

Witherslack Group's specialist speech, language and communication settings

As the leading specialist educational and care provider in the UK, Witherslack Group delivers highly resourced and expert led provision for a range of needs including Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH); ASD; ADHD; and speech, language and communication needs.

For each cohort of need, both in terms of education and care, specialist settings provide a tailored environment and dedicated Internal Team Around the Child (ITAC) approach to fully support every child and young person.

For the area of speech, language and communication needs we are able to offer a specialist day and residential school, which is supported by both a 16 to 19 Centre and 52 week children's home. This complete offer ensures that outstanding outcomes for every child can be realised academically, socially and personally.

Pontville School is a co-educational independent specialist residential and day school in Lancashire. With a record of continued outstanding Ofsted results Pontville School is regarded by many as the first choice school for speech, language and social communication in the UK. Communication is at the centre of every aspect of life at Pontville School and this ethos is the foundation of the school's impressive track record of realising positive, life changing outcomes for young people and their families.

All pupils access speech and language therapy and individualised programmes, as required, which are uniquely integrated within the curriculum, to address the specific therapeutic, care and behaviour needs associated with communication difficulties. The specialist provision aims to remove the barriers to learning so that the young people at Pontville School really do achieve beyond their goals and aspirations.

The school's success in realising consistently outstanding outcomes for pupils is endorsed by their successful reaccreditation for NAS Autism Accreditation and also the Pearson Shine a Light Awards, where Pontville was voted SEN School of the Year.



16 to 19 Centre

Pontville School's purpose built specialist 16 - 19 Centre, which also offers additional opportunities for younger students, as appropriate, delivers a comprehensive vocational and academic curriculum over a five day week and also offers continued therapeutic support as part of a student-centred approach.

Upon starting at the 16 - 19 Centre, each student will experience a carousel of vocational and academic taster courses during the first half term. The highly equipped learning environment incorporates a range of resources to support progressive and specialist qualifications, including a fully functioning kitchen to support catering qualifications; a mini-salon for hair, beauty and customer care qualifications; motor vehicle and construction areas to support related vocational qualifications; subject specific classrooms and designated teaching areas; and an independent living area to simulate a home environment and to enable the learning of life skills.

Additionally at the main school site, learning opportunities and qualification routes are available in Music, ICT, Horticulture and Small Animal Care, as well as other possible routes in line with student preferences.



www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/pontville-school

The Birches Children's Home



The Birches, based in Lancashire, offers a therapeutically centred home aimed at nurturing the social, emotional and moral needs of up to 6 young people, who typically have learning disabilities including speech, language and communication needs, as well as ASD and Asperger's Syndrome. All young people will attend Pontville School.

There is a longstanding core group of staff which means that young people are cared for by a team that truly know and understand them. The staff also work closely with school staff to promote the educational opportunities and attainment of all our young people. While at The Birches young people are supported in accessing independent learning opportunities within the home setting that compliments their learning.

The entire home environment is designed to consider the needs of the young people. The décor and layout of the home are all tailored and adaptable. All bedrooms environments are created with the involvement of the young person to enable them to feel comfortable and at home, and also to ensure their sensory and personal needs are met. The Birches attentive and nurturing environment also incorporates a chill out room, which adopts many aspects of a sensory room, and has been designed in consultation with the young people.

Truly individualised plans are developed and worked to for every child and young person. This planning begins well before they join the home and considers every aspects of a child's life to the minutest detail. Eating habits and times; bedtime routines; types of toiletries; modes of travel; and social preferences and past times are all considered intensely so that a truly tailored support plan is put in place.

The therapeutic rationale and practice in the home is fundamentally based upon attachment principles combined with a variety of environmental and supportive therapies. In addition to the established and consistent home staff team, Witherslack Group has a Clinical Services Team, with members contributing to the support of the young people at The Birches. Psychology specialists and Mental Health Practitioners work alongside the practice team, supporting with potential interventions and strategies that can further help a young person whilst in placement.

All young people are supported to move on to semi-independence with transition planning starting early with the involvement of both young people and their families. The home staff work closely with each young person and support them in their next steps, whether that be in terms of further education, assisting with finding independent or semi-independent living or preparing for employment. Ofsted have highlighted this as an area of significant strength for The Birches...

"This home prepares young people really well. In most children's homes that I know, members of staff do far more than they should for young people, which limits their independence. At this home they do things with them not for them. That makes all the difference."

The daily living experience of the children and young people is structured and varied providing stimulating opportunities for social, intellectual, vocational and personal enrichment. They will be encouraged to utilise local community services and join youth groups or community-based sports activities; it is important that they feel that they are part of the wider community and that they also have something positive to contribute.

 www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/childrens-homes/the-birches/

For further information about our specialist approach to speech, language and communication needs or our complete Witherslack Group offer, visit www.witherslackgroup.co.uk or contact us on **0844 880 6520** or admin@witherslackgroup.co.uk

