



# Gretton School's Residential Provision Statement of Purpose 2023 - 2024



## Gretton School

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# Welcome to Gretton School

At Gretton School we believe that every student must be provided with opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, academically and physically to achieve the highest possible outcomes.

All of our children and young people have a diagnosis of Autism, some with additional diagnoses too. The school is set up to support each individual to reach their very significant potential. Young people are encouraged to expand their life and social skills to enhance their independence, self image and social skills for the future.

We provide residential accommodation for 14 young people. The school itself can support up to 150 students aged 5-19. The residential accommodation is split between 5 houses. Each house accommodates 2 or 3 young people.

Each week we produce a newsletter so students and families can see what has happened in the week and what is going to happen in coming weeks.



# How we support young people in Gretton's residential accommodation

Each young person has an individualised care and support plan, which is produced in conjunction with families and the young people themselves. Prior to starting at Gretton young people are sent a blank version of the support plan to complete with their families. This version will then be used for the first few weeks of the transition period. We recognise that young people may have high levels of anxiety when first starting here so they may not be able to discuss the support they need initially.

We endeavour to ensure that we achieve compatible groups of young people within each house, should this not work out opportunities to review and redress these are made.

Staff nurture individual relationships with the young people and these are based on respect and positive regard. Staff are curious about young people's interests and will make space for particular wants and needs. This can help to make young people feel safe in an unfamiliar setting. Daily routines are made as flexible as possible to suit the needs and preferences of each young person.

All boarders have their own bedroom which they are able to lock if they want to. Each room has cupboard space, a wardrobe and a desk. Young people are encouraged to personalise their rooms with pictures, photos, or belongings from home to help them feel at ease in unfamiliar surroundings. Each house also consists of a shared bathroom, laundry room, kitchen, dining area and lounge. These areas are decorated in a warm and homely manner and young people also participate in the decoration of these shared spaces. We are able to wash young people's clothes within the houses and clothes do not need to be named.

Most houses also have a room allocated for staff to enable them to carry out Sleep-in duties to ensure that there is always someone on hand to support the young people in case of any emergency overnight. Where this is not possible, the young people are supported overnight by waking Night Support staff. Each house also has an area for the storage and administration of medication.



There is a main school kitchen and dining room where the young people eat lunch during their school day. During non-school hours, all meals are prepared and cooked in each house. Staff encourage young people to join in with the food preparation and shopping for ingredients. We are able to support individual needs and preferences around food.



If a young person has a hobby or special interest they would like to continue from home, we will accommodate this where possible, this may mean that we are able to support the young person to join a local club. We also support young people to try out and develop new interests. These activities may include the gym, climbing, Dungeons and Dragons, Warhammer or going to the theatre, to name but a few.

It is really important to us that everyone at Gretton has a voice. All young people have the opportunity to speak with an independent advocate who visits throughout the year to speak to the boarders and gain their views on a range of school- and boarding-related issues. This can also be an opportunity for young people to share any concerns they have with someone external to the school in case this is needed.

It is essential that the young people we support have a voice and have a say in how the provision is run. Young people are invited to attend regular meetings to discuss relevant topics and also raise any concerns they may have. Young people will also spend time with their keyworker to express their views and concerns, and discuss their targets. Each young person is allocated a member of the staff team to be their keyworker. This person can be a direct contact for parents and carers and offer support to the young person whilst staying at Gretton.

All staff in the residential team work together to provide a supportive, relaxing and safe environment for the residential students.



# Young People's Education

All young people will be provided with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which takes into account the needs identified on their EHC plan. This curriculum is made up of four key layers in order to take account of the individuality of learners and their unique learning profiles:

## Core

Our core curriculum consists of a wide range of subjects, in line with national curriculum recommendations, which we offer from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 5. These subjects are differentiated to take account of learners' gaps in education, spiky learning profiles and interests, so that learners at any level are able to achieve qualifications in secondary (from Year 8 onwards in some subjects) to support them to move on to their chosen destination after Gretton. Learners are in small learning groups (of no more than 10) with a teacher and at least one Teaching Assistant; as such, they are able to learn in quiet calm environments with staff that get to know them well and support their individual learning styles. The curriculum is well differentiated, so learners are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability and are supported to make good progress. If there is a day when learners are struggling, staff are able to pick up the learning with them at a later date to support catch-up and consolidation.

## Support

Everything we do at Gretton is aimed at supporting learners to achieve academically. Sometimes, learners need a more therapeutic approach to self-regulation and developing strategies, before they are able to make academic progress; and the support curriculum, which runs throughout the school at all ages and stages, enables learners to develop their learning capacity and abilities as they grow older and move through the school. The Multidisciplinary Team - comprising Occupational Therapy, Art Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, as well as Clinical and Educational Psychology - work with all staff in the school. Their job is to support the embedding of therapeutic approaches within all the classes and to respond where a learner might need more support in order to fully integrate learners into the classroom and learning. As you walk around the school, you are likely to see all sorts of evidence of therapy in the classrooms, from therapeutic furniture to visual prompts and supports to manage emotional regulation.

## Extension

Whilst every learner at Gretton has a full curriculum timetable, we work hard to ensure that we are also offering teaching sessions in a range of other things to support learners to develop their physical, social, emotional and self-help skills. Independent travel, social skills development, careers, Duke of Edinburgh and work experience are delivered at different stages of the school to support this development through fun, engaging and supported activities. We start early at Gretton, working with learners to ensure that they are safe out and about. Independent travel starts from working with learners to be safe on site and, through the years in school, learners will learn the steps to be able to take themselves into town on public transport. This is supported by residential staff, so that learners have experiences of being out and about and experiencing the world around them.

## Enrichment

The enrichment curriculum encompasses all the social opportunities we create for learners to mix with one another, enjoy special interests together, develop their knowledge of wider topics and enjoy the outdoors. We offer a range of sporting activities both within school, such as teacher/student football matches, sports days and golden mile events, as well as those which enable learners to compete in events with other schools. Forest School is offered to

learners up to Year 8 and beyond this age, we encourage learners to become Forest School rangers and work with the young students as mentors. We also take learners on trips and visits, not only to reinforce learning on particular topics, but also to connect with our local community and gain an understanding of the world outside Gretton School.

## Young People's Health

Young people will remain registered with their local home GP. If a health concern is noted or reported whilst the learner is in residential, then parents or carers will be contacted. If the concern is an emergency, then appropriate action will be taken in contacting medical professionals or the young person is taken to the local Accident and Emergency (A&E) department. If the concern is less serious or part of an ongoing concern, then parents will be asked to contact the young person's GP to arrange an appointment.

All medications for the young person are sent into school by the parent or carer. Staff are trained in the administration of medication and there are policies in place to support this. Young people can also be supported to self administer medication, which may be something young people want to work towards as they move through the school.

Young people will also continue to see their local home dentist or optician. Staff can support young people in attending appointments if required.

If young people are receiving support from outside agencies, such as the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) they can be supported to attend online appointments.

We recognise that emotional well being is very important. Young people who come to Gretton have usually had a complicated educational journey. Staff make themselves available to young people to talk about their concerns and worries. Pastoral support is also available for children within the school.



# Positive Relationships

We believe that children communicate their thoughts and feelings through their behaviours and we have a responsibility to try to understand what they are telling us, even if this may not be immediately apparent. It is important to connect with the underlying reasons the child may be behaving in a particular way. Their observable behaviour is grounded in their own experience of Autism and often as a result of coping strategies that they have developed over time, so our job is to support, identify, interpret and redevelop so that a child is able to respond to difficulties and challenges in different, healthier, and safer ways. We also work hard to celebrate the uniqueness of each child and their experience of Autism so that, by the time they graduate from Gretton, they are better able to understand their own Autism, its impacts on themselves as individuals and on those around them.

We recognise that many of the young people placed at Gretton School may have struggled in previous specialist or mainstream placements. Some have experienced early childhood adversity and all have a diagnosis of Autism, with the probability of other co-occurring diagnoses which are likely to have made school feel particularly difficult. We also recognise that previous educational experiences may have resulted in the children and young people at Gretton feeling a sense of shame that they have learned to cover with sometimes aggressive and avoidant behaviour. Our role is to work therapeutically with Autistic learners, to understand the uniqueness of their experience and to build and use healthy and positive relationships to help them develop greater self-esteem and realise that they can make different choices.

We come from a place of curiosity about behaviours, and staff are trained to think carefully about the complexities of a learner's experience in order to try to identify the feelings and thoughts behind the behaviours. Sometimes the feelings that working with a child can bring out in ourselves can give us insight into what the learners are experiencing. If we can - as professionals - understand that our feelings are a reflection of those of the student, it enables us to act in a way that reassures, offers options and empowers the learner.

The combination of relationships, structure, routine, clear boundaries and opportunities for thinking together promotes the development of positive, healthy, safe ways of relating to others. All staff should be aware that children can be abusive towards other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and that the school is vigilant and responsive to these behaviours; we work in an environment where the behaviours of one child can have a direct impact on the feelings of another and we are committed to - rather than removing the causes of anxiety and stress - supporting learners to develop strategies, resilience and the ability to manage the impact of others on their own sense of well being.

We are aware that working in this way with children and young people can take time and that during their time at Gretton, it is likely that all children will go through periods of dysregulation and difficulty. We ask that all stakeholders recognise this and offer support and patience when children who have experienced a period of dysregulation might have an impact on the progress and regulation of their own child.

# Safeguarding, bullying and complaints

All staff at Gretton School receive safeguarding training as part of their induction and then regular refreshers.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Gill Rughoobee:



She is appointed to take the lead in child protection issues in the school.

Emma Nelson, the Head of Care, is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:



There are three other Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in the school; Mrs Paula Dupadlik (left), Mrs Samantha Taylor O'Farrell , Miss Catherine Harrison and Mrs Zoe Copping



Any concern - from a young person, staff member, or anyone who has contact with the young people - is recorded on My Concern. This is a secure and trusted safeguarding software that is used by schools and colleges to record, report and manage the full range of safeguarding, pastoral and wellbeing concerns.

If staff note, or young people disclose, that they feel they are being bullied, this is recorded on the school's bullying log, which is regularly monitored by key staff and actions are implemented to support the young people in this situation. Children and young people with Autism will almost inevitably have some social interaction difficulties at times, so this is an area in which staff are particularly vigilant.



# Residential Staff Team



Emma Nelson is the Head of Care, who has overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the houses. She has worked in residential special schools for the last 25 years. She has a Level 5 qualification in Leadership and Management.



Kevin Hunt is the Deputy Head of Care and supports the day-to-day running of the service. Kevin has worked in residential special schools for 30 years and holds a Level 3 qualification in Caring for Children and Young People.



Nicole Gaw is a Team Leader and has worked at Gretton for a number of years. She also has a Level 3 qualification in education and childcare.

As well as the above staff, each house has a dedicated team of residential support workers (RSWs). The team consists of both male and female staff and they are provided with regular supervisions to ensure that staff are trained, confident and competent in supporting the young people.

The residential houses have a keyworker system. Each young person will have an allocated keyworker who will have regular meetings with the young person. These meetings will involve discussions around their general well-being, specific topics that may have arisen, or any concerns the young person may have.

All staff receive an induction training package, as well as regular staff training that provides them opportunities to develop their skills. Once staff have completed their probation period, they are supported to complete their Level 3 qualification in Residential Childcare.

# Complaints and Concerns

We hope to always be able to discuss concerns as and when they happen; we are committed to developing ongoing open communication with parents and families of our residential students. However, we recognise that things may sometimes go wrong and - when this happens - we also have a complaints policy which parents and young people themselves may use to highlight areas of concern. Complaints can be made verbally or in writing and will be managed in line with the policy. Depending on the reason for the complaint, they may be managed by either the Head of Care or by senior Education staff.

We encourage feedback from young people, families and stakeholders. Yearly surveys will be sent to learners and families to gain their view on different aspects of the school. The feedback is used to support our future development.

# Organisation Structure

