

Partnership in Neurodiversity in Schools 2024-2025(PINS)

Year 2 of PINS will run from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

20 Telford schools joined the DfE funded PINS project in April 2024, a one-year project to develop the provision for neurodivergent pupils in our primary schools. See below the difference it has made to our schools.

PINS is a joint project between NHSE and the DfE (funded by the DfE) and is an integral part of the Change and AP programme.

The model of good practice established by the DfE is:

- Tailoring to meet school needs.
- Challenge of ensuring that every school's need is met.
- Access to specialists at school level, bringing practitioners back in.
- Funding through ICBS – with health and education working together alongside the PCFs.

We are proud to have been recognised as having a model of good practice across Shropshire and Telford.

The project focuses on 6 domains, including:

- Leadership, Culture and Values
- Communication
- Teaching and learning/readiness to learn
- The environment
- Readiness to learn
- Sensory
- Children and Young People's Mental Health Services

The PINS project works on partnership with the local Parent Carer Forum (PODS). This is an integral part of the PINS project, particularly building relationships between schools and parent carers.

Every school accessed 8 bespoke sessions of support, working alongside practitioners in their own setting to understand the needs of neurodivergent pupils and made adaptations and adjustments that meet needs. This included completing communication and environment audits, consistent use of visuals, strategies to support the typical learning styles of neurodivergent pupils, ensuring that pupils have their basic needs met first, through understanding interoception, before considering readiness to learn, identifying and meeting sensory needs through adaptations and adjustments, reviewing the behaviour policy and considering a relational approach, where schools recognise that a one size fits all does not meet every child's need.

In addition, schools accessed a whole day of training on neurodiversity with our Educational Psychology team and a half day workshop with our Parent Carer Forum, PODS, to understand the journey of a parent carer and share the fabulous practice taking place in our schools. There were bespoke sessions with the Parent Carer Forum to support engagement with parent carers and involve them in co-production of policies and resources to support pupils with SEND

We worked with local specialists. It is so important to work with partners who are invested in our schools. These include:

- Speech and Language Therapists
- Education Psychology Service
- Occupational Therapy
- Behaviour Support Advisory Team
- Specialist SEND outreach teachers
- School Nurses - sensory
- Children and Young People's Mental Health Services
- Autism West Midlands

Our schools have provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about the support and are excited to embed their good practice as part of Year 2 of PINS.

Feedback on working with PODS:

The first Coffee morning/workshop gave information around understanding how school and PODS can work together to develop support further.

Lots of parents signed up for this and staff felt it was successful. Next session is for ALL parents – this will be a ‘come and meet the experts’ coffee morning, similar to ideas that other schools shared

We will be signposting parents to PODS services – continuing to share reminders on Facebook posts and a commitment to host coffee mornings.

'Staff have enjoyed being part of the project and seeing things from different perspectives. The learning from PINS is being used to drive it further. The learning was very much needs driven.'

Woodlands

'We are looking forward to second year of PINS as this has helped to build on the outreach model we have already accessed. PINS has been more accessible than Outreach in terms of broadness and general learning across the whole school. It was beneficial to be able to learn from the knowledge of specialist practitioners who have worked across multiple schools. PINS has felt like a whole school approach development, leading to longer term success.'

'Thinking of outcomes – historically when there is an initiative there has been a directed learning outcome amongst staff which felt scripted. If asked now, you would see the difference in approach to meeting need across the whole school and it is properly embedded in their everyday offer.'

Windmill

'Staff have appreciated the CPD opportunities and feel highly motivated by what can be achieved. Staff are all fully on board with the support that has been provided. The behaviour policy has recently been reviewed and now includes the recommendations made.'

Millbrook

'Grateful having access to funded courses. Being on TEAMS, having flexible access and afterschool, and practitioners have provided good quality support to all staff'

'PINS has been a very positive experience, but it would have been ideal if the project was longer to enable more time to embed good practice between sessions. We know this is a journey however and have a planned list of next steps as a result of this work.'

If you would like to find out more about the PINS project, contact

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