



Eagle House School (Sutton)

Welcome to Eagle House School (Sutton). We are a specialist co-educational secondary school for young people aged 11-19 years with a primary diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder and additional needs such as ADHD, speech & language difficulties, sensory issues and associated behavioural difficulties. Eagle House School (Sutton) is part of the Eagle House Group of independent specialist schools (4-19yrs) accepting children and young people from across the full spectrum of autism. We have achieved the highly sought NAS accreditation. We strive to provide a school environment that is understanding of each young person's autism allowing them to grow in confidence, achieve in their studies and start to develop friendships – often for the very first time. We recognise the issues that our young people face within their daily lives and work with them throughout their school career teaching them how to better manage their autism, to develop their independence skills, to embed a clear work ethic and move towards a fulfilling and exciting future beyond school and college.

Upper and Lower pathways

Within school we provide a full and stimulating curriculum that seeks to challenge our young people. This is delivered via an upper and lower pathway structure, offering a differentiated curriculum to each learner taking their social, communication and academic abilities into account. We work within the National Curriculum ensuring it is delivered with empathy, structure, understanding and with a strong autism focus.

To ensure a successful transition through to adulthood, we have an upper and lower pathway 6th Form Centre. The upper pathway supports young people in to a college course of their choice and provides appropriate work and vocational opportunities. We have developed individualised pathways and courses with a view to creating a balance between support and independence for each learner with the knowledge and security of working with their learning and job coach, who will encourage and support them throughout. The lower pathway similarly includes vocational opportunities with support and works to build on each learner's independence and work skills be that externally, or within school itself. Both pathways include essential travel training.

A typical day

A typical school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.15pm (2.00pm on Fridays). As the majority of our learners have an early start to their day we offer an optional Breakfast Club ensuring learners are relaxed and ready for a busy school day.

Key stage 3 and Key stage 4 learners are carefully selected for placement within a small class group, typically of 6, suited to their abilities. They have a class tutor, learning support assistants and, unlike a mainstream secondary school, they will tend to have the majority of their lessons within their own classroom. This serves to help them with organising themselves and reduces anxiety, often raised, with moving to different classrooms for different subjects. That said, learners have their science lessons in our fully equipped science laboratory, music lessons in our purpose built music studio, ICT in the multiscreen ICT suite and weekly sports activities in our all-weather multi activity games area. Learners are also offered opportunities to go swimming, horse riding and take part in other recreational activities on a weekly basis.

We follow the National Curriculum for all subjects, from Entry Level to GCSE (where appropriate), providing an exciting breadth of accredited courses (see our website for more details). As a specialist school, we carefully differentiate courses for each learner ensuring they are suitably challenged and

successful. Our learning support assistants are always on hand and trained to support our learners in their lessons, across all subjects, throughout the school day.

All learners are academically assessed for progress every term, without the pressures experienced within a mainstream school and with scrupulous preparation for any examinations they may take at the end of Key stage 4 depending on **their curriculum subject courses**.

Autism approaches in the classroom

Each classroom is designed to incorporate individual work stations and a central station for group work. We follow the TEACCH© approach for structured learning, which ensures that every learner understands where to go, what to do and when their work starts and finishes. We support our learners with clear, visual timetables and visual instructions suited to their needs. This approach builds confidence, independence, aids their learning and reduces anxiety.

As autism specialists, we have a key focus on supporting all learners with their personal development. Each learner has a Personal Development Plan (PDP), which addresses their needs in relation to their autism, their social skills and their emotional wellbeing. Every learner has a comprehensive Behaviour Support Profile (BSP) to complement their PDP. This plan works with both the learners' strengths and difficulties in order to create clear strategies that minimise the impact of their autism.

We know that anxiety can escalate at times and whilst we work closely with learners to reduce this, there may be times when their behaviour can be more challenging. All school staff are trained in the use of physical intervention (Team TEACH©) should it be required. This may be used to support a learner, finding themselves in a heightened state of anxiety. This ensures that all learners remain safe and are given a pre-selected safe space of their choice in which to relax and calm.

The Curriculum Access Team (CAT)

As a specialist autism school, we have our own onsite therapy team led by our clinical psychologist (autism specialist). Our CAT is comprised of speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists and a student wellbeing officer. The team work in partnership with class groups to support learners to access their learning through full class working and individual work (via their Education, Health & Care Plan) using autism specific approaches. Therapists are involved with every learner from day one, conducting a six week period of assessment focusing on a learner's strengths and difficulties. This provides every class group with the necessary information required to develop an individualised pathway for every young person with the appropriate support. The CAT will continue to work with, support and assess each learner throughout their school career. This is enhanced by the work of our student wellbeing officer, who works closely with learners, the CAT and families to create a unique and holistic approach.

The Eagle House Approach

We use a variety of autism-focused approaches, which serve to enrich every learners school experience and are embedded in everything we do. This combined approach is based on best practice, experience and innovation.

Our four core approaches are based on positive behaviour support and incorporate –

- The Ziggurat Model©; a highly acclaimed approach for designing interventions for autism
- TEACCH©; a structured learning approach incorporating visual support

- ‘the little group` Approach’©; our own attention approach that seeks to increase each learner’s motivation to learn
- PODD© (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display); an augmentative communication system for pre-verbal and lower level verbal learners In addition to our core approaches, our CAT provides a range of autism-specific approaches tailored to the needs of each learner.

We believe that learning can only be achieved when key elements have been addressed including a learner’s health, sensory and wellbeing needs, their level of motivation and their social and communication needs. Using our core approaches, we ensure every learner is readily equipped to achieve their full potential across all areas.

Reward System

Motivation can be a challenge for our learners. We develop a personal profile for each young person and develop our knowledge of their likes and dislikes. We set individual reward targets with learners quickly gaining the motivation to work hard in order to reach their reward goals. Our reward system promotes an interest in learning and celebrates individual achievement. Depending on a learner’s abilities, rewards are given either immediately, after work completion, when they have reached a specific personal goal or have collected points towards a larger target behaviour. Rewards can be tangible or sociable and are always appropriate to the individual learner.

Extra-curricular activities

Our learners have the opportunity to ‘get involved’ and experience a wide variety of extra-curricular activities throughout the school year, be it through daily lunch time clubs or residential offsite visits.

Music

We have a fully equipped music and recording studio rich with opportunities for ‘hands on’ instrumentalists; from rock & pop to world music and the classics. Learners are taught how to play a range of musical instruments and work towards performing in bands, which rehearse, record and perform together. Class groups follow accredited courses and individual tuition is offered for learners working towards graded exams (Trinity College). For the budding DJs, learners can also use the latest technology in music with our fully equipped sound and mixing desks.

Sports

We have a sports curriculum that offers learners the opportunity to try a variety of sports and games, whilst developing their physical strengths and addressing their sensory needs. These weekly lessons encourage learners to discover sports that they enjoy with the aim of them continuing with regular exercise in to adult life.

Onsite facilities include an all-weather games area, an adventure playground, a fully equipped work out room and trampoline. Horse riding and swimming are weekly features of a learner’s timetable with an annual swimming gala for those with a more competitive edge. We regularly enter teams for a local inter-school football competition.

Education

Every class group enjoys regular educational offsite trips with the aim of enhancing their learning in a different environment thus broadening every learners experience and generalising the work they have done in school. Every offsite trip is a teaching opportunity where they learn about money, shopping, independence skills and travel training.

With London on our door step, classes visit exciting destinations such as the Science/ Natural History Museum, Buckingham Palace, the Tate Modern, Duck Tours, the Tower of London, HMS Belfast and Kew Gardens to name but a few. Many classes make an annual visit to Chessington World of Adventures, which proves very popular. Regular local trips include vocation based visits to a local garden centre, trips to Sutton to learn about shopping and for our older learners, weekly visits to local colleges.

Some learners can take advantage of an annual residential visit to Leiston Abbey, where they work side by side with classical musicians from Procorda to learn about music, drama and prop making. When they return, they do a performance for the whole school and their parents/carers. This has become very much embedded in the annual school calendar.

Competitions

We feel that healthy competition is important for some of our learners so every year we enter teams for the Sutton Science Challenge against other local schools. Our teams have been very successful, winning on a number of occasions in this competition.

Our learners have also achieved success in the Sutton Shakespeare Drama Festival, where they demonstrate their acting prowess in front of a full audience – a big achievement for young people with autism. Friday & Lunchtime Clubs – Every September, learners are given the opportunity to select Friday afternoon and lunchtime clubs they wish to try. They are free to move between clubs throughout the year giving them the opportunity to try something new. Clubs include fun and stimulating choices such as music club, drum club, yoga, Zumba, drama club, ICT club (including Minecraft and animation), art club, photography and board games.

Our parents and carers

We feel very strongly that parents are a central part of a learner's support team. We work hard to ensure we have close communication with parents involving them in all key educational decisions. Parents are always encouraged to contact the school or arrange to meet with their child's class teacher or therapist whenever they need to.

We offer three Parent - Teacher evenings throughout the school year, where parents and carers are invited in to school to discuss their child's progress.

We believe in offering support to families where required, and do so via our onsite student wellbeing officer. Bringing up a child with autism can be very isolating and our student wellbeing officer will support parents and families by bringing them together for mutual support and answering any questions or concerns they may have.

Parents and carers are also invited to regular whole school events such as our Christmas Celebration and our summer Celebration Day, which we hold at the local Secombe Theatre in Sutton. This gives learners the opportunity to show their skills on a variety of instruments, singing, dancing, art and drama.

Open days and admissions

All young people wishing to attend our school will need a primary diagnosis of autism and a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) as the majority of our pupils are funded by their local authorities.

If you are interested in talking to us or wish to view the school, then our parent liaison officer will arrange for you to join us and other parents and carers on one of our regular open days. If you are unable to attend an open day, you will be offered a tour of the school on a day more suited to you. If parents and carers are interested in their child attending Eagle House School, our parent liaison officer will talk to you regarding the information you will require to approach your local authority.

Open days for our 6th Form Centre are separate to the school open days so if you are interested in a visit, please contact our parent liaison officer who will ensure you have a place on the 6th Form Open Day. For a prospectus please contact the school office or look on our website where you can download and print a copy.

For an initial chat or for information about our school, please contact our parent liaison officer on 0845 074 2972 or email parent.liaison@eaglehousegroup.co.uk

We shall look forward to meeting you all very soon.

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