



# Welcome to The Bridge Short Stay School

## Headteacher Introduction

I'm delighted to be able to welcome you to The Bridge Short Stay School.

The Bridge exists to change young people's lives. We know that every student that comes to us has had a difficult experience with schools and education. We aim to offer a bridge from that challenging past to a brighter future – that future will be different for everyone, but could include returning to mainstream school, achieving GCSEs with us, going on to College and University or getting a good job.

Exclusion is the only thing all of our students have in common. We are committed to getting to know each young person as an individual and providing them with the support that they need. We encourage them to have high aspirations, in line with their own interests and provide them with the opportunities to achieve those goals.

To allow each child to achieve in line with their ambitions we follow a number of curriculum pathways which you can read about more later in this document. By placing a student in the most appropriate pathway to them we can ensure that their curriculum meets their needs and interests, while having the flexibility to adapt this as things change over time.

Over **90%** of our students who return to mainstream education do not need to return to us.

For many of our students the aim is for us to be brief part of their journey through education. We work with students and families to make positive changes to the behaviours that led to exclusion and support them to return to a mainstream school. Once there, over 90% of our students who return to mainstream are successful and complete their education at the new school without returning to us.

In KS4 all students regardless of pathway work towards completing core GCSEs that will enable them to move on successfully to College or Apprenticeships. Depending on pathway, they will also be able to study further GCSEs or more vocational options to help prepare them for their next steps. Our results compare well against similar schools across the country – our students regularly get better GCSE results and better rates of progression to Post 16 destinations than students excluded in other parts of the country.

As a PRU, we know we need to do things differently to other schools and you will get a flavour of that from this prospectus. We put a great emphasis on personal and social development and all students participate in aspects of learning outside the classroom to support this.

Our aim is always to work in partnership with parents and families so that it feels like a collaboration between home and school. If you want more information about us and the work we do please phone 0151 2453877 or email [enquiries@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk) to make an appointment.



**Parent says:** "I would just like to say thank you for all the hard work and effort you have given George while he has been with you. I have seen how much he has changed and grown for the better. Without your help, love and support I don't know where we would be but he is now looking forward to starting college and the future."

# Inclusion: a curriculum for all

## Inclusion

### Understanding Exclusion

We understand that in the lead up to a permanent exclusion, student behaviours may have been influenced by underlying SEN or wider social issues that are impacting on a young person. We aim to see past those behaviours and get to the root causes of the behaviour to be able to make positive change.

### Transition Process

Following referral to The Bridge we will complete a part time, phased transition into the school before students join their pathway to help us get to best understand the support that they need. During this time, students complete a number of cognitive assessments and work either 1:1 or in a very small group – this allows us to get a full picture of the students educational needs and build positive relationships with staff so that we can start to identify what may have caused difficulties in the past.

### Special Educational Needs

Students may have been excluded with identified SEN but often there are underlying issues that have been masked by behaviour before exclusion. Through our induction and highly personalised teaching we are able to better understand these needs and start to address them.

Adaptive teaching in all subjects, with groups no bigger than 8 students, allows teaching staff to personalise work and learning to meet the needs of each individual student. Experienced staff also deliver interventions with individual students in order to meet their bespoke needs.

Our SEN staff are experienced in accessing further support for students and where this is identified as being needed they will work with parents to put in place referrals and applications for outside agencies or EHCP.

### Pastoral Support

Outside life can have a big impact on a student's ability to focus and behave appropriately in school. We know that many of our students have experienced challenges in their life and so we put a lot of emphasis on being able to provide wellbeing support.

Each pathway has teaching and support staff attached to it to act as personal tutors for students within that group. These staff form close and positive relationships with the members of their group and are often the first port of call for young people or their parents with any general concerns.

Within the wider pastoral team, we have highly trained and experienced safeguarding staff whose primary role is to make sure all of our young people remain safe and free from harm. They are able to offer parents and families signposting to information and support with any concerns around anything that might be putting young people at risk. Outreach staff are available to support and encourage young people who struggle to attend school regularly and make a big difference in promoting positive engagement with students who weren't previously participating in anything. Staff also have experience in a wide range of issues, including providing wellbeing support and drugs counselling.

Where we don't have the expertise needed to fully support a young person, we have strong links with local services to be able to refer students to the right place to get the help that they need.



# Core curriculum: foundations for success

Following induction students are allocated to one of 5 bespoke pathways, with different areas of focus that are most appropriate to meet each individual's needs at that time. These are regularly reviewed and students may move pathway to ensure that they are always receiving the support that they need.

Common to all pathways is a focus on maintaining and developing their learning in core subjects, including English and Maths, to ensure that they continue to make progress in these subjects and allow for a seamless transition back into a mainstream classroom. Small groups in all pathways mean that specialist teachers can quickly get to know student abilities in great detail allowing them to build on strengths and address any weaknesses in each subject, meaning that our young people typically make better progress academically than they were in their mainstream school.

All students will also experience a range of wider provision including PE; Art; PSHE; RSE and Learning Outside the Classroom in order to promote their wider physical, social and emotional development. Students in KS4 also have the opportunity of accessing more vocational aspects of learning and in some cases extended work placements to help prepare them for life after school.

The balance of the curriculum between academic learning and personal development is weighted differently in each pathway to provide what is needed for students in each particular group.

## Pathway 1

P1 is a KS3 pathway for students who either have identified SEN or where it is felt more investigation into their learning needs is required. The majority of the curriculum is taught by a consistent teacher and TA team, ensuring that they get a very in-depth level of understanding of each individual's needs while the student experiences high levels of consistency. Many subjects are taught via cross curricular projects with subject experts leading more specialist subjects.

## Pathway 2

P2 is a KS3 pathway for students who currently have high levels of Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs and therefore require a lot of support. Within and outside of lessons, personal targets are reviewed several times a day and across the curriculum there is a big focus on developing the resilience and social skills that young people need to be successful

## Pathway 3

P3 is a KS3 pathway for students who are preparing for a return to mainstream school. As such the curriculum and timetable more closely mirrors that of other schools with a greater focus than P2 on academic learning, whilst continuing to provide the support that students need to make positive change.

## Pathway 4

P4 is the more academic of our KS4 pathways. Students study a wide range of GCSE subjects with the opportunity to achieve up to 7 GCSEs if they remain at The Bridge for the duration of KS4. The academic expectations of this group also support these students to be able to return to mainstream schools.

## Pathway 5

KS4 students who have more vocational aspirations or who require higher levels of social and emotional support are placed in P5. Within the curriculum there continues to be a focus on achieving GCSEs in core subjects, but this is combined with more vocational learning, developing practical skills that will support students transition into apprenticeships or the workplace at Post 16.



**Parent says:** "I would like to say a heartfelt thank you for all of you and your teams kindness, support and for treating Lewis with respect. I will always be grateful and absolutely be singing your praises for the work you all do."

# Extended Curriculum: Opportunities for all to thrive

At The Bridge we believe it is important to extend the curriculum, for all students, beyond traditional academic subjects. A wider curriculum supports our students in their rounded development and it is often in these areas that they excel – allowing them to experience success and gain in confidence.

Within the weekly timetable there are opportunities for students to take part in these wider activities including:

- PE
- Art and Design
- Vocational Skills
- Food and Nutrition
- Learning outside the classroom/Duke of Edinburgh

## Duke of Edinburgh

KS4 students work towards the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze or Silver award as part of their curriculum time. As part of this programme students are supported to develop new skills; volunteer to make a difference to their community and participate in physical challenges. The award culminates in the expedition where students have to self-navigate a route and independently support themselves through an overnight camping trip. For many students this expedition has been the highlight of their time at The Bridge.

## Learning Outside the Classroom

Students in KS3 also have timetabled learning outside the classroom sessions. Aspects of this will be preparation for later participation in Duke of Edinburgh, replicating some of the physical challenges including things like camp fire cooking and expedition walks to the peak of Moel Famau. Other sessions link with and support the Humanities curriculum and can include things like museum visits.

## Trips and Rewards

Further trips are organised to support different subject areas or as rewards; recent trips have included things like:

- Theatre trips to support study of Blood Brothers in English
- Alton Towers
- Gullivers World
- 'The Big Bang' Science Fair in Birmingham
- Manchester Christmas Markets
- Chester Zoo



# Working with families

We aim to work as closely with families as possible to secure positive outcomes for our students. We communicate with parents in an open and regular manner, but we welcome contact from families to discuss anything they wish.

Regular contact from tutors – tutors are normally the first point of call for day to day issues and they will be in touch at least weekly to give an overview of how students are going on. This contact will include the positives as well as any issues that are arising. We believe it is important to make sure we are sharing the things that go well rather than waiting for an issue occur to make contact. Where there may be concerns this regular contact also allows us to try and ‘nip them in the bud’ rather than waiting for something to build into a bigger issue.

## Reports and Parents Evenings

Written reports of student progress are sent out to all families during the summer term, giving a comprehensive overview of progress across subjects and more generally. There are formal opportunities to discuss progress at Parents Evenings held twice per year. More specific feedback than that provided by tutors can be requested by making an appointment to speak to specific teachers.

## Headteacher Drop In

The Headteacher holds a monthly drop in morning where parents can make an appointment to discuss any specific issues they wish. Dates are sent out in advance for these and parents can make an appointment by phoning or emailing school.

## Information sharing/Drop in sessions

There are also opportunities for families to come into school for information sharing events or drop in sessions that are organised based on things that are happening in the local community or school. In previous years this has included information sharing on topics like ‘legal highs’; MacMillan coffee mornings & other charity fundraisers and Year 11 leavers events.



**Parent says:** “We had lost hope in the whole education system and The Bridge gave us that back. They took a child who was, frankly, broken and rebuilt him, allowing him to go on and thrive at College.”



**Parent says:** “I really don’t think my son would have ever finished his education without the team at The Bridge. We’re very grateful for the support and understanding from all the staff.”

# What our parent’s say

	Strongly Agree	Agree
The school is led and managed well	90%	10%
The school is friendly and welcoming	90%	10%
The school provides high quality learning opportunities	80%	20%
The school has high expectations of my child	70%	30%
I feel comfortable approaching the school with questions	90%	10%
Communication from the school is regular and informative	80%	20%
I feel my child is safe and well supported at school	90%	10%
The school supports my child to improve their behaviour	80%	20%
The school helps my child to manage their feelings and be resilient	90%	10%
My child is encouraged to be mature and independent	100%	0%
My child knows who to approach if they have a worry	90%	10%
My child is encouraged to work hard and do their best	90%	10%
The teaching is good	90%	10%
My child is gaining new skills that will help them in the future	90%	10%
I would recommend the school to a family facing similar challenges	80%	20%

**Parent says:** “My daughter had such a positive experience at The Bridge. Her attending made a huge difference, not only to her, but in improving all the relationships in our family.”



# Behaviour and self-development

## Behaviour

We recognise that young people referred to The Bridge have struggled to manage their behaviour previously, that is why they have been excluded. Supporting students to make changes in the way they respond and behave in school is critical to our work in providing them with a bridge to a brighter future.

We know that we can't just work with young people in the same way as their mainstream school and expect things to change. As a school environment we do however, of course, have high expectations of how students should behave while with us. Our basic expectations is that students remain:

**Ready:** in the right place at the right time, ready to learn

**Respectful:** to each other, to staff and to property. Speaking appropriately without bad language

**Safe:** behaving in a way which keeps themselves as well as others safe

We aim to take a positive approach to behaviour change. Based on well researched neuroscience, we know that our students are more likely to respond to reward and recognition than sanction and punishment, although consequences still exist where students fail to meet expectations.

As with the curriculum, we take a personalised approach to behaviour, with students being set individual targets based on what we know about them – ensuring that they are realistic & achievable while still providing challenge and being relevant to the things each student needs to work on. Tutors review these targets regularly and change them over time to ensure continual progress.

Students are scored for their behaviour in every lesson and this feeds into their individual rewards. Each week, every student has the chance to achieve a Gold, Silver or Bronze award and these are added to a gift voucher that is awarded at the end of each term. Student achievements, including for behaviour are also acknowledged and celebrated at the weekly praise meeting led by members of senior staff which can lead to further, weekly rewards.

When students aren't able to meet expectations around their behaviour in school, they may fail to achieve particular rewards. As far as possible we will try to link sanctions to the behaviour, for example requiring a student to repair damage that they have caused, so that we are forming a clear link between behaviour and consequence. In extreme cases we will also use periods of suspension to allow for reflection on behaviour and implementing any changes in support that are needed.

As well as individual rewards, we want young people to learn how their behaviour impacts on a whole community. Community stars are awarded to or deducted from pathway groups when students actions have a positive or negative impact on the whole school community. These stars have a value attached which give the group their budget for termly reward activities.



# Key Information

## What are our school times?

Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday	
Breakfast	8.55-9.20
Lesson 1	9.20-10.10
Lesson 2	10.10-11.00
<b>Break</b>	<b>11.00-11.15</b>
Lesson 3	11.15-12.05
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12.05-12.45</b>
Tutorial	12.45-1.15
Lesson 4	1.15-2.05
Lesson 5	2.05-2.55
Reflection	2.55-3.10
<b>Wednesday</b>	
Breakfast	8.55-9.20
Lesson 1	9.20-10.10
Lesson 2	10.10-11.00
<b>Break</b>	<b>11.00-11.15</b>
Lesson 3	11.15-12.05
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12.05-12.45</b>
Tutorial	12.45-1.15
Lesson 4	1.15-2.05
Reflection	2.05-2.15

## Transport

Students who live more than 3 miles away from school are eligible for transport support. The Local Authority Officer who has supported you with your child's exclusion will be able to provide guidance on the transport that will be provided.

## Induction Process

To be able to best support your child we need to know and understand them as well as possible. Our induction process for new students is vital to this. In their early days at school students will attend on a part time basis and work with staff either 1:1 or in very small groups to complete assessments and help us get to know them.

This induction process helps students to form positive relationships with staff in school and allows us to learn better what support they are going to need in order to make school successful going forward. Once this induction is complete your child will join their group on a full time basis.

## Food in school

Students should provide their own lunch or dinner money, unless they are entitled to free school meals. Students who arrive on time, we provide breakfast in the morning. Students and staff eat together as a community within their pathways. Dinner money is paid in advance by online payment, it costs £2.75 per meal or paid for via Free School Meal entitlement.

At lunch times students can enjoy hot and cold options such as sandwiches and paninis, jacket potatoes and we include cake, fruit and something to drink. Our school day is structured with routine times for break and lunch and the transition between lessons will be made clear and will be maintained by all members of staff.

To register for Free School Meal eligibility visit <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/school-meals.aspx> or call 0300 123 7039.

**General enquiries 0151 2453877 / 07795 061661**

**enquiries@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk**

**Safeguarding: safeguarding@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk**

**Special Educational Needs: SEN@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk**

**Information on exclusion from school: exclusions@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**

# What we stand for

The Bridge exists to change young people's lives. As the Cheshire West alternative provision for students permanently excluded from mainstream schools, it offers a bridge from a challenging past to a brighter future. The Bridge is a school where individuals are known and their personal needs met, creating a community where young people can develop high aspirations and are given the opportunity to achieve them.

## Aims and Values:

We aim to:

- Deliver high quality teaching and learning within an appropriately tailored curriculum that will ensure students reach the highest levels of attainment to support a successful future.
- Eradicate the impact of past challenging experiences in order to put young people in a position to succeed.
- Be part of a student's journey rather than the ultimate destination and identify appropriate pathways so that students are in the best position to make a success of their next steps.
- Meet the needs of the students by supporting our talented and committed workforce enabling them to complete their role effectively.
- Provide suitable facilities that allows for a broad and engaging curriculum to be delivered and minimise the need for travel so that resources are used efficiently.

## We value:

- Self- Confidence.
- Resilience.
- Aspiration.
- Community Mindfulness.
- Positivity

## Our School Values

Bridge citizens aspire to be happy, healthy, imaginative and resilient members of society who:

- Embrace diversity and difference.
- Face challenges and aspire to work hard and succeed.
- Have self-confidence which allows them to show compassion for others.
- Have a sense of justice, pride and respect towards themselves and their community.
- Leave school with the skills and qualities to be valuable members of the adult community.



# Admissions...and getting involved

## Admissions

Places at The Bridge Short Stay School are commissioned by the Local Authority for students who are resident in Cheshire West and have been permanently excluded from their previous school. We aim to admit students who are excluded from the 6th school day following exclusion, however this may be later at times when we are at capacity or handling a large number of admissions.

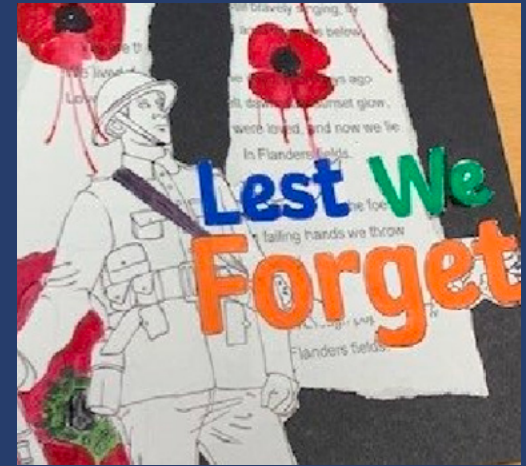
Following admission students will participate in a phased induction process before joining their pathway full time.

We are unable to accept direct applications from parents. If you are concerned that your child might be at risk of exclusion or would benefit from Alternative Provision we'd encourage you to discuss this with their current school or the LA Education Access Team.

## Management Committee

The Management Committee serves as the School Governors who support and challenge staff in the school to make sure they are providing everything they can to get things right for students in the school and change young people's lives. The Management Committee includes parental representation, but please get in touch if you're interested in being more involved in this way.





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**Parent says:** "I wanted to drop you a message to thank you so very much for all the support you have given Eva over the last few years. There was a time we never thought she'd be around to see the end of school and now with the support and encouragement of The Bridge we are excited to see how she grows - she's now more than ready to face the world!"