

Parent Information Sheet: September 2021

Head Office Address and Contact Details	Outcomes First Group Turnpike Gate House Alcester Heath Alcester Warwickshire B49 5JG 01789 767800	Outcomes First Group 1 Merchants Place River Street Bolton BL2 1BX 01204 521667
School Address and Contact Details	Options Higford Higford Hall Near Shifnal Shropshire TF11 9ET 01952 630600	
Proprietor Contact Details	Richard Power Director of Care and Education richard.power@ofgl.co.uk 077102 55888	
Chair of Governance / Safeguarding Governor	Graham Norris Regional Director graham.norris@optionsautism.co.uk 07872501430	
Head of Service	Anne Adams anne.adams@optionsautism.co.uk 07525124822	
Head Teacher Designated Safeguarding Lead	Richard Winzor richard.winzor@optionsautism.co.uk 07860404736	
Senior Teacher SENDCO/Designated Teacher CLA Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Samantha Carswell samantha.carswell@optionsautism.co.uk 07597507308	

Admissions

As part of our admission process, the school will review all relevant and recent reports. This will usually include:

- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Most recent School Report/s
- Social History and any relevant reports
- Clinical reports (e.g. Psychology, Psychiatry, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy)/ Diagnostic Information

Parents and the young person (where appropriate) will be invited to visit the school site. Higford Senior staff will carry out admission assessments, which usually includes visiting to observe and consult with previous school / settings. Once a

Placement has been offered and accepted, an Admission Planning meeting will be held with all relevant parties in order to ensure each young person's start at Higford is well planned in order to best meet their individual needs.

Policies

All key policies are available on our website, including Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour Support, Complaints, Curriculum, Planning, Assessment, Teaching and Learning, and our SEN Information report.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

At Options Higford we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognise that safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people is everyone's responsibility. We follow Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) procedures and acknowledge that the welfare of the child is paramount. It is our duty to respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child. We work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies. Our statutory duties and supporting guidance are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

All staff (including agency staff) at Options Higford are familiar with the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2018. All staff (including agency staff) are aware of their individual roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including their responsibility to be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We ensure that all staff (including agency staff) undergo an appropriate induction process where they are given copies of the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. On-going support is provided through regular supervision and appraisals to ensure these policies and procedures are put into practice to protect children. All staff are expected to update their child protection training at least every three years. In addition all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Positive Behaviour Support

All children and young people at Options Higford have been identified as benefiting from ASC specific and trauma and mental health informed approaches. Our students have difficulties with thinking, social understanding, social communication, flexibility of thinking and sensory issues. Our behaviour support policy and practice is designed to promote positive behaviour and ensure that young people are safe and their welfare promoted, whilst respecting the different challenges they face. This is based on the

concept of “unconditional positive regard” which was developed by the psychologist Carl Rogers, in that we believe that a complete and unconditional acceptance of each child and young person in the school, of who they are and what they do as a learner with autism and additional needs, potentially including attachment difficulties, is the bedrock of any work to improve behaviour. Unconditional positive regard means accepting that the child or young person is attempting to deal with situations in their lives as best they can.

We concur with the OFSTED guide for Inspectors “Positive Environments where Children can Flourish” (March 2018) which states: “The foundation of good practice in working with children should be:

- Building relationships of trust and understanding
- Understanding triggers and finding solutions
- If incidents do occur, defusing the situation and/or distracting the child wherever possible.”

Many challenging behaviours are closely linked to a young person’s communication and learning difficulties and are the best and most powerful way they currently have of getting their message across or getting their needs met. If we can work out the meaning of the behaviour, we are then in a better position to encourage a more appropriate response. The functional analysis of behaviour is used to assist in the development of behaviour support plans. The Info Exchange behaviour recording system is used to help with this analysis.

All young people at Options Higford will have a Positive Behaviour Support Plan. This is developed in consultation with staff and through reference to the behaviour tracking data. It will outline the priorities for their development in behaviour and the strategies to be followed by all staff to support the young person. All staff have been trained to use PRICE approaches and must work within the framework provided by PRICE. A number of core physical intervention techniques will be taught to all members of staff. The list of core techniques will be reviewed annually to ensure the techniques that are being taught remain appropriate for the behaviours displayed.

SEN Information Report

Options Higford caters for students with autistic spectrum condition, challenging behaviour and additional complex difficulties.

We are registered for up to 34 students aged from 8 -19 years of age

The students have difficulties in all four areas of need as defined by the SEN Code of Practice:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

All students have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

We use the principles of the National Autistic Society (NAS) SPELL approach in order to maximise access to the whole curriculum by prioritising:

- **Structure:** including how we organise the environment, the use of personal schedules and systematic strategies to work
- **Positive:** approaches and expectations through sensitive but persistent intervention based upon thorough individual assessment, including Intensive Interaction, Forest School and play-based approaches
- **Empathy:** based upon respect for personal experience to inform what motivates and what may frighten, preoccupy or distress each individual
- **Low arousal:** based upon individual sensory profiles and the use of PRICE for the positive management of potentially challenging behaviour
- **Links:** through a thematic approach to the curriculum and a multi-disciplinary team-work approach across the service and with families / significant others.

Complaints

Options Higford encourages all of its young people, and anyone who comes into contact with our services, to raise any matter about which they are unhappy or feel they have cause for complaint. Every complainant has the right to expect to be treated fairly, politely and without prejudice. Anybody making a complaint will not be victimised in any way. We resolve to investigate every issue fully and seek a satisfactory conclusion in all cases.

Total Number of complaints logged for 2020-21:

0

Accreditation results 2020-21:

ASDAN Personal Progress Certificate- 1

ASDAN Personal Progress Diploma- 4

ASDAN Entry Level Certificate in Personal Social Development (Entry level 1)- 1 student (5 modules).