



# Highcroft School

## Prospectus 2023 - 2024

  
make every day epic

# Welcome

**Highcroft School is a small specialist provision which caters for pupils aged 11-18 years with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who need a smaller, more structured educational placement in order to develop their true potential.**

The school, part of the Keys Group, provides placements for both pupils who reside in Keys residential homes and day pupils. We are committed to each and every one of our pupils and provide specialist support which is individually tailored to meet the unique needs of the pupils.



# Values, Ethos and Vision

We are committed to the EPIC values, which is embedded in our own our fundamental belief is that every student has the right to the appropriate and relevant educational provision to enable and encourage them to achieve their full potential.



# Our Mission

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Highcroft School is situated in a quiet, rural village in Bishop Auckland, County Durham and offers a nurturing and safe environment for the children attending. The school offers a pleasant and spacious learning environment and works in partnership with the residential staff to ensure a 24 hour wrap around service is offered to all the young people referred to us for a combined care and education package.

Class sizes are small and are structured to facilitate the implementation of individual education plans. The plans ensure each student works through a differentiated National Curriculum programme of study appropriate to their ability and Key Stage.

We also offer the opportunity for all pupils who are working at that level to achieve nationally recognised accreditation via AQA (GCSE's) and NOCN. Included in the NOCN qualifications are Functional Skills in Mathematics, English and ICT. In addition, certification can be achieved for a range of

subjects including; Skills for employment, Citizenship, Mental Health and well –being, Independence and Careers. Additional training such as First Aid/Food Hygiene Certificate is also included.

In order to meet the diverse needs of the pupils at Highcroft School, we ensure that the staff to pupil ratio is very high. The school is registered for 12 pupils and is staffed by a Head Teacher, the deputy, teachers and teaching assistants/ ESWs at an average ratio of 1;2.5 students.

We also have available members of Care staff who offer additional pastoral support when required. The pupils are encouraged to work in a variety of settings; individually, co-operatively in pairs and in small groups, as we believe the development of social skills and independent work strategies are vital.



# Our School

The school introduces the pupils to a wide range of knowledge, skills and experiences - linguistic, literary, mathematical, scientific, technological, moral, physical, aesthetic, creative and social.

The school has clear, positive expectations for behaviour and well-established, successful positive reinforcement strategies that are reviewed regularly. Every child has individual education targets relating to both academic and behavioural achievements that are reviewed regularly to ensure positive progress is being made.

Highcroft School fundamentally operates within two main principles:

1. All pupils, without exception, are to be valued as unique and special members of society.

2. All pupils can succeed and should be encouraged towards ever-greater appropriate challenges in all areas of their learning.

Highcroft School has been rated as a “strong good” in an OFSTED inspection in March 2023 and graded Outstanding for Behaviour and attitudes.

The following comment was recorded: “Pupils enjoy being part of a community, they show a deep respect and understanding for one another’s differences and Leaders have ensured that behaviour in the school is exemplary. Pupils throughout the school are motivated, polite and courteous, they are highly attentive in lessons and motivated to learn”



# Safeguarding

Highcroft School (as part of Keys Group) has a comprehensive child protection policy and will take any reasonable steps to ensure the safety of its pupils. In cases where the school has reason to be concerned that a child may be subject to ill treatment, neglect or other forms of abuse, staff will follow local Children's Safeguarding Board procedures and inform both Keys' Company Directors and Social

Services of the concern.

The safeguarding and child protection policies are kept on school premises at all times and are available for to all to see, with copies available upon request. All Parents of young people will be sent the school Safeguarding Policy.



# The Curriculum:

Courses offered may change during the school year following timetable reviews'

**At Highcroft, sound academic progress and achievement is of great importance. The school seeks to re-establish the concept of learning as a positive and enjoyable experience.**

The curriculum provided is broad based to ensure that each student takes part in the full national curriculum and religious education, which is differentiated to meet individual needs.

We aim to introduce pupils to a wide range of knowledge, skills and experience.

The Curriculum emphasises the need to acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and Maths and English schemes of work are carefully planned to ensure full coverage of the national curriculum at a level appropriate to the pupil's ability. In addition to this, pupils are also encouraged to develop their functionality in Mathematics and English and all are encouraged to sit functional skills examinations in preparation for employment or college.

We aim to offer all pupils a rounded curriculum in which, irrespective of academic ability, they can achieve high levels of success. In response to this, we offer a variety of practical wider

curriculum activities.

The central element of this is our Enrichment programme which includes:

- cooking
- life skills
- working towards independent living
- work experience programme where appropriate
- outdoor trips which could include trips to Museums, places of Worship and wildlife centres.

The School is currently developing a programme of engagement with a local Church, the YMCA and local businesses to incorporate pupils in local community life.

This programme enables pupils not only to develop new physical skills but also to develop trust and positive relationships with others. More recently the school has partnered up with the local community to develop and maintain the community garden. Students have access to the garden for cross curricular use - including the growing of plants and vegetables.

(These may change during the school year, following timetable reviews):

English	Science	Religious Education
Maths	Physical Education/Outdoor Education	Citizenship/PHSE
Humanities	Art and Craft	Computing
Design Technology	Independence/Careers	Food Technology

## Provision for children with Special Educational Needs

Our objectives and principles in making provision for pupils with special educational needs are as follows:

1. Each child is given a broad based and relevant curriculum.
2. The special needs of each child, as identified in his/her Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are addressed and statutory EHCP reviews are held regularly and completed in a thorough manner.
3. A behaviour management programme is in place and is continually reviewed; staff training in the management of children/young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (E.B.D.) is ongoing.

The school has a team approach. Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Therapists, Residential Carers, Social Workers and other professionals are all involved in monitoring pupil progress using individual education and behaviour plans.

## Counter Bullying

Highcroft School is totally opposed to bullying in any form and it will not be tolerated at any level.

We are committed to providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils where they can develop both academically and as an individual.

A comprehensive anti-bullying policy operates within the school along with a set of procedures to identify and deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

If you have any concerns regarding bullying or wish to discuss this area further, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

## Documentation

All policies and procedures are available on request and can be obtained from the school.

Highcroft School's First Aid Policy is available to parents on request or via the school office.

## Careers guidance/further education

All pupils have access to careers advice and guidance as required. This is provided through links with Durham Works and EDT (Education Development Trust).

Careers is also addressed in our independence sessions held weekly with staff holding IAG qualifications.

## Provision for children with EAL Identity/cultural diversity

At Highcroft School we believe that every child is entitled to equal access to the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, class or disability. Pupils with EAL will be able to participate fully in the schools' broad and balanced curriculum. The school has a policy in place and this will be put into practice when and if required.

## Health and Safety

As part of the Keys Group, Highcroft School has comprehensive health and safety policy and procedures.

The Policy/Procedures file is kept on school premises and is available to anyone at all times.

## Health and Sex Education

Our school provides a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated.

All our pupils will receive age and ability-appropriate relationship, health and sex education and will be delivered throughout the year at different times dependent in circumstances. Consent is sought from parents or carers prior to these lessons taking place.

## Complaints

It is important to pupils' sense of security and personal confidence that they have a means of "Being heard", in the event of having a complaint. For this purpose we ensure every pupil is made aware of the suggestions and complaints procedure and will assist and support them in the event that they feel the need to use it. [The policy is held in school and is available upon request]

They can share their complaint with their Teacher or classroom support assistant. If they are still unhappy they can telephone (0121 780 7800) to speak to James Madine (Chair of Governors) who will arrange to see them. If they feel they cannot talk to any of these people, then they can telephone NYAS (0808 808 1001) or Childline (0800 1111). These calls are free and confidential.

Keys Group also have a visiting advocacy service to all their children's homes provided by NYAS on a monthly basis.

Parents, carers or representatives from the Local Education Authority (L.E.A.) or Social Services Department (S.S.D.) who are concerned about the quality of education offered at Highcroft School should contact the school's management immediately. Any complaint will be given prompt, serious consideration. Complaints for the preceding year are available on request from the school. Please call the Headteacher on 01388 718031 or write directly to the school (full address details available on the back cover).

0 complaints were received during the academic year 2021 to 2022. There are 0 ongoing investigations.

## Philosophy and expectations

Policy and practice at Highcroft School reflects the belief that disruptive and challenging behaviour has underlying causes and effects. Children with low self-esteem cannot tolerate anything that increases their negative feelings about themselves and thus reduces the chances of being hurt any more. They often refuse to recognise their own achievements, resent other people's successes, can delight in upsetting others, reject praise, humiliate others or refuse to respond to those around them at all.

A particularly destructive characteristic of children or young people with low self-esteem is that by shutting off from the negative, these children also shut off from the positive. They cannot feel 'good feelings'. They struggle to hear praise or receive 'good' information. Our challenge is to reach beyond the young person's defensive shell and help them believe that teachers are really there for them and that they can place their trust in their teachers. The foundation of our work focuses on establishing positive relationships based on mutual respect.

We prefer to talk about behaviour being consequential rather than of sanctions. Sanctions are used sparingly and after all other alternatives have been considered. Discussion will take place with a senior member of the team before a decision is taken regarding an appropriate sanction. Sanctions usually involve some form of reparation (tidying, cleaning and helping) but sometimes may involve the loss of a privilege or a restriction in a particular activity for a defined period of time (e.g. 5 minutes less break).

Should a pupil's behaviour escalate to a point that he/she is likely to cause harm to himself/herself, other people or cause serious damage to property, then physical intervention will be used. Pupils are always given the opportunity to reflect on the incident and talk through it with a member of staff. The form and method which this takes is clearly identified in the Keys Group's Physical Intervention Policy. All staff are fully trained in the company's method of physical intervention. Placing authorities are informed of the physical intervention policy. Any incident requiring physical intervention is recorded in detail, with access to relevant parties made fully available.

## Identity/cultural diversity

Highcroft school acknowledges the range of cultural and identity diversities inherent in society. These are acknowledged throughout the curriculum and individual needs are identified and embraced.





## Positive Behaviour Support

Highcroft School seeks to create an environment which encourages and reinforces positive behaviour; we recognise this as necessary for effective learning to take place. The purpose of this Positive Behaviour Policy is to ensure that Highcroft School has a consistent approach to rewarding good behaviour and achievement and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

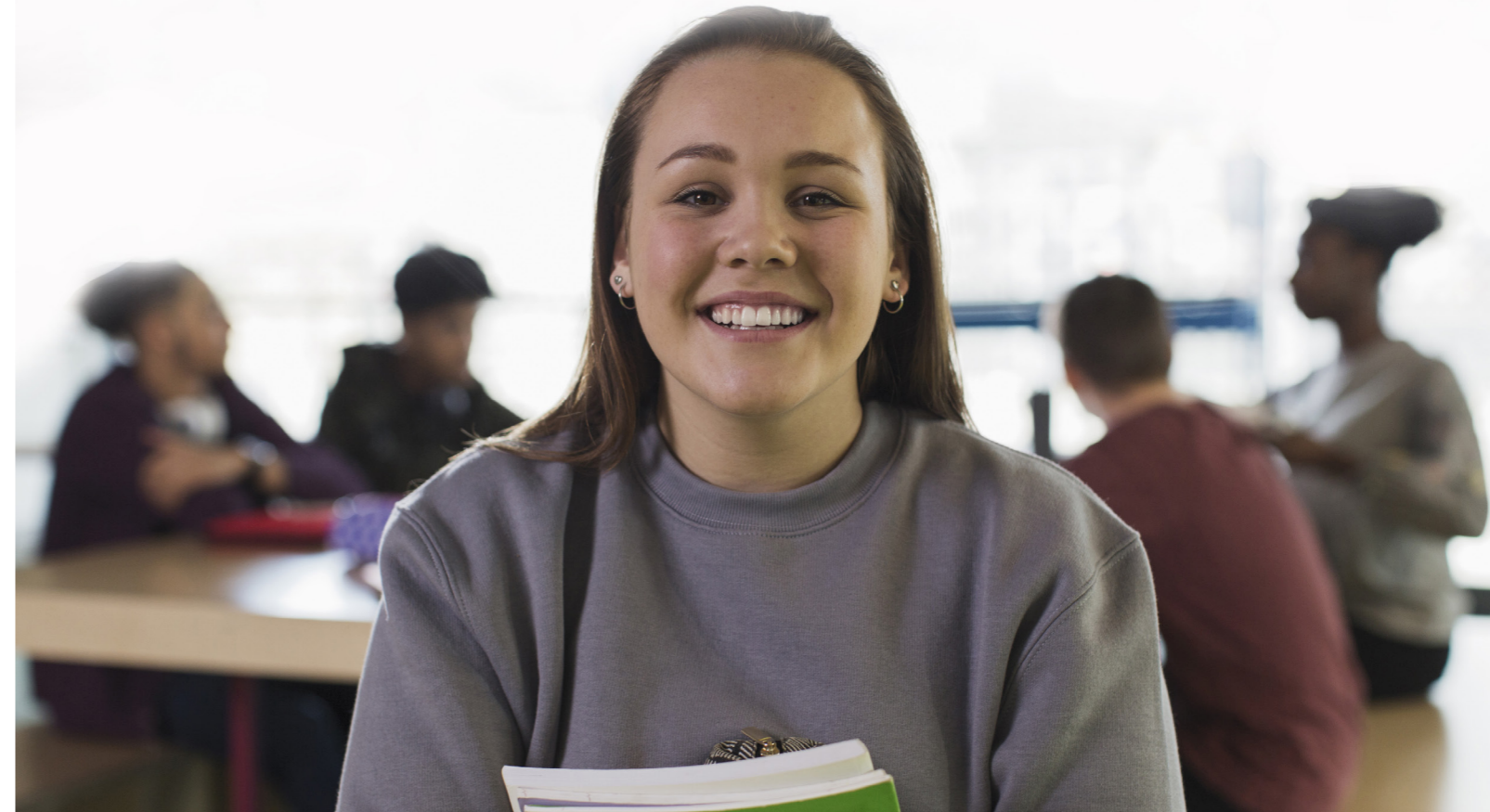
Good behaviour is most effectively achieved when there are clear expectations of student conduct.

Pupils bring with them a wide variety of behaviour patterns and at Highcroft School the aim is to work within standards of behaviour based on the basic values of honesty, respect for self, others, authority and property, responsibility and consideration. The intention of applying rewards and sanctions is to demonstrate to pupils that their actions have consequences.

## Exclusions

We acknowledge that the children placed at Highcroft School have had previous negative educational and social experiences and as such will present challenging behaviours. It is our aim therefore to provide a quality education for even the most challenging pupils. Permanent exclusion from education is not an alternative. However, if a child's placement in school is seriously preventing the 'effective education'

of other pupils or the child is presenting a significant risk to themselves or others within the school, additional support may be sought or an alternative education package may be provided. Any 'Education Intervention Plan' will be reviewed regularly and steps taken to reintegrate the pupil back into normal school provision will be clearly defined.







## Admissions

### Admissions Criteria:

Pupils will either be unable to maintain a place in a mainstream school or be thought to be able to benefit from a stable period in a small supportive school environment. The pupil will probably have an Education, Health and Care Plan and be between the ages of 11 and 18 years..

### Admissions Procedures:

When a placement is requested, a copy of the child/young person's EHCP and/or other relevant documents, such as previous school reports, Individualised Education Programme (I.E.Ps) etc. will be needed. This is in order to ascertain the suitability of the placement and to set up an education programme appropriate to the child/young person's needs. A planning meeting will then be held to determine if the placement is appropriate to the pupil's needs.

### Fees:

The academic year is 39 weeks divided into 3 terms. Fees will be charged on a weekly rate for 39 weeks of the year and will be invoiced on a termly basis for day pupils one term in advance.

Should a pupil leave without prior written notice or not as a result of a review, then 6 weeks (half a term) fees in lieu will be required. Notice to leave the school must be in writing and the 6 weeks (half a term) will be charged from the date of the letter of notice.

### Visiting the School:

Highcroft School is happy to welcome visitors and anyone interested in placing a child at Highcroft is encouraged to make an appointment to visit the school.

Representatives from the Local Authority (L.A.) and Social Services Department (S.S.D) are also encouraged to visit.

## Exam Results Table 2022-23

SUBJECT	NUMBER ENTERED	NUMBER ACHIEVED	PERCENTAGE PASSED
Functional Skills 2 English	3	3	100%
Functional Skills 2 Maths	3	1	33%
Functional Skills 2 ICT	1	0	0%
Functional Skills 1 English	5	4	80%
Functional Skills 1 Maths	4	3	80%
Functional Skills 1 ICT	2	2	100%
Entry Level 3 English	3	2	66%
Entry Level 3 Maths	4	4	100%

## General Information:



### **What are the start and finish times?**

School day; 9am -3pm

### **What arrangements have been made for the lunch break?**

Lunch is provided to all pupils.  
Lunch break is 12.20pm - 1pm.

### **Who should absence be reported to?**

Absence should be reported to the school administrator on 01388 718031 before 9.15am.

### **How will I get to know what progress my child is making?**

Progress reports are distributed to families and other professionals at the end of every term. Progress on a pupil can be requested at any time throughout the academic year



### **How will my child's attendance be monitored?**

Your child's attendance will be monitored in exactly the same way as it is now in mainstream schools, with formal attendance records in the form of a register being kept by the school. Any concerns regarding attendance will be dealt with under current procedures and will involve close liaison between parents/ carers, school staff, Local Authority and Children's Services professionals.

### **Do pupils have to wear a uniform?**

Our pupils are expected to wear a T-shirt bearing the school logo (provided by school) and black trousers or leggings,

## SCHOOL TERM DATES 2023 - 2024

Term 1		
Tuesday 5th September 2023	Tuesday 19th December 2023	Term 1
Monday 30th October 2023	Friday 3rd November 2023	Half Term
Term 2		
Thursday 4th January 2024	Thursday 28th March 2024	Term 2
Monday 19th February 2024	Friday 23rd February 2024	Half Term
Term 3		
Tuesday 16th April 2024	Tuesday 23rd July 2024	Term 3
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2024	Half Term

**INSET Days:** Monday 4th September 2023, Monday 6th November 2023  
Wednesday 3rd January 2024, Monday 15th April 2024,  
Monday 3rd June 2024

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**Highcroft School**

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07961308613

**Chief Executive:**

David Manson  
0121 728 7800

**Chair of Governors:**

James Madine  
0121 728 7800

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David Manson

**DfE No:** 840/6012**Ofsted URN:** 136748**Reg Co.No.:** 03363263