WELCOME TO HUDLETON 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?

Oh hello - you must be Ruben and Elena, yes?

Why of course.

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

SHE HAPPILY SHOWS THE TWO AROUND HUDLETON HIGH.

I’m sure you’re going to love it here. Ask me any questions you like.

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

Here you get to be as creative as you like and every idea is seen as a good idea.

Thank you.
Ms Camilla Pang here is teaching one of my best science subjects: Physics.

You can use them in any class if it helps you. Mr Stephen Fry and Mr Barry Carpenter can give you whatever support you need.

**DRAMA HALL**

You see, we’re a neurodiverse-friendly school. I myself have dyslexia, autism and dyspraxia.

That doesn’t make school hard for you?

I find some things hard, like sports. But this school splits sports into competitive and noncompetitive groups.

So I can enjoy it at my own level and pace.

Wow! I’ve seen her on TV!

And she’s not the only one thinking of her career this year. All of us are.

Our GCSEs are coming up this year - the first serious exams for us S4’s.

Despite your dyslexia?

“Despite”? I’m confident I’ll do well because of it!

Yep. That’s our Chelcee Grimes - a Jr BBC Sports correspondent, yet still at school.

I’m going to apply for an early place at Stanford.

I’ll show you a room where anyone can realise their amazing abilities and how best to use them.

The **Umbrella Room**, where pupils share their experiences about neurodiversity...

...as well as help each other and try out all sorts of ideas for studies and schooling.
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.

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

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

ALL THIS WAS POSSIBLE IN THIS SCHOOL BECAUSE THE SCHOOL LEADERS WERE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS FROM THE PUPILS.

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?

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

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!

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.

DON’T WORRY, I’LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN.
HIS NAME WAS MR SNIPES.

Allow me to show you around, Headmaster Snipes.

This is the Umbrella Room; the most popular room in the school.

Are there no classes here? The pupils seem to just be playing around.

That would be splendid, Deputy Head Bremner.

No sir. It’s a space where all pupils can discuss, inspire and try out ideas.

I see...

This is one of our English classes. Mr Fry here teaches English part-time.

Those two are using computers. Is this distracting technology necessary?

It’s the drama hall - very popular, particularly among our pupils who are neurodiverse.

And what is this slovenliness?

“Neurodiverse” indeed.

Umm... It’s the term we use for pupils who are dyslexic or autistic or-

Yes, yes, of course. I shall address the matter next week...

...during my first assembly as this school’s new headmaster.
THE FOLLOWING MONDAY:

Good morning pupils of Hurdleton High.

I am your new headteacher while Mr Carner 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.

Let’s go to the Umbrella 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...

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.
THE GANG HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE. Calm down. Let’s meet with Mr Snipes and explain our case to him.

MR SNIPES HAPPILY AGREES TO MEET WITH THEM IN HIS OFFICE. What can I do for you, dear students? I understand you have concerns?

This is an attack on every value the school stands for!

They are indeed swift and harsh changes. Necessary measures can be hard, and I accept responsibility for them.

But are they really necessary, sir? It may have a negative impact on students who are neurodiverse.

Thank you for seeing us, Mr Snipes. It’s the recent changes... We respect the intent, but they were made without pupil consent.

I’m afraid that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.


But... the number of pupils with dyslexia...

I see them as an excuse parents use to cover their child’s lack of capability.

You... You can’t be serious.

I don’t believe things like dyslexia exist.

It’s just my opinion. You are all more than entitled to disagree.
But while I'm headmaster here, I intend to run this school the way I believe is best for its future. Thus, the future of its pupils too.

But neurodiversity has nothing to do with lacking ability, sir.

Harvard? With those marks you've been getting in your English tests, Siena?

I intend to apply for an early position at Harvard this year...

But I get straight A's in maths and science!

Siena, it's my duty to inform you that nobody can make Harvard with such poor English grades.

I advise that you accept this reality as part of growing up.

Andy's Tourette's can lead to sudden outbursts of anger...

You don't even know her! How-

Careful, Andy. It is also my duty to keep records of pupil behavior.

I'd hate to record "aggressive behaviour" towards your headteacher for simply stating a professional opinion.

A bad record can affect job and college prospects, so I suggest you calm down at once.

But what about restricting assistive technology? I have proof that I need it.

Certainly, young man!

Wait... Special Needs?

Just tell me what "Special Needs" equipment you require.

But "special needs" makes it sound like I'm stupid. I got 5 A's in my last exams.

Oh I'm sorry. "Special Needs" is the official term I use, so it will go on your record.
I struggle with some things, but “special needs” isn’t a fair representation.

What about the drama hall, sir? It’s mine and Charlotte’s best subject!

With ADHD, our studies will make it hard to keep it up as an extracurricular activity.

Should you be seen as having “special needs” for needing glasses, sir?

Ah, Mr Greenwood. You do this school proud with your golf achievements.

But at the end of the day, you are at school to attain academic grades. Studies help you achieve that. Distractions like drama do not.

But drama has so much extra value for Charlotte, like golf has for me!

It’s just a shame we don’t have an exam for golf.

Let’s just say: your golf shines better for the school name than your grades do.

What do you mean? Your only hope is to keep trying harder.

Are you saying I don’t work hard-

That’s enough, Josh. Thank you for your time, Mr Snipes.

They all leave Mr Snipes’ office.

That guy! Doesn’t he get that school’s all about enabling students?

We can’t let him do this. We should organise a school protest.

No, guys. Remember that Mr Carner is only away for a while.

If we start a school protest, Snipes will make the authorities think it was his fault.

Not damaging and disabling them.
Charlotte’s right, guys. We shouldn’t do anything drastic, for Mr Carner’s sake.

But there’s no way we’re going to let the school’s values be squashed by one man’s ego!

We’re the Umbrella Gang!

BUT THIS WAS GOING TO BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE.

FOR SNIPES WAS PUSHING A "FORMAL AND TRADITIONAL LEARNING" POLICY UPON THE SCHOOL THAT WOULD RESTRICT UMBRELLA ACTIVITY IN ALL CLASSROOMS.

We’ll make sure that the whole school is still one big umbrella for neurodiversity.

That’s right! Umbrella Room or not.

We’ll make sure neurodiversity survives and thrives through this “Snipes Storm”.

HE ENFORCED A STRICT TEXT-BASED APPROACH FOR ALL TEACHERS.

This is more relevant to the national curriculum than the current teaching methods.

HE EVEN REPLACED THE NEURODIVERSITY POSTERS AROUND THE SCHOOL WITH ONES HE DEEMED "MORE STUDY FOCUSED".
EVERY ASSEMBLY, HE WOULD ANNOUNCE
MORE CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL'S VALUES.

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

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

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 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.

You must stop this madness, Snipes!
The pupils need more support in school.

There is no need to get worked up, gentlemen.
But these drastic changes were made without warning or consent.

I am simply doing what I believe is best for this country’s educational values.
Precisely: in the interest of Ofsted’s values.

If that’s what you see neurodiversity as, then in all due respect...
...I don’t think you quite understand it, or the problems with school that it tackles.

School, studies and exams all revolve heavily around executive functions.

Those are the brain’s processes that allow us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and manage multiple tasks successfully.

People who are neurodiverse often struggle with certain executive functions, and so find traditional schooling unfairly hard.

But with the right support they can do just as well as their peers, if not better.

Even simple things like more time and preferred seating can help.

Time and space to find their own solutions to their difficulties are also helpful.

Is it right to restrict those things when they can make a difference?

And assistive technology can also be very helpful for certain pupils.

But ultimately, gentlemen, school has always been about intelligence.

Exams and grades are the system we use to determine who is and isn't.

Therefore, we must focus on the intelligent pupils who do well at school.

But neurodiverse pupils are intelligent, and helping them will benefit school grades—

Enough. If you wish for open mindedness, be open minded to my ways first.

You know, Mr Fry, it’s a shame that we don’t get along better.

I’ve been reading up on your records. 3-4 years ago, you would have been a model teacher for my vision of schooling.

What a pity you exchanged your iron fist in the classroom for the soft touch of SEN.

I couldn’t be prouder for my change of heart, sir. Especially after today’s conversation.

(Hmph!)

Stephen, wait...

Ah, Mr Bremner. One moment please.

I appreciate how respectful you are of my views, despite our disagreements. I see great potential in you.

Indeed. You see, I have an important task that needs done...

...which I want to assign to someone I can trust.
The Office For Standards And Education - Ofsted.

An Ofsted school inspection is coming up in the next few months.

I want this school to get an outstanding ranking from the Ofsted inspectors.

I would like to put you in charge of getting the school ready for the inspection.

If Ofsted are impressed with the school on the day of inspection...

...they will be impressed with those responsible for it.

That, of course, would include your part in it.

As you know, Ofsted inspections are like exams for us teachers and heads.

I trust you to prepare my school well for the big day, Deputy Head Bremner.

Yes, sir. I'll leave it with me.

Ohh... What should I do, Mr Carner? I want the Ofsted inspection to go well for the school's sake...

...but it wouldn't be the school you've worked so hard to help.

BACK IN MR SNIPES' OFFICE...

It's all coming together now. Just like it did in all the other schools where I got rid of the troublemakers and lazy pupils.

Once Ofsted see what I've done with this school, they'll surely make me into an Ofsted inspector at last.

HEADTEACHER'S OFFICE

Heads

No more "neurodiversity" nonsense, which rewards lack of ability and effort!

Yes... They'll finally give me the influential position I deserve, as a true man of traditional education.
AS THE WEEKS WENT BY, MR SNIPES’ NEW SCHOOL STARTED TO WEIGH DOWN ON ALL THE PUPILS’ MORALE.

WITH HALF-TERM EXAMS LOOMING, PUPILS WERE EXHAUSTED FROM THEIR STUDYING. FOR THIS, AND THE PRESSURE OF EXAM REVISION, LESS PUPILS WERE TURNING UP TO THE AFTERSCHOOL UMBRELLA SESSIONS.

WHEN THOSE MOCK EXAMS FINALLY CAME, ALL PUPILS WERE VERY STRESSED. AND WITH FAR LESS SEN SUPPORT AVAILABLE...

...MOST NEURODIVERSE PUPILS STRUGGLED WITH THE TEXT-BASED AND TIME-PRESSURED QUESTIONS OF THE EXAMS.

WHEN THE RESULTS FOR THE EXAMS CAME IN, GRADES WERE LOWER THAN USUAL ACROSS THE BOARD.

BUT NO ONE FELT THE FAILURE AND ATTAINMENT GAP MORE THAN NEURODIVERSE PUPILS.

BUT THIS DIDN’T SEEM TO PHASE MR SNIPES...

As long as it looks like an ideal school to Ofsted on that day... then that’s all that matters.

Anyway, moving on: the school filed for a change of school name a while ago, correct?

Em... yes, that’s right, but Mr Carner-

Pah! The pupils are adjusting to the new changes - that’s all.

Then I have the perfect solution to help pupils adjust faster to the new ways. I have already made the arrangements!

From next week on, Hurdleton High School will be called...

AND SO, WITHIN A WEEK, EVEN THE SCHOOL’S NAME HAD BEEN CHANGED.
EVENTUALLY, EVEN THE UMBRELLA GANG HAD TO ACCEPT THE SITUATION...

That’s because all the pupils have lost their morale - especially since the exam results.

I don’t think we’ve ever had to deal with an adult like Mr Snipes before.

Ruthlessly pursuing his own agenda - refusing any other points of view but his own.

We need to get the school enthusiastic about neurodiversity again.

Yeah! It benefits everyone, not just us neurodiverse pupils.

If there’s anyone who can enthuse and unite the school, it’s J Grange.

But I’ve not even seen him in school since the half-term exam results.

Charlotte and I are close friends with him.

Yeah. We’ll pay a visit to his house and see if he’s okay.

Sounds like a good call.

Should we do some Umbrella Activities while they’re away?

I don’t see much point, Ruben.

I have to agree with Andy. These sessions were to help people, but it seems they’ve just been a waste of time.

The point? It’s thanks to these after-school sessions that Elena and I haven’t lost confidence in ourselves!

Yeah! We’ve learned all kinds of ways to beat all kinds of difficulties by being proud of our neurodiversity.

Isn’t that what you told us The Umbrella was for, Siena? To ‘realise your superpower’?

And neurodiversity can help us overcome these new difficulties at school too!
Meanwhile, Chelcee and Charlotte pay J Grange a surprise visit at his house.

Your mum let us in. She said you’d been “not feeling well” lately.

Hey mate, you alright? We were worried.

Leave me alone, guys. I’m not myself anymore, and never will be again.

Hey, this isn’t like you. Why won’t you come to school?

Because there’s no point. I’ve got ADHD and I’ve realised it’s a problem. Since school changed, I feel like an incapable failure whenever I’m even near it.

I know it’s better to stay positive, but I’ve lost my self-belief. And isn’t that what I’m known for, right? Now I’ve even failed at that.

Let’s face it. I’m a failure. It’s what my feelings have been telling me since Snipes took charge.

I think I must have some kind of clinical depression. That’s what it feels like.

Oh J…

You said you think you have depression. Can you tell me more about how you feel?

Drained and fatigued; hard to focus; really sad…

Well I have been medically diagnosed with depression before and to me…

…it sounds like you’ve just lost your confidence and so have neglected your self-care.

When I’m feeling low and drained I’ve learned that there are things I can do to help myself.

Turning your iPad off at night, getting proper sleep, eating healthily, getting some decent exercise…

Doing these simple things will help you feel 10 times better.

You see, feeling low and depressed doesn’t necessarily mean that it’s clinical.

And as for your ADHD, when you understand it and manage it well it can be an asset.
ADHD can make your attention constantly wander, or cause you to fidget.

But that wandering mind is also how you think of so many ideas for your music.

It helps you play to your strengths and brings out your talents and abilities.

Come with us, J. We’re going to the Afterschool Umbrella.

BUT THE GIRLS MANAGE TO DRAG HIM ALONG...

Huh? Are they playing?

I know what to expect from the Umbrella. It won’t help, guys.

They’re doing schoolwork through their strengths and passions.

Siena’s dyslexia and ADHD can make her struggle with English...

...but also especially good at maths and physics! She can teach others about it now.

See? The Umbrella isn’t just about inspiring those with neurodiversity.

It’s about USING your neurodiversity to connect to what you’re good at and thrive.

They’re strong... But not despite their neurodiversity but... but because of it.

I’m gonna make my ADHD a force to be reckoned with!

I’ll... I will...

That’s the J Grange we know!

He’s back!

But it sure doesn’t help my exam results and schoolwork.

I only felt I could achieve anything when Mr Carner was head.
I am more than “back”. I feel powerful after what you’ve just shown me!

We need to get the whole school feeling this too. ND’s making a comeback!

But I’m gonna need superpowers. Your lyric-writing skills, Chelcee.

And your performing abilities, Charlotte.

SO THE THREE OF THEM DEvised A SONG ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF NEURODIVERSITY.

THEY DID SO WITH CREATIVE PRIDE, AS IF THEY WERE MAKING A SONG TO TOP THE CHARTS.

CHELCEE WROTE THE LYRICS WHILE J GRANGE ADDED MUSIC TO IT.

CHARLOTTE CAME UP WITH A DANCE ROUTINE TO GO WITH THE SONG.

SHE AND J GRANGE THEN SANG AND PERFORMED IT TOGETHER.

THEY ASKED MARCUS TO HELP WITH FILMING AND EDITING IT INTO A MUSIC VIDEO.

MARCUS DID SO AND ACCIDENTALLY MADE IT INTO A TRUE DIGITAL MASTERPIECE!

THEY THEN (WITH MR FRY’S CONSENT) PUT THE VIDEO ON THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WEBSITE.

PUPILS ALL OVER THE SCHOOL (WHO HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS ON THE SCHOOL’S WEBSITE) WERE NOT ONLY AMAZED AND INSPIRED, BUT VERY PROUD THAT IT HAD BEEN MADE BY PUPILS OF THEIR SCHOOL!
THE VIDEO WAS SO POPULAR THAT IT INSPIRED EVEN THE UMBRELLA GANG...

Let’s upload more resources to the website.

Yeah, we could nickname the School Social as “UmbrellaTube”!

MR SNIPES NEVER PAID ANY MIND TO THE SCHOOL SOCIAL, ANYWAY.

WITH HIM OBLIVIOUS, THE PUPILS COULD USE THE WEBSITE WITHOUT HIS INTERFERENCE.

SO THERE WAS NOTHING TO STOP ANDY AND JOSH UPLOADING A VIDEO ABOUT USING SPORTS TO HELP WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING.

FOOTBALL RELAXATION

GOLF CONCENTRATION

SIENA UPLOADED VIDEOS TO REMIND PEOPLE TO FEEL PROUD AND CONFIDENT ABOUT WHO THEY ARE, AS WELL AS TIPS AND ADVICE AROUND NEURODIVERSITY.

ELENA MADE HER OWN SERIES OF STORIES ABOUT CHARACTERS WHO OVERCAME ALL KINDS OF ADVERSITY.

SOCIAL

Elena’s Stories

Ruben’s Fundraiser

RUBEN STARTED A FUNDRAISER TO HELP THOSE IN NEED AND POSTED REGULAR UPDATES, TO INSPIRE HOPE AND POSITIVITY IN PUPILS EACH WEEK.

AND THROUGH POPULAR DEMAND, THE MUSIC VIDEO WAS UPLOADED ONTO YOUTUBE...

...AND IT BECAME A VIRAL HIT!!

THE VIDEO STARTED INSPIRING PEOPLE NOT JUST AT SCHOOL...

...BUT PEOPLE AND COMPANIES ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY.
NOT THAT MR SNIPES KNEW ANY OF THIS WAS HAPPENING...

Hm? Is that... humming?

The pupils seem to all be in much higher spirits these days.

I hear class performances are improving too.

It’s happening at last.
They must be finally adapting to MY way of schooling.

And this is going to be perfect for the Ofsted inspection.

When they see my school with my happy high-performing pupils...
...they’ll see just how well my way of education works.

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE LEARNING SUPPORT ROOM...

Anyone know why we’ve been called here?

Beats me. Did Fry or Carpenter mention anything to you, Ruben?

Not at all.

Deputy Head Bremner?

Ah yes, come in. I want to have a word with you, Umbrella Gang.
First of all, we’re so proud of what you’ve been doing on The School Social.

From the music and videos...

...to the blogs and stories.

They’ve not just inspired the school’s pupils, but us staff too.

Your viral video has been particularly noticed - not least by Microsoft, ENO, Alison Moyet and even The London Gospel Choir.

All of whom have emailed the school to offer their support for neurodiversity.

M-M-MICROSOFT?! One of the biggest tech companies in the world?!

ENO...?! You mean the English National Opera?

This is all nice and flattering, but... let’s be real.

Oh, but I wouldn’t be so sure of that.

Yeah, Snipes will reject their support if it has anything to do with neurodiversity.

You see, this school has an *Ofsted inspection* coming up very soon.

An inspection that I’ve been put in full charge of by the headmaster himself.

And this is where you lot come in!

I’m going to need your help with preparing for the BIG DAY.

I’m to make sure that the school reflects the “true values of education” on the day of the visit.
A FEW WEEKS LATER, THE "BIG DAY" OF THE OFSTED INSPECTION FINALLY ARRIVES...

You know, you didn’t have to pick us up personally from the station, Mr Snipes.

Oh, but I insist. I want this day to be as fine and memorable for you as possible.

Rightway High

This is a remarkable school after all, thanks to what I’ve brought to it. When you see it, you’d think I was a natural Ofsted inspector myself.

Quite...

May I ask why you thought it was necessary to change the name of the school while you’re serving a temporary post?

Rightway High

From what I hear, it was a decision made without consulting the school authorities.

It’s all part of my grand experiment I’ve been doing with this school, madame.

Your experiment, eh?

(Once they see inside, they’ll be blown away...)

An experiment to make this school an establishment of true educational values.

AS SOON AS THEY ENTER THE SCHOOL...

Is this your grand experiment, Mr Snipes?

HAPPY OFSTED INSPECTION DAY!

Wh-wh-wh-HUH?! Neurodiversity?! There must be some mistake!!

Welcome to Rightway High! I am Mr Bremner - deputy headteacher of this neurodiverse school.
Deputy Head! What is the meaning of th-

This is a school that values all learning types, and the intelligence of every pupil.

Since Mr Snipes put me in charge of today’s Ofsted inspection...

...please allow me to show you all around.

ART DEPARTMENT

Here we host creative-study sessions, where pupils invent their own fun way of studying.

Creativity and engagement are key values in this school, you see.

And here we have an executive functioning class run by Mr Fry.

This is helpful for all pupils, but especially for many of our neurodiverse ones.

BOOSTING ORGANIZATION SKILLS

- Using colour coding
- Using visual and audio reminders (e.g. phone alarm)
- Know what "organized" looks like (e.g. a tidy desk ?)
- Practice using a to-do-list (start small - don’t try to do too much)

For example, class, this is how a desk is kept tidy...

Our partners at Microsoft have a wide range of helpful devices.

Assistive technology helps pupils who struggle to read, write and listen as fast as others.

From sound recorders to smart-reading softwares.
Oh my! Microsoft and the English National Opera?

The ENO are teaching mindfulness techniques through movement. We treat the mental health of our pupils as a #1 priority.

I wanted to visit this wonderful school personally, along with the ENO.

Choreographer Matthew Bourne?!

Of course! Many of our finest dancers are neurodiverse. I wanted to show this school how talented people with neurodiversity can be.

I must say, Mr Bremner, I am very impressed. I can see the value in what’s being done for pupil-morale and inclusivity.

Well-well! I may be able to pull off a place in Ofsted after all... *Chuckle*

Eh? They actually LIKE it?!

Come, inspectors. I have much more to tell you about MY school here.

Thank you, Mr Bremner, you’ve done an excellent job! I’ll take over from here.

So is all this the “experiment” you were telling us about earlier, Mr Snipes?

Of course! To please Ofsted is a priority of mine, after all.

Excuse me. We’d like to give Ofsted a special performance of the pupil-made song from online.

Alison Moyet! The London Gospel Choir!

Whatever this “song” is, these big names will just impress Ofsted even more.

Certainly. Dim the lights and start the show!
This song is called “Don’t Stand Still, Move Forward”

It’s about neurodiversity and anyone who has ever faced challenges at school.

Does it celebrate our talents that make us a sensation?

The things that form our passions and our determination?

Or does it celebrate the memorising of words, desperately writing to the ticking of a clock?

If this proves your worth then this is absurd, there’s so much of you that exams don’t unlock.

Neurodiversity holds a message for all!

A reminder that any mind has a right to stand tall!

Learning types are all pieces of the same whole.

There’s more than one way for us to reach the same goal.

What do big players see in us that school doesn’t desire?

Apple, Google, Sony, Youtube look for folk like us to hire.

We have a lot of ability, and they can see it’s true, so why can’t our school see that potential in us too?

We’re proud of who we are and will continue to achieve!

Even when those up-top won’t let us up to breathe.

So what is intelligence? What should school be all about?

It’s in whatever your strengths are. There’s no reason for self-doubt!
THE SONG ENDED AND THE ROOM ERUPTED WITH APPLAUSE FROM EVERY ANGLE. THE SONG SEEMED TO HAVE ATTRACTION 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!

B-But... this is...

I have reviewed your record at this school and previous ones. I think I now understand what's been going on.
I understand your point of view of how you believe school should be.

The "best form of education" is an ongoing discussion in Ofsted, after all.

But it is NOT your job as headmaster to enforce your ideology on a school and its pupils.

Especially without proper consultation!

And from what I've seen, it's likely your deeds are mixed up with personal ambition...

...which you have put before the needs and talents of your pupils and staff.

As well as the local businesses and charities that support the school.

"Looking like a great school" is not in line with Ofsted's values.

So a position in Ofsted, which you were clearly after, will not be offered to you.

As for your position as headmaster, that should be decided by the pupils of "Rightway High".

BEING a great school IS. This is done by giving every pupil a proper chance to succeed.

It's only fair, since they've not had a say on any of the school changes so far.

Which reminds me: they should also have their say on the new school name too.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to learn, Mr. Snipes.

It's important to be reminded of what school is really about.

Sometimes, how we do school needs to be re-thought to give ALL pupils the best chance of succeeding.

But... Why me?! I only tried to teach these pupils how education SHOULD be done!

Well, my friend Shaun Felton told me something once that helped me understand pupils better...

"They're only interested in what you know..."

...once they know that you care."
AND SO, AFTER A SCHOOL VOTE, MR BREMMER REPLACED MR SNIPES AS THE NEW TEMPORARY HEADMASTER.

MICROSOFT DONATED A LOAD OF LEARNING-SUPPORT TECH AS PART OF THEIR MESSAGE IN SUPPORTIVE NEURODIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS.

IT WAS ALL GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.

MATTHEW BOURNE ASKED CHELCEE AND J GRANGE IF HE COULD ADAPT THEIR SONG INTO AN UPCOMING PERFORMANCE THAT ENO HAD COMING UP IN THE WEST END.

ALISON MOYET WAS TO STAR IN IT, AND HE ASKED CHARLOTTE IF SHE WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM IN IT TOO.

IT WAS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE FOR THE THREE OF THEM!

WITH THE SCHOOL RETURNING BACK TO NORMAL AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF MR SNIPES, THE UMBRELLA GANG AND THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOT TOGETHER TO DISCUSS A NEW NAME FOR THE SCHOOL; (“RIGHTWAY HIGH” WASN’T VERY POPULAR).

THEY WANTED SOMETHING THAT WELCOMED AND INSPIRED ALL LEARNING TYPES.

MICHELLE OBAMA SCHOOL?

LEONARDO DA VINCI SCHOOL?

ALAN TURING HIGH?

MARIE CURIE HIGH SCHOOL?

EVENTUALLY, SIENA SUGGESTED THE NAME “UMBRELLA HEIGHTS”.

SINCE THE UMBRELLA WAS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SCHOOL TO ALL PUPILS...

...AND THE FACT THAT PUPILS COULD REACH THEIR OWN GREAT HEIGHTS THROUGH WHAT THE UMBRELLA STOOD FOR.

I LIKE IT. IT’S A NAME THAT FITS ALL IDOLS OF NEURODIVERSITY.

INCLUDING THE ONES WHO WILL BE GRADUATING FROM THIS VERY SCHOOL ONE DAY.

All in favour of Umbrella Heights being the new school name?

AYE!
AND SO, WHEN MR CARNER EVENTUALLY RETURNED FROM HELPING OTHER SCHOOLS, HE DISCOVERED THAT MUCH HAD CHANGED AFTER ALL.

THE SCHOOL DIDN'T JUST HAVE A NEW NAME...

...BUT NEW SUPPORTIVE TECHNOLOGY, NEW REVISION RESOURCES, AND A MUCH MORE ACTIVE SCHOOL BLOG THAN BEFORE.

MR FRY AND MR BREMNER TOLD HIM EVERYTHING THAT HAD HAPPENED.

ABOUT MR SNIPES AND HOW THE UMBRELLA GANG HAD HELPED FIX THINGS.

I'm not surprised it worked out. Because I left Mr Bremner as deputy head.

With him around, I knew the school would be fine, no matter what.

You chose the right man to trust the school's values to, Mr Carner.

WHEN THE GCSE EXAMS FINALLY CAME, THE RESULTS WEREN'T JUST BETTER THAN THE HALF-TERM MOCK EXAMS, BUT THEY WERE SOME OF THE BEST SEEN IN YEARS!
Sienna was accepted into Stanford, getting A’s in her English exams, despite snipes doubting her. But she decided to stay on and finish her time at school first.

She also became a UN Ambassador that year too.

Josh got excellent exam results, while also winning the UK junior golfing Gold Cup.

And exam results weren’t all! Andy received a school award for campaigning for neurodiversity rights.

Ruben and Elena were given a national citizenship award for raising money for the NHS.

Marcus also got a national citizenship award, as well as a Jr internship with Microsoft!

And after the success of “Don’t Stand Still, Move Forward”, J Grange got a record deal for his rap song ‘Rise Up’.

And Charlotte and Chelcee? Charlotte continued her acting and dancing while Chelcee started up her BBC Jr Sports Work Again.

They just did it alongside their new London West End opportunity.
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:

1. "The *i* before *e*, except after *c.*"
2. "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
- Social Skills
- Changes & Flexibility
- Executive Functioning

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
**Impulsive!**

**PROS:** decisive, enthusiastic, sensitive.

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

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**Hyperactivity**

**PROS:** energetic, hardworking, active, athletic.

**CONS:** always on the go. Difficulty sleeping sometimes.

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**Strengths:**

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

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**Challenges:**

- Poor concentration.
- Forgetful.
- Easily bored.

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**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.


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 Dyscalculia

I can write or talk out a maths problem I need to solve.

Numbers are hard for me.

Counting money & making change.
The difference between numbers & words.

Estimating time.
Doing numbers in my head.

But I am also creative.
A strategic thinker.
A problem-solver.
A lover of words.
Intuitive.

I can break down tasks into steps in my own creative way.

I can use visuals & diagrams to help me out.

I can use real life comparisons and physical objects.

I can draw out the problem.

Let your Dyscalculia Shine.
Andy's Tips & Tricks for Tourette's 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.

You can reach any heights!

Do something you love, like sports, singing, playing an instrument, etc. Doing a hobby you enjoy can help calm tics.
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 
than 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 Norther 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 Chelsee Grimes, rapper and celebrity Chef Loyle 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.