School Prospectus
2026 / 2027

Avon Park School

Education

Therapy

Futures












Proprietor details

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Executive Head Teacher's name and contact details

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School ethos/mission statement

Avon Park School is an independent day special school for pupils with social communication difficulties, autism and challenging behaviour. The school caters for boys and girls aged 6 to 16.

The school is part of the Witherslack Group who have provided inspirational education and care to children and young people, resulting in life changing experiences and countless stories of success since 1972.

Exceeding Expectations

The principal aim of our school is to provide a stimulating, challenging and caring environment which allows each student to develop to their full potential educationally, physically, socially and personally. We strive to develop our students towards being valuable and valued members of their community. Avon Park will provide an inspirational education that places the student at the heart of each and every decision that is made, taking into consideration the challenges they live with but not allowing them to be defined by them.

"Dream, Believe, Achieve"

Details regarding admission process

We specialise in providing for pupils with Autism, communication difficulties and challenging behaviour who are aged between the ages of 6 years to 16 years. Initial enquiries and informal visits are always welcome; but referrals should come to us directly from the pupil's local authority and we would encourage families to work with their local authority team from the outset wherever possible.

Referrals can be made by the Local Authority throughout the academic year and start dates thereafter agreed by all parties.

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 met by the school. Fees and NASS approved contracts will then be agreed with the placing local authority.

There will be a collaborative decision made between all stakeholders about how a young person should transition into the school which will include a pre-admission visit and home visit by our Family Liaison Officer and then a planned transition into the school. This is all in a

personalised way that is based in our best interest approach, in line with the expectations of the code of practice. There will be an initial assessment period followed by a Post Admission Review Meeting after 12 weeks of a placement commencing.

If you wish to discuss making a referral please contact the Family Liaison Officer, via the school office.

The school's Admissions Policy is available on request.

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 Clinical Regional Director, 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, suspensions, 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.

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 of concern 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 get their needs met in a less harmful way.

Every child has a risk assessment and where appropriate a PBS wave plan. PBS wave plans are developed in partnership with the child/young person and their family. A PBS wave plan promotes pro-active and preventative strategies and includes the teaching of new skills.

Within lessons, students can earn points based on their engagement, behaviour and attitude to learning. These are categorised into the following: showing resilience, being friendly, working independently and work produced. This is a self-reflective task as the students will decide the number of points they feel they deserve and can open conversations as to why they feel they have chosen the amount and what might need to happen next time to ensure full points are achieved resulting in better outcomes. There are also opportunities for students to earn merits for acts of positive behaviours around the school throughout the school day. At our school we regularly celebrate the success of all pupils in a variety of ways as we recognise that focussing on success and positive outcomes is essential in developing a positive culture and ethos across the school.

Provision for EHC Plans

We make sure that the work in the classroom is at the right level for each pupil and if a student needs some extra help or additional academic 'stretch', we will arrange this too. This could include;

- Extra support from a teaching assistant or the pastoral team
- Individual interventions to develop literacy or numeracy skills
- Use of our sensory room
- Support from one of our clinical services team
- Additional assessment and support from clinical services team
- Additional and more complex work being provided
- Extended project work or homework
- The opportunity to explore concepts out of the classroom

All pupils have an annual review of statement of special educational needs (SEN) or the new Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Family and representatives from the placing local authority are always invited to these review meetings.

The school is able to access support from the wider Witherslack Group to meet a range of additional needs. This includes the additional needs detailed in the statement of SEN or EHCP and other issues such as English as an additional language.

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 pupils start date. One to one support from a bi-lingual support assistant will be provided if this is an identified requirement in line with the agreement with the placing local authority.

Details of complaints procedure

In accordance with the Children's Act 1989, all children at Avon Park School have access to a Complaints Procedure. Informal complaints or concerns will be addressed by contacting the school office and asking to speak to the class teacher or the Family Liaison Officer. Formal

complaints directly from the child or via a parent/carer or member of staff should be reported directly to our Executive Head Teacher Kerri Louca-Weston

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

Avon Park School has been open since October 2014. A summary of accreditation results for Year 11s is available upon request to the school.

Safeguarding Mission Statement

Avon Park 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 of protection and how to respond to these concerns.

We have a 'Child Protection And Procedures Policy' and all staff are trained and supported by our Designated Safeguarding Lead Danielle Adams, who ensure it is fully and effectively implemented.

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.

If you require further support on safeguarding matters you can contact the school.

If you require further support on safeguarding matters from our corporate team you can contact the Witherslack Group Head of Safeguarding Mary Aurens using the email address Mary.Aurens@witherslackgroup.co.uk or Warwickshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01926 414144.

Promoting General Welfare

The pastoral team will link with other agencies such as CAMHs, social care or medical teams. They are responsible for medication in school and can help to resolve any issues with school transport.

The pastoral team are always available to offer support if someone is finding it difficult to manage their behaviour. They are responsible for making sure the school's reward system makes a difference to pupil's progress, behaviour and attendance.

As part of how we look after each other, all staff have completed a standard First Aid course and there are also staff who have been trained to a higher level. Avon Park School staff receive regular updates in the use of First Aid and Health and Safety.

Our operational systems are all regularly reviewed by the Witherslack Group Quality Assurance Team.

Anti-Bullying

We pride ourselves on our warm and caring atmosphere. All members of our community are entitled to safety and protection and therefore bullying will not be tolerated. We have clear policies and guidelines raising awareness in staff, children and young people to signs of bullying.

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

Health and Safety

At Avon Park School, Health and Safety is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and operational aspects delegated to the 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 visits and audits the school each term.

First Aid/Medical Care

The school has a medical room on both sites. We respond to any first aid incidents with qualified staff and quick treatment. We inform parents of issues arising where necessary and appropriate.

The school is only allowed to administer prescribed medication. All medication is recorded and kept in a locked medical cupboard. Paracetamol and Calpol can only be administered with parent and carer consent.

Details regarding staffing and recruitment

Avon Park 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. Witherslack Group pride themselves on their rigorous induction and probation processes.

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if…? - Frequently asked questions by new parents.

What happens if my child is unwell?
If your child is unwell at home and won't be attending, please let us know by phoning the school office as soon as possible. You will also need to contact the taxi company if your child uses school transport. Good attendance is important to us, so we will ask you to explain why your child will not be at school.
If your child becomes unwell at school, staff will take care of them and let you know as soon as possible. We have a medical room that pupils can use but we will not give out any medication unless we have your permission. If necessary, we may ask you to come and collect your child.

What happens if my child doesn't want to wear school uniform?
We do expect everyone to wear school uniform in school. The pastoral team will work with you to identify the problem and find a way to overcome it. We have a good track record of convincing some very determined young people that they do need to wear school uniform – and it does make a difference to achieving points and prizes! All pupils are provided with polo shirts and sweatshirts free of charge.

What happens if my child needs medication in school?

Contact a member of the Pastoral team through the school office. If you need to send medication in with the taxi driver, please phone school first and then make sure it is in a sealed envelope with the taxi driver. The Pastoral team will make sure it is collected, logged in our school's medication systems and administered at the right time.

What happens if my child doesn't like school dinners?

Out kitchen staff are happy to prepare food for a special diet. Just let us know the problem and we'll work together to find a way around it.

What can my child bring into school?

Pupils should not need to bring food or drinks into school as all of these are supplied. Fizzy drinks, energy drinks and those high in sugar are absolutely not permitted and will be confiscated as they are damaging to our pupils' ability to concentrate and focus.

Electronic toys/ phones / music equipment for use during the taxi journey will need to be handed into staff on arrival. These are then locked safely away until the end of the day. Please let us know if equipment needs charging for the homeward journey and we will do our best to help.

Please don't bring toys or games into school, we have lots of equipment here for you. We don't allow pupils to swap / buy any toys from each other.

Cigarettes, all smoking equipment and vaping equipment are not allowed on site. Pupils should not bring alcohol, illegal substances or anything that could be used as a weapon onto the school site. The school reserves the right to confiscate such items.

If you think your child requires an exemption for some reason to any of the above e.g. a diabetic child needing access to a sugary drink this will be agreed at the point of admission or diagnosis, so don't worry.







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