

School Prospectus

2026 / 2027



Education

Therapy

Futures



Proprietor details

Witherslack Group

Lupton Tower Lupton

Cumbria LA6 2PR

Tel: 015395 66081

Email: admin@witherslackgroup.co.uk

Head Teacher's name and contact details

Ms Clare Read

[Clare. Read@witherslackgroup.co.uk](mailto:Clare.Read@witherslackgroup.co.uk)

Ashbrooke School, Ashbrooke Road, Sunderland, SR2 7JA

Holiday contact details

Mrs Claire Adams

Senior Administrator

Claire.Adams@witherslackgroup.co.uk

0191 6075610

School Ethos

Ashbrooke School is a warm and inclusive community where pupils can achieve and be happy. We are committed to giving our children and young people a creative, caring and innovative learning environment that nurtures individual talents and encourages a love of learning. The core values of respect, responsibility, and resilience are central to our ethos. These principles underpin everything we do, helping our pupils develop not just as learners, but as thoughtful, confident individuals who are encouraged to share their voices and actively shape our school culture. As a team, we are equally keen to listen and adapt to support pupils so that they develop a strong sense of self and grow in confidence. Everyone has a role here at Ashbrooke, and it is this shared sense of purpose and belonging not just makes us a school but a place where potential is realised every single day

“Pupils are proud to attend Ashbrooke School” (Ofsted September 2026)

Aims of school

We are committed to giving our students a creative, caring and inspirational learning environment allowing them to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their education, social skills and social communication.

Ashbrooke School is dedicated to:

- Providing opportunities for pupils to learn and achieve.
- Promoting pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Preparing young people to progress to their next stage of development, be it education, employment or training, with enthusiasm, motivation and optimism for the future.
- Encouraging the development of independent young people equipped with the skills and qualities to make a positive contribution to society.
- Identifying and removing any barriers to learning that pupils may have. Our school’s therapy team includes speech and language therapists, therapists, an educational psychologist, forensic psychologist and occupational therapists, who are supported by the wider Witherslack Group Clinical Services Team.
- Integrate therapy into the classroom and work towards enabling all young people to make full use of their learning opportunities whilst developing staff.
- We also aim to prepare young people for a productive and happy adult life by ensuring they are as resilient, independent and employable as possible.

Our ethos is based every member of our school having a sense of belonging within our community and is supported by our 3Rs: Respect, Responsibility and Resilience. Pupils gain positive points for showing these qualities around school.

<u>Respect:</u>	<u>Responsibility:</u>	<u>Resilience:</u>
• For self • For peers • For staff • For the	• On time • On task • On side	• Trying – not giving up • Tolerating others

environment	• Looking after resources	• Not being distracted or led into poor behaviours • Coping with change
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Details regarding admission process

We specialise in educating pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties who are between the ages of 5- 19. Pupils may have a diagnosis of ADHD, ASC, PDA, Attachment Disorder or Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties. Initial enquiries and informal visits are always welcome, but referrals will come to us directly from the pupil's local authority.

Applications are considered by our admissions panel, and a non-prejudicial visit will then be arranged. Following this visit a place may be offered to pupils whose needs can be fully addressed by the school. Fees and NASS approved contracts will then be agreed with local authorities.

There will be an assessment period followed by a post admission review after 12 weeks. Referrals can be made throughout the academic year.

You can email referrals at referrals.ashbrooke@witherslackgroup.co.uk or contact Clair Brown on 0191 607 5610 or 07393 465256.

Our Clinical Offer

Essential to the Witherslack Group Therapeutic Model are our Clinical Services Team who work alongside the wider multidisciplinary team to provide an integrated provision of therapeutic intervention, care and education.

Each of the children's learning environments are supported by a designated and bespoke team of clinicians which may include: Therapists, Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Assistant Psychologists.

Our children, young people and the staff supporting them also have access to other specialist clinicians within the wider group including our Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist.

All of our practising clinicians are registered practitioners with The Health and Care Professions Council or their appropriate designated regulatory bodies such as The British Association of Counselling Psychotherapists, British Association of Play Therapists, and the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, and all receive supervision from other senior clinicians within the group or from externally commissioned specialists within their field.

Line management for the clinicians is provided by senior clinical colleagues and the Regional

Director Clinical, who in turn is line managed by the group's Clinical Director.

All clinicians are supported to maintain their registrations through Continuing Professional Development opportunities, many being supported by the group to develop specialisms such as Sensory Integration Therapy and Trauma Informed Communication Approaches.

Clinical Governance is the responsibility of the Clinical Director who chairs the quarterly Witherslack Group Clinical Governance Board; attended by external advisors and internal Directors.

Details of approach to positive behaviour support, exclusions, rewards and sanctions

Ashbrooke School expects to achieve high standards of behaviour through building effective relationships with pupils within a culture of mutual positive regard. We aim to increase pupil engagement, foster self-esteem, develop and promote self-regulation, encouraging positive attitudes, effective role modelling and teaching respect. Our staff teams meet regularly to discuss each pupil and the best ways we can support them. Regular internal team around the child (iTAC) meetings create a forum for this but our staff also have daily informal discussions, which often include pupils. Here they can discuss and develop the approach that provides the best support and agree individual strategies designed to encourage and develop self-regulation.

We employ a number of therapists within the school who will work with individual students as well as contributing to the iTAC process, ensuring that this therapeutic approach to learning permeates our practices. Any intervention is integral to our curriculum with no stigma attached to any form of therapy our pupils receive. Ashbrooke School benefit from a large multidisciplinary clinical team of 12. All work directly with pupils and deliver focused training to staff on a regular basis.

We understand that pupils may be experiencing a range of sensory processing challenges relating to their neurodivergent profile and will, at times, mask their emotional presentation or struggle to articulate how they are feeling. We aim to promote a mutually respectful environment where pupils are tolerant of other children's needs, and where all children have a right to learn and be heard. Where behaviour falls below expectation we ask pupils to reflect upon their actions and attempt to discover what may lie behind the behaviour and identify triggers or common events, which might influence a pupil's emotional state. These are all factors which will ultimately help a pupil understand why they have acted in the way they have, the impact the behaviour may have had on others and the consequences of their behavioural presentation. This learning enables them to develop skills, which helps them to self-regulate their emotions and behaviours. This work might take place at break times, lunch times or after school. Restorative practice is an important element of this, and pupils may be asked to give something back to the school community by completing agreed tasks and/or speaking to those who have been affected by their behaviour.

At times when children or young people are placing themselves or others at risk of harm, staff may need to use physical intervention to keep them safe. This is used within strict guidelines, only as a

last resort, and staff are trained in using the BILD accredited framework PRICE (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment). Staff receive regular training in de-escalation strategies and positive behaviour support (PBS) strategies. The school's leadership team monitors any use of physical intervention through data on a day-to-day and monthly basis, which helps to identify any patterns of behaviour and develop any necessary intervention strategies to be put into place to reduce its use.

Exclusions

Exclusions are rare. Where necessary we may need to remove a pupil from their class for a brief period, or for more serious issues we may provide a space away from the classroom to reflect on the issue for a longer period of time.

Ultimately, we want to support all pupils as they learn to understand and manage their own emotional presentation. We will always communicate with parents and carers when we take additional measures such as internal reflection for more than a day, and will look to work in partnership with children and their key adults to support successful re-integration.

Rewards

Ashbrooke School a rewards system based on the 3Rs. Pupils can earn points ever lesson based on the 3RS. Pupils can choose how they spend their points and then these are ordered through our online shop.

Assemblies takes place each week where pupils are presented with their certificates and achievements celebrated.

Pupils also benefit from a wide range of offsite trips and visitors which enrich their individual experience at Ashbrooke School.

Provision for EHC Plans

Every year we review a child's EHC plan to see how they are progressing towards achieving the outcomes specified on the EHC plan, which is known as an Annual Review. It is a chance for everyone working with the child to meet and discuss what changes might be needed to support them or whether changes are needed to the outcomes themselves.

We invite the child's parent/ carer, the young person, a local authority SEN officer, a health service representative and a local authority social care representative to the meeting, where applicable, giving them at least two weeks' notice of the date. Other individuals relevant to the review will also be invited.

We will seek advice and information about the child prior to the meeting from all parties invited and send any advice and information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks before the meeting. Children, parents and young people will be supported to engage fully in the review meeting. The child's voice is central to this meeting and will be sought prior to the meeting giving them plenty of time to share their views.

We will then prepare and send a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting. The report will set out recommendations on any amendments required to the EHC plan and will refer to any difference between the local authority's recommendations and those of others attending the meeting

Within four weeks of the review meeting, the local authority must decide whether it proposes to keep the plan as it is, amend the plan, or cease to maintain the plan, and notify the child's parent or the young person

If the local authority decides not to amend the plan or decides to cease to maintain it, they must notify the child's parent or young person of their right to appeal that decision.

Each child will be given a broad based, relevant and personalised curriculum. The school has an 'Internal Team around the Child' (ITAC) approach in which teachers, teaching assistants, therapists, residential workers, social workers and other professionals are involved in monitoring pupil progress.

Work is carefully differentiated in order to meet the individual needs of children and regular assessments ensure continuity and progression. Each child has individually tailored positive expectations for achievement. This ensures that they are challenged appropriately and experience success frequently.

Details for consideration of pupils/parents whose first language is not English

On admission a child's need for additional support is identified. Appropriate provision is then established prior to the pupil's start date. One to one support from a bi-lingual support assistant will be provided if this is an identified requirement.

Details of complaints procedure

In accordance with the Children's Act 1989, all children at Ashbrooke School have access to a Complaints Procedure. Informal complaints or concerns will be addressed by the Teaching Assistant, Tutor or a pupil's Key Worker. Formal complaints directly from the child or via a parent/carer or member of staff should be reported directly to the Head Teacher

Complaints or concerns arising from adults also follow set procedures. Firstly, the concern should be addressed informally with the school. Copies of these policies and procedures are available on request.

Statement regarding accessing exam results

Our approach to preparing young people for the adult world is very individual. Initial assessments will identify academic levels and any barriers to learning. Early in a pupil's school career we will seek to identify and nurture their aspirations for the future.

The most appropriate accredited route for each individual will then be mapped based on all of these factors. In short we are answering these questions:

- What academic level is an appropriate target for this pupil?
- Do they have realistic aspirations that determine a particular route or qualification?
- The answers to these two questions will determine what qualifications they pursue.

We offer a range of accreditation ranging from Entry Level to GCSE qualifications alongside

Functional Skills, BTECs and AQA Unit awards.

At Annual Reviews we will look to discuss the most appropriate route for pupils with their parents/carers.

On exam results day August 2026 Ashbrooke School proudly shared results day with our outgoing year 11. Each pupil is different, and the focus of the qualifications was to enable them to achieve long term in their chosen career. These qualifications included GCSE, BTECs and functional skills along with Duke of Edinburgh Silver award.

- 100% of our year 11 achieved a qualification in English and Maths
- Pupils achieved an average of 10 qualifications each
- 100% had qualifications to enable them to gain a place on a post 16 course of their choice

These results reflect the commitment and dedication of our pupils and the team, and we are delighted to celebrate their success.

The school office will be open on Examination results day and senior staff will be present alongside our office staff to discuss results and provide advice and support.

If you require results to be sent via email, this can be facilitated.

Previous examination results can be accessed from our school office on request.

Safeguarding Mission Statement

Ashbrooke School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people. We believe in the importance of working with partner agencies to ensure that children and young people are kept safe, happy and healthy. All staff working here are made aware of the need for protection and how to respond to these concerns.

Where we suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, we have a statutory duty to make a referral to relevant agencies. Where local procedures allow, we will inform the parent(s) of the referral. The school will share any information relevant to the referral with those agencies and will contribute to any assessments being undertaken.

We have a safeguarding policy and all staff are supported by our designated Safeguarding Lead:

William Elliott, William.elliott@witherslackgroup.co.uk

DDSLs Leanne Kenny, Leanne.kenny@witherslackgroup.co.uk

DDSL Claire Muncaster, Claire.muncaster@witherslackgroup.co.uk

DDSL Joe Kamanaga, Kalala.kamanga@witherslackgroup.co.uk

If you require further support on safeguarding matters you can contact:

Clare Read Headteacher clare.read@witherslackgroup.co.uk

If you require further support on safeguarding matters you can contact:

Mary Aurens, Witherslack Group Head of Safeguarding
mary.aurens@witherslackgroup.co.uk.

Tricia Stevens, Regional Director Witherslack

patricia.stevens@witherslackgroup.co.uk.

Promoting General Welfare

At Ashbrooke School we want our pupils to have a sense of belonging. We believe building trusting relationships is the key to this. We believe it is vital to establish stable and trusting relationships between pupils and staff, as well as working positively with parents and carers.

Ashbrooke School has a pastoral team of six staff who ensure the wellbeing of all pupils is constantly being monitored, reviewed and developed. In collaboration with our therapeutic team, they support pupils during key worker sessions which are held on a 1:1 basis for some young people. The strong links between home and school are essential in supporting our pupils feel safe to learn and thrive at Ashbrooke School.

In addition to addressing any welfare needs and issues, the pastoral staff have a pro-active role in delivering targeted support and advice to pupils in school. They assist pupils with the running of the school council, which gives pupils a voice, as well as supporting other school staff on a daily basis and through iTAC meetings.

Regular contact with parents happens via group tutors, teaching assistants, leaders and the pastoral team to ensure we are all working together for the benefit of the young people in our care.

When pupils start at Ashbrooke they will have a number of assessments in order to best plan for their individual needs. These are not merely based on academic ability; pupils will also have assessments by educational/clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist. The results of these assessments help staff to develop an individual care and education plan and positive behaviour plan for each pupil. Our unique offering provides an individualised, person-centred, therapeutic package for each pupil.

Attendance Data

Excellent attendance is encouraged for all pupils. We pride ourselves on pupils' attendance records greatly improving from previous schools they have attended.

We work closely with pupils' families to ensure all pupils maintain an excellent attendance record.

If a child needs to be absent from school for any legitimate reason, a telephone call is required. A copy of Ashbrooke School's Attendance Policy is available on request.

Great importance is placed on school attendance and we ask that holidays be arranged during school holidays.

Anti-Bullying

We pride ourselves on the warm and caring atmosphere at our school. All members of the school community are entitled to safety and protection and therefore bullying will not be tolerated. We have clear policies and guidelines raising awareness to staff, children and young people to the signs of bullying. Our anti-bullying co-ordinator ensures that all cases of bullying or suspected bullying are brought to the attention of all staff quickly, and clear guidance on our zero-tolerance policy is followed.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website.

Personal social and health education

Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education is delivered in a number of ways. It is planned into pupils' weekly personal social & health education (PSHE) lessons and sequenced into relevant topics across other subject areas such as PE, science, outdoor education and food technology.

Relationships, sex and health education is delivered to meet statutory requirements and to prepare pupils to make safe and informed decisions. For PSHE and RSE, individual pupils may have sessions delivered in smaller sessions, depending on their needs or level of understanding. We aim to provide a clear framework for staff to deliver age-appropriate learning in this area. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from our relationships and sex education classes. We are very happy to discuss this, or any questions parents may have about this or any aspects of our curriculum.

A copy of the Ashbrooke School's RSE policy is available on the website or available upon request. Examples of lesson resources/ materials are also available to view on request.

Risk Assessments

Our role is to support children to lead a positive life, helping them to understand daily risks that they face and to learn how to overcome them safely. Due to our children's difficulties, some of them exhibit 'risk taking' characteristics; we therefore have rigorous procedures to ensure everyone's safety. Individual risk assessments will be completed for all pupils during their 12-week assessment period and will form part of the post-admission assessment review.

Risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed that cover the environments, lessons, and general activities that take place within the school. Where off site activities are planned, the visit leader will complete a risk assessment and update our Evolve System which ensures all pre-visit checks have been completed, and the visit is authorised by a senior member of staff. A fire risk assessment has been undertaken and this is kept updated following any changes to layout, heat-generating activities or fire hazards introduced. An annual review of fire safety is undertaken by a competent person.

Health and Safety

At Ashbrooke School we have an ISO 45001 accredited safety and health management system that ensures risks have been identified and effective control measures are in place. Monitoring is undertaken by our Site Manager and Headteacher. The site manager coordinates any work identified and required.

The whole site has internal health and safety checks in place for the maintenance team to complete, with an action plan put in place to rectify any faults. The school have support from the Witherslack Groups Safety, Health, and Environment Team, who are competent health and safety professionals who provide advice, guidance and training to create safe and healthy environments for everyone. They undertake a health and safety audit of the school annually and complete additional visits when needed.

First Aid/Medical Care

The school has a medical room. As part of their induction training all staff complete a one day Basic First Aid course for children's services. In addition, a number of identified staff have completed the four day First Aid at Work training. All First Aid training is followed up with refresher training every three years.

The school is only allowed to administer prescribed medication, this is administered by our Pastoral Team, led by the Pastoral Manager. All medication is recorded and kept in a locked medical cupboard. Paracetamol and Calpol can only be administered with written parent and carer consent.

Details regarding staffing and recruitment

Ashbrooke School follows a rigorous recruitment process in order that we recruit high quality staff and ensure that children and young people are kept safe. Senior leaders involved in the recruitment process undertake Safer Recruitment training and all staff employed within the school are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Staff List

Head Teacher	1
Deputy Head Teacher	2
Assistant Head Teacher	3
Quality Lead	1
SENCO	1
Pastoral Manager	1
Positive Behaviour Lead	1
Deputy Pastoral Manager	2
Family Liaison Officer	1
Teachers	22
Higher Level Teaching Assistants	1
Teaching Assistants	30
Pastoral Assistant	2
Speech and Language Therapist	3
Therapist	2
Occupational Therapist	3
Forensic Psychologist	1
Assistant Psychologist	2
Educational Psychologist	1
Site Supervisor	1
Maintenance Assistant	2
Senior Administrator	1
Assistant Administrator	3
Cook in Charge	1
Assistant Cook	3



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