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OLIVE AP ACADEMY - THURROCK : The Vision



Olive AP Academy - Thurrock moved into a brand new, purpose-built, building in Tilbury in July 2017. This move marked a fresh start for our alternative provision academy and its pupils; providing them with the space and facilities they need to grow and develop as learners. To ensure that our academy provides each of our learners with the confidence and resilience to achieve success, Olive AP Academy – Thurrock (OA-Th) has developed a new vision for the way the academy will work.

Our fundamental belief is that young people with SEMH needs can, and should, succeed in line with their peers. The principle of our work at OA-Th is that, wherever possible, pupils will access our intervention programmes as a preventative, short term or part time, measure to avoid repeated fixed term and permanent exclusions. Our aim is to support each pupil’s smooth and successful transition back into mainstream school and back into their community using DfE’s 2013 statutory guidance for alternative provision as the basis for our work (updated 2016).

What we offer:

Outstanding and highly effective teachers and leaders who deliver an innovative curriculum at KS3 and KS4, which is based on the principles of expeditionary, project based, outdoor and experiential learning. The creative melding of these approaches at OA-Th enables our pupils with SEMH needs to access a rich and enhanced curriculum:

* real life immersion experiences, field work and outdoor learning opportunities
* physical, drama and art therapeutic approaches to learning
* resilience and character building through service to the community
* an “ethic of excellence”; encouraging our pupils to produce “beautiful work”
* learning through head, heart and hands experiences

All our programmes are delivered by staff skilled in working proactively with pupils who may exhibit SEMH needs. We have a robust quality assurance process for our curriculum mapping and delivery, for pupil progress and for the quality of teaching and learning.

**OA- Th KS3 short term programme** will usually last for one term (up to a maximum of two terms for exceptional cases), including induction and reintegration time for pupils who have been permanently excluded from school with pupils being be dual registered. The programme will develop pupils’ social, emotional and mental skills through an integrated and therapeutic curriculum. Literacy and numeracy will remain key focus areas, and will be delivered through learning expeditions linked to the Secondary national curriculum.

**OA-Th KS4 programme** reflects the different nature of the KS4 curriculum pathways and aims to prepare pupils for a range of college and work based options at the end of year 11.

* Part or full time (dual registered Y10 and Y11) programmes offering therapeutic input, accredited pathways and / or vocational pathways. It is anticipated that pupil placements may be for 1 or 2 years. Pupils remain on the home school roll throughout the placement. Half termly reviews will take place and pupil progress and attendance will be tracked robustly including a weekly telephone call to the school. This programme is delivered in collaboration with the pupil’s home school.
* Full time (on OA-Th roll Y11 only) programmes offering a therapeutic input, accredited pathways and / or vocational pathways. Half termly progress reviews will take place to track progress and attendance and readiness for the world of work, education or training.

**Complex needs provision:** To access this provision at OA-Th a pupil will often remain on a school roll for the duration of their OA-Th programme. There may be cases where a pupil with complex needs moves into the LA and is placed temporarily on the roll of OA-Th through the Fair Access arrangements. In these cases, steps will be taken to secure a placement in a mainstream school as soon as possible. Additionally, there may be exceptional cases where some students are placed at OA-Th as a short-term measure (usually for no more than 2 terms) to enable appropriate substantive specialist provision to be found by the Local Authority. Some Year 11 pupils who are hard to place or have complex needs, may also be referred to the Provision to complete their Year 11 programme of study where practicable.

A collaborative approach:

The relationship between a pupil’s home school and OA-Th is crucial to each pupil’s success in order to prevent pupils from developing a sense of isolation from their peers and their school community.

OA-Th aims to proactively support mainstream schools with their inclusion agendas and will be able to offer schools support with a wide range of tailored, preventative programmes for pupils they are concerned about and who are at risk of exclusion. Olive Academies has extensive experience of delivering successful outreach training and support to schools and we hope to launch this service in Thurrock in the near future.

The referral process:

Currently OA-Th is commissioned by the Local Authority to provide 96 FTE places overall; 78 Secondary FTE places and 18 FTE places for complex needs pupils. There are now agreed, clear and published referral procedures for a pupil’s admission to a short-term programme at KS3 or KS4 and no pupil will be admitted outside these procedures.

Prior to a request for an OA-Th intervention place for a pupil, schools will have accessed agreed wider external support for the pupil.

OA-Th pupils are likely to have some or all of the following characteristics:

* Significant SEMH needs which impact on their learning and progress
* Sometimes fragile attendance history and gaps in their education due to exclusion
* Have a range of other agency involvement with them or their families
* Be at risk of exclusion or have been Permanently Excluded
* Benefit from a nurturing approach to underpin their learning

OA-Th acknowledges that there may be occasions when it needs to be named on a pupil’s EHCP. However, this can only happen following an extensive and meaningful consultation in which OA-Th and families are fully involved. All parties must be able to agree that the Academy is an appropriate provision (OA-Th, families, LA) in line with the SEND Code of Practice, and that the appropriateness of the placement will be reviewed termly.

OA-Th does not offer intervention programmes for pupils exhibiting significant mental health issues as these pupils require a different, highly specialist provision to meet their needs.

In the event of a pupil being Permanently Excluded OA-Th will liaise with the excluding school, the LA and the community of schools to support the smooth transition of the pupil into a new school placement. A pupil who has been Permanently Excluded from school will be admitted to OA-Th by the 6th day after the PEx in the event of another school not having been identified (with the ambition of a swift reintegration into a mainstream school). In the event of a pupil with an EHCP (or undertaking an assessment for an EHCP) being at risk of PEx, it is anticipated that an emergency review of the pupil’s EHCP would take place in order to determine changes to provision or placement.

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