

School Prospectus

2025 / 2026



Education

Therapy

Futures



Proprietor details

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School Ethos

At Cumberland School we change expectations about who we are, what we can do and what we can achieve. We create opportunities to learn new things, build new skills and reach our goals so we can contribute more to our own success and that of the people around us.

Aims of School

Cumberland is dedicated to:

- Promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
 - Providing opportunities for pupils to learn and achieve
 - 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, Person Centred Therapists, an Educational Psychologist and an Occupational Therapist, who are supported by the wider Witherslack Group Clinical Services team
 - Integrating therapy into the classroom and enabling all young people to make full use of their learning opportunities whilst developing staff and their practice
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- 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

Admission process

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 met 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 meeting after 12 weeks.

Referrals can be made throughout the academic year.

If you wish to discuss making a referral please contact Chris Newiss, Head Teacher, Melanie Adams, Local Authority Partnership Manager or Maggie Allred, Family Liaison Officer.

The school's Admissions Policy is available on request.

Curriculum

At Cumberland School we Change Expectations about who we are, what we do and what we can achieve. We Create Opportunities to learn new things, build new skills and reach our goals so we can Contribute More to our own success and that of the people around us. Within our curriculum approach, we link our Intent, Implementation and Impact.

Intent

Our intention is to deliver a curriculum that is broad and balanced for all pupils, one that opens doors and opportunities for them in their immediate and longer-term futures. Our intention is for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding in each subject and at each stage of their schooling. The Curriculum, which is planned by subject specialists in consultation with SLT and others, broadly follows the national curriculum. However, we are more ambitious and far-reaching in terms of closing the knowledge, skills and attainment gaps that many of the pupils have when they join the school. We intend that our wider, holistic curriculum, addresses the substantial social, emotional, personal and other needs of the pupils and develops these further.

It is our aim that all pupils achieve a GCSE qualification, or equivalent in every subject that they study. If this is not appropriate for individual pupils, personalised programmes of study will be implemented and delivered. At Key Stage 4, pupils are offered both academic and vocational qualifications in an environment that is built around preparing them for their next steps in life.

Our curriculum includes statutory requirements for PSHE and RSE, religious education, literacy, citizenship, numeracy, work related learning (including careers education), sex education and equal opportunities. The curriculum is academic, vocational and pastoral. As pupils move through the Key Stages, they are encouraged to exercise greater choice in terms of the subjects they study and pathways available. This prepares pupils for the next stage of education, training or employment. As well as academic attainment, pupils also develop in personal, moral, social and cultural contexts. These are promoted through whole school assemblies, tutor group sessions and themes that run each week.

In delivering the curriculum, our intent is committed to the following principles:

- To respect the value of all individual pupils and staff
- To provide the highest standards of care and education
- To ensure safety, security and opportunities for success
- To have regard for the preferences and needs of all learners
- To value pupils as individuals, respecting their rights and beliefs

- To raise aspirations and equipping pupils with life skills
- To promote the value of a healthy lifestyle
- To make all pupils feel welcome irrespective of race, colour, creed or impairment
- To have high ambitions for our pupils and expecting them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life

The needs of the pupils at Cumberland School are varied and often complex. Our intent for successful inclusion relies on absolute respect for the needs of the individual. We strive to give individuals the same access and opportunities as all other pupils wherever possible.

Implementation

We recognise the need and value of sequencing learning and teaching in both core and foundation subjects and take this into consideration in our long and medium term subject planning. Opportunities for re-visiting, consolidating and over-learning are identified to improve memory and grasp of key facts, skills and concepts.

We provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate knowledge, so that it remains in their long-term memory. We provide progression from simpler and/or more concrete concepts to more complex and/or abstract ones.

Pupils, through the formal and extended curriculum, are regularly given opportunities to revisit and practice what they know. They deepen and solidify their understanding of facts, skills and concepts to allow them to recall information effectively, making learning more durable.

The teaching staff at Cumberland School ensure that:

- The curriculum is planned and devised to best suit the needs of individual pupils
- The curriculum is delivered and evaluated effectively
- The curriculum is delivered with due regard to the individual needs of each pupil and differentiated as appropriate
- The curriculum is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work
- The procedures for assessment meet all established requirements and are used to proactively support the learning and development of the pupils
- There is equality of access to the whole curriculum
- They use effective strategies for overcoming barriers to learning, managing pupil behaviour and encourage pupils to act responsibly towards others.

The curriculum at Cumberland School works to embrace formal and informal learning. The adapted version of the National Curriculum is designed to meet the SEMH needs of our pupils

by following the National Curriculum where appropriate but also includes a wide range of activities that provide ways to enrich the experience and learning of the children.

Mutual respect and tolerance for each other is viewed as an important part of the curriculum and this is actively role modelled. The school has a clear focus on the social and emotional development as well as the wellbeing of each child, and how this influences their academic progress.

The majority of pupils who attend Cumberland School have Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's). We work in conjunction with local authorities to ensure that these are regularly reviewed and that the needs of individuals are met.

Impact

In the 2024/25 academic year, pupils achieved a wide range of GCSE, Vocational, Certificate Level and BTEC qualifications. GCSE Results were as follows:

Performance Indicator	Percentage of all pupils (15)
Pupils achieving at least one GCSE grade 1-9	93%
Pupils achieving grade 1-9 in GCSE English Language	86%
Pupils achieving grade 1-9 in GCSE Maths	93%
Pupils achieving grade 1-9 in GCSE Science (Biology)	86%

Qualifications were also gained in:

COMBINED SCIENCE: TRILOGY

Statistics

Computer Science

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

History

ENGLISH LITERATURE

FILM STUDIES

Approach to positive behaviour support, exclusions, rewards and sanctions

Cumberland School expects to achieve high standards of behaviour through increasing pupil engagement, self-esteem, developing and promoting self-regulation, encouraging positive attitudes, effective role modelling and teaching respect. Our staff team 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 themselves. 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 therapists within the school who work with individual pupils 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. Both our sites benefit from significant SaLT and OT provision alongside Mental Health Practitioners, Clinical Psychologist and an Assistant Educational Psychologist. All work directly with pupils and deliver focused training to staff on a regular basis.

Where behaviour falls below expectation, we ask pupils to reflect upon their actions and attempt to discover what may lie 'behind' the behaviour, identify triggers or common events which might influence a pupils 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 behaviour.

This learning enables them to develop skills which helps them to self-regulate their emotions and behaviours. This work takes place at breaks, lunch 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 PRICE (Protecting Rights In a Caring Environment) Techniques. 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.

Suspensions

Suspensions are rare. Where necessary we will seek to remove a pupil from their class for a brief period or for more serious issues we may “internally exclude”, where a pupil is asked to work away from their class for a longer period of time. Ultimately, we want to support all pupils as they learn to manage their own behaviour.

Rewards

Our individual pupil rewards system allows pupils to earn points for appropriate behaviour and work in every lesson. At the end of each day, these points are converted and allow access to a range of afternoon enrichment activities and clubs. They also contribute to a voucher system which allows pupils to purchase items from various online outlets or from the high street. There are several other routes pupils have for adding to these rewards such as helping others or by making positive contributions to the school and/or local community.

Provision for EHC Plans

Every year we review each pupil’s EHC plan to see how they are progressing towards the outcomes specified on their plan. The thoughts of the pupil, parents and professionals are discussed at the Annual Review meeting and, where appropriate, updates to this plan agreed.

Our iTAC meetings are the forum for staff to contribute to this process and is where targets to help the pupil achieve are set. Discussion at these meetings allows everyone to talk about, agree or to challenge and change these targets.

At least 2 weeks before the meeting the updated information, and an invitation to attend, is sent out to everyone involved. Pupils are always invited and encouraged to attend all or at least part of the meeting.

If the Local Authority decides not to amend the plan or decides to cease to maintain it, they must notify the young person’s parent and/or the young person of their right to appeal that decision.

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. Interpreters will be employed to attend all meetings if parents/carers require this.

Details of complaints procedure

In accordance with the Children Act, 1989, all children at Cumberland School have access to a complaints procedure. Informal complaints or concerns will be addressed initially by the pupil's Form Tutor who is part of a wider Internal Team Around the Child (iTAC). Formal Complaints or concerns arising from adults also follow set procedures. Firstly the concern should be addressed informally with the school. We have had 1 formal complaint within the last academic year. 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?
- What are the pupils preferred options for academic study?
- What is the preferred vocational pathway?
- Do they have realistic aspirations that determine a particular route or qualification?

The answers to these questions will determine which qualifications they will study and which pathway they will pursue.

Currently, we offer GCSE qualifications alongside BTEC, ECDL, Functional Skills qualifications and Entry Level certification. Full examination results are available on request from the school office.

At Annual Review, we discuss and evaluate the most appropriate route/options for pupils with their parents/carers and Local Authority representatives. We employ independent Careers advice who work with pupils from Year 7.

Safeguarding Statement

Cumberland 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.

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.

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

Chris Newiss -Head Teacher

christopher.newiss@witherslackgroup.co.uk 01204 324446

Kirsty Macey – Designated Safeguarding Lead

kirsty.macey@witherslackgroup.co.uk 01204 324446

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

Mary Aurens - Witherslack Group Safeguarding Lead

mary.aurens@witherslackgroup.co.uk 07469 143799

Richard Wilkins – Chief Operating Officer

richard.wilkins@witherslackgroup.co.uk 015395 66081

Promoting General Welfare

At Cumberland School we believe in providing our children with support inside and outside of the classroom. We believe it is vital to establish stable and trusting relationships between pupils and staff, as well as working positively with parents and carers.

Our Pastoral Care Team ensure that the well-being of all pupils is constantly being monitored, reviewed and developed, and that strong links are made between school and home. We provide each pupil with high quality support and by doing so, we believe our pupils are able to exceed expectations in education, grow as individuals, are prepared for, and able to take positive steps to a brighter future.

When a pupil starts at Cumberland they will have a number of assessments in order that we can 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 develop an Individual Care and Education Plan and Positive Behaviour Plan each child.

Our unique offering provides an individualised, person-centred, therapeutic package for each pupil.

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. We conduct regular surveys and interviews with pupils specifically around bullying and bullying behaviours. The school has gained the Gold Award from the Anti-Bullying Alliance. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is available on request.

Health and Sex Education

Health Education is delivered in a number of ways. Our Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) is delivered in weekly lessons, as part of Science, Physical Education and Outdoor Education, and of course in Food Technology.

Sex and Relationships Education is delivered within the PSHE curriculum and is also part of the Science curriculum. 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.

Health and Safety

At Cumberland School Health and Safety is coordinated by Glen Hartley (Rivington Lane Campus) and Nick Hunt (Station Road Campus). Both sites have 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 audits the school on a regular basis. We firmly believe a rigorous approach to all aspects of Health and Safety is integral to the smooth running of the school.

First Aid/Medical Care

A medical room is located in easily accessible locations on both school sites. All staff as part of their induction training complete a one day Basic First Aid course for children's services. 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 Staff who are all fully trained to administer medication. All medication is recorded and kept in a locked medical cupboard.

Details regarding staffing and recruitment

Cumberland School follows a rigorous recruitment process in order that we recruit high quality staff and ensure that children and young people are kept safe. All teachers are highly trained specialists. 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.

Attendance Data

High levels of attendance are encouraged at all times, in order for pupils to maximise the opportunities Cumberland School can provide. Individual pupil attendance is often far better than previous schools and any non-attendance is followed up promptly, initially by Maggie Allred, our Family Liaison Officer and also by the iTAC team.



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