



# Ash Meadow School Prospectus



**2021 - 2022**

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## Aims of Ash Meadow School

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**To ensure and celebrate high standards of achievement for all students, including personal and social development by:**

- having high expectations.
- target setting and continuous assessment.
- celebrating achievements and enhancing self-confidence and self-esteem through praise and reward.
- using individual planning and monitoring progress.
- using internal and external accreditation at the individual level of each student.

**To ensure each student's knowledge, skills and understanding are developed by:**

- offering a broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated curriculum.
- regular assessment, target setting and review, including choice, decision making and independence.

**To respect the rights of students by providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment through:**

- following the requirements for safe recruitment.
- implementing rigorous policies and procedures for safeguarding and health and safety.
- acting on the outcomes from monitoring processes, including implementing dynamic risk assessments.
- recognising that students have a right to privacy and dignity.

**To ensure equality of access and opportunity by:**

- using in-class support for each student ensuring all planning is individual and regularly reviewed.
- personalised resources including communication aids, ICT equipment and bespoke sensory equipment.

**To facilitate transition to adulthood by:**

- developing self-advocacy skills through improving the young person's communication.
- developing independence and independent living skills.
- providing every student with a transition plan in conjunction with the Placing Authority.
- working with the local Careers Service, Colleges, and other agencies on the transition plan from when the student is 14 years old.

**To build and foster partnership with parents/carers, external agencies, and the local community by:**

- maintaining a regular dialogue with parents/carers.

- holding multi-disciplinary educational annual reviews.
- attending and contributing to statutory reviews.

**To continually improve the quality of education through:**

- the monitoring and self-evaluation of systems, procedures and outcomes for students exceeding minimum standards for education and care.

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## Information for Parents/ Colleagues

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Ash Meadow school is a specialist independent provider supporting vulnerable young people with complex needs. Young people may have been diagnosed with Autism including Asperger's Syndrome, Fragile X, Learning Difficulties and / or Complex Neurological Conditions. They may be receiving ongoing CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) support or be awaiting multi-agency assessment. All of our students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or are in the process of being assessed.

At the time of referral, it is probable that the young person will be in a situation of crisis and may be presenting with behaviours which place themselves and those around them at risk. Some students may have been out of school for significant periods of time.

Ash Meadow school will provide each young person with all-round support. We will ensure a safe environment where their educational, health and social care needs will be met in full, and they will receive the opportunity to achieve their developmental potential.

We provide a protective framework for young people, which ensures that parents and placing authorities have peace of mind when commissioning placements regardless of the young person's vulnerabilities or presenting behaviours.

Ash Meadow School can provide assessment services which identify future need, inclusive of educational provision, healthcare, and social care. Using evidence-based practice and accessing regional and national resources, we can provide each young person with a broad, balanced, differentiated, and personalised curriculum, inclusive of college transitions and work-based placements, which maximise a young person's ability to reach their full educational potential.

Ash Meadow School has a fully equipped First Aid room where students can receive emergency assistance in the event of an accident or illness. There are a number of First Aid boxes located around the school and a defibrillator is held in the office in the case of an emergency. Our staff are fully trained in a number of first aid certificates including First Aid at Work, Emergency First Aid and Paediatric First Aid. There are also Mental Health First Aiders to support if required. More information is available from the school office (01744 416007) where you can request a First Aid Policy.

If your child or the young person you support has English as an additional language, please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01744 416007 where further information can be provided including our English as an Additional Language policy. We are a fully inclusive school and will endeavour to support all communication needs.

The school is registered with the Department of Education (Independent Schools) No:

If you require any further information then please contact Vicky Tijani, our Head of School on 07595449171.

<b>Age range of students</b>	<b>5 - 19 years</b>
<b>Registered for</b>	<b>35 students</b>
<b>Annual fees vary considerably dependent on individual need (day pupils)</b>	<b>From £53, 984.58</b>
	<b>September 2022 – From £56, 650</b>

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## Education Mission Statement

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***“Awakening Potential - Our Vision is to provide the highest quality education services which are personalised and achievement driven to ensure our students are supported to reach their full potential and achieve the best possible life chances.”***

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Everyone at Ash Meadow School is extremely passionate about achieving our vision and the efforts and achievements of staff and students is exceptional. Our staff teams have devised an Employee Value Proposition which is displayed around the school. They are very proud to share their values with students, families and all stakeholders.

The school offers a broad range of opportunities for students to achieve their potential with academic study, personal relationships and community integration. The school can offer placements to young people with a variety of needs and diagnoses, including Autistic Spectrum Disorders, CAMHS Intervention and Learning Difficulties.

The comprehensive education programme offered to each student, is personalised to meet their individual need, and address in full all recommendations as set out in their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The school provides full access to the National Curriculum, modified and tailored to meet the specific learning needs of all students. It is delivered and monitored by highly trained, experienced teachers and teaching assistants.

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## How will we achieve our mission?

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### **Admissions Policy**

Ash Meadow School is an Independent Special school which is accessed by local education authorities, social services and health services who require an integrated package of education and care or school day placements. Placements are offered to young people by the placing authority and who Ash Meadow School assess as requiring specific interventions. We accept those who have particular sensory integration and require support strategies to focus on self-regulation. We are registered for up to 35 places for students aged 5 – 19 years, which includes day placements.

### **Referral Process**

Before a planned placement is offered at Ash Meadow School, the student will be visited in their home/placement environment. Once it is agreed that our school can meet the needs of the young person, a pre-admission review meeting will take place, to finalise the details of individual care, education and behaviour support plans. A bespoke transition plan will be formulated with the school, family and support teams to ensure a smooth, seamless transition.

## **Partnership, Safeguarding and Staffing**

There are many partners in the process of educating and caring for our students. Therefore, we aim: -

- To foster close partnership working with Local Authorities.
- To work together, in close co-operation with parents, keeping them fully informed on the progress of their child and the life of the school.
- To provide home/school diaries, parents workshops, class Dojo (online feedback and support for families/school) coffee mornings and open days to offer a support and information service for families.
- To visit the homes of our students, as necessary, to provide an extension and consistency of support in their education.
- To provide support and advice on strategies which may be introduced into the home to support family life.
- To maintain the fullest possible links with our local schools and colleges.
- To work closely as a multi-disciplinary team with other associated agencies e.g., therapists, psychologists, social workers, careers officers etc.

## **Safeguarding Students/Vulnerable Adults**

Parents/carers should be aware that the school will take any reasonable action to ensure the safety of its students. In cases where the school has reason to be concerned that a child may be subject to ill treatment, neglect or any other form of abuse, staff will act immediately and inform the relevant people as set out in the school safeguarding policies and procedures.

The designated person for Child Protection/Safeguarding at Ash Meadow School is Ruth Clifford, **Safeguarding Lead/ Executive Head. Vicky Tijani, Head of School, is our Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Bright Futures Care Ltd Safeguarding Officer is Caroline Davies. They can be contacted via email or telephone as follows:**

[Ruth.clifford@brightfuturescare.co.uk](mailto:Ruth.clifford@brightfuturescare.co.uk) 07540014868

[Vicky.tijani@brightfuturescare.co.uk](mailto:Vicky.tijani@brightfuturescare.co.uk) 07595449171

[Caroline.davies@brightfuturescare.co.uk](mailto:Caroline.davies@brightfuturescare.co.uk) 07801340755

To create a happy, caring environment we strive to provide a highly skilled, caring and enthusiastic staff team, therefore we aim: -

- To work together as an effective team within which each member is recognised and valued as an important part of the school community.
- To involve staff in the decision-making processes of the school.
- To offer a programme of induction, in-service training and staff development that will enable all staff to develop and extend their skills.

All staff are rigorously checked against the Disclosure and Barring Service Records prior to employment and regularly re-checked. Safeguarding training is provided both at induction and at regular intervals during their employment.

Copies of all school policies are available to parents, social workers and LEA representatives from the school office on request and there are a number of additional policies on the website including Promoting Good Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Complaints Policy.

Our policy on Safeguarding is available to download from the school website or upon request from the school office.

## **Behaviour Support**

Ash Meadow School has a positive approach when managing challenging and inappropriate behaviour and has access to the Bright Futures Care Ltd. company Positive Behaviour Support Team. We recognise the challenges that face our young people and take a holistic approach in understanding the individual, their autism and their specific needs. Positively managing behaviour begins with the analysis of the function of challenging or inappropriate behaviour and continues with the design of a proactive strategy to help the individual develop skills to manage their own behaviour. We use a range of different strategies to support the individual including teaching coping strategies and relaxation techniques, supporting the individual to substitute more appropriate behaviour and rewarding desirable behaviour by praise and the use of positive reinforcement. Each student will have an individualised Behaviour Support Plan to support their behaviour which will outline proactive teaching strategies and reactive strategies to ensure the individual's safety. Ash Meadow School has adopted the 'Team-Teach' approach using de-escalation and positive management techniques. This approach provides us with positive handling strategies enabling planned, systematic and graded approaches that are effective, safe and the least intrusive as possible. We believe that the Team Teach Approach helps individuals in learning to make choices and to begin to take control of their behaviour. Further details of Team Teach may be obtained from the Team Teach Foundation.

A copy of the school's Physical Intervention Policy is available to all parents, social workers and LEA representatives from the school office on request.

## **Measurement and Celebration of Progress**

At Ash Meadow School we have high expectations of our students in all areas of their learning and lives. We celebrate their achievements and progress in a multitude of ways to help build self-esteem and sense of achievement. As a school we strive to ensure that their work receives recognition regardless of ability but with a focus on effort and self-actualisation.

Each individual has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). Several assessments support the ongoing recording of progress and contribute to person centred planning including 'Evidence for Learning' which is an assessment tool that captures and assesses engagement and learning with tools to support a holistic approach. Learning goals and achievements are celebrated and supported for each individual through National Accreditation including the EQUALS Award schemes, ASDAN programmes, accredited learning programmes that lead to Level 5 GCSE and other relevant award bodies. Every year, at Ash Meadow School, we hold an Awards Ceremony and end of year Prom on the school grounds where students receive

awards for recognition of their excellent achievements in both academic and social progress.

## **Bullying**

Our school provides a nurturing environment where students and staff members are encouraged to respect each other's beliefs, choices, personal space and privacy. This allows everybody to feel safe and comfortable when interacting both inside and outside of the school.

To sustain our nurturing ethos and environment, we encourage positive behaviour through role modelling, careful matching of young people and staff to the school and by promoting a shared set of standards and expectations of behaviour. Celebrating our student's positive behaviour and achievements remains our primary means of promoting their social and emotional development and community inclusion. Our students have formulated a 'Student Value Proposition' which can be found on the school website and includes areas such as learning and friendship with associated standards and expectations.

It is very important that our students can communicate their concerns or anxieties regarding the behaviour of others, in particular any incidence of bullying. We, therefore, ensure that staffing arrangements are in place to deter bullying from occurring in the school and to ensure that no incidence of bullying could go unnoticed or unchallenged. Peer-on-peer abuse is taken extremely seriously, and we provide discrete sessions to make sure that our students understand what to do and who to speak to when they need help or support. We ensure that each student has effective communication skills and contact points, both internal and external to the school to support their concerns and promote a sustainable culture of positive behaviour within our environment.

We regard every behaviour and situation as a positive learning opportunity for students and those supporting them. We do not use any sanction or reparation which is designed to punish or achieve compliance from students at any time. It is of primary importance that any consequences in place to support behaviours, including bullying, are sensitive to the student's age, level of understanding and personal dignity.

Where the behaviour of a student compromises the safety and well-being of others, we will look to identify strategies, support and resources that can help them to continue with their school studies, community activities and daily routines in a positive way.

## **Risk Assessment**

Ash Meadow School Leadership Team recognise that to effectively control risks and prevent harm to people, Health & Safety needs to be managed to the highest of standards. Visible and active leadership promotes a positive Health & Safety culture and active participation from all staff encourages success. All students have individual risk assessments, the information of which is used to plan educational visits, organise lunchtimes or seating in class and level of support that is required for different activities. Risk assessments for visits are put in place as appropriate and additional risks are monitored by staff throughout.

## **Exclusions**

The school does not exclude students from education. Should a student cause a concern in terms of safety to themselves and/ or others, or become excessively anxious in a group situation, then they can be taught in an alternative classroom. This is monitored and targets for reintegration in the class situation are set. If a placement is deemed to have become unsuitable for a young person, then a review with outside agencies and the placing authorities is requested. The policy on exclusions is available from the Ash Meadow School Office.

## **Procedure for Making Complaints**

If a student, parent or any other adult involved with our students should need to make a complaint, representations can be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy at Ash Meadow school, Ruth Clifford or Vicky Tijani, or the Chief Executive Officer, Daniel Jones, or Bright Futures Care Safeguarding Officer, Caroline Davies. Facilities exist for both formal and informal complaints to be processed within the school's complaints procedure. Further information is provided within Ash Meadow School Complaints and Representations Policy which is available on request from the school office or from our website.

As many of our young people experience communication difficulties, strategies have been developed to communicate any celebrations, grievance or concerns our students may have, e.g., a weekly feedback sheet, review reports and complaint forms. All forms produced are available within our Total Communication Approach, including augmentative devices, written word, symbols or PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) format.

## **School Uniform**

Students are required to wear school uniform during the academic day. The uniform consists of: -

- navy polo shirt (available from the school office),
- royal blue sweatshirt (available from the school office),
- dark grey trousers/ skirt or pinafore, blue gingham summer dress
- black shoes.
- Pale blue PE t-shirts (available from the school office) and navy shorts and pumps.
- Royal blue book bags (available from the school office)
- Royal blue PE bags (available from the school office)

We fully understand that some students have sensory regulation needs that may impact on their ability to tolerate materials in certain clothing. In these situations, we will work closely with families and care teams to ensure that the student wears clothing that makes them feel comfortable and safe. We will then work on addressing their tolerance levels at a pace that does not cause any increased anxiety.

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## Organisation of the school day

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### School Hours

#### Key Stage 1 & 2

Morning: 09.00 to 12.00 (including morning break)

Afternoon: 13.00 to 15.15 (including afternoon break)

#### Key Stage 3, 4 and 5

Morning: 09.15 to 12.30

Afternoon: 13.30 to 15.25

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## Curriculum Offers

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At Ash Meadow School we have three main strands to our curriculum. These are: -

- Sensory Curriculum (All Stages)
- Formal Curriculum (Key Stages 1 – 3)
- Pathways Curriculum (Key Stage 4)
- Post 16 Curriculum

All of our curriculums teach and support students in their ability to experience and learn valuable skills including independence skills, social skills, mental health and well-being, creative skills, aesthetic skills, skills in sexual and relationships education (SRE), British Values and Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) aspects to learning and life.

### The Sensory Curriculum

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As part of the Sensory Curriculum, we offer our students a range of thematic approaches to learning including Communication, Independence, Structured and Sensory Free Play/ Leisure Time, Life Skills, Physical Wellbeing, Outdoor School (*including The World about me/ Scientific knowledge*), Creativity (*including Drama, Art and Music*).

At Ash Meadow School, as part of our Sensory Curriculum, we have adapted the EQUALS semi-formal curriculum to suit the needs of our learners with Autism and/or severe learning difficulties who may be lateral learners for a significant number of years. The curriculum is developmental in nature and open to personalisation. At Ash Meadow School we recognise that some students may remain learning within the Sensory Curriculum for a significant amount of time and therefore it is not directly related to either age or key stage although there are clear, personalised progression routes. Some students may move into National Curriculum learning in some areas, such as Art, but may remain within the sensory curriculum for other areas of learning. The aim is to ensure that all learning is completely personalised and bespoke to meet individual needs.

## The Curriculum Offer at Key Stage 1 & 2

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All of our students follow a key stage or developmentally appropriate thematic curriculum which incorporates the foundation subjects and where suitable, may also link to the core subjects and the national curriculum. Careful planning and schemes of work ensure that there is a breadth and balance of subjects being taught across the year, including life skills and sex and relationships education, and health education including personal care, health and mental well-being at a level that is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the individual. Our students are taught basic health and safety by an external accreditor and experience safety in the home such as fire safety and basic first aid. Our curriculum is further enriched through specialist provision such as art tutors and sports coaches.

Ash Meadow School follows the Jolly Phonics programme, and we may add to this if any of our students require additional or alternative phonics support. Ash Meadow School is a specialist provision for communication and interaction and our staff are highly skilled in utilising a range of communication methods to support students to access the curriculum, examples include Makaton, PECS, objects of reference (OOR), sensory cues and alternative augmentative communication aids such as Speak for Yourself Application on an iPad or equivalent. We adopt a total communication approach and commission Shine Therapy Services who assess the speech and language and sensory needs of our students and work with our teachers to develop plans that are bespoke to individual needs.

Learning is broken down into small, achievable steps to ensure success and promote further development. All achievements are celebrated weekly, during our 'Celebration Assembly' meetings and there is a personalised reward system in place.

Our specialised teaching team has adopted a thematic approach to the curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 & 3. This approach has several potential advantages:

- It can reduce pressure on the timetable to allow more time for the Core Curriculum areas.
- There is an overwhelming child-centred focus.
- It will help generalise skills and support students to transfer learning.
- Students will link learning with increased independence and fluency.
- Increased flexibility of thinking.
- Learning will be more practical.
- It can be a powerful vehicle to promote cross-curricular skills including independence and the key skill areas of ICT, communication, problem solving (resilience), teamwork and improving own performance & learning.

The following subjects are taught at Key Stage 1 & 2:

- English/ Phonics
- Communication/ Phonics

- Mathematics
- Science
- ICT
- PSHE
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Art/ DT
- Food technology
- Music
- Sport
- Sensory Hub curriculum visits
- Swimming
- Options – one afternoon a week, students are given the opportunity to choose between a range of activities.

### **The Curriculum Offer at Key Stage 3**

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Throughout Key Stage 3 we promote an ethos that provides a basis for more independent learning. The students receive a broad, balanced, relevant, differentiated curriculum which promotes academic, social and emotional growth.

Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum to encourage our students to link learning and transfer their skills from the classroom to community situations such as using their skills from a maths lesson to pay for their swimming lesson each week.

The following subjects are taught at Key Stage 3:

- English/ Phonics
- Communication/ Phonics
- Mathematics
- Science
- ICT
- PSHE including Relationships and Sex Education, Health Education
- Drama
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Art / DT
- Food technology
- Music
- Sport
- Swimming
- Equals 'Moving On' (*Nationally Accredited 5-year course for 14 years plus*)
- Options – one day per week students are given the opportunity to choose between a range of activities.

- Enrichment and Careers/ Connexions - Transition planning takes place later in Year 9 with Connexions who advise on relevant courses, work experience and future work-based training, including College placements.

### **Pathway Curriculum (Key Stage 4)**

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Whilst our Key Stage 4 students continue to have a broad and balanced curriculum including the core and foundation subjects, they also benefit from a progressive work-related learning programme which incorporates Enterprise, World of Work, enrichment and work experience which takes place at our school and in the local community. During Enrichment Day our students choose from a range of subjects to establish if they would like to further their studies or career in that area such as photography, hair and beauty, nursing, teaching, astronomy etc. Students are accredited for their work across the curriculum through a range of sources such as a plethora of ASDAN qualifications and Equals 'Moving On' 14 plus. Our Pathways Curriculum provides the building blocks in preparation for transition into a mainstream, employment, work experience or college provision.

At Ash Meadow School we strive to provide an engaging, exciting and personalised curriculum which awakens potential and supports our students to excel in their self-esteem and grasp how important they are as members of our school and the wider community. We enter writing competitions to have our work published in Young Writers' Anthologies and display our artwork in local and national galleries. We enter sports competitions with other schools and promote independence throughout all of our activities. If a student, their family or carers, education team and wider support network believe that a mainstream setting would support a student's learning and social development by having a peer group at similar level of development, for instance in their Maths studies, we will either support a full transition or a bespoke transition to a mainstream school. In this situation, we may accompany the student to a local high school so that they can learn with their peers whilst having the comfort and trust of their staff from Ash Meadow School. This support may be stepped up or down depending on the individual student's needs.

The following subjects are taught at Key Stage 4

- English ASDAN
- Communication
- Mathematics ASDAN
- Science ASDAN
- ICT ASDAN
- PSHE including Relationships and Sex Education, Health Education
- Drama
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Art / DT
- Food technology

- Music
- Sport
- Swimming
- Equals 'Moving On' (*Nationally Accredited 5-year course for 14 years plus*)
- Options – one day per week students are given the opportunity to choose between a range of activities.
- Individual interests related qualifications if appropriate.

### **Our Post 16 Curriculum Offer**

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Our post 16 students follow learning programs that are tailored to their individual needs, education, and employment goals. They continue to work on the qualifications in the Key Stage 4 Pathway Curriculum and the overarching elements within the programs include:

- Pathway to Employment
- Pathway to Housing
- Pathway to Health
- Pathway to Friends and Relationships

These pathways include learning functional skills in Mathematics and English, alongside a range of other training to prepare our young people for their adult lives. Other elements of learning could include meaningful work experience, travel training, independent living, and personal skills.

### **Progress and Assessment**

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At Ash Meadow School, the curriculum is based on interactive, individualised programmes and monitored to maximise individual progress. We regularly assess and track each student's progress using 'Evidence for Learning' assessment and B-squared, which include Engagement Model, P Levels and beyond. The teaching breaks down tasks into a series of small steps, each step preparing the way for the next. Success is reinforced using consistent praise and rewards to motivate students, so that segments of learning build into a meaningful 'whole'. This involves:

- specialised classroom organisation (workstations, visual symbols).
- safe spaces outside each classroom.
- individual learning that addresses gaps in learning and builds on skills.
- breaking down tasks into achievable elements.
- a structured and consistent learning environment.
- high levels of classroom support.
- positive reinforcement of correct responses.
- a Total Communication Approach.
- highly trained staff including Autism Training (Bright Futures Care Ltd. is the Autism Education Trust (AET) training provider for the area.

- strategies including TEACCH model (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related Handicapped Students).
- Individual Support Plans.
- Personal Education Plans
- Social Stories.

## **Experiences provided by the curriculum**

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For all students, the curriculum is supported with community activities related to the theme that term. For instance, students will learn about 'places of worship' and visit a place of worship in or around their local community provides experience in the following areas:

- **Linguistic**

Students develop communication skills and increase their use of language through phonics, listening, speaking, reading and writing. They also have the opportunity to study a Modern Foreign Language. Skills that are developed in the classroom are promoted and transferred into real life situations in the community.

- **Mathematical**

Students make calculations and develop understanding and appreciation of relationships and patterns in number and space. They have opportunity to develop their capacity to think logically and to express themselves clearly. Knowledge and understanding of mathematics is developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion. Skills that are developed in the classroom are promoted and transferred into real life situations in the community.

- **Scientific**

Students develop their knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces. They are encouraged to view science as a process of enquiry and to develop associated skills such as observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings at a level that relates to their age and developmental level.

- **Technological**

Students develop a range of technological skills, including the use of ICT; developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products at a level that relates to their age and level of cognitive development.

- **Human and Social**

Students develop an understanding of people and how they interact with their environment; and how human action, both now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. They learn about the main world faiths within Religious Education and PSHE.

- **Physical**

Students develop physical control and co-ordination as well as tactical skills and responses through a range of sporting activities, cycling, sensory regulation and a vast range of experiences. They are encouraged to evaluate and improve on their performance across a range of individual and team sports and activities. They acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health and are supported to transfer the skills and knowledge to situations outside of the school environment.

- **Aesthetic and Creative**

Students have the opportunity to make, compose and invent across within a range of disciplines and through a variety of media. In particular (but not exclusively), subjects such as art, music, dance and drama contribute to this area. During Enrichment sessions, students can express their special interests and make choices to learn about photography, filming, astronomy and a wide range of experiences.

In all aspects of school life, staff will avoid any activity which promotes a partisan political view and will ensure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of students, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. (This is best practice adapted from the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 and DfE guidance)

### **Careers Guidance**

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Connexions become involved as careers advisors and speak to all students from Year 7 onwards at a level that is appropriate to their needs, aspirations and levels of independence. If students are able to work beyond Level 5 of GCSE programmes, they are carefully and sensitively supported to transition to mainstream settings with the support from Ash Meadow staff. Students have the opportunity to learn about different careers and to gather information about training, education and occupations beyond school.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development**

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At Ash Meadow School we recognise that the personal development of our students, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC), plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve and prepares them for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities that life will bring. SMSC development is strongly influenced by the Employee Value Proposition and the Student Value Proposition of our school and almost everything the school does is underpinned by these values. Here at Ash Meadow School, we firmly believe that:

- A variety of opportunities should be made available to our students to enable them to achieve their full potential, breaking down barriers to learning.
- All students will participate in a wide range of activities that will help them

- gain the highest level of independence possible and self-esteem.
- All students should be fully engaged, enjoy and be active participants in their learning.

## **Fundamental British Values**

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Ash Meadow School policies and procedures ensure that teaching is balanced and make certain that the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are fully resected through discrete teaching, assemblies, differentiated planning, including our curriculum offer and bespoke schemes of work. Through expert teaching our students develop:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety.
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence.
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- Developing a depth of understanding about different faiths and lifestyles.
- An acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

## **Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education**

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A high priority is placed on PSHE to include the acquisition of independent living skills to maximise opportunities for self-confidence, social interaction, personal autonomy, self-empowerment, economic well-being, self-advocacy and to enhance life chances. It includes aspects of Health Education including Sex & Relationship Education. We are dedicated to promoting anti-bullying and providing a safe environment for our students. Assemblies and discrete lessons often focus on peer-on-peer bullying and how to deal with such incidents at a level that supports the students understanding. In addition to PSHE, students have access via Individualised Educational Programmes to the wide range of curriculum areas. School policy documents are available to parents, Local Authorities and their representatives on request. The school's curriculum and schemes of work are a dynamic resource and will be continually revised and updated. We have a PSHE Lead teacher who takes responsibility for the overall curriculum and ensures that resources are of the highest standard.

## **Supervision of Students**

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The supervision of students is paramount to ensure that they make the best choices and remain safe, feel safe and trust staff at all times. We have high levels of supervision whilst balancing this carefully to support students in making choices and learning to be as independent as possible. Some students may need one to one support or greater when they join Ash Meadow School, however staff teams are committed to provide students with strategies to manage their anxieties and communicate these in more appropriate ways, thus reducing the level of support they need to manage their anxieties.

## **Total Communication Approach**

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Ash Meadow School utilises a 'Total Communication' approach with the aim of creating strategies, resources and stimulating environments which will develop individuals' non-verbal and verbal communication abilities, facilitate social interaction, attention and understanding, and support emotional development such as self-esteem and self-assertiveness. Total Communication strategies address both receptive and expressive communication and are individualised according to needs. These strategies include the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), objects of reference, Makaton signing, voice output devices such as an iPad with corresponding Speak for Yourself Applications, social stories, visual strategies, physical, gestural and verbal prompts.

**Communication and language development** gives students opportunities to experience a rich language environment; develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical development** provides opportunities for young students to be active and interactive; and develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Students must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

**Personal, social and emotional development** helps students to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; form positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

**Literacy** development and our Jolly Phonics scheme encourages students to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Students must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) which ignite their interest.

**Mathematics** provides students with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and describe shapes, spaces, and measure.

**Understanding the world** guides students to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive arts and design** enable students to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

### **Meeting Special Educational Needs**

All our education staff are specialist teachers and teaching assistants who are experienced in differentiating the National Curriculum for students with a wide range of special educational needs. Instructions given are always simple and clear, presented in a range of ways including verbal/ visual/ symbol, whilst ensuring the learning environment is calm, safe and secure.

Each student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is a working document that is reviewed and updated regularly. The IEP includes small steps towards specific but achievable targets, with opportunities for students to repeat work as necessary and experience recognised success.

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## **The Curriculum**

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The school provides access to the National Curriculum for all students.

### **Sensory**

Many of our students have sensory impairment so they need specialist intervention to develop each of their senses individually and in combination. We aim to provide a stimulating multi-sensory curriculum for all students who will benefit from this approach, which encourages more visual, auditory and tactile experiences. The sensory curriculum is extended and integrated throughout the national curriculum and the individual's waking day.

### **English**

All staff regard good literacy skills as a fundamental requirement for students in achieving their full potential. For young people to learn effectively, staff ensure that work is inspiring, challenging and appropriate to meet individual needs. We have a Literacy Lead teacher who takes responsibility for the overall curriculum and ensures that resources are of the highest standard.

At Ash Meadow School, all staff monitor literacy across the curriculum, as we believe it is the key to:

- improving students' phonological awareness (Jolly Phonics), communication and learning skills
- improving students' performance with reading, writing, speaking and listening skills
- improving students' independent learning skills and increases their life chances.

The school uses ongoing 'Evidence for Learning' assessment and our data is benchmarked with National Cohorts and analysed on an annual basis.

## **Mathematics**

Mathematics is an important part of everyday life and functional numeracy is at the forefront of all mathematical teaching. It is taught to students to equip them with a powerful set of tools including logical reasoning, problem solving and the ability to think in abstract ways.

The scheme of work taught to students at Ash Meadow School is dependent on individual specific educational needs. This in turn dictates the rate of learning, topics, resources to be used and teaching methods employed.

Mathematical experiences involve individual / group work and incorporate a variety of problem-solving activities and resources, including books, calculators and mathematical equipment. Students learn to record their work in different formats, dependent on the mathematical activity. This helps to focus students' thoughts and provide a means of communicating with others. We have a Maths Lead teacher who takes responsibility for the overall curriculum and ensures that resources are of the highest standard.

## **Science**

Small group work and separate teaching allows us to develop each student individually. Science work is based on the National Curriculum and we aim to engage in topics using investigations which require the students to predict and form hypotheses based on their knowledge and abilities.

We are able to use the environment, the internet, visit exhibitions and places which link topics to augment practical work in class.

## **Art and Craft**

Art provides students with a wide range of experiences to develop their practical skills and to develop their awareness of various types of artwork. In each Key Stage, students undertake activities which provide a range of visual, tactile and sensory experiences, and allow students to experiment using different media. At Ash Meadow School, we want Art to encourage freedom of self-expression, enhance self-esteem and provide a cultural base by studying individual artists and genres.

## **Information Communication Technology (ICT)**

Students are encouraged to use Information Communication Technology to enhance their learning and motivation. The school is wholly committed to the use of computers across the curriculum and provides students with the opportunity to use the Internet and full multi-media PC equipment including iPads to complement learning.

In each Key Stage, ICT is approached in a practical child-centred manner. The study of ICT enables our students to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world by being actively involved in experiencing, investigating and manipulating information in a variety of forms.

## **Personal, Health, Social, Economic (PSHE)**

A high priority is placed on PSHE to include the acquisition of independent living skills to maximise opportunities for self-confidence, social interaction, personal autonomy, self-empowerment, economic well-being, self-advocacy and to enhance life chances. It includes aspects of Health Education including Sex & Relationship Education.

In addition to PSHE, students have access via Individualised Educational Programmes to the wide range of curriculum areas. School policy documents are available to parents, Local Authorities and their representatives on request. The school's curriculum and schemes of work are a dynamic resource and will be continually revised and updated. We have a PSHE Lead teacher who takes responsibility for the overall curriculum and ensures that resources are of the highest standard.

## **Modern Foreign Languages**

Modern Foreign Languages is taught in all Key Stages by both discrete teaching sessions and additional themed weeks. Students are introduced to foreign languages using a variety of teaching styles, communication techniques and media, encompassing geographical awareness, cultural similarities and differences, and food technology, with basic vocabulary. In our Key Stage 1 department, our students engage in music, food, dance and other cultural aspects of Modern Foreign Languages such as colour and number.

## **Humanities – History, Religious Education (RE) and Geography**

History, RE and Geography are delivered under the umbrella of Humanities through a structured thematic approach. Our history curriculum encourages students to ask and answer questions about past and present events. In Geography, we teach students about the world they live in and the significance of global issues. We teach our students about other religious festivals and celebrations in our RE topics. Students within all Key Stages study and develop an awareness of differing religions from around the world with a focus on the 'Calendar of Culture' which encompasses a wide range of celebrations. Classes visit local places of worship to extend their knowledge of other beliefs and guest speakers are invited in to share their experiences with the students. As many young people placed at Ash Meadow School have diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, it is important to investigate and attain an understanding of the multi-cultural and ethnic society in which we live. Studies encompass local and global diversity, including issues of disability and social inclusion.

## **Design and Technology and Food Technology**

Both subject areas are delivered within a half day or full day activity programme, depending on the needs of the young people, and during our structured themed weeks. Students investigate, design and make a range of functional items from given briefs that are related to real situations. Every student will experience the satisfaction of planning, developing and realising a finished product.

## **Music**

Our students are exposed to music from different cultures through both listening and hands-on experience. These experiences are provided via talks and visits, instrument workshops, sensory experiences and discreet lessons. In Key Stage 1 & 2, music is integrated into the daily lessons, where students sing and sign as a group and are introduced to new topics through song. We aim to encourage an understanding and enjoyment of music through delivery of the subject.

### **Record of Achievement**

Through the Record of Achievement, the school provides a framework to enable students to plan and manage their own learning and personal development.

The Record of Achievement File is a useful tool to assist young people with post 16 planning. It incorporates:

- material that helps young people to think about their achievement
- a professional file to store qualifications, achievements and experiences
- a 'presenter' that can be used to take selected evidence to an interview
- photographs of seminal moments and experiences.

At Ash Meadow School, we constantly encourage our students to engage with others and celebrate their achievements. We strive to include students in the decision-making process and self-assessment which, in turn, improves their self-confidence and esteem.



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## Assessment, reporting and recording

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### Assessment

At Ash Meadow School, the curriculum is based on interactive, individualised programmes and monitored to maximise individual progress. We regularly assess and track each student's progress using 'Evidence for Learning' assessment, which includes the Engagement Model, P Levels and beyond. The teaching breaks down tasks into a series of small steps, each step preparing the way for the next. Success is reinforced using consistent praise and rewards to motivate students, so that segments of learning build into a meaningful 'whole'. This involves:

- specialised classroom organisation (workstations, visual symbols).
- individual learning that addresses gaps in learning and builds on skills.
- breaking down tasks into achievable elements.
- a structured and consistent learning environment.
- high levels of classroom support.
- positive reinforcement of correct responses.
- Individual Communication Strategies.
- Highly trained staff including Autism Training.
- strategies including TEACCH model (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related Handicapped Students).
- Individual Support Plans.
- Personal Education Plans.
- Social Stories.

### Reporting and Recording

On admission, a full educational baseline assessment is undertaken. Education staff provide reports based on academic ability, developmental progress and behaviour. Education reports are completed at the end of each term and a more extensive report is completed at the end of each year in July.

'Evidence for Learning' reports are updated each half term and they inform teachers of the progress each student has made and identify future planning. The data is fed into 'Evidence for Learning' to analyse progress and identify any areas for improvement. Formative testing is carried out regularly to test the core subject areas.

An annual update of each student's Education, Health, Care Plan (formerly Statement of Educational Need) is held with placing authorities, education representatives and parents, reviewing targets for the preceding and setting new ones for the coming year. These reports form an integral part of the LAC (Looked After Children) review process.

### Reviews

A full education report is provided for each review, including assessment data, a Curriculum Map for the term, IEP, Speech and Language report and a 'My Voice' education sheet completed by the student which expresses their views on their education.

## **Therapy Assessments**

Each student has a thorough Speech and Language assessment and Occupational Therapy assessment carried out by Shine Therapy Specialists, who are commissioned to work with Bright Futures Care Ltd. for several days per week. The therapists work closely with staff throughout the education and residential settings to develop a total communication approach which will fully support the young person in all settings.

The aim is to create strategies, resources and stimulating environments which will develop students' non-verbal and verbal communication abilities, facilitate social interaction, attention and understanding, and support emotional development such as self-esteem and self-assertiveness.

The therapists work in consultation with families, educational and residential staff to provide individualised communication programmes for each young person. Augmentative Devices, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Makaton, Objects of Reference, Photographs and Visual Schedules are all used to support and encourage students to communicate at their most sophisticated level.

## **Extra-curricular Activities (After school and lunchtime)**

Students are encouraged to choose from a range of lunchtime and after school clubs to add some structure to their free time. Most of the clubs have been suggested by the students and are regularly added to, depending on individual requests. We have a pastoral/ inclusion team who takes responsibility for organising and delivering lunchtime games and ensures that resources are of the highest standard.

## **Outreach Service**

Ash Meadow School is part of a much wider community. As part of the education service, we offer our day students and their families an Outreach programme which is designed to offer extra-curricular activities that are of particular interest to the student. The Outreach programme is an extension of school activities and is designed to further enrich their lives in the community and support families by providing opportunities for young people to develop social skills in and around the local community.

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## Contact Ash Meadow School

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Ash Meadow School is easily accessible from any part of the Northwest region and is approximately 4 kilometres (2.5 miles) from Rainhill Stoops, Junction 7 of the M62. Ash Meadow School is ideally located to access the facilities of a wide range of neighbouring authorities including Warrington, Halton, and Liverpool.



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Ash Meadow School is owned by Bright Futures Care Ltd.

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