

School Prospectus

2025 / 2026



Education

Therapy

Futures



Proprietor details

Witherslack Group

Lupton Tower Lupton

Cumbria LA6 2PR

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Email: admin@witherslackgroup.co.uk

Head Teacher's name and contact details

Mrs Clare Read

Clare.Read@witherslackgroup.co.uk

Ashbrooke School, Ashbrooke Road, Sunderland, SR2 7JA

Holiday contact details

Mrs Claire Adams

Senior Administrator

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School ethos

With our focus on the three areas of **Respect, Responsibility and Resilience**, Ashbrooke School aims to develop a sense of community where children, young people and adults respect and support one another to create an environment which allows everyone to flourish. Children and young people are encouraged to share their views and take responsibility for their actions, staff are keen to listen and adapt to support young people in their social development. Everyone is helped to understand their role and their impact on others and encouraged to contribute to the collective improvements we want to make every day.

“This is a school where pupils thrive” (Ofsted July 2022)

Aims of school

Ashbrooke School caters for young people who have been diagnosed with a range of complex difficulties which have affected their ability to be successful in previous settings. Their needs have resulted in negative behaviours which have become barriers to their learning. We intend to offer a nurturing learning environment that provides social and emotional support alongside a targeted curriculum.

Ashbrooke School believes that the curriculum embraces all that is learned: via lessons, social times, therapeutic input and role modelling by the adults and peers around them. With this in mind, we are promoting an ethos of **Respect, Responsibility and Resilience** in all that we do. We aim to teach our young people to grow into citizens who are able to work and co-operate with others, whilst developing their knowledge and skills so that they make progress from their different starting points and celebrate both academic and personal success.

We are asking our young people to demonstrate these three skills in the following ways:

Respect:	Responsibility:	Resilience:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For self• For peers• For staff• For the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On time• On task• On side• Looking after resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trying – not giving up• Tolerating others• Not being distracted or led into poor behaviours• Coping with change

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, ASD, 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

Positive Behaviour Support

The overall aim of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is to improve the quality of a person's life and that of the people around them. This includes children, young people and adults.

PBS provides the right support for a person and their family to help people lead a meaningful life and learn new skills without unnecessary restrictions. It is not simply about getting rid of problematic behaviour. With the right support at the right time the likelihood of children exhibiting behaviours which challenge are reduced.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approaches are based on a set of overarching values. These values include the commitment to providing support that promotes inclusion, choice, participation and equality of opportunity. Behaviour that challenges usually happens for a reason and may be the person's only way of communicating an unmet need. PBS helps us understand the reason for the behaviour so we can better meet people's needs, enhance their quality of life and reduce the likelihood that the behaviour will happen.

We aim to help children develop the skills they need to manage their own behaviour and therefore good behaviour patterns are taught, encouraged and rewarded.

Every child has a Positive Behaviour Support Plan and an individual risk assessment. PBS plans are developed in partnership with the child/young person and their family. A PBS plan promotes pro-active and preventative strategies and includes the teaching of new skills.

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.

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, 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.

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.

Termly targets for Literacy and Numeracy are set as part of a pupil's individual education plan and progress is assessed frequently. Pupils receive intensive individual help. Individual behaviour targets are discussed with the child on a daily basis and are monitored and reviewed as part of their individual behaviour plan.

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 2025 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. This success has allowed pupils to be offered a place on post 16 education.

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 Child Protection Policy and all staff are supported by our designated Safeguarding Lead(s).

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

Mary Aurens - Witherslack Group, Safeguarding Lead

mary.aurens@witherslackgroup.co.uk

Promoting General Welfare

Ashbrooke School has a pastoral team of six staff. Their role is to promote and support the general welfare and well-being of all pupils within the school. 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.

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 and the pastoral team to ensure we are all working together for the benefit of the young people in our care.

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.

Health and Sex & Relationships Education

Health Education is delivered in a number of ways. Our Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) is delivered through timetabled lessons each week for all pupils. Pupils can enjoy sporting activities, informal cooking sessions (with a firm focus on healthy aspects), music, art- therapy or mindfulness.

Our Sex and Relationships Education is delivered in similar tutorial sessions. However, individual pupils may have sessions delivered in smaller hand-picked groups 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 Sex & Relationship Education classes. We are very happy to discuss this or any questions parents may have about our programme.

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.

Health and Safety

At Ashbrooke School, Health and Safety is co-ordinated by our Site Manager. The whole site has internal health and safety checks in place for the maintenance staff to complete, with an action plan put in place to rectify any faults. The Witherslack Group's Management and Risk Assessment Teams visit and audit the school each term. Health and Safety is integral to the smooth running of the school.

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

We currently employ 22 teaching staff with an additional 28 teaching assistants. The Pastoral Team of 6 staff work closely with this team and our clinical team of 11.

The school employs a Family Liaison Officer to help with links between home and school.

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
SENCO	1
Pastoral Manager	1
Deputy Pastoral Manager	2
Family Liaison Officer	1
Teachers	22
Higher Level Teaching Assistants	2
Teaching Assistants	28
Pastoral Assistant	3
Speech and Language Therapist	3
Therapist	2
Occupational Therapist	3
Psychologist	2
Assistant 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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