INFORMATION SHEET

Special school pupil voice pilot programme

A partnership between NASS and Kaleidoscope to put special school pupil experiences at the heart of school improvement and SEND reform.

NASS and Kaleidoscope have joined forces to invest in a new pilot that puts special school pupils' experiences at the heart of school improvement and SEND reform. Launching in January 2027, participating schools will gain powerful insights into inclusion and belonging, practical tools for action, and the opportunity to help shape national conversations about the future of SEND.

Kaleidoscope is an independent research and innovation organisation advancing inclusion, belonging, wellbeing and human-centred data. It was founded by Dr Nicole Ponsford, an award-winning educator and researcher. By bringing together research, lived experience, learning and technology, Kaleidoscope helps organisations understand who is being underserved, why experiences differ and what meaningful change could look like.

The pilot: turning pupil voice into action

The special school pupil voice pilot has been designed to help schools:

- Better understand how pupils experience inclusion and belonging.
- Identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Develop evidence-informed priorities and actions.
- Monitor progress and impact over time.
- Contribute to a stronger evidence base for the special school sector.

The programme combines pupil voice, leadership reflection, staff views and parent/carer perspectives, providing a rich picture of inclusion across your school community.

Schools will be supported throughout the process by the Kaleidoscope team and will have access to tools, resources and guidance for a full year.

Who is the pilot programme for?

The pilot is **open to all special schools who are NASS members.**

We are looking for schools that are committed to listening to pupils, strengthening inclusion and using evidence to inform improvement.

Accessibility and participation

Kaleidoscope will work with schools to support meaningful participation and consider the diverse communication needs of pupils.

The pilot programme is designed to help schools engage pupils in ways that are appropriate to their needs and abilities, enabling as many young people as possible to share their experiences.

KEY DATES

Applications open: Wednesday 4th November
Information webinar: Tuesday 24th November
Applications close: Tuesday 1st December
Pilot programme launch: January 2027

What will participating schools receive?

Each participating school will receive one year's access to the Kaleidoscope platform, including:

Pupil voice surveys
Designed to explore key areas of schools experience, including:

- Inclusion and belonging
- Relationships
- Participation and voice
- Environment and culture
- Identity and wellbeing

Leadership inclusion audit
A structured tool to support leaders in reflecting on systems, culture and practice across the school.

Staff surveys
Providing insight into staff experiences and perceptions of inclusion.

Parent and carer surveys
Helping schools understand the experiences of families and identify areas for development.

School dashboard
A secure dashboard bringing together survey findings, analysis and trends.

Coaching recommendations and action plan
Practical guidance to help schools identify priorities and plan improvement activity.

Champion Hub
Whole-staff access to resources, learning materials and tools to support ongoing development.

Want to find out more before you apply?

Please join the NASS and Kaleidoscope teams at **midday on Tuesday 24th November** for an introductory webinar and Q&A. Learn more about the pilot, what's involved, benefits for your school and how to take part.

Visit the NASS website to book onto the webinar:
nasschools.org.uk/events

How will the findings be used?

Participating schools will receive their own school-level data and insights.

In addition, anonymised findings from across participating schools will be shared with NASS to:

- Strengthen understanding of pupils' experiences in special schools.
- Identify common themes across the sector.
- Support evidence-informed policy discussions.
- Ensure special school voices are represented in conversations about SEND reform.

No school or individual pupil will be identifiable in information shared beyond the school. Appropriate disclosure controls and reporting thresholds will be applied to protect confidentiality.

90 days inclusion roadmap

Starting in January 2027, schools will be supported to:

LISTEN
Capture pupils' experiences and hear what matters most.

ACT TOGETHER
Explore findings and use your coaching recommendations and Action Plan to agree on next steps.

CHECK BACK
Review progress and share what has changed.

You will receive an onboarding webinar, a named Kaleidoscope contact and regular updates. Your platform access continues for the full year.

Places and cost per school

NASS and Kaleidoscope have jointly subsidised the pilot to make participation accessible for NASS member schools.

- **Up to 30 schools** will be selected for the pilot.
- A **maximum of two schools** from any one Trust or Group may participate. If more than two schools are interested in taking part, Kaleidoscope would be happy to discuss funding arrangements outside of the pilot.
- Schools will be selected from applications received to ensure a broad and representative cohort.
- Participating schools will be asked to make a contribution of **£500 + VAT per setting**.

Apply to be part of the pilot

Click the button on the right to start the application form.



Submitting an application indicates that your school is willing to pay the contribution set out above if offered a place on the programme.

Deadline for applications is **5pm on Tuesday 1st December.**

As part of your application, please provide the details of your Headteacher/Principal and another member of the Senior Leadership Team. These individuals will act as the school's key contacts throughout the pilot programme.