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Planning

Partnerships for Inclusion in Neurodiversity in Schools 2025/2026

NHS BRISTOL, NORTH SOMERSET AND SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE INTEGRATED
CARE BOARD

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-029865

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-052c5f

Published 4 June 2025, 12:57pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

NHS BRISTOL, NORTH SOMERSET AND SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE INTEGRATED
CARE BOARD

Floor 2, North Wing, 100 Temple Street

Bristol

BS16AG

Email

scwcsu.scwprocurement.bnssg@nhs.net

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKK11 - Bristol, City of

Justification for not providing organisation identifier

Not on any register

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/>

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://atamis-1928.my.site.com/s/Welcome>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Partnerships for Inclusion in Neurodiversity in Schools 2025/2026

Reference number

C366682

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85100000 - Health services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

- 1) This notice is placed as a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to inform the market of BNSSG Integrated Care Board (ICB) intention to commission Partnerships for Inclusion in Neurodiversity in Schools 2025/2026. The Commissioner would like to understand the level of provider interest in delivering these services.
- 2) BNSSG ICB is seeking to secure a Prime Provider who has the capability and capacity to deliver the project, in line with the specified requirements.
- 3) The intention will be to award to a single Prime Provider.
- 4) The services will be delivered within the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire geography.
- 5) The intended contract term will be for 12 months, with a start date of 1st August 2025.
- 6) There are no foreseeable changes anticipated over the life of the contract, e.g. no additional funding or activity.
- 7) TUPE will not apply
- 8) Total contract value of £179,000
- 9) Interested provider should formally register their interest via the Atamis link provided below, no later than 12:00 16th June 2025.

BNSSG Integrated Care System: Closer collaboration between education and health, including working collaboratively across professional boundaries, training for non-health staff and creating environments that facilitate best possible outcomes for children and young people.

A better understanding of the experiences of neurodiverse children at school and how to make future improvements.

Schools and Parent Carers at schools will be asked to review the outcomes at the end of the period of support to feedback on provider delivery and outcomes.

The ICB PINS project management and delivery provider working within the partnership governance structure will:

- Use the self-assessment tool information gathered from the participating schools, combined with the themes emerging from the parent carer survey and children's voice activities, where this is available in time, to commission the support required.
- Coordinate and timetable delivery of appropriate support for each school.
- The offer of support from the PINS Programme is 37.5 hours (5 days' equivalent) of input per school. There is flexibility on the timetabling of the specialist support offer, either in days, sessions or hours. The PINS Management and Delivery Provider will work with schools to devise the right timetable of support, which must be completed by the end of the programme i.e. 31st March 2026.

The 'embed' offer for 45 schools which participated in a PINS project in FY 2024-25)

This exercise is being carried out by NHS South, Central and West Commissioning Support Unit (SCW) on behalf of the Commissioner.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £179,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKK1 - Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Bristol/Bath area

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Contract: 1st August 2025 - 31st July 2026

Extension: possible but depends on future Department for Education funding

BNSSG ICB is looking to contract a project management and delivery provider to lead, administer and deliver the PINS project in total including school selection, school liaison, support package delivery, monitoring and reporting and evaluation.

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The PINS Programme tests an innovative model for the effective and efficient deployment of health and education workforces, focusing on supporting neurodivergent pupils. This cohort is a fast-growing group of children likely to benefit from more inclusive mainstream environments. An equally important strand of the PINS Programme is to strengthen parent carer and school partnerships in mainstream education settings.

BNSSG delivered a PINS project in FY 2024-25 and has the opportunity to expand the offer to 30 additional primary schools in our area. In addition, support will be offered to existing 45 schools involved in PINS projects in FY 2024-25 to help them to embed their learning and practice improvements.

2.2 Governance

A local partnership governance group oversees the PINS local project. The group includes the ICB, the 3 LAs and parent carer representation.

The ICB is required, on a quarterly basis, to complete a written report for the PINS National Delivery Support Team, which must be completed in line with deadlines provided in advance. The partnership will ensure that all strategic partners (LAs, schools, and

PCFs or other parent carer-led groups) cooperate with the ICB and provide updates when requested.

2.3 Co-producing the PINS Delivery Plan

The ICB is the lead delivery partner of PINS and has submitted a Delivery Plan that sets out how we will bring together the local area partners across health, LAs and schools, alongside PCFs to deliver the local PINS project. The Delivery Plan sets out what support may be needed to be commissioned for the local area, how it will be commissioned and how the funding will be allocated.

School selection for FY 2025-26

PINS projects in areas which participated in a PINS project during FY 2024-25 are expected to expand the project to work with 30 new schools per ICB area, and the ICB is responsible for deciding which schools to work with in collaboration with the relevant LAs and PCFs. The ICB will use locally available data and intelligence to support the decision making around school selection. We are aiming to recruit 10 new schools in each LA area

The PINS Programme offer

PINS projects provide two parallel and complementary strands of work for each participating school. These consist of delivery of a package of tailored support (which could include training, resources, audits and reviews of provision) by specialist education and health workforces to the school; and a programme of parent carer engagement activity, which will include the formation or development of a parent carer engagement group in each school, and the facilitation of regular meetings between representatives of this group and the school's senior management team.

The tailored support offer for new schools in FY 2025-26

The process for providing tailored support to new schools will mirror the PINS Programme approach taken in FY 2024-25. ICBs will utilise the same, nationally agreed self-assessment tool for schools to identify priority areas for support, and this activity will begin as soon as our school selection is complete.

Schools will collate the findings and use them to assess themselves against high-level domains (including Leadership, Culture and Values; Mental Health; Readiness to Learn; Teaching and Learning; Environment and Communication). It is expected that schools will be supported by the local PINS project delivery team to complete this and to consider which support and interventions may be of most benefit to each school. Where it is possible to complete the parent carer survey and children's voice activity ahead of the support offer being agreed, the themes from these sources should also be considered when determining the package of support for each school.

In discussion with schools, local partners will decide on the most appropriate type, length, and content of support, by matching the feedback from their self-assessment responses to a range of interventions set out in the national menu of support (which has been mapped against the support available locally). In parallel, local projects will also fund the PCF (or other parent carer-led group) to provide support to schools to establish the parent carer engagement activity.

Continuing support for schools who participated in a PINS project in FY 2024-25

Funding includes up to £35,000 to support PINS 2024/25 schools to embed the learning and approaches put in place to support neurodivergent children and young people within these settings. This will enable schools to continue to strengthen ways of working to create cultures of inclusivity, continue to work alongside their parent carer engagement group to increase engagement and ensure that parental views are heard.

Commissioning of the tailored support offer

The menu of support is made up of evidence-informed approaches and was developed in collaboration with a range of education and health professionals, as well as parent carers and young people. The ICB and partners will use this to inform decisions around which interventions to commission to meet the identified needs and priorities of each school.

The local partnership will use evidence when making choices about which support to invest in and how best to implement the support offer to schools. It is not mandatory to deliver everything on the menu of support, but projects will not be able to commission interventions which are not part of the menu.

The PINS project will build on existing resources and offers available locally. Utilising existing structures and resources will maximise efficiency, by expanding access to resources and approaches which may already be familiar to schools. It will also support the legacy of the programme, by extending and increasing the reach and impact of existing offers across the area. However, PINS funding will bring additional resource into the area, so therefore where an area has already commissioned access to specific resources such as training, the PINS support should build on these by adding value or extending access rather than duplicating or replacing existing support by commissioning a wholly new offer.

Working with PCFs or other parent carer-led groups

Collaboration with parents and carers is critical to the success of the PINS Programme. The PCF is key to successful delivery of PINS at a strategic level in the local area, through involvement in the local partnership and support to the project delivery team. The PCF is also responsible for delivery of the parent carer engagement activity in participating schools.

Evaluating the PINS Programme

The DfE commissioned a high-quality mixed method independent evaluation at the beginning of the programme, to run from March 2024 - September 2025. The evaluation will continue to be conducted alongside the programme in FY 2025-26 and will be extended to run between March 2024 - September 2026, subject to approvals. Year 1 of the evaluation (March 2024 - September 2025) currently seeks to understand how the PINS Programme was implemented and assess the suitability of PINS being rolled out more widely.

The second year of the evaluation will focus on the embedding offer for schools and will seek to:

- Understand how PINS was extended and embedded in different locations, identifying any barriers and enablers to delivery.
- Determine, whether and to what extent, the benefits of PINS are able to be sustained through a 'lighter touch' embed offer for the existing cohort of schools.
- Determine, whether and to what extent, PINS improved schools' ability to support neurodiverse pupils.

To evaluate the project, ICBs and their strategic partners will be expected to cooperate with the appointed evaluator and provide information when requested. This is a requirement within the specification attached to the MoU between ICBs, DfE and NHSE. It is likely that some evaluation activity will take place after the programme delivery period ends on 31 March 2026. This will be confirmed in the specification in due course.

Reporting arrangements

PINS funding is ringfenced to the PINS local project and cannot be repurposed for other uses.

Project management

The ICB has funding to establish a local project delivery team which will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the PINS project in our area. This funding is being utilised to contract a project management and delivery provider.

II.2.14) Additional information

ICBs will support schools involved in PINS during FY 2024-25 to embed the learning from PINS interventions. Up to £35,000 of your budget can be used for this purpose. To do so, the PINS Management and Delivery Provider will facilitate or commission a termly

community of practice to:

- Highlight local areas of good practice.
- Allow schools the opportunity to share experiences and learn from each other.
- Promote the ongoing development of inclusive cultures.

It should:

- Include an element of co-production with parent carers (funding for this purpose may be provided to the PCF or other parent carer-led group to support this activity, from the wider 'embed' budget).
- Be facilitated by someone with the relevant skills and experience, and this should be agreed by the strategic partners (ICB, LAs, PCF).

The 'embed' offer could also consider other support for schools such as:

- Access to an online resource toolkit.
- Shared access to the training and support being delivered as part of the offer to schools joining the project in FY 2025-26 (where this creates no additional cost which could inhibit delivery to new schools).

The PINS Management and Delivery Provider will be required, on a quarterly basis, to complete a written report for the PINS National Delivery Support Team, which must be completed in line with the deadlines provided. The deadlines for submission and templates for each quarter will be provided in advance. The PINS Management and Delivery Provider lead will be expected to attend and give a verbal update on progress in between the submission of the formal quarterly monitoring reports. The National Delivery Support Team will agree with each ICB the appropriate rhythm for these conversations.

Self-Assessment tool

To support the successful delivery of the PINS local project, each school will be asked to complete a self-assessment tool. It seeks input from school leaders, SENCOs and the governing body, and should be considered alongside children's and parent/carers' voice feedback wherever possible. The self-assessment tool will help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the whole school approach to neurodiversity, including the areas in which the school would benefit most from support from health and education specialists and expert parent carers.

Children's and Parent Carers' Voice

In addition to the self-assessment carried out by school staff and governors, each school will be asked to seek children's feedback. A suitable member of staff will facilitate and collate input from children. Collated feedback will then be used to inform and complete the Children's Voice Self-Assessment Tool.

The local PCF will provide a link to a survey for parents and carers to complete, which schools will be asked to distribute. Wherever possible, this should be organised to run in parallel with the school's completion of the self-assessment tool and children's voice activities, so that parent carer views are considered when planning the support provided. The PCF will share anonymised, thematic findings of the surveys with the PINS Management and Delivery Provider and provide thematic summaries to each school. The parent carer survey will be repeated after the delivery of the tailored support to the school and completion of the parent carer engagement activity.

Menu of support

The menu of support has been created by the DfE and NHSE, with input from parent carers, health professionals, school and MAT leaders, educational

psychologists, SENCOs, and specialist advisors. The menu of support is used by the PINS Management and Delivery Provider to identify the most appropriate, evidence-informed support for each school setting, based on the areas prioritised from self-assessment and provision available in the local area. All support provided will focus on whole school approaches. PINS funding cannot be used for direct support (e.g. 1:1 speech and language therapy) in response to individual children's needs.

Outcomes: The expected outcomes have been divided into four separate categories Schools, Parent/Carers, Children and BNSSG.

Schools: Improving the learning environment for neurodiverse children and in turn all children in the school environment.

Helping all school staff to build their confidence and understanding of neurodiversity in the school environment.

Strengthen school culture, policies and strategies to support neurodiverse children in school.

Build strong neurodiverse practices, strategies and culture to have a long-term positive impact on the school environment for neurodiverse children.

Strengthening of parent carer and school partnerships in mainstream education settings

Building confidence within schools when working with local partners on neurodiversity

including local parent/carers groups, local authorities and service providers.

Tackling challenges in terms of identification and assessment.

Supporting a shift away from the need for diagnosis and focus on strengthening knowledge, skills and improving environments to better meet the needs of neurodiverse children and reframe the focus to how a supportive learning environment and well-equipped school can better meet the needs of the children.

Parent Carer: Strengthening of parent carer and school partnerships in mainstream education settings.

Building confidence within local parent/carers groups when working with local school partners.

Developing improved co-production with families to facilitate service design and delivery.

Children: Contributing to reducing the number of children being excluded from school and help to improve school attendance.

Contribute to positive engagement in class and school activities.

Contribute to the wellbeing of neurodiverse children in school.

Support neurodiverse children to achieve classroom and school goals.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

31 August 2025

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

This notice is an information gathering exercise rather than a call for competition in its own right, and therefore publication or response does not commit the Authority or respondents to a future procurement, nor provide any process exemptions or preferential treatment to any parties expressing an interest. The Authority will not be liable for costs incurred by any interested party in participating in this exercise.

Interested providers will be able to view this opportunity via the live opportunities list on the 'Health Family' e-procurement system, Atamis. Click on 'View our Live Opportunities' from the home page, available on the following link: <https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome>.

Once you have found the opportunity (via the search function, using the title or reference number(C366682), to gain full access to the relevant information and market engagement questionnaire, you will need to click on 'Register interest' - this will take you to the log-in page.

If you are not already registered on the system, you will need to do so before gaining full access to the documentation and to be able to submit your expression of interest and market engagement questionnaire responses, using the placeholder provided within Atamis.

This is a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) prior information notice. The contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply