



Sunfield Local Offer

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What is Sunfield?

Sunfield is an Independent Special School, Children's Home and charity with over 80 years of experience in supporting boys and girls, aged 6 – 19 years, with severe and complex learning and behavioural needs, including Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC). Sunfield is part of Ruskin Mill Trust which operates a number of provisions (Schools, colleges, children's homes and supported accommodation in England and Wales).

We offer 38 and 52 week residential placements, and day places, to children with complex and profound special needs and challenging behaviours, along with a respite provision for young people. Sunfield do not take emergency placements but we can offer swift, well planned admissions to match an appropriate vacancy.

Who does Sunfield provide for?

Sunfield can meet the needs of children and young people with Severe Learning Disability (SLD), Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Developmental Delay, Down's Syndrome and associated complexities such as epilepsy. However, as every child is completely unique, we will always assess every child individually.

What is the Sunfield's approach to supporting children and young people?

Our multi-disciplinary teams in Care, Education, Psychology and a range of Therapies, work closely together with children and their families both on one site and at home.

By getting to know each child and young person, we tailor our services to their needs. We make a difference – especially in cases where a child has been unable to thrive elsewhere.

With our customized approach, children and young people's communication and life skills develop, so they can more fully engage in their learning and in their independent living; they can also develop more positive relationships with the community around them.

The Sunfield offer is based on trust. It depends on meaningful, honest and open relationships with you and your child. Our goal is to help make each child feel safe, respected, confident and independent young people who are capable of achieving their very best.

How are decisions made about who can attend Sunfield?

We offer placements to children and young people with severe and complex learning needs which may include a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition. Most of our placements are funded by the local authority. Often a formal referral will come from them, however we do also accept privately funded placements.

As part of our assessment process, Sunfield will send a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, to meet your child and assess their needs, in their current environment – this maybe at home, school, a short breaks provision or a residential setting.

Based on their detailed observations as well as consideration of the identified needs within their Statement of Educational Needs (SEN), or the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the team will establish whether Sunfield can meet your child's needs. If so, the team will identify how Sunfield will meet these identified needs, including the required staffing support. The offer to whether to place your child at Sunfield will be shared with the local authority.

Careful consideration is given to placing each new young person within a peer group that is compatible to all children within that group, and one that offers the best opportunities for the children and young people to live and learn alongside one another.

How does Sunfield ensure that my child will be compatible with his/her house/class-mates?

Every child's needs are carefully considered when they are referred to Sunfield. Our observational and clinical assessments allow us to look at their needs of your child and their compatibility with the existing cohort group of young people they would be joining.

We also reflect on the needs of the group and how they may affect your child's introduction and placement. This allows us to make adjustments and plans to accommodate any specific needs that may arise. Identifying a compatible group where your child can be safely and live and learn happily is our top priority.

What facilities will be available to my child?

Sunfield has a variety of residential houses and extensive education facilities that are all located in 58 acres of parkland grounds, nestled on the slopes of the Clent Hills. The grounds themselves include a working farm with horticultural areas and natural trails for exploration and adventure, as well as play areas with trampolines and outdoor sensory areas with calm spaces. All are designed to enable children to engage, relax, exercise and have fun and develop life-long learning and independent living skills both safely and securely.

We have several spacious classrooms with bespoke furniture and interactive whiteboard; we have other smaller buildings for young people who need more individualised education programmes. Sunfield also

has a range of specialist rooms for cookery, arts, games and administration, along with a farm classroom, a large theatre, lecture room and meeting rooms. The children and young people have access to a range of state of the art technology to support their communication and learning e.g. iPads and other Alternative and Augmentative Communication aids.

Sunfield follows a Rudolf Steiner based curriculum which allows a more flexible and bespoke way of educating the young people to ensure that they flourish and grow. The methodology that is used in Sunfield is called Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE) which focuses on young people taking part in a practical based curriculum that delivers a broad and balanced curriculum including literacy, numeracy and IT. The focus is on developing the young person's life skills, social enterprise, community based Festivals and academic skills.

Sunfield has a host of dedicated on-site therapy facilities, including a soft play and light therapy room, a state-of-the-art Sensory Integration Suite and a sensory room which enable children to benefit from regular meaningful therapy sessions to support their independent living and learning. The children and young people also have the use of instruments, devices and equipment to support therapies such as music, speech and language, and occupational therapy; they also access toys and items to support their play therapy. In addition to this Sunfield is also able to offer Eurythmy, Rhythmical massage and Therapeutic Art.

In addition to our on-site facilities, we have a fleet of vehicles that enable young people to access appropriate community-based leisure facilities such as shopping, cinema, bowling and swimming. Some young people also attend community-based clubs and events on a regular basis.

How will my child's learning be matched to their needs?

Learning is continuously promoted through full-time attendance at school and through our integrated waking day curriculum. Staff in Education, Care and Psychology & Therapies work in close liaison, creating a Team Around the Child (TAC), to ensure that teaching and learning approaches are closely matched to each student's individual learning need. There is regularly monitoring and assessment and fine tuning where necessary.

Communication passports are in place for children and young people who require them in order to maintain across all settings. The 'Individual Learning Plan targets' challenge each child and young person to achieve their fullest potential, across the curriculum – whether it be in a lesson at school, preparing a meal in their home setting, or enjoying an activity in the community.

Your child will have meaningful, relevant access to a broad and balanced based on PSTE, working towards challenging individual targets. We will continually benchmark their academic progress against national expectations, using the Department for Education's Progression Guidance for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Your child will benefit from small class groups, based on their age, ability, communication and sensory profile. They will undertake a personalised learning programme, supported by expert teams who work together to meet the diverse needs of all young people. They will also be able to access innovative and effective creative arts, functional skills and work-related learning, where appropriate. Our Post 16 Curriculum will enable each young person to learn, practice and refine the skills, knowledge and understanding they will need for their adult lives.

What specialist services will be available to my child?

Working with our expert Care and Education teams, our on-site Psychology and Therapies team, offers a holistic range of therapies to support development across all aspects of a child's life. As they are on-site services, they provide a responsive and flexible approach to your child's changing needs, and are able to offer timely support, advice and intervention. These therapies include Speech and Language therapists, Occupational Therapists, Music Therapy, Light and Colour therapy, Eurythmy, Rhythmical Massage and Therapeutic Art.

Sunfield works with a range of health care professionals including Psychiatrists, GPs, specialist dentists, opticians, local CAMHS, Continence Nurse, our Trust Nurse and Trust GP. They will liaise closely with

you and the key professionals supporting your child's health, and will train and advise staff in accordance with your child's agreed health support plan. The wealth of knowledge and experience here at Sunfield, from our professional experts will enable your child's needs to be understood and met by a qualified and experienced team.

How will Sunfield support my child's well-being?

In our experience, happy and secure children and young people are more able to learn and thrive. Our priority will be to support their well-being and emotional needs, so they can more confidently and effectively access their living and learning experiences.

If your child needs additional intervention, our teams in psychology and therapies, are on-hand, and on-site, to assess, advise and further support their emotional well-being and needs.

Sunfield has an excellent track-record of helping children and young people to change their own life, by engaging effectively with their living and learning experiences. The resulting increase in skills, confidence and ability to communicate empowers them to make a very real progress in their life.

What training do the staff supporting my child have?

Sunfield has a rigorous selection process, aimed at securing only the highest quality team members from the outset. Once selected, all new staff undertake an induction programme of mandatory training, i.e. Safeguarding, working with Autism, Communication training, QCF level 3 in Health and Social care for children and young people, CALM de-escalation training and PSTE. This training ensures they staff the required skills and knowledge, competence and confidence to undertake their role.

This is also followed by our programme of additional and ongoing training, which provides staff with further mandatory and bespoke training. These training courses enhance any role-specific skills and supports their wider career development of our staff. Sunfield's teams continually share their own expert knowledge, experience and understanding of each child with each other, to provide the highest quality bespoke care and education.

How are families involved with Sunfield?

We see you and your family as integral to your child's journey through Sunfield. We will liaise with you on all aspects of your child's life here. We have an open-door policy, so you are welcome to request a visit at any time, and we will do our very best to accommodate you.

As part of your child's Individual Learning Plan [ILP], individual targets will be determined at the beginning of each term by our team and after informed consultation with you. Progress against these targets are reviewed regularly. Teachers also keep in touch with families, carers by telephone throughout the term. A report is sent to parents at the end of each term. In addition, a report on the progress of your child will be written for the Annual Review of their Statement or EHCP, when amendments can be made.

Sunfield's is dedicated and committed to supporting the whole family through a variety of support services, including training seminars for family members and carers. Our sibling support programme enables brothers and sisters to get involved and have fun too; making new friends and sharing experiences. Our Family Centre has two self-contained flats available to families to come for overnight or weekend stays. We also have a suite of rooms for day visits, offering comfortable homely spaces where you can spend precious, quality time with your child.

Sunfield has a Family Forum group, comprised of parents, carers, siblings and grandparents, who represent the wider family population. They meet each term, with representatives from the Sunfield Leadership Team, Residential, Education and Clinical and Therapies team, to discuss and reflect on the children and young people and their journey at Sunfield.

How will Sunfield prepare my child for the transition to the next stage of their life?

Sunfield will prepare your child for transition from the day they join, by developing their independent living skills and identifying strategies to support their communication, learning, behaviour and sensory needs; all of which will contribute to the next stage in their life.

In Year 9, Sunfield will begin to plan for the transition into Adult Services, working alongside you, your child and representatives from the local authority. Our transitions officer is available to advise in this process and, when your young person reaches the College department, they will work closely with everyone to ensure a coordinated and planned approach to the new adult provider. As Sunfield is part of Ruskin Mill Trust there are many opportunities to transition into one of the many colleges that RMT has around the country: from Glasshouse College in Stourbridge to Ruskin Mill College in Gloucestershire to Clervaux College in Darlington. There are also opportunities for residential provisions in all of these places as well. Your young person can have a fully bespoke package put together to fit their needs.

How do I take the next step?

At Sunfield, our aim to inform, support and reassure you, your child and your family from the moment you get in touch with us. We will help you make the right choice.

If you would like more information, or are considering Sunfield for your child, please contact our Referrals and Transition Co-ordinator, on 01562 881320 or at referrals@sunfield.org.uk.

You can get in touch to arrange an initial visit, or simply to discuss what Sunfield can offer your son or daughter. We take admissions throughout the year, so please feel free to contact us at any time.

We look forward to hearing from you!

