

Autism-friendly cinema

An introduction

Dimensions is a charity that offers support services to people with learning disabilities and autism. They offer autism-friendly film screenings in partnership with Cineworld, ODEON, Vue and Showcase Cinemas.

Every month, each participating cinema shows a different film from a selection of new releases and classics including Pixar animations, Disney adventures and other fantastical adventures suitable for all age ranges.

You can contact Dimensions about this project:

Tel: 0300 303 9003 (ex 1531)

Email: autismfilms@dimensions-uk.org

What makes the screenings autism friendly?

- The lights will be on low
- The volume will be turned down
- There will be no trailers at the beginning of the film
- You'll be able to take your own food and drinks
- You'll be able to move around the cinema if you like

Is there a cinema in my area that is taking part in autism-friendly film screenings?

| Cineworld | Odeon | Showcase | Vue |
|--|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Birmingham Broad Street Birmingham NEC Rugby Shrewsbury Solihull Telford Wolverhampton | Birmingham Birmingham Broadway Plaza Coventry Dudley Leicester Nuneaton Stoke Tamworth Telford West Bromwich Worcester | Coventry Leicester Walsall | Birmingham Leamington Spa Leicester Redditch Stratford Worcester |

Visit www.dimensions-uk.org/families/autism-friendly-screenings/ for a full list of cinemas taking part.

How do I book?

You can buy your ticket on the day but you may want to book in advance to avoid arriving to a sold out screening. Booking in advance is also recommended if you require a wheelchair space, to ensure that this will be available when you arrive, since wheelchair spaces are limited. Schools receive a discount.

You can be notified of when tickets go on sale by following Dimensions on Facebook or Twitter or by signing up to their weekly e-bulletin at www.dimensions-uk.org/news-and-events/enewsletter.

You can book online or contact them by phone.

| Cineworld | Odeon | Showcase | Vue |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Monday to Sunday 10am-10pm | Monday to Saturday 9am-6pm, Sunday 10am-5pm | 24 hour booking number | 24 hour booking number |
| 0333 003 3444 | 0800 138 3315 | 0871 220 1000 | 08712 240 240 |

Frequently asked questions

Why is my local cinema not participating in autism-friendly film screenings?

There are over 250 cinemas across the UK taking part in autism-friendly film screenings. There is a good geographical spread, to improve people's access to the cinema. Some cinemas do not have the right physical access to screen the films and some have other commitments on the days that autism friendly films are screening.

What if we want to visit the cinema beforehand to get used to the environment?

You are welcome to contact your local participating cinema before the autism-friendly film screening to see the layout and get used to the environment.

The Dimensions website has advice on creating social stories for the cinema as well as examples provided by parents and some sample layouts.

Do I need to have a CEA Card to support someone to attend?

No. If the person you support goes to the cinema regularly it may be worth them getting one of these cards but for the purpose of autism-friendly film screenings, it is possible to support someone to attend and get in for free without having to produce a CEA Card. If you are a carer but do not have a CEA Card you may be asked to show some form of ID, such as a workers card or ID badge.

Can siblings and friends come?

Yes. Autism-friendly film screenings are where mainstream films are shown in a sensory friendly environment. People are more likely to enjoy the film without the risk of being told to be quiet or sit down because it is not expected that they will be silent or stay seated at all times. It gives people with autism and people with learning disabilities the chance to attend a film with their friends and family in a more inclusive environment. Anyone who thinks this is something beneficial is welcome to attend.

How do you decide which film to choose?

The films are chosen to appeal to as many people as possible and give people choice. The aim is to use new releases to make sure these are equally available to people with sensory needs.

Lots of people have contacted the scheme and given their suggestions about the types of films that they feel would be suitable and this feedback is used when deciding on the film. If you would like to make any recommendations please contact Dimensions.

Are these the only cinema chains that do these type of sensory friendly screenings?

No. This is the first partnership between a charity and a national chain of cinemas. However, there are also many independent cinemas also offering this service.