



**Mission Statement and Ethos**

**November 2024**



**THE CHILDHOOD FIRST MISSION**

is to transform the lives of children and young people who suffer emotional & psychological difficulties so that they can relate well to others, fulfil their potential and enjoy life

**OUR EDUCATIONAL VISION**

is for our Young People to become confident, connected and actively involved lifelong learners

We have created a trauma-sensitive school, where we provide safe, healthy, engaging, and challenging learning environments. This involves first learning about each pupils' trauma and how it affects their behaviours and their capacity to learn.​

We have intentionally created a learning atmosphere that supports each student with compassion, teaches resilience and is aspirational. Our secure attachments and trusting, safe relationships enable each student to make progress – academically, socially and emotionally.​

In order to achieve all of the above we need to understand and 'know' our young people as individuals as well as part of a community. There is a period of 'settling' for each young person when they arrive at The Gables during which time the Residential Team get to know the young person and their specific social, emotional and care needs. This information, along with information from the 'state of mind' assessment by the child psychotherapist ensures that the school staff have a broad understanding of the young person's needs before an academic baseline assessment is undertaken. This baseline assessment will highlight any gaps in the young person's learning as well as indicate barriers to learning brought about by their social, emotional and psychological difficulties.

The psychodynamic approach used within the school allows this wide range of adults to work closely with teachers to assess pupils’ individual needs and to support them in becoming successful learners. Induction into the school proceeds in a measured way in order for a young person to build up relationships with the class teacher and support staff. Most often our young people have a poor experience of school and education and our induction strives to overcome many of the barriers to education within the young person. Therefore, induction may be a slow process. Academic work may be carried out in the home setting as well as in the classroom with the teacher, learning support or care worker support. All academic work is underpinned by our Values and Key Competencies which enable the young people to access a broad and balanced curriculum linked to the National Curriculum.

For most of our young people with their experience of instability, trauma and abuse (physical, sexual, psychological & neglect), a period of stability without evidencing academic achievement can be viewed as real and important progress. We believe that experiencing a period of stability which reduces acting out and shows acceptance of support from the Therapeutic Care Team and the School Staff is evidence of clear and necessary progress for this group of young people, despite the fact that there are few or no indications of progress in academic areas.

Our experience and data over the years demonstrates that once young people feel safe within the Greenfields Community many make good progress in Core Subjects as well as in Social and Emotional Development.

We monitor very carefully how each young person is progressing and can track the changes over the course of their placement. An increased focus on tracking the young peoples' progress using multi-disciplinary input enables us to provide better support for the young people in their next steps of learning.

Additionally the young people are effectively supported to develop their own ability to keep themselves and others safe within the learning environment.

As most of our young people come to us with an EHCP there is a tendency for their stated objectives to focus on accessing the National Curriculum and progressing in accordance with age-appropriate levels and national norms. Our vision has more depth and breadth for our young people especially as many of them are functioning at levels below their cohort nationally. Our curriculum uses the National Curriculum to underpin a foundation learning curriculum which offers the young people access to a personalised programme tailored to their needs, interests and aspirations. This takes the form of three main components:

* functional skills
* subject and/or vocational learning
* personal and social development

To support these components we use the ASDAN curriculum development programmes and qualifications which provide for Key Steps (Basic Skills); short accreditation and certificated courses; GCSE comparable qualifications; wider key skills and Personal Learning & Thinking Skills (PLTS).

We want our curriculum to encourage, motivate and engage our young people through the promotion of experiential learning which then makes that learning relevant and transferable.