

How to improve mainstream schools for neurodivergent pupils in BANES

What is this?

This is a summary of what neurodivergent young people in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) think about school. Especially: what would improve mainstream schools for neurodivergent pupils.

It's based on research by the BANES Youth Forum. There's more information, and an accessible audio version of this summary, at <https://bit.ly/neurodivergent-pupils>



What do these words mean?

Neurodivergent: People whose brain works differently from 'neurotypical' people. Neurodivergent people may be autistic, dyslexic, have ADHD, etc. In schools this is often called 'Special Educational Needs' (SEN).



BANES: Bath And North-East Somerset

Mainstream schools: Schools for all young people. 'Special schools' are only for young people with SEN and/or a disability.

What did we find out from our survey?

Neurodivergent young people in BANES find a lot of things difficult at school. Especially:

- Too much noise
- Teachers not understanding their neurodivergence
- Crowds of people
- Making friends



Lots of things would improve neurodivergent pupils' experience at school in BANES. Especially:

- 1) **More neurodiversity training for school staff** (this was the top choice)
- 2) Not being punished for things that are very difficult for them
- 3) Quiet places to go to between lessons, and during lessons if needed
- 4) Neurodiversity education for all pupils

Other research supports our findings and our recommendations.

What do we recommend to mainstream schools in BANES?

Our four recommendations to schools are the four improvements listed above.



Our 'toolkit'

Our 'toolkit' is guidance for schools on:

- Good neurodiversity training for school staff
- Alternatives to punishing neurodivergent pupils for things they find very difficult
- How to set up quiet, safe sensory spaces for neurodivergent pupils
- Good neurodiversity education resources for pupils



The toolkit is at <https://bit.ly/neurodivergent-pupils>

