

Pinpoint Cambridgeshire and local children's Occupational Therapy team win award for championing SEND Co-Production



Pinpoint Cambridgeshire and the Children's Occupational Therapy (OT) team have been honoured with an Excellence in Co-Production Award at the National SEND Best Practice Event, recognising their work to improve support for children with SEND.

The partnership between Pinpoint and the OT team has centred on regular meetings with parent carers to address concerns around children's sensory and emotional needs—both in school as well as outside school hours.

One parent explained the challenge: *"As my child doesn't show any behaviour difficulties, they haven't been offered the circuits (structured activities designed to help regulate sensory input, particularly for children with autism who may experience sensory processing challenges). They do know that she is upset after school, but because it doesn't impact her lessons, they don't change anything during the day. They've offered a fidget box to her at 3pm... that's it."*

Recognising that many children were stuck on waiting lists for assessments, Nicola Foreman, Lead Children's OT for Cambridgeshire, launched an OT Helpline to support families, schools, and professionals. Building on feedback from parents, OT Gerald Maidens developed a free training pilot for primary schools aimed at helping schools better understand and manage sensory surroundings to help children learn.

The impact has been significant. One school staff member noted, *"It has made me stop and think about my expectations when asking the children to sit on the carpet."*

Children, too, are feeling the benefits with one saying: *"My brain likes it when I can move around and then do my work. It helps me when I'm fizzy."*

Another added, *“I think my writing is better now. It’s because I’m stronger in my hands. Oh and I like being able to choose if I can stand, sit, kneel or lie on my tummy for my writing work.”*

The award recognises a model of co-production that puts families at the heart of shaping better, more responsive support for SEND children.

This work was funded as part of Pinpoints core work, they receive additional funding to the DfE grant from both the Local Authority and Health.