM...













THE SONG ENDED AND THE ROOM ERUPTED WITH APPLAUSE FROM EVERY ANGLE.

THE SONG SEEMED TO HAVE ATTRACTED HALF THE SCHOOL TO THE PE HALL.



THE OFSTED INSPECTORS WERE ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED...

Congratulations to you all! Tell me, who wrote those lyrics?

Chelcee, ma'am. She's a lyrical genius.



Well done, Chelcee. I'm particularly interested in the lyrics about "those at the top".

Could you explain that part of the song to me?



It's okay, Chelcee, you can tell her.



Well, you see...



A big reason why this school is so neurodiverse-friendly is because of Mr Carner's support.

But since he's been away...

...everything he's worked so hard to build...



...has been actively reversed by Mr Snipes! He's changed everything that supports neurodiversity.

It's had a huge impact on exam results and pupil morale.

We were always open to new ideas, but Mr Snipes didn't consult pupils or staff.



Is this all true, Deputy Head?

I'm afraid so. The school that you've seen today...

...is very different to what it's been since Mr Snipes took charge.



Now wait just a moment, Bre-

Mr Snipes, I have heard quite enough from you!

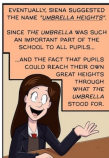
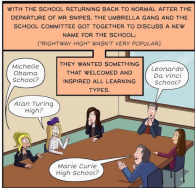


5-But... this is...

I have reviewed your record at this school and previous ones. I think I now understand what's been going on.











JOSH'S DYSLEXIA DIAGRAM



**My dyslexia makes some things really hard for me.*

That's okay! Everyone finds some things harder than others.

**I'm really slow at reading and listening.*



*Read at whatever pace you're comfortable with.
Use voice recorders and audiobooks to help you.*

**I find spelling hard and scary.*

*Use images and rhymes to help you remember hard words. For example:
• "The i before e except after c."
• "One collar & two sleeves are necessary for a shirt."*

**I keep forgetting little things and often forget to bring in things that I need for school.*

*Make a little diary or checklist for yourself to use at home.
Get into the habit of packing your bag the night before.*

**I'm a slow writer. I usually run out of time and I worry that I can't keep up.*

Ask your teacher if they can sort out a laptop or ipad for you, or ask if you can be given extra time to complete your tasks.



You can achieve anything you want to!

SIENA'S AUTISM UMBRELLA



Things
you may find hard
when you have **autism...**

Noise

Mood
Swings

Executive
Functioning

Social
Skills

Changes
&
Flexibility

But you may also have...

FANTASTIC MEMORY SKILLS

GREAT AT VISUAL THINKING

HIGH CONCENTRATION WHEN MOTIVATED

REALLY GOOD AT THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

A REAL STRENGTH FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING AND ANALYSIS

MARCUS' ADHD ANALYSIS



IMPULSIVE !

PROS: decisive, enthusiastic, sensitive.

CONS: saying or doing things without thinking about them or the consequences.
CAN be easily upset.

HYPERACTIVITY ⚡

PROS: energetic, hardworking, active, athletic.

CONS: always on the go. Difficulty sleeping sometimes



STRENGTHS: ✊

- . Creative thinking.
- . Good spacial & visual awareness.
- . Full of ideas.
- . Artistic.
- . A big picture thinker.

CHALLENGES: 💣

- . Poor concentration.
- . Forgetful.
- . Easily bored.

SUPPORT SKILLS:

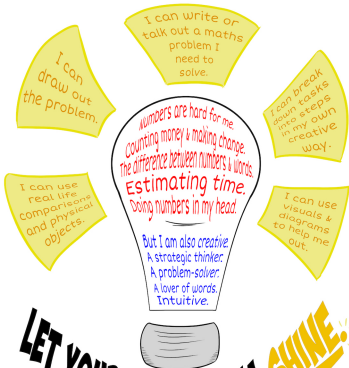
- . **ROUTINE** ~ to help with organisation and punctuality.
- . **HUMOUR** ~ laughing about mistakes rather than taking them too seriously.
- . **BREAK** ~ break tasks down into small doable chunks.

CHARLOTTE'S TOP 10 TIPS FOR DYSPRAXIA



- 1.** Break tasks down into easy steps.
- 2.** One task or instruction at a time.
- 3.** Tackle large blocks of text in small bursts.
- 4.** Use dyspraxic-friendly pencils and materials.
- 5.** Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- 6.** Use lists to tick off completed tasks.
- 7.** Never compare yourself to others!
- 8.** Pack your bag the night before.
- 9.** Use pictures/visuals wherever possible.
- 10.** Remember: every task you complete, no matter how small, is an accomplishment.

CHELCEE'S DYNAMIC IDEAS FOR DYS CALCULIA



LET YOUR DYS CALCULIA SHINE.

ANDY'S TIPS & TRICKS FOR TOURETTES TICS



Stress & worry can make tics worse. Deep breathing can help you relax.

Tiredness makes tics & concentration worse. Get plenty of sleep.

Don't feel ashamed or embarrassed about tics. It is okay to have them. You wouldn't judge someone for needing to sneeze.

I have a good sense of humour and empathy.

I'm very good at the tasks that I enjoy.

I know tics can cause me to make movements and noises without me meaning to.
BUT...

I have quick reflexes.

I am creative and energetic.

I am good at thinking outside the box.

If you're worried someone is confused by your tics, calmly explain that it is not voluntary.

Do something you love, like sports, singing, playing an instrument, etc. Doing a hobby you enjoy can help calm tics.

~~You can reach any heights!~~

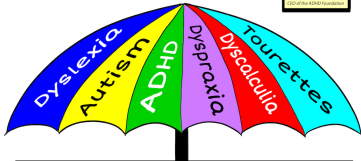
WHAT IS NEURODIVERSITY?

1 in 5 people have different minds that think differently! Of the 7 billion people on planet earth - everyone has a brain that is different. Our planet thrives on diversity - biodiversity, racial diversity, cultural diversity and neurodiversity. Being different is part of the universal design.

1 in 10 have dyslexia minds. 1 in 20 have ADHD minds. 1 in 20 have Dyspraxia minds. 1 in 50 have autism minds. 1 in 100 have Tourette's or tics. 1 in 20 have dyscalculia. Some of us have more than one of these differences.

Different minds have different talents, different abilities, different intelligence. You might not be good at every subject in school - but you will be amazing on some of them. We should value and celebrate these differences. We understand one another better when we understand these differences. We learn to respect one another's differences.

- Dr Tony Lloyd
CEO of the ADHD Foundation

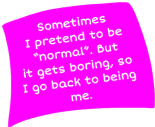


Being neurodivergent can make certain school difficult, and this will affect some neurodiverse people differently than others. However, there are always things that can help you with these difficulties:

- Use **assistive technology** to help with reading, writing and listening skills. (laptops, noise-cancelling headphones, speech-to-text software, etc).
- Use ***chunking*** and ***simplifying***. Chunking means breaking your work down into manageable chunks. Simplifying means focusing on the key points rather than the whole text. Mindmaps and highlighter pens are great for this.
- Exercise and a tidy workspace can help you with **executive functioning**. Exercise clears and reboots your mind while tidyness helps organisation.



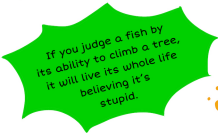
I love my dyslexia
and am proud
of what I achieve.



Sometimes
I pretend to be
"normal". But
it gets boring, so
I go back to being
me.



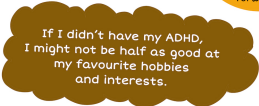
You don't need to
worry about what type
of autism to call me by.
Just call me by my name.
I'd much prefer
that.



If you judge a fish by
its ability to climb a tree,
it will live its whole life
believing it's
stupid.



If you can't
fly then run.
If you can't run
then walk. If you
can't walk then
crawl. But whatever
you do you have
to keep moving
forward.



If I didn't have my ADHD,
I might not be half as good at
my favourite hobbies
and interests.



Thank you to all the sponsors of the Neurodiversity Umbrella Project - if you live in Brighton, Manchester, Liverpool, Crewe, Chester, Huddersfield, Edinburgh, Lisburn Northern Ireland, Cardiff in Wales, Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland - then look out in June 2022 so you will see the brightly coloured umbrellas above the streets and in your schools. They will be there to celebrate Neurodiversity; to celebrate YOU!

For information about the Umbrella project email info@adhdfoundation.org.uk

Also, don't forget to ask your school to register for Neurodiversity Celebration Week in March 2022!
www.neurodiversity-celebration-week.com

Congratulations and thank you to everyone involved in bringing this third volume of 'The adventures of the Umbrella Gang'. Thank you to the celebrities who kindly agreed to make guest appearances as themselves or as teachers in the school where the adventures of Josh, Siena, Marcus, Elena, Ruben, 'J', Charlotte and Andy are told. These comics are based on the real life experiences of neurodiverse young people. Thanks to TV Presenter and pop artist Chelcee Grimes, rapper and celebrity Chef Loyce Carner, Author and TV presenter Stephen Fry, Singer Alison Moyet, comedian and impressionist Rory Bremner, ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity Patron Patricia Kelly, Artist and Film set designer Monty Hitchcock and Rossie Stone who founded Dekko Comics.