



**Excel**  
HIGH SCHOOL

# ONLINE LEARNING FIT GUIDE

A FAMILY & STUDENT RESOURCE FOR ADHD & AUTISM



## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to help families and students thoughtfully evaluate whether an online learning environment is a good fit for a learner with ADHD or autism.

You can:

- Complete it together as a family
- Use it when comparing schools
- Bring it to school meetings or consultations
- Revisit it after the first month of online learning

There are no right or wrong answers. The goal is clarity, not perfection.

# SECTION 1: STUDENT SELF-REFLECTION

(Recommended for students age  
10+ with parent support as needed)

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Check the statements that feel true for you:

- I focus better in quiet or controlled spaces
- Crowded classrooms or noise make it harder for me to learn
- I like being able to pause, rewind, or review lessons
- I work best when I can take short breaks
- I feel more comfortable when I can learn at my own pace

## DAILY ROUTINES

- I like knowing what to expect each day
- I work better with a clear checklist or plan
- I find it harder when schedules change suddenly
- I do better when tasks are broken into steps

## SOCIAL PREFERENCES

- Large groups feel overwhelming
- I prefer small-group or one-on-one interactions
- I like having social options without pressure
- I feel more confident when I can choose when to engage

**Student reflection (optional):**  
**What helps you learn best?**

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# SECTION 2: FAMILY OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Use this section to reflect on your child's needs and past school experiences.

## ATTENTION & EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

- Sustaining focus is harder in long class periods
- Organization or time management requires extra support
- Benefits from flexible pacing
- Responds well to clear routines and expectations

## SENSORY & LEARNING COMFORT

- Sensitive to noise, lighting, or crowded spaces
- School environments can increase stress or discomfort
- Recovers more effectively when stressors are reduced
- Benefits from learning in a familiar environment

## LEARNING STRENGTHS

- Learns well through reading or visual materials
- Enjoys independent or self-directed tasks
- Demonstrates strong interests or passions
- Benefits from mastery-based progression

# SECTION 3: WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN ONLINE SCHOOL

Use this checklist when evaluating programs.

## PROGRAM DESIGN

- Clear weekly expectations and pacing
- Consistent course layout and navigation
- Predictable routines across courses
- Ability to revisit lessons

## STUDENT SUPPORT

- Regular teacher communication
- Academic check-ins or coaching
- Early identification when students need additional support
- Clear processes for learning accommodations

## NEURODIVERGENT-FRIENDLY FEATURES

- Flexible pacing options
- Reduced cognitive load in lessons
- Clear instructions and examples
- Optional, low-pressure community spaces

## FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

- Transparent progress tracking
- Easy access to staff
- Clear expectations for parent involvement

## SECTION 4: QUESTIONS TO ASK AN ONLINE SCHOOL

Use these questions during enrollment conversations:



How do you support students with ADHD or autism in daily coursework?



How often do teachers communicate with students and families?



What happens if a student falls behind or feels overwhelmed?



How is progress tracked and shared with families?



What community or connection options are available, and are they optional?



How are learning accommodations supported in an online environment?

# SECTION 5: FIT SCORECARD

Rate each area from **1 (Not a Fit)** to **5 (Strong Fit)**.

AREA	1	2	3	4	5
Learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pacing flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning comfort & regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confidence & independence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Overall impression:

- Strong fit
- Possible fit with supports
- Not the right fit at this time

## Notes:

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## SECTION 6: PLANNING NEXT STEPS

- Schedule a consultation with the school
- Request sample lessons or platform access
- Discuss learning supports or accommodations
- Set a 30-day check-in plan if enrolling
- Revisit this guide after the first month

## FINAL REMINDER FOR FAMILIES

Online learning works best when:



Structure and flexibility are balanced



Support is proactive, not reactive



Student confidence is prioritized



Progress is measured over time

The goal is not to remove all challenges, but to create an environment where learning is **structured, manageable, and sustainable over time.**