

School Prospectus

2025 / 2026



Education

Therapy

Futures



Proprietor details

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Oversands School

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School holiday contact details

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Our School Vision and Values

Oversands School is committed to the following principles:

- To provide an aspirational, safe and caring environment where personal growth and development is promoted.
- To provide the highest standards of education and care
- Opportunities to experience success, feel valued and suitably challenged in our vibrant learning community.

We aspire to raise the standards of achievements for all our school community and to achieve recognition as a centre of excellence. We want to enable pupils to develop into socially and emotionally responsible citizens with the skills for successful lifelong learning and employment.

We respond to the needs of the pupils in our care and provide a school that addresses our children's complex needs in a holistic manner.

Our values underpin all that we do at Oversands School and they were chosen in a collaborative process that involved all members of our community.

We teach through our values explicitly and celebrate them weekly as part of our celebration rewards whole school assembly.

We know that our pupils will face challenges in their life, but we are confident that, with the right aspirational support and attitude, they can and will flourish.



Welcome to our School

Oversands School is an independent, specialist day and residential school, providing high quality education for boys and girls. Based in Cumbria, the school meets the needs of a diverse group of pupils with a range of complex learning needs, social and emotional difficulties and challenging behaviours.

Oversands School offers a unique environment of high quality education, nurture and care to young people who have complex educational needs, communication difficulties and challenging behaviours. We have a comprehensive programme of support, which ensures that individual needs are met to maximise the progress of each young person.

We are privileged to benefit from fantastic grounds within a truly stunning rural location. These contribute to making Oversands School a positive and happy place in which to live, work and learn. We make full use of the environment through a creatively designed curriculum and extended activities, which offer all of our young people the opportunity to experience success. Our curriculum is based upon the foundations of curiosity, creativity and challenge (ambition) and this sets an aspirational environment for both young people and the adults who support them

We would be delighted to welcome you to our school to see for yourself our exceptional and inspirational environment.

Aims and Ethos

We are committed to providing our pupils with a happy, nurturing and motivating atmosphere for them to enjoy their learning and where they are supported to reach their potential in all aspects of their education,

social skills and social communication.

Oversands 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, person centred therapists, an educational 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 supported by the WG Futures program.

Details regarding our admission process

Oversands School is a co-educational, independent, specialist day and residential school in the Lake District. We provide high quality education and care for children between the ages of 5 and 19. We specialise in meeting the needs of a diverse group of pupils, exhibiting social, emotional, mental health and challenging behaviours, alongside a range of other associated complex needs. 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 the local authorities.

There will then be an assessment period followed by a Post Admission Review after 12 weeks.

Referrals can be made throughout the academic year; the school's Admission Policy is available on request.

If you wish to discuss making a referral please contact Carla Hughes, Local Area Partnership Manager, 015395 66755, Carla.Hughes@witherslackgroup.co.uk

Our Curriculum

Oversands curriculum is built upon the values of curiosity, creativity and challenge and we are committed to helping our pupils to flourish and achieve their aspirations through our approach to education and care. Oversands School provides a curriculum, which is pupil-centred, ambitious, engaging, and relevant. We have high expectations of all pupils, with the aim that they leave us with qualifications, accreditation and experiences, which will prepare them for the next chapter of their lives. We aim to do this through three key focus areas of intent, which are consistent across all key stages:

- Preparing for further learning
- Preparing for work
- Preparing for life

This is underpinned by two additional whole-school implementation approaches:

- Opportunities for personal development and learning outside of the classroom, including keeping safe, promoting well-being and developing independence;
- Internal Team Around the Child (ITAC): education, care and therapeutic strategies and outcomes.



Key Stage 1-2 (Years 2 - 6)

KS1 and 2 pupils start their school journey in our designated primary classrooms and are taught most of their lessons by their class teachers. Pupils access the National Curriculum, with additional interventions offered as required. There is a focus on reading, including the teaching of phonics to early readers using the Read, Write, Inc. programme.

Pupils access:

English, Maths, Science, Computing, PE, PSHE/Careers/Citizenship (including Relationships and Health Education), Humanities (Geography and History), Art & Design, Design

Technology, Personal Development and Enrichment. Individual pupils access clinical/therapeutic input as appropriate to their needs.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 – 9)

Pupils at KS3 continue to be taught for most subjects in their own dedicated form classrooms. They access National Curriculum subjects with a continued focus on reading. Pupils are taught by their form teachers for English, Maths and PSHE/Careers/Citizenship but progress to being taught by a wider range of other subject specific teachers for the rest of the curriculum. They visit specialist teaching rooms as appropriate to the subject eg the Science Lab and the Art Room.

Pupils access:

English, Maths, Science, Computing, PE, PSHE/Careers/Citizenship (including Relationships and Health Education), Humanities (Geography and History), Art & Design, Design Technology, Personal Development and Enrichment. KS3 pupils continue to access clinical/therapeutic input as appropriate to their needs.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 – 11)

Our current Key Stage 4 offer is a mix of GCSE, vocational and functional skills qualifications, from Entry Level to GCSE, depending on pupils' level of attainment. In Year 10 and Year 11, pupils follow a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Science, PE, Computing, PSHE/Citizenship/Careers (including Relationships, Sex and Health Education), Personal Development and Enrichment. Pupils select additional 'option' subjects to cater to their individual interests and career aspirations and these include Motor Vehicle Engineering, Construction, Humanities, Catering, PE/Sport, Separate Science and Computing. KS4 pupils continue to access clinical/therapeutic input as appropriate to their needs.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12 – 14)

At Key Stage 5, the 16-19 study programmes provide our Post 16 pupils with a structured learning programme which supports development, progression and pupil aspirations. A combination of all of the elements below are provided to each pupil:

Substantial qualifications offering stretch and preparation for transition to education at the next level or for employment (offered on-site or as part of a bespoke package with a link FE college as linked to pupil need).

English and Mathematics where a GCSE at grade 4 has not yet been achieved

Work experience and/or work-related learning

Other non-qualification activity to develop character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence and to promote a successful transition to adulthood (including PSHE/Citizenship/Careers, Employability, Personal Development and Enrichment). KS5 pupils continue to access clinical/therapeutic input as appropriate to their needs.

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

Oversands School has high expectations of its pupils in terms of their behaviour. It is our aim that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

Our school's Positive Behaviour Support Policy is designed to support the way in which all members of the school live and work together in a mutually supportive way. It aims to promote the overall well-being of pupils and staff, and an environment in which everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

The school believes that it is important to encourage positive choices throughout the school day by celebrating and rewarding positive behaviour. This will include the use of our Rewards Policy to praise pupils for positive actions, stimulating a voluntary and progressive improvement in their behaviour and increasing their motivation towards the achievement of academic objectives.

We work hard to ensure that behaviour support is consistent across the school so that boundaries and consequences are clear to all and are applied fairly, proportionately, and without discrimination, taking into account SEND needs and disabilities as well as the additional challenges that some vulnerable pupils face.

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 additional support strategies to be put in place.

At our school there are many children with a range of experiences that have prevented them from attending mainstream school. It is the policy of the school to keep pupils 'On roll as much as possible no matter their difficulties. Unfortunately, very occasionally, professional judgment regarding suspension will need to be taken. This decision will be made by the Head Teacher. Most suspensions are fixed-term for a short period. Pupils will be supported in their return to school via a re-integration meeting. A fixed term suspension is always a last resort and we would explore all other avenues before taking steps to exclude a child.

Provision for EHC Plans

An interim placement review meeting will take place at 12 weeks post admission. This meeting allows assessment results to be shared and intervention programmes to be agreed. Each child will then have their Education Health Care Plan review where their statement/health and care plan will be reviewed and their progress monitored in relation to their targets. Transition reviews take place at a child's Year 6, Year 9 and Year 11 Statutory Annual Reviews where decisions regarding future secondary education and Post 16 planning will take place.

At all meetings the views of the child, parents/carers, teachers, therapists, local authorities, care and health professionals are all gained to ensure all stakeholders can contribute.

This detailed planning and expertise enables the school to cater for the following diagnosed or described conditions:

- Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- Oppositional Behaviours
- Pathological Demand Avoidance
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Multiple Learning Difficulties
- Social Relationship Difficulties
- Dyspraxia
- Milder forms of self-harming behaviour
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Under achievement due to diagnosed condition or previous challenges accessing the curriculum

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.

Details of our complaints procedure

In accordance with the Children's Act 1989, all children at Oversands School have access to a Complaints Procedure. Informal complaints or concerns will be addressed by a member of the Leadership Team in the first instance. 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.

Copies of these policies and procedures are available upon request.

Statement regarding accessing exam results

School will be open for examination results day and staff are present to discuss results and provide advice and support. If required results can be sent by email. Previous examination results can be accessed from our school office upon request.

Year 11 Exam Results 2025

Oversands would like to congratulate the 2024/25 Year 11 cohort in achieving excellent results in the Summer examination series. Over 90% of our pupils went on to secure post 16 places in colleges or an in work apprenticeship.

73% of pupils achieved GCSE in English

73% of pupils achieved GCSE in Maths

73% of pupils achieved a qualification in maths, English and science

Pupils achieved in a range of additional GCSE qualifications including all three Sciences, Geography and Computer Science. Alongside these traditionally academic, a range of vocational qualifications were achieved in Level 1/2 Motor Vehicle Studies, Level 1 Sports Leadership and Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering.

Safeguarding Mission Statement

Oversands School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of the young people in our care. 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 are made aware of the need of protection and how to respond to these concerns.

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

Jennifer Stopford Lead DSL

Ed Sherratt DDSL (Head Teacher)

Karen Appleby DDSL (Deputy Head (Care)

Stuart Dancer DDSL (Pastoral Manager)

Sarah Edmondson (Head of Care)

If you require further support on safeguarding matters you can contact the school's safeguarding leads above on 01539 552397 or Mrs Mary Aurens (Witherslack Group's Safeguarding Officer) Tel: 07469 143799

Where we suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, we have a statutory duty to make a referral to the 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.

Promoting General Welfare

There are a number of systems in place to support individual pupils. Twelve weeks after admission, the school holds an Initial Review, to which parents/carers are invited, in order to review the pupil's placement and agree any next steps.

All new pupils are also assessed by the SENCO to identify any additional learning support required. If learning difficulties are indicated, interventions will be set up to meet the individual needs. This could be in the form of either in-class support, 1:1, the writing of differential material, or a mixture of all of these.

In order to promote good communication, continuity of care and to plan for future needs, the school works with all relevant professionals as pertinent for the individual pupil. Where appropriate, pupils may also have access to the onsite clinical team. Your child may be referred on to outside agencies, e.g. CAMHS if this is felt to be appropriate. Within school at least termly, but often half termly, all internal school professionals working with the child meet to ensure complete coordination of all aspects of care and education. This is called an "Internal Team Around the Child" (ITAC). This is a significant aspect in ensuring the stability of each pupil's placement and clarity about their changing needs and required provision.

Our Pastoral Care Team also support pupils in their progress through school and are available to talk through any issues with parents/carers and can carry out home visits when necessary.

Anti-Bullying

We pride ourselves on our kind and respectful school environment. All members of our community are entitled to safety and protection, 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 will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff and this includes protection from bullying. We aim to combat bullying and other harmful behaviour using, amongst others, preventative strategies through the active development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills.

Oversands School have an Anti-Bullying Strategy in place alongside our Anti-Bullying Policy which is available on request.

Relationships, Health and Sex Education

Relationship, Health and Sex Education is delivered as part of a progressive and age-appropriate PSHE curriculum which takes account of all the DfE's 2020 statutory requirements. Parents are able to withdraw their children from some aspects of the curriculum up to the third term before the child's 16th birthday. Please see the school's RSE policy on our website for further details.

Health and Safety

At Oversands School Health and Safety is of paramount consideration as outlines in our Safety Health and Environment Policy. 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.

First Aid/Medical Care

The school has a dedicated medical room. All staff, as a part of their induction training, completes First Aid Training. All First Aid training is followed up with refresher training every three years. Health checks, dental checks and eye checks are provided for our residential pupils in conjunction with the LAC nurse.

We have a number of staff who have completed additional First Aid training in line with their areas of responsibility which include, Forest Schools and Outdoor Education.

The school is only allowed to administer prescribed medication, key staff are trained in the administration of 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

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



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