

Children and Young People Committee  
26 November 2024

Item 7: Safety Valve Report

	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question/ comment:</b>
1.	Ms Liz Day	I have concerns about how the children are going to be taught. It seems unfair to me that neurotypical children should be subjected to the foibles and differences of neuro-diverse children. Will the neurotypical children be taught in the same classrooms, or will there be division in schools? Whereas neuro-diverse children learn in very different ways, so do neuro-typical children, but neuro-typical children being the norm may get frustrated by having to wait for neuro-diverse children to catch up. Is the thought that neurotypical children will be employed to do remedial work with neuro-diverse children?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response:</b>
	Councillor Bryony Goodliffe, Chair, Children and Young People Committee	<p>Thank you for reaching out and sharing your concerns about how children are taught in inclusive classrooms. I appreciate your honesty and willingness to discuss this important matter.</p> <p>At the heart of inclusive education is the belief that every child, neurotypical and neurodiverse alike, has the right to access a high-quality education in an environment that fosters respect, understanding, and mutual growth. I'd like to address some of the points you raised to help clarify our approach and reassure you of our commitment to meeting the needs of all learners.</p> <p>1. Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms: While there may be instances where neurotypical and neurodiverse children learn alongside one another, this is done with careful planning and appropriate support in place to ensure the needs of every child are met. Teachers use differentiated instruction and tailored strategies to help all students progress at their own pace, without one group being left behind or feeling frustrated. This approach allows for mutual understanding and encourages children to value diversity from an early age.</p>

	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question/ comment:</b>
		<p>2. Balancing Needs: We understand that neurodiverse children may require different approaches to learning, just as neurotypical children have their own varied learning styles. Our schools are equipped with resources, training, and staff to ensure that all children receive the attention and support they need. This includes employing teaching assistants, creating tailored learning plans, and providing specialised interventions where appropriate. The goal is to create an environment where everyone can thrive without one group's progress being hindered by the other.</p> <p>3. Peer Interactions: Inclusive classrooms are not about asking neurotypical children to take on the role of educators for their neurodiverse peers. Instead, they are designed to foster collaboration and mutual support. While children may sometimes work together on activities, this is guided and supervised by teachers and meant to enrich learning for both groups. Research shows that such interactions often build empathy, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, benefiting all children in the long term.</p> <p>4. Fairness and Equity: Fairness in education doesn't mean treating every child exactly the same—it means providing every child with the opportunities and support they need to succeed. Inclusion is about creating a learning environment where differences are respected and valued. By doing so, we aim to prepare all children for a diverse world where collaboration, adaptability, and understanding are essential skills.</p> <p>I hope this helps to address your concerns and provides some reassurance about the thought and care that goes into inclusive education. We are committed to creating positive, supportive environments where all children, regardless of their neurodiversity, can achieve their full potential.</p>