



## Have you heard of PANS and PANDAS?

**PANS – Paediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome**  
**PANDAS – Paediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal Infections**

PANS and PANDAS are post-infectious autoimmune and/or neuro-inflammatory medical conditions which affect both physical and mental health. They can be triggered by common infections (for example strep throat, chickenpox, or influenza). These conditions mainly affect children, and onset usually happens between 3 and 13 years. PANS however can also affect adults, and the conditions do not just stop at 16.

Both PANS and PANDAS are recognised by the NHS. Clinicians are currently working on capturing incidence figures, formulating NHSE endorsed guidelines, developing clinical pathways and collating information for education, social care and health professionals.

### How do these conditions affect CYP in school?

CYP with PANS and PANDAS can abruptly go from doing well in school to experiencing a range of difficulties. These can include developing obsessive thoughts and behaviours, tics, anxiety, behaving in younger way, anger, eating issues and problems sleeping. In some cases, CYP can develop unexpected special educational needs.

Sometimes CYP also have sensory issues, changes in fine or gross motor skills, hallucinations and handwriting deterioration. These issues can come and go with symptoms changing a lot over time.\* CYP can of course have co-occurring conditions. The key thing is to note whether these symptoms are different from the CYP's usual behaviour, and to give due attention to all of the new impacts. Not all CYP will have every symptom.

In cases of PANS or PANDAS, it is crucial to accurately pinpoint the underlying cause of the symptoms at an early stage. The signs can often be mistaken for other conditions, poor parenting or behavioural disorders rather than as a medical condition. Schools should follow the guidance for supporting children with medical conditions.

For more medical and general information please go to the PANS PANDAS UK website- <https://www.panspandasuk.org>

For education resources including the option for schools to attend free CPD accredited teacher training - <https://www.panspandasuk.org/education>

\*Any CYP with these symptoms should be promptly evaluated by a medical practitioner.