Autumn 2
November 2025

PINS Newsletter

WELCOME BACK

Dear PINS schools,

We hope that the start of the new academic year has been a positive one. While our initial 40 PINS schools are now accessing a series of face-to-face workshops to support the embedding of their bespoke PINS sessions, we also welcome our 30 new schools, who have completed their audit and attended a brokerage meeting to discuss and plan their support, with most already working with their designated practitioners.

A MESSAGE FROM PODS

PODS Parent Carer Forum is delighted to be collaborating with an additional 15 schools as part of the second phase of the PINS Project. We greatly value the opportunity to work alongside schools, parent carers and Senior Leadership Teams to embed meaningful coproduction and participation practices.

To support this partnership, we hosted introductory meetings with schools during the term preceding the summer holidays. These sessions provided valuable opportunities for staff to meet the core project contacts - myself and Uma - and establish early connections. We are also pleased to welcome Lisa, a volunteer parent representative, whose lived experience and insight into tics and Tourette's syndrome have enriched our neurodivergence discussions.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue delivering twilight sessions online and to facilitate in-person workshops over the coming months. Key dates include:

17th November - Workshops exploring parent carer experiences within school settings, followed by an open discussion

25th November - Relational Behaviour Policy workshop, building on insights from the previous session

8th December - Working Together Charter

As part of our Year 1 Project work, we will also be delivering a workshop focused on the Working Together Charter. This session will offer dedicated time to explore the charter in depth and consider practical strategies for embedding it within your school's engagement with parent carers. You may have heard initial mention of this during the SENCO network meeting on 5th November.

In addition, we would like to highlight a series of support sessions currently being run in partnership with the Educational Psychologist team at PODS Hub. These sessions are designed to assist families who are on the neurodivergent (ND) waiting list or who may be experiencing challenges at home. A flyer with full details is attached for your reference.

We look forward to continuing our work with you and appreciate your ongoing commitment inclusive and collaborative practice.

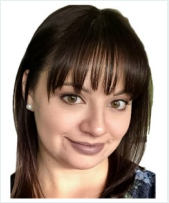
Jayne Stevens - PODS Strategic Lead

YOUR PINS TEAM:



SIÂN DEANE

PROJECT LEAD



SOPHIA AHMAD

PROJECT SUPPORT OFFICER



JAYNE STEVENS

PODS STRATEGIC LEAD



UMA BHATIA

PODS PARENT CARER LEAD



TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH HELEN VINCENT (NEURODIVERSITY PRACTIONER)

Thank you to all those who attended our first workshop. It was a great success, which was echoed in the feedback we received from you.

The session focussed on:

- Recapping what neurodiversity is and the strengths and differences of these learners
- The sharing of good practice from two of the schools Helen supported last academic year
- Embedding neuroinclusive practice
- Raising the profile of neurodiversity
- Upskilling the team

A big thank you to Sorcha (Millbrook Primary) and Dave (Clive Primary) for sharing their incredible work with the implementation of Sensory circuits and the LEANS curriculum.

Our biggest thanks goes to Helen Vincent. Hopefully you have received all the materials from the workshop and the wealth of resources Helen kindly shared with us.

"Really useful and very practical. Good to attend with my Headteacher too, to have a strategic plan put together"

A SPOTLIGHT ON THE EMBEDDING WORKSHOPS

As part of embedding your learning from Year 1 of PINS, we have offered a series of 6 workshops linked to each of the 6 domains.

So far, the workshops have provided a great opportunity to network and share learning amongst all schools.

We hope you enjoy the books you took away with you and find them useful for sharing what neurodiversity is with the children, celebrating the famous neurodivergent people and helping everyone to understand neurodiversity.

Please do remember to contact Sophia if you have not already booked your place on the workshops

SENSORY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS WITH CHILDRENS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Our second workshop focussed on developing the sensory and physical domain with two of the occupational therapists who have been working in our PINS schools, Katrina Drummond and Hellen Spriggs.

The session included topics such as:

- Sensory processing for children in school
- Sensory and physical environment audit and adaptions
- Interoceptive curriculum
- OT resources available for school staff and for families to access

This was followed by a fantastic presentation from Helen Hughes, Headteacher of West Felton CE Primary School, regarding changes made due to the support of PINS, including considerations to overcoming potential barriers.

Thank you to our presenters for another successful morning!





Readiness to Learn Embedding Workshop 2025

WRITING A RELATIONAL POLICY WITH DARREN LENNON

The focus for the session was the **Readiness to Learn** domain and was led by Darren Lennon, Headteacher of the Alternative Provision Schools across Telford and Lead for the Behaviour Support Team in Telford. He was joined by the headteacher of Donnington Wood CE Junior School, Robert Fox, who was able to share the significant changes and impact they experienced during Year 1, when they focussed on the readiness to learn domain.

The workshops are designed to celebrate success, share good practice and look at what comes next.

The workshop included a recap on:

- Attachment
- Attachment aware school-thinking about the wider child
- SEND and neurodiversity
- Restorative Policy for all
- Equalities Act/Protected Characteristics
- Connection before correction
- Rapport for reason – with pupils and parents

From the feedback we received it was clear our delegates felt inspired and thoroughly enjoyed the session.

Thanks again to Darren Lennon and Robert Fox for delivering such a successful session

SPECIAL PINS VISIT

Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin has been recognised throughout the duration of the project as a model of good practice, due to our forward thinking, sustainable model, which far exceeds the number of hours expected for delivery of support.

By way of celebration, at our third workshop, Sue North MBE, Deputy Director for Children and Young People, Learning Disability, Autism and SEND and Phil Brayshaw, Head of CYP, National Learning Disability and Autism Programme from NHSE paid us a visit, to network with our schools and see the impact of the ongoing PINS work.

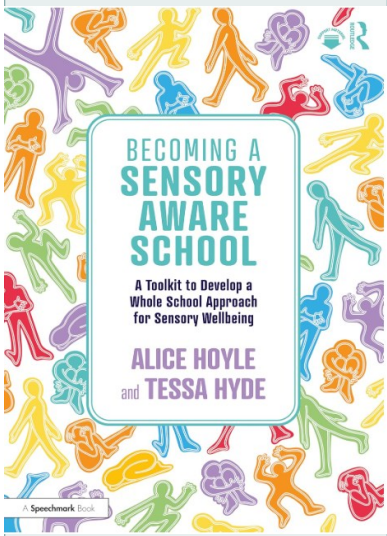
STSA WEBSITE

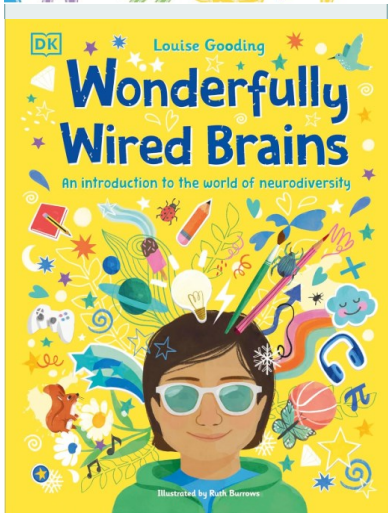
Please note that our website includes the work of PINS and gives some additional background information to the project.

You may find this useful to sign post your stakeholders to, or add the link on your own website to ensure parents know the work you are involved in.

You can find the information here:

PINS – Severn Training and Schools Alliance





THE REMAINING **EMBEDDING** WORKSHOPS

Here are the remaining workshops to look forward to, all delegates can expect to receive additional information and joining instructions prior to the session. To book a place or for any further questions, contact Sophia - sophia.ahmad1@taw.org.uk

Strengthening relationships with parent carers - PACC (Shropshire schools only)
19th November 2025 9am - 12pm at Shrewsbury Town Football Club
Making the relationship work. Co - production of the relational policy may be used to support this, or schools will bring along another policy they wish to co-produce

Strengthening relationships with parent carers - PODS (Telford schools only)
25th November 2025 9am - 12pm at The West Stand, AFC Football Club
Making the relationship work. Co - production of the relational policy may be used to support this, or schools will bring along another policy they wish to co-produce

Communication - SaLT
11th February 2026 9am - 12pm at The West Stand, AFC Telford
Supporting children and young people with developmental language disorder and speech sound disorders

Mental Health and Wellbeing—Nikki Mcgarvey
2nd March 2026 9am - 12pm at Shrewsbury Town Football Club
Reviewing the approaches to compassionate Support: Practical strategies for creating inclusive and supportive environments for neurodiverse and ALL pupils. Understanding how to embed this and how to embed good practice

THE BUDDY SYSTEM

The buddy system has been introduced within our embedding workshops and is available across all domains. It is an opportunity to link with another school who may have a particular strength within a certain domain, to enable you to see that good practice first hand, and take the learning back to your own setting.

Thank you to those who have signed up to be a buddy, or made a request for a buddy. If you have missed one of our workshops but would like to be part of this, please contact Sian or Sophia.

NEURODVIVERSITY BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS

To end year one, our PINS schools were gifted with two fantastic books which had been mentioned by various practitioners to support the understanding and celebration of neurodiversity, and a toolkit to develop the whole school offer for sensory wellbeing. Both areas having been raised as an area for development in multiple schools. The books are as follows:



Louise Gooding - Wonderfully Wired Brains Amazon.co.uk : louise gooding

An informative and inclusive children's guide to neurodiversity for those not in the know and to inspire children who are neurodivergent

Alice Hoyle & Tessa Hyde—Becoming a Sensory Aware School Becoming a Sensory Aware School: A Toolkit to Develop a Whole School Approach for Sensory Wellbeing: Amazon.co.uk: Hoyle, Alice, Hyde, Tessa: 9781032529073: Books

WORKSHOPS FOR **EXPAND** (NEW 2025/2026) SCHOOLS

As one of our new schools, you can expect to attend two face-face events, in addition to your bespoke school sessions. These events are a great opportunity to network with the other PINS schools, share good practice and reflect.

Please ensure you book your places with Sophia:

Making the relationship work - PODS (For Telford and Wrekin Schools Only)
17th November 9am - 12pm at The West Stand AFC Telford

Making the relationship work - PACC (For Shropshire Schools Only)
1st December 9am - 12pm at Shrewsbury Town Football Club

Supporting children with neurodiversity in schools - Telford EP Service
12th December 2025 9am - 3pm (Please note this is a full day event)



"Very Informative. Good mix of theory and practice. It was nice to hear from a case study school's perspective."

OUR ONLINE CPD OFFER (FOR **ALL** SCHOOLS)

Supporting the Wellbeing of Neurodiverse children
Gurmat Singh
13th January 2026 4pm-5pm

Education around Sensory with Foods and PICA
Kelly Gregg - Shropshire School Nursing
20th January 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Behaviour as Communication
PODS - For Telford and Wrekin Schools
29th January 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Behaviour as Communication
PACC - For Shropshire Schools
3rd February 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Neurodivergence & ARFID: Care to Eat
Sandra Williamson - Telford School Nursing
10th February 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Exploring Barriers to Education through a Neuroaffirming Lens
Telford Educational Psychology Service
3rd March 2026 4pm-5.30pm

DLD: Assessment and Diagnosis
Gillian Hackett - Speech and Language Therapist
11th March 2026 4pm—5.30pm

Sensory Processing in the Education Environment
Katrina Drummond—Children's Occupational Therapist
24th March 2026 4pm-5.30pm

Writing an Inclusive Behaviour Policy
Darren Lennon - HT, BSAT Team Lead, OSTED inspector
TBA





ABOUT STSA

Severn Training & Schools Alliance (STSA – formerly Severn Teaching School Alliance) is based in Telford and is a partner of the Shropshire & Telford Education Partnership Teaching Hub (STEP). The Alliance draws on a large pool of talent and expertise to deliver support for schools, professional development for staff at all stages of their career, and engages in research and development projects. In partnership with the University of Chester, the STSA also offers high quality Early Years and Primary Initial Teacher Training via the PGCE Lead School Partner route.

OUR PRACTITIONERS

Thanks once again to the wonderful practitioners supporting PINS:

Alexa Dunn - Assistant HT at Haughton School, Inclusion/Outreach/Hubs

Hayley Williams - Senior Specialist Outreach Teacher at The Bridge School

Katrina Drummond & Hellen Spriggs - Children's Occupational Therapy

Helen Vincent, Rachel Tomkinson and Hollie Jones - Neurodiversity Practitioners (Shropshire EP Service)

Darren Lennon - HT The Linden Centre, BSAT team lead, OFSTED inspector

Sarah Perrins & Miriam Bristol - MATi Specialist Advisory Teacher (Communication)

Niki Mcgarvey - MATi and Outreach Specialist Advisor (SEMH)

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