



# Parent and Carer Guide



## A welcome from the Head Teacher, Miss Ford

**Olsen House is unique and the curriculum is structured to each young person's individual needs to give them the maximum chance of success.**

Our staff team are trained with the skills, knowledge and experienced to work successfully and effectively with young people who have been out of school for some time and disengaged from education.

Our team are all Autism Education Trust Qualified and we have an excellent track record of working positively with young people on the autism spectrum. The school provides first rate education and wraparound support to ensure every student realises their full potential.



The Bluebird ASC Provision at Olsen House School

## Message from the staff team

We celebrate success, support young people in their life choices and help them find stability and purpose by exploring and enabling them to do the things they enjoy while learning.

Olsen House is a vibrant and welcoming day school we provide effective educational solutions for young people affected by social emotional and mental health difficulties.

Our school has a science laboratory, art and design room, computing and technology suite, a brand new food technology kitchen, therapeutic intervention room and a literacy and numeracy nurture base. There is plenty of space to learn and discover new things and some quiet space too should your child needs some time to think or work independently. The Bluebird ASC provision is there for pupils on the autistic spectrum and those that learn better in a calming space.

The school supports children and young people with various educational and social needs, some of which are associated with the challenges of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, attachment disorder, autism, dyslexia and dyspraxia. To maximise opportunities for pupils at Olsen House, education and support are provided in very small class sizes.

The school follows the national curriculum where appropriate and each pupil has their own tailored timetable designed to take into account individual educational and learning needs.

Pupils enjoy studying for a wide range of qualifications including functional skills, GCSE's and BTEC, there are both on and offsite learning opportunities.

*The following questions have been developed by and may be of interest to Olsen House School parents and carers.*

## How does the school know if my child needs extra help?

Before your child starts at Olsen House School we receive lots of information which is put together by those who have identified your child as needing more support. This information is called an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and every pupil at the school has one.

We will look at this plan before we meet you and begin working on how we can best educate and support your child. We will then meet with you, your child, your child's social worker, if they have one and together we will find out what works best for your child and how they like to learn. From this meeting we will create a learning and development package which is right for your child.

## How will the school staff support my child?

When your child arrives at the school will look at where they are up to in their education and, by completing some baseline assessments, we will plan realistic targets together with your child. Not every child find it easy to come in to a new school and as a team we offer a stepped approach to a new school environment. Your child's teacher, tutor and keyworker will work with your child to set targets to develop their learning and development targets. They will keep you well informed of your child's progress throughout the year.

If your child needs extra support we may use external help from our school educational psychologist, speech and language therapist or school nurse. All input from these people is monitored and assessed regularly to ensure that it is the most effective support we can give.

Olsen House School is part of the Kedleston Group. The Kedleston Governing Body visit the school regularly and make sure that standards in education, safeguarding and health, safety and welfare are compliant at all times.



*We measure your child's progress against their targets and make sure that they are kept up to date in each lesson through personal learning outcomes and annual reviews of their overall progress.*

## How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

The school follows the national curriculum where appropriate and each pupil has their own tailored timetable designed to take into account individual educational and learning needs.

To maximise opportunities for pupils at Olsen House School, education and support are provided in very small class sizes. Pupils enjoy studying for a wide range of qualifications including functional skills, GCSE's and BTEC, there are both on and offsite learning opportunities.

## How will I know how my child is progressing?

Your child will have an individual plan for their education and behaviour, with their targets clearly shown.

We measure your child's progress against their targets and make sure that they are kept up to date in each lesson through personal learning outcomes and annual reviews of their overall progress.

We will ask your child to tell us what they think about their progress.

Each term we send a report home with updated information about how your child is doing we will also talk with you about their progress at our termly parent's mornings.

## How can I get involved in supporting my child's learning?

When your child is referred to Olsen House School you are invited to come and visit as part of the placement process. You will be given the name of your child's tutor and keyworker and they will be the main point of contact for you if they need to talk to someone at school.

Each year there are termly open days for parents, carers and professionals, to access the school and meet those involved in your child's education. This provides all of the people involved with your child an opportunity to discuss personal and social progress as our Educational Psychologist and Speech & Language Therapist will also be present on these days. On the parent days we endeavour to deliver updates to you on our latest practices and on topics such as Learning Outside the Classroom award, Department for Education changes in policy, keeping children safe and other current issues.

You are welcome to contact the school at any time to discuss the how you can get involved in school life and the planning of activities and trips.

## What support does the school offer for my child's overall wellbeing?

When your child arrives at the school they will be assigned a keyworker who will give your child pastoral support during the school day. They will guide your child to make positive choices about their education, behaviour and planning for their own future.

At school we follow the five steps to wellbeing and where possible incorporate them into our curriculum. Our learning Outside the Classroom approach to education means that the pupils spend time being active, engaging in the community and visiting new and interesting places of cultural significance. Many studies have proven evidence that this approach raises children's sense of personal wellbeing.

If your child is identified as needing some extra support, they will be assessed by one of our therapists as early as possible. The school offers Solution Focus Brief Therapy with trained key workers, educational psychology, speech and language therapy, Lego Therapy and access to occupational therapy. The school has many specialist services and expertise they can access such as the school nurse, SRE advisors and Careers Connex.



## What training do the staff supporting pupils at the school have?

The team are all Autism Education Trust level 2 Qualified, and we have an excellent track record of working positively with young people on the autism spectrum. Two members of the staff are Level 3 trained and lead on accessibility at the school. All teaching staff are trained with the skills and experienced to work successfully with young people who have been out of school for some time and disengaged from education. Every member of staff is trained in safeguarding and child protection and the school has 3 members of staff trained as designated safeguarding leads.

All keyworkers have been trained to deliver Solution Focused Brief Therapy to the pupils to help the pupils plan for better choice making. Our Educational Psychologist is trained to deliver programmes of support for pupils with dyslexia and works in partnership with our literacy coordinator. Our Pastoral manager has Positive Management of challenging behaviour training and leads the team.

## What types of activities are available outside the classroom for my child?

All Physical Education is held offsite and includes visits to climbing hangers, Crosby Leisure Centre and Gym, Crosby Lakeside Activity Centre and the local all-weather football pitches.

The pupils regularly visit galleries, museums and have the chance to work with the staff at these establishments. There are visits to the theatre and cinema which are frequently used to support the your child's learning.

## How will the school support my child to start college or training?

Your child will be given the opportunity to begin college and vocational courses while they are with us. This makes the change from schooling to college or training less of a leap. Some of our older pupils already do this.

Our school advisor works with you and your child from year nine onwards to make sure they gain the qualifications needed for the type of college or training course they want. They will also support you and begin some work with your child from year seven.

We will make sure that as much help and planning is in place before your child moves on to college, training or the workplace.

## Who decides what type and how much support my child will receive?

The support your child will receive at school will be based on the recommendations from their statement or EHCP, your input as parents or carers and baseline assessments when your child first arrives at school. The type and level of support is planned by members of the senior management team, the support professionals, educational psychology, speech and language therapy and key workers.

The decision is not just be made by the school alone but with input from you as parents or carers and also in consultation with your child. If your child's needs change and are different from the recommendations on their original plan then we will consult with your education authority to see how we can access more help.

You will be involved all the way through the process and will receive updates about your child's progress. There will be regular reviews of support plans for your child to assess the impact of the support. From these reviews we can plan whether to reduce support, increase it or make a new plan. There will be targets in every plan that are measurable and this is how we can track the progress being made.



## Ofsted rated us as GOOD in our 2017 inspection, these are some of the things they said about us:

- Parents are very satisfied with the school and speak with enthusiasm about how the staff nurture their children and support their learning. This is summed up by a typical comment that the school is ‘second to none’.
- The strong leadership of the Head Teacher, ably supported by the Deputy Head Teacher, has created a clear vision and direction in driving the school forward.
- The committed and effective staff team share the vision to create a school where pupils’ needs are at the forefront of everyone’s work.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. Almost all pupils achieve their targets and most exceed them. All pupils continue into further education or training.
- The focus on pupils’ personal development is excellent. The promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through all learning activities.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for. They indicate that there is little or no bullying and they feel well informed about how to keep themselves safe.
- The school provides a wide range of therapeutic practices along with academic subjects. A speech and language specialist provides one-to-one support for students who have communication difficulties so that they gain confidence and make good progress.
- Students very much enjoy the presence of Henry, the therapy dog, who brings an aura of calm enthusiasm to the corridors and classrooms.

Olsen House School has prepared a parent and carer information pack for you, which you will receive once your child has enrolled at Olsen House School.

## If you have any questions or concerns you can speak to us at any time.

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