



# WOODSIDE GROUP

OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTRE

PROSPECTUS



# WELCOME

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# THE WOODSIDE WAY



ONE ASH, LOUGHBOROUGH



## A NOTE FROM THE HEAD

At Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre, where AUTISM is our first language, our mission is simple – to enable each and every individual to be all that they can be.

We guarantee that for ALL our students, we will provide ...

- AA creative, inspiring and individualised curriculum, which encourages risk-taking, promotes independence and provides memorable experiences that truly enrich their lives.
- A teaching, learning and assessment framework that is profoundly personalised and reflects, measures and celebrates their strengths, achievements and progress over time.
- An outdoor learning focus, designed to enthuse, engage and motivate our students, whilst allowing them to make a real connection with the world around them.
- A dedicated and highly skilled staff team, who are fully empowered and equipped to ensure that our students have every possible opportunity to be all that they can be.

We expect our whole school family to be committed to this pledge, as well as to the safeguarding and welfare of our children, and to ensure that students can reach their full potential, both academically and socially, by receiving the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive, respectful and therapeutic environment.

Within the following pages you will come to fully understand how we do things the 'Woodside Way'.

Warmest regards,  
**Jonny Lakin**

# WOODSIDE A HISTORY

Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre was founded by Jonny Lakin, in 2011.

Regarded by many ASD professionals as the most effective practitioner in dealing with young people with complex Autism, Jonny is highly regarded for being able to build long lasting, positive relationships with students. Perhaps Jonny's greatest ability is in helping students make significant progress both academically and socially, where other mainstream schools and Autism practitioners have failed.

Jonny's philosophy is built on what he refers to as 'Beautiful Moments'. These are small, but special moments created

between students and staff members such as: the overcoming of a fear; a simple non-verbal gesture that says a thousand words, or an instruction that has been taken literally by the wonderful autistic mind. Sharing these moments with students and parents is a privilege, which Jonny and his team hold in the highest regard.

Making a positive difference to the lives of these amazing young people is the driving force behind Jonny's success and the continuous growth of the Woodside Group.

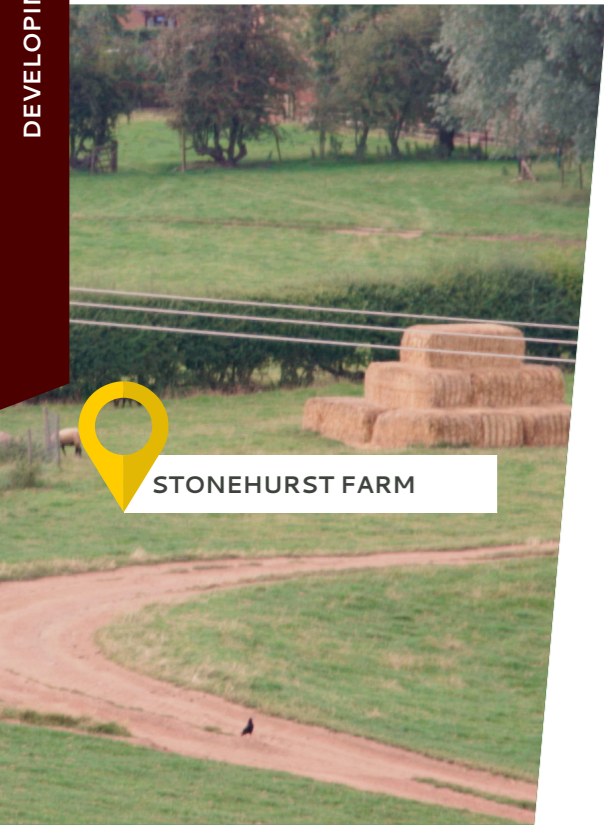


STONEHURST FARM, MOUNTSORREL

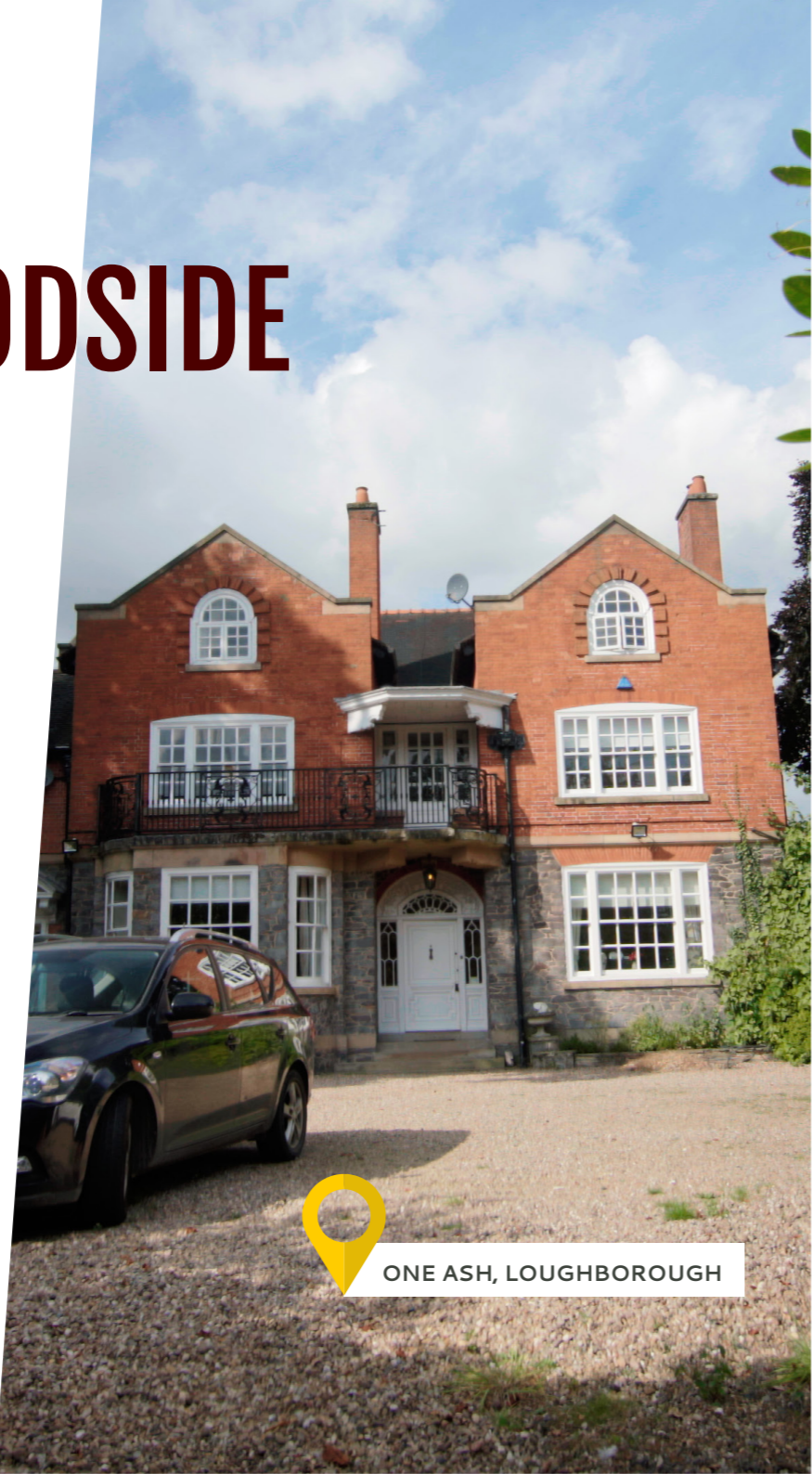


ONE ASH, LOUGHBOROUGH

# DEVELOPING THE WOODSIDE GROUP



STONEHURST FARM



ONE ASH, LOUGHBOROUGH



STONEHURST LODGE, MOUNTSORREL



VALE FARM, LOUGHBOROUGH

Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre has grown significantly since it was established in 2011.

The first base, Woodside Lodge, was founded as a secondary education base, opening with just 1 student and 2 staff members.

In September 2014, Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre opened a primary base at Stonehurst farm in Mountsorrel, Leicestershire. This brought with it the opportunity to educate students from the age of 4 to 19 years of age, with an integrated curriculum across both sites.

Between 2014 and 2017, as well as developing a strong presence in Outreach services, working 1 to 1 with students to facilitate academic progression, Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre proceeded to open a further four bases: a mixed secondary education base; a girls only secondary education base; a boys only Autism and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) base and a therapy team base.

Locating our bases in remote and rural surroundings remains an integral part of our mission at Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre and is carried forward into our vision as a group. This philosophy gives integrity to the Outdoor Learning curriculum we offer and the Outdoor Learning Centre ethos we aim to embody, which is at the heart of how we teach at all bases in the Woodside Group.

At the start of the 2017-18 academic year, Woodside Lodge

Outdoor Learning Centre amalgamated its girls only secondary education base and the original base of Woodside Lodge into 'One Ash'. The property is steeped in history and set within acres of field and paddocks, once again enabling us to deliver on our commitment to outdoor learning.

Due to the growth of Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre, Woodside Group was established in 2017. Through the platform of the Woodside Group entity, the organisation will expand its educational offering into different counties throughout the UK and eventually internationally, bringing opportunities and the "Woodside Way" of learning to a larger number of students and prospective employees.

Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre now has approximately 30 students (including Outreach) and a staff team of over 50 members, all with extensive experience of working with Children with Autism. At the heart of our recruitment strategy is the attraction of staff members with diverse skill sets, it is this which creates the unique tapestry of abilities that allows us to offer a broad and exciting individualised curriculum for our students.

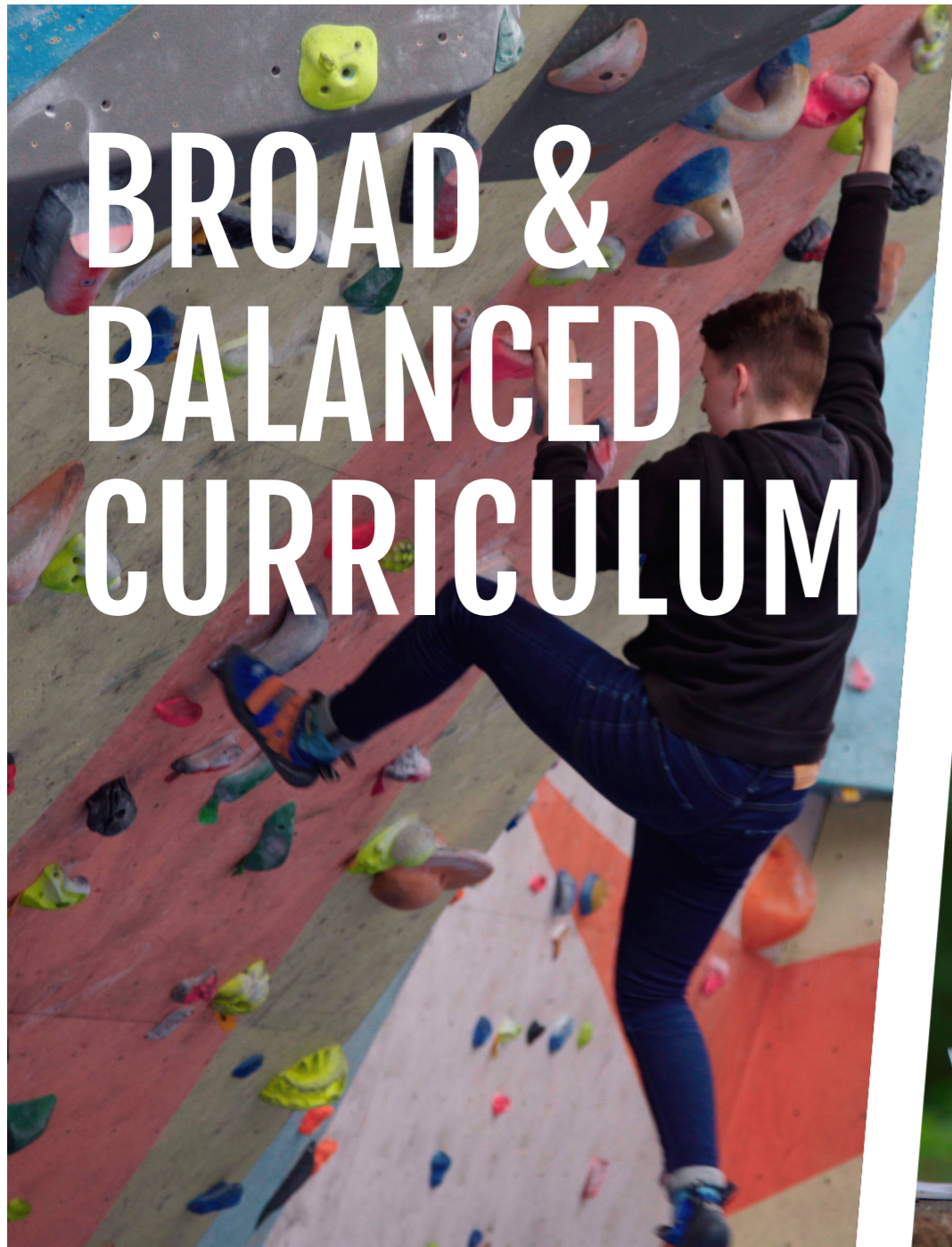
As the Woodside Group expands, it will seek to replicate its current operating model ensuring a consistent 'Woodside Way' of delivering the highest quality of education to our students, an establishment that is championed by parents and an exciting employer of choice for our staff.



## SAFEGUARDING **OUR COMMITMENT**

Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff to act in the best interests of our students at all times by:

- Acting in an open and transparent way that would not lead to any suspicion about their actions or intent.
- Respecting their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries.
- Reading and understanding school policies on child protection and safeguarding
- Fulfilling their obligation to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.



# BROAD & BALANCED CURRICULUM



## CURRICULUM POLICY

At Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre, we individualise each learning experience to each of our students. We assess the anxieties and stresses that form the barriers to learning and then, through a mixture of therapeutic methods, such as Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy and Equine Therapy, we reduce those anxieties and stresses.

When the students are ready, we introduce a bespoke curriculum tailored to meet the needs of the individual student, identifying a pathway into adult life. We address educational qualifications, vocational opportunities, essential lifeskills and other key areas in transitioning to the next phase.

As an outdoor learning centre, we prioritise learning through direct experience, ensuring that learning happens through acquiring skills in real life, hands-on, situations. By working in this way, we aim to raise aspirations, equipping our students with the skills needed to fulfil a valuable role in society and become responsible and independent citizens.

By using the wider environment, we seek to engage students who do not thrive in traditional classroom environments, whilst also allowing the students to create a real and powerful connection with the world around them.



**Russ Carrington**  
Director of Education





# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS OVER GCSEs

At Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre, as of academic year 2017-18, we have chosen to follow the Functional Skills pathway of study, over that of the traditional path of GCSE, for both Maths and English.

This decision, of course, raises a number of questions from students, staff and parents alike, and therefore this communication is to answer any of those questions that you may have.

## What is Functional Skills?

Functional Skills is a comprehensive course that looks at the 'functional' side of maths and English. It focuses on providing realistic contexts, scenarios and problems; specific tasks that are relevant to students; problem solving; and the applications of knowledge, skills and understanding for a purpose.

Level 1 Functional Skills are equivalent to a GCSE Grade E-D, and Level 2 Functional Skills are equivalent to GCSE Grade C-A\*. This includes GCSEs obtained from summer 2012 onwards with an Enhanced Functional Content (EFC). Equivalencies for the new 1-9 GCSE have not yet been published.

Functional Skills are currently under review to ensure their continued rigour and academic currency alongside the new GCSE. However, results from the reform programme have been put back until 2019.



## So.....why this decision?

So, the next question is, "Why are Woodside Lodge choosing Functional Skills?" There are numerous reasons why this decision has been made:

### Tailored to Our Students

ForSkills, our Functional Skills learning platform, is an online resource which creates a bespoke progression plan for each student. ForSkills is a great place to start for baseline assessments, as well as to consolidate learning, but the main sections of learning are down to our teachers to tailor their plans to the individual student. Functional Skills objectives have a lot of space for creativity and obviously we want to encourage this as much as possible, particularly with our school focus on Learning Outside the Classroom, which has a multitude of benefits in preparing students to become independent citizens.

### No Need to Contribute to League Tables

One reason in particular that GCSEs are chosen in a mainstream setting is that the results of these exams contribute to league tables and allows a comparison between schools. As an independent specialist provider focused on progress both academically and socially, we do not need to provide this data to show our worth. Instead, due to our focus on all aspects of each student we communicate our progress to all stakeholders on a case study basis; much more in keeping with our ethos as a school.

### Transitions to Next Steps

Although Functional Skills is a GCSE equivalent, many people assume that it is easier to get into college, or transition to the next step of any kind with a GCSE qualification; however, this is not necessarily the case. We, at Woodside Lodge, focus greatly on the transition to the next phase and we are constantly building our relationships with both employers and colleges alike. All of our communication with colleges and employers has been very positive regarding Functional Skills qualifications.

All in all, the Functional Skills program of study gives us at Woodside Lodge, rated outstanding by Ofsted, the best opportunity to individualise a maths and English curriculum to each one of our students, whilst still equipping them with the requisite qualifications to progress into further education, or employment.

# SUCCESS STORIES

The most important testimonials and the most powerful, are those that validate why we do, what we do at Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning in the unique way that only Woodside Group can do it. Those come from our former students, who have progressed onto success.



*Thank you for being a constant in Cade's life.*

*You have brought him through so much and taught him how it is to be a man. I cannot thank you enough for the time and effort you have put into Cade. Woodside you are my friend and also my family. Both me and Cade will never forget your love warmth and compassion.*

*Love Always,  
Helen & Cade xx*



“ I knew that if anyone if anyone could school Skye, it would be Jonny, in Jonny's school. Simple as that. She's come on so far.

**Rosie**  
– Skye's Mum



“ The thing is with Woodside, they are able to understand his daily challenges and daily battles...They just understand it, they just get it, and it's worth its weight in gold.

**Nath**  
– Charlie's Dad



“ The change is phenomenal. Anybody who knows me or knows Laura can't believe it's the same girl. They've really built her confidence up.

**Vicky**  
– Laura's Mum





# WOODSIDE GROUP OUTLOOK

The future looks bright for the Woodside Group, with plans for expansion into 2018 and 2019. The group will focus on developing new relationships with Local Education Authorities and maintaining existing partnerships within the East Midlands, so that it is always able to meet the educational needs of those children and young adults in need of an ASD specific individualised education programme.

For more information please contact us.

# WHERE AUTISM IS OUR FIRST LANGUAGE

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