

MORE EMPATHY - MORE INCLUSION - MORE CELEBRATION

Dear schools and settings across Shropshire,

The Neurodiversity Practitioner (NDPs) Team was established as a permanent part of the Educational Psychology Team in April 2025, following a successful pilot project involving 49 primary and secondary schools across the county.



The NDPs offer needs-led support across the age range (0-25), covering the constellation of neurodivergence. The role of the NDPs is to enhance the awareness and understanding of pupils presenting with neurodivergent needs, to promote an assess, plan, do, review cycle, and to build knowledge, skills and capacity to support pupils both individually and systemically. Individual work is aimed at pupils who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who are in the EHC Needs Assessment process as these pupils have already been assessed and needs-led support should already be in place. The NDPs will also be continuing the core systemic roles they are involved in. These include pupil voice projects, Emotional Based School Avoidance (ESBA) support and the development of support and training offers for schools and settings in areas such as Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Last year, the NDPs supported even more schools through the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in School (PINS) project and are continuing to support this project in its second year. The NDPs are part of the Shropshire Outreach team, as well as delivering and supporting the implementation of the new Neuroinclusive Practice Training Offer and Network groups. Moreover, the NDPs have collated resources and information that could be helpful for settings; this can be found on their Learning Gateway page.

We very much look forwards to hearing from you soon and to being able to work with you to provide additional support to our neurodiverse children and young people in Shropshire.



Principal Educational Psychologist
and Preventative Lead



Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist
for Neurodiversity



Dr Kathryn Morgan

Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist (Neurodiversity)

Hi! I'm Kathryn. I am one of the strategic leads for the Neurodiversity Workstream and line manage the Neurodiversity Practitioner Team. I have been part of autism assessment teams for over 10 years and I am currently one of the educational psychologists working in the Children's Development Centre. I am hugely passionate about enhancing neuroinclusive practice, including promoting neuro-affirming language, to empower and enable our neurodiverse learners and those around them.

Helen Vincent

Neurodiversity Practitioner & Post-16 Lead

Hi! I'm Helen. I am an experienced primary teacher, SENDCo and designated lead for care-experienced children. I have worked with teenagers in residential settings and have grown-up children of my own. I am committed to supporting settings to embed neuroinclusive practice so that every child and young person thrives. I am the lead for Post-16 and have recently been involved in developing resources to support schools with understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.



Hollie Jones

Neurodiversity Practitioner & ADHD Lead

Hello! I'm Hollie, I am a qualified teacher and have been working with children for 20 years. I have taught across both the private and state sectors in the UK and abroad before specialising in neurodivergence. Having ADHD myself and parenting neurodivergent children, I bring both professional and personal experience to my role. My dream is to see neurodivergent people proud of their uniqueness and celebrated for being their wonderful selves.



Rachel Tomkinson

Neurodiversity Practitioner & Early Years Lead

Hi! I'm Rachel. I am an experienced primary teacher and SENDCo, dedicated to supporting staff, children and their families. Enhancing neuroinclusive practice and championing the voice of children and young people is at the heart of my work. Currently, I am leading a Pupil Voice project that builds on good practice in our schools, ensuring pupils' experiences and ideas are valued and acted upon by the wider audience of Shropshire's Neurodiversity Workstream.



SHROPSHIRE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

NEURODIVERSITY PRACTITIONERS

ABOUT US



We are the Neurodiversity Practitioners (NDPs) who work within Shropshire Educational Psychology Service (EPS). We are all qualified teachers with a wide range of experience in Special Educational Needs.

You can find out more about us on Shropshire Learning Gateway. This is where you can also access a regularly updated document which details free resources that schools and settings can use to enhance and support areas such as pupil voice, meeting sensory needs, environments, emotional regulation, transitions and mental health.

Our monthly newsletters can also be found on Shropshire Learning Gateway.



HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOU

One-to-one
work with
Children and
Young People

Parent
Information
Sessions

Staff CPD
Delivery,
including
training

Working
Collaboratively
with other
Services and
Professionals

Whole-School
Action
Plans

Staff
Coaching

Interventions
to Support
Neuroinclusive
Practice

OUR VALUES, BEST HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS

- For neurodivergent children to have the reasonable adjustments that they need.
- For neurodivergence to be seen as an asset: embraced and celebrated by all, and for this culture to start a ripple effect from schools through society.
- For neurodivergent children to understand themselves better and confidently communicate their needs.
- For neurodivergent children's strengths and areas of need to be recognised and supported.

WHAT PEOPLE LIKE AND ADMIRE ABOUT US



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

- Assist our joint consultation model of meeting together with teachers, the SENDCo and parents/carers.
- Provide as much detail as possible on the Form 4 (involvement and reports from other professionals, Pupil Centred Plans, pupil voice).
- Provide a quiet space for us to work with pupils.
- Encourage all staff to contribute to the creation of whole school actions.
- Share any feedback from staff with us.

The term **neurodiversity** describes the diversity of human minds and the infinite variation in neurocognitive functioning. Individuals can be **neurodivergent**, which means that their neurocognitive functioning is divergent from what may be deemed as average or **neurotypical**.

We are:

Pupil / Person-Centred

We ensure that children / young people and their parents / carers are truly listened to, and are at the heart of all decision-making. This process enables the children / young people to recognise their unique strengths and know how their own existing skills, alongside identified support strategies, can help them to manage challenges within their home and educational settings. Using person-centred principles, we emphasise tailoring support to meet the individual needs, preferences and aspirations of our neurodiverse children and young people.

Needs-Led

The needs-led approach is a holistic perspective to supporting children and young people, and the adults who support them. Working in partnership with individuals and their families as well as education, health and care professionals, we explore and identify strengths and needs to improve outcomes and experiences for neurodiverse children and young people. The children and young people who we can support do not need to have a diagnosis relating to neurodivergence.

“Lovely empathetic ladies that 'get' the busy demands within a school environment for SENDCos. Lovely to discuss issues and how best to support our neurodivergent children.”

“I feel the partnership between schools and NDPs can be an important resource for systemic change, and a longer working relationship would allow for further development of this.”

Solution-Focused

Solution-focused approaches empower people to create positive change. Using solution-focused principles enables us to explore what is working well at school and at home, to build on strengths and competencies and move together towards shared goals, priorities and aspirations.

Coaching

Coaching is a way of working with people that focuses on supporting them to improve their performance, to learn and develop, and/or experience greater well-being. Coaching takes place through the medium of conversations with the two primary aims being to raise awareness and to develop responsibility.

The NDPs use coaching to gain a better understanding of the school / setting as well as individuals and to support the process of change over time towards an individual, school or setting's best hopes and aspirations. Coaching has been effectively used to support Senior Leadership Teams and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinators to facilitate school-wide changes that promote and enhance neuroinclusive practice for all.

Case study:

A primary school was keen to embed a consistent approach to supporting emotional regulation for neurodiverse learners across the school. The NDP met with individual staff members and, through collaborative discussion, explored how evidence-based interventions could be used to understand and promote the emotional literacy and positive mental health of all learners. Over time, staff were supported by the NDP to set realistic and achievable objectives, both short and long-term, which could be implemented in the classroom, taking account of individual confidence and capacity.

"Great to have the opportunity to discuss school based SEND issues to devise an action plan to support the growing number of neurodivergent children at our school.

Great facilitator to enable staff members to open a debate about key issues which have been identified by the school. A flexible approach when working with the school and parents."

Developing a Culture of Neuro-Affirmative Practice

The NDPs empower staff and schools / settings to develop approaches that embed neuroinclusive practice and celebrate neurodiversity, thereby further promoting an inclusive ethos and culture. This can include promoting and enhancing the use of neuro-affirmative language within schools / settings.



Environments

The NDPs support schools to identify what is working well and highlight potential areas for development. These can be linked to, for example, supporting readiness for learning, sensory preferences and / or emotional regulation. This can include conducting a learning walk and enabling child / young person voice within explorations and planning adaptations.

Sensory Audits

This involves raising awareness and understanding of sensory preferences and challenges. The NDPs can advise on how to enhance neuroinclusive learning environments and meet needs through reasonable adaptations and providing sensory diets.

"It has been invaluable to work with someone who has grown to understand the needs of our school and work with us to tailor support which meets the children's needs."

Advice on Teaching and Learning Styles

The NDPs can work with staff to recognise the range of learning styles of neurodiverse learners and recommend strategies for supporting whole class, small group and individual pupils.

Working with Parents and Carers

The NDPs recognise the power of schools working in partnership with parents, carers and families. Whenever possible, joint consultations between the NDPs, school staff and parents / carers are recommended to enable a more holistic understanding of the child / young person.

"It makes such a difference to have someone who is trained to teach these things. My son also feels really comfortable with her and looks forward to their sessions..."

Transition

The NDPs can advise on what support may be offered to a neurodivergent individual / cohort of pupils to promote carefully managed, positive transitions. Depending on packages, this could include transition support across schools, e.g., primary to secondary.



What is the Purpose of a Consultation?

- Develop a broader insight and understanding into challenging situations, utilising applied psychology approaches.
- Explore and agree upon person-centred, reasonable actions and evidence-based approaches to address challenges and bring about positive change for the setting, for pupils and for their families.
- To evaluate recommendations and adapt strategies to promote effectiveness.
- *To ensure the consultation is as effective as possible, please ensure that the Form 4 is completed fully, there is an appropriate space to hold the meeting in and that key members of staff, and parents / carers if possible, are able to attend.*

Case study:

A joint consultation between the NDP, class teacher and parents enabled key adults working with an autistic child to compare observations and better understand his needs. Teaching staff were concerned that the child was reluctant to write or to contribute to class discussions. Through the consultation process, adults recognised that the child was experiencing anxiety around making mistakes in front of peers. Once this was identified, strategies were suggested to support the child to develop resilience and acceptance of mistakes; these included direct teaching of a growth mindset, self-regulation calming strategies and interventions to promote the child's strengths and positive self-construct. Parents were keen to adopt these strategies at home, too.

Solution Circles

NDPs can facilitate a structured, problem-solving process around identified pupils. Multiple members of staff contribute ideas to enable understanding and future support strategies, with an action plan being formed within the process. Many children / young people can be discussed within each Solution Circle, thereby promoting positive change for many as well as CPD for staff.

"I feel that Rachel's input has been invaluable. Her knowledge and what I have learned about my student has really helped me understand him and also how to notice the triggers and to be able to prevent the outbursts."

Individual Support

The NDPs work with individual pupils to enable them to share their experiences. This may include exploring their thoughts and feelings about the school / setting and supporting them in recognising their areas of strength and challenge. Through observation, pupil consultations and activities, children and young people are empowered to share their views meaningfully and to be actively involved in their futures, including the creation of support plans.

A report will be written following individual support which will be shared with families and schools / settings. As part of the support, strategies can be modelled to members of staff in the hope that they will use them with other children / young people in the future.

Working on What Works (WoWW)

WoWW aims to promote pupils' sense of belonging, focusing on finding solutions to problems or challenges and building positive relationships between all class members and a greater sense of belonging. The NDP, in role as the WoWW coach, initially works with the class teacher to identify targets to achieve within an agreed time frame.

Case study:

A primary school was keen to enhance the sense of belonging for neurodiverse pupils in a mixed Y4/5 class. After coproducing targets with class staff and children, the WoWW Coach (NDP) visited weekly to observe and share specific positive feedback reflecting upon the targets. The NDP observed increased engagement in learning, reinforcing of learning behaviours and expectations both from staff and peers as well as a sense of collective ownership. The class want to continue the approach and share with families too.

"Hollie allowed students, parents and staff to feel that their voice was valued and validated, and she acted as a powerful and positive catalyst for collaborative work and progress."

Promoting Pupil Voice

The NDPs are skilled at enabling children and young people to share their views, experiences and understanding of the world. This is achieved through using person-centred tools and creative activities which encourage the voice of the child / young person and inform strategies which could be implemented. This may be done on an individual basis or as part of a wider school approach.



Continued Professional Development (CPD)

The NDPs deliver training on a wide range of areas to enhance understanding and promote neuroinclusive learning environments. Bespoke training can also be created to meet the needs of individual schools / settings and our training offers are continuously growing.*

Our CPD training offers currently include, but are not limited to...



What is neurodiversity?



Neuroinclusive practice for
Early Career Teachers



Masking



Behaviour as communication



Neuro-affirmative language



Enabling child / young
person voice



Understanding sensory needs
and learning environments



Supporting emotional regulation
of neurodiverse learners

Please see our Learning Gateway page for updates on our CDP training offers.

I can use the information from the session for certain children in my setting to improve their experience of education.

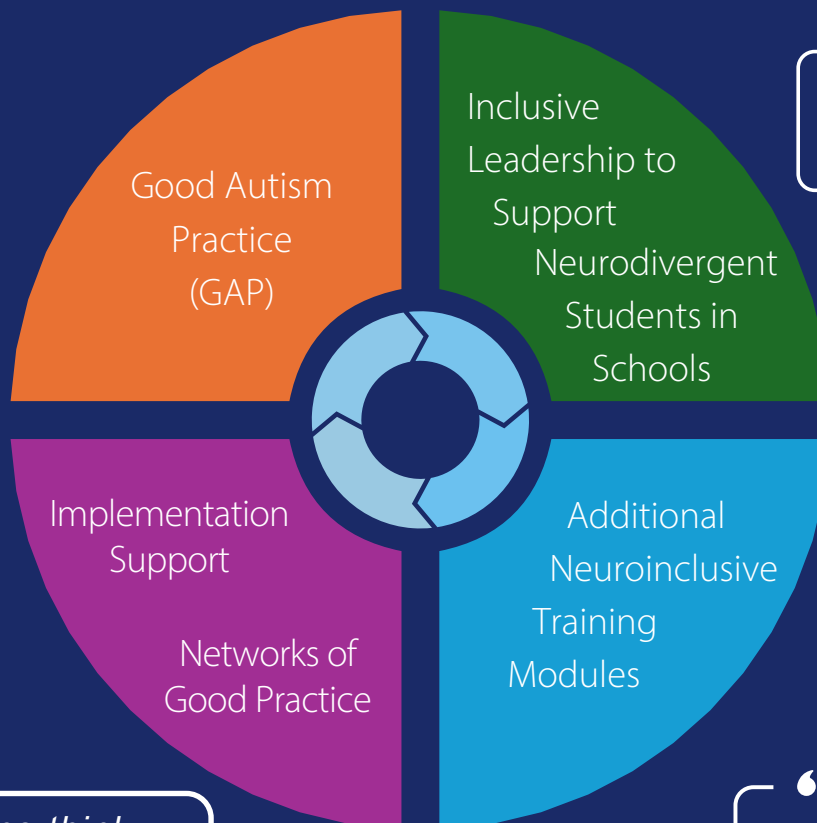


The idea of macro and micro transitions was new to me. I liked all the practical resources - e.g. one page profiles.

Excellent session - very engaging, informative, inspiring, really interesting and eye-opening. Delivered in a very friendly and understandable way.

The NDPs are also key members of the Autism Education Trust (AET) delivery team in Shropshire. As well as delivering the Good Autism Practice (GAP) training, they can support schools / settings with the implementation of the knowledge and skills following the training. Moreover, the NDPs can deliver the additional AET modules, including 'Understanding Anxiety' and 'Transitions in Schools' as well as some of the additional neuroinclusive training modules. The full Shropshire Neuroinclusive Training offer can be found below. *(Please contact eps@shropshire.gov.uk for more information.)*

“
*A fantastic
course.*
”



“
*Very informative
and enjoyable.*
”

“
*It really made me think
about the needs of
individuals regardless of
diagnosis.*
”

“
*Brilliant and
clear information.
Light-hearted.*
”

Networking & Signposting

The NDPs support schools to enhance their awareness of available resources, professionals and opportunities for staff development across Shropshire in relation to neurodiversity.

"Not for profit"

Each package will be costed depending on the number of sessions required to deliver the support. This will need to be agreed with the requesting service.

Each session is approximately three hours.

Current pricing for the remainder of the academic year 2025-26 is £100 per session.

Form 4 - Request for Involvement can be accessed by **schools / settings** via the Shropshire Learning Gateway.

	Sessions	Cost
<u>Package A</u> 3 Coaching sessions	3	£300
<u>Package B</u> 3 Coaching sessions and 2 CPD sessions	5	£500
<u>Package C</u> 3 Coaching sessions and 3 individual casework	12	£1000
<u>Package D</u> 3 Coaching sessions, 2 CPD sessions and 3 individual casework	14	£1200
<u>Package E</u> Bespoke package agreed with school	Bespoke packages are priced individually	

For further information on the Neurodiversity Practitioners or to arrange an informal discussion about your school's / setting's needs, please contact us:



Tel: 01743 258414



eps@shropshire.gov.uk



[Learning Gateway](#)