

Neurodiversity In Schools Project 2023 to 2024

Since 2021, Portsmouth City Council and other agencies have been working with a number of schools to help them improve the way they support pupils with neurodiversity. In developing school practice this has successfully transformed the way their pupils engage with and enjoy school life, improving their overall wellbeing and happiness.

Now there is an opportunity for more Portsmouth schools to work with us in this way, receiving free support, so collectively we can improve outcomes for all children and help them to live their best life (see some feedback below).

Research shows that children with neurodiverse needs, with or without a diagnosis of autism, are at increased risk of poor learning outcomes, exclusion or anxiety and mental health problems.

The project has allowed us to provide schools with free support, including a review of the school environment and classroom practice, leading to action plans that will support improvements and improve inclusivity within the education settings.

The project has been coproduced with school leaders, young people, parent carer forum representatives and partnership agencies and focusses on whole-school change.

The project involves:

- **Training** for the whole school and wider workforce inclusive of senior leaders and governors.
- Developing policies and practice to support **cultural change**, from the senior leadership team down.
- Setting up **parent hubs** to support parent carers in understanding their child and developing their knowledge through support and training and increasing communication with education settings.
- Access to an innovative **Neurodiversity Digital Platform** that provides families and professionals access to a range of resources and tools with up-to-date information.

There are currently fifteen schools taking part in the project, but we want more to sign up in the next year. Contact the team for more information:

Email: Neurodiversity0-19Enquiries@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Phone: 02392 606051

How we can support your school needs

The project offers bespoke training and support based on the needs of the whole school, including emotion coaching, sensory needs, behaviour communication and inclusive classroom practice. Other training may also be available on request or if a need is identified. This is provided by the Neurodiversity Multi-disciplinary Team and the multi-agency behaviour support team and will support the whole school/ workforce to develop their understanding and practice for supporting their pupils with ND needs.

Your school will benefit from:

- Access to training to deliver 'Understanding Myself' which supports children to better understand their own needs and how to meet them.
- A free "Resource Box" which will have tools and information to support their learning.

- Help from our parent carer forum (Portsmouth Parent Voice) to develop parent hubs. Parent/cares will receive the same messaging as schools, and training if requested.
- Creation of an innovative **digital platform** that provides families and practitioner's access to a range of resources and tools, up to date information and interactive functions.

What schools and parents say about the project

Schools:

"We feel that being part of the project has been extremely beneficial.having the training from "the OT" has been 'game-changing' and has enabled us to really improve the provision for children with sensory processing issues"

Parents:

"The parent hubs have enabled parents to feel supported and free to talk with other parents who are experiencing similar concerns."

Pupils:

"He is much more settled. He is happy and trusts that he can make mistakes and it is ok. He feels that he belongs".

Contact details

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[Neurodiversity platform – Family Assist](#) (click on the neurodiversity tab)