



**WESTHEATH**  
REBUILDING LIVES THROUGH EDUCATION



SCHOOL



THERAPY



CENTRE



RESIDENTIAL



WEDDINGS



# WELCOME

West Heath School is a unique educational environment set in 32 glorious acres of Kent countryside, on the outskirts of the town of Sevenoaks. Our staff passionately believe in the transformative power of education to change the lives of the young people in our care.

Our philosophy is to create a nurturing environment, centered around a holistic approach, whereby young people are welcomed, accepted for who they are, and their educational needs are balanced with an understanding of their therapeutic requirements. Our intuitive staff are reflective practitioners who work collaboratively with the students' families and external professionals, to ensure that our students make sustained progress and develop a resilience that will be their mainstay in their future lives.

I look forward to welcoming you to our extraordinary community that I am privileged to lead. I am so proud of our remarkable young people, whose individual journeys have been a triumph of hope, patience, perseverance and courage.

Mrs Photini Bohacek BA (Hons), MA, CPE  
PRINCIPAL



[westheathschool](https://www.westheathschool.com)

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# THERAPY

Therapy at West Heath School plays a major part in the social, emotional, mental health, behavioural and physical wellbeing of our students. Whilst not officially designated as a “therapeutic school”, our whole approach is underpinned by a ‘soft’ therapeutic approach which permeates everything from our curriculum to our behaviour management. Whilst many of our students have a specified therapeutic requirement on their Education, Health and Care Plans, most of our students will access our therapeutic department at some time or other during their time with us, whether it be for in-depth counselling, a safe place to off-load, a need to control their anger, help with social skills, difficulties with sensory issues, or just to learn some relaxation techniques before exams.

At present our therapeutic offer consists of:

- Psychology services including; Cognitive and Psychological assessments
- Speech and language therapy
- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Play therapy
- Counselling
- Mood management therapy
- Integrated Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy
- Complimentary therapy



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# THE CURRICULUM

At West Heath we ensure a curriculum that is both flexible and individualised to engage all of our students whilst providing support to improve their self-regulation.

The curriculum promotes personal growth and good health and wellbeing as well as appropriate academic challenge to secure the best future outcomes for our students. There is also a vast range of effective interventions available across the school. We deliver outstanding lessons based on the National Curriculum that then lead to opportunities to study a range of nationally recognised qualifications that enable students to access further education. Our curriculum offer is continually revised so that we can meet the individual needs of our students, achieved by listening to the aspirations of both students and parents. At West Heath School we believe in supporting and educating the student holistically. Therefore, we provide a challenging academic programme alongside structured learning of life skills and PSHE, whilst prioritising their social, emotional, and mental health needs. An active Student Council ensures that the voice of the young person is always heard.



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# LOWER SCHOOL

“... A respectable and nurturing environment which allows students to develop strong foundations to build upon”

The Lower School provides a nurturing environment for students to feel comfortable to allow learning to take place effectively.

We believe that when students demonstrate our core values of Responsibility, Respect, Relationships and Resilience, their academic ability will develop as well as their social skills in readiness for life in Middle and Upper School and further education.

Along with the core subjects such as English, Maths and Science, our students access more varied subjects such as Self-Science, Forest School and Life Skills. Here in the Lower School, we believe that educational visits and outdoor activities are essential in developing every facet of our students. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting the students' team building skills and their capacity to embrace challenges and opportunities.

YR 5, 6, 7, & 8

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE 5 STUDENTS

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School follows a traditional secondary school model in the preparation of GCSEs, Functional Skills and Entry Level examinations, Art Award, DofE, NCFE and BTEC courses. Preparing and guiding our students through this transition is a key focus.

There are Numeracy and Literacy interventions and in Year 9, our students are assessed for specific access arrangements in preparation for public exams. In year 10, students will choose a further four subjects to study within the optional curriculum from a total of 17 subjects including a wide variety of practical, creative and academic courses. This will be the start of a two year programme.

Our students thrive in the safe, secure and comfortable environment that we promote which allows them to develop their talents and achieve their aspirations.

YR 9 & 10

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE 6-8 STUDENTS





## UPPER SCHOOL (INCLUDING SIXTH FORM)

Upper School has a key focus on supporting and preparing our students for their examinations, vocational courses and further education to ensure a smooth and successful transition. Within Upper School we promote work experience alongside their studies.

Upper School encourages independent learning and develop resilience, so students are prepared, ready to tackle the challenges and rigour of 6th Form study and adult life.

YR 11

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE 8 STUDENTS



## SIXTH FORM



Prior to a student joining the Sixth Form, discussions are held between the school, the student and the parents/carers to ascertain the most suitable education route, post 16.

Within the Sixth Form at West Heath School, we offer bespoke programmes of study through a phased transition over one, two or three years, focusing on offsite learning and preparation for adulthood. Within Sixth Form we place a large emphasis on pastoral care and support which is provided by our designated Sixth Form tutors located both onsite and within our offsite provisions. Regular communication between the tutors and parents/carers ensures they are involved throughout our students' journeys.

With our chosen partnership providers, we are able to provide a variety of courses and qualifications that are fitting yet academically and professionally challenging for our students.

YR 12, 13, 14 & 15

*"Leaders prepare pupils very well for their future lives. Students are supported exceptionally well to take their next steps into education or the workplace."*

OFSTED 2019

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*"The sixth form is based in a local college. Staff support students very well so that they can take part in college courses while also attending the sixth form base that is located in the college building. Students become more independent so that they can then leave the school sixth form and follow further courses or work placements. Sixth form students are glowing in their praise for the school."*

OFSTED 2019



# RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Our Boarding provision is a collection of small purpose-built bungalows forming the Boarding Colt Village. Each young person has their own private bedroom, to which they are given a key and our boarders can personalise their bedroom with posters, family photos and ornaments giving them ownership of their room. Each house has its own philosophy of care which underpins the school's values Responsibility, Respect, Relationships and Resilience.

We aim to ensure that every young person has the opportunity to fulfill their aspirations and educational potential. The highly qualified residential team ensures a child focused, needs led, residential provision. The purpose is to provide a stimulating and nurturing homely environment in which children feel safe and secure, encouraging social, emotional, and academic development.

- The Residential Team work closely with their education and therapeutic colleagues to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach
- Each young person has a dedicated key worker
- The boarding community promotes fundamental modern British Values
- Sixth form students have access to filtered Wi Fi
- House meetings and Residential Student Council meetings support students to make informed decisions surrounding independent living which will prepare them for adulthood
- Beyond the school day boarders have access to a range of school facilities including gym, swimming pool, Astroturf and a purpose-built Youth Club which has a pool table, PC's, cinema screen, and games consoles
- Boarders are encouraged to use Off-site community facilities and engage in activities that include bowling, clubs/classes, theatre trips and other community events



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# WHO WE SUPPORT

## SOCIAL

Our designation is to provide for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

This includes:

- Difficulties in communicating with peers, leading to social isolation and apparent behaviour difficulties
- Elevated levels of frustration or anxiety caused by the inability to participate in learning and/or social contexts
- Speech production difficulties with a mild impact on classroom participation and interactions with peers (as a secondary diagnosis)
- Delayed attention and listening skills
- Students with a language delay (as a secondary diagnosis)

All of our prospective students have a speech and language assessment with our Speech and Language team prior to their journey at West Heath School.



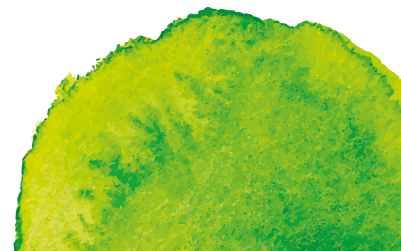
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## EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the main part of the school we accept students with mild to moderate levels of the following:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (high functioning)
- Anxiety-based problems including Attachment Disorder, Separation Anxiety, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, School Phobia, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Tourette's Syndrome
- Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder
- Problems related to trauma





## OTHER

- Sensory motor skills
- Functional skills
- Sensory modulation
- Motor skills
- Sensory skills
- Perceptual skills
- Pain management
- Handwriting

## HEART

In HEART (our specialist mental health department) we accept students with moderate levels of:

- Anxiety Disorders including Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Tourette's Syndrome
- Eating Disorders
- Gender Identity Disorder
- Depressive disorders including depression and self-harm
- Personality Disorders
- Bi-Polar Disorder/Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder
- Schizoaffective Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (high functioning)





# INFORMATION FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

We pride ourselves in the proactive and collaborative way in which we work with Local Authorities. Below is some information which is the first step to understanding a little bit about us and some of the benefits to our structure and approach. We always welcome visitors and would encourage our current and future partners to come and see us to get a full understanding of who we are and what we do

- Charity status
- Cost-effective provision
- Set fee structure
- In house therapy included in fee\*
- Member of NASS
- Training opportunities and outreach
- 12 week new placement review
- Range of psychometric and cognitive tests onsite
- Participation in procurement platforms
- Clearly defined entry criteria
- Therapeutically informed teaching and support practice
- Support across key transition stages
- High-quality Annual Review process
- Regular communication and updates
- Independent (st20) residential provision evaluation
- High-quality residential provision
- A rural and peaceful environment set in 32 acres of lawns and woodland
- Sports, swimming and tennis facilities
- College-based 6th Form provision
- Good transport links

\*When meeting the entry criteria and assessment process, provided that the therapeutic needs can be met with our existing provision resource and constraints



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## OUR VISION

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

# “REBUILDING LIVES THROUGH EDUCATION”

To support and empower every member of our community in the process of developing the capacity to accept and exercise responsibility; to demonstrate respect for themselves and others; to build and maintain relationships based on trust, respect and integrity; and to be courageous enough to continue to build the resilience necessary to flourish.

## OUR VALUES

### RESEPECT

Having respect for others, for ourselves and for our environment.

### RESPONSIBILITY

Having the courage to accept responsibility for our own actions and their consequences, and taking the necessary action to do what's right.

### RELATIONSHIPS

Being open to the vulnerability that comes from building trusting and respectful relationships, knowing that through connection comes so much of what gives life value

### RESILIENCE

Developing the courage to live life, accepting failure as part of learning and growth, and building the capacity to respond positively to adversity



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# HEART

HEART, our Health, Education, Assessment, and Revitalising Therapy department, was redefined in September 2016 to support our students further and to meet an ever-increasing need from Local Authorities to find school placements for young people with significant mental health difficulties. HEART now comprises approximately 32 of our most vulnerable students, who for one reason or another, require a greater need for particularly close monitoring and supervision, where extensive access to our therapeutic services may be needed, or where a great deal of additional managerial input is required. Our young people in HEART have access to, and benefit from, the following provision that goes beyond that generally available to students funded on our basic fees. At present we offer our HEART students the

- A calm and nurturing environment with access to a designated suite of rooms that allows them to study in areas where they can feel secure and relaxed
- Prompt access to specific therapeutic support as and when necessary. This includes Counselling, CBT, Play Therapy, Integrative Child Psychotherapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech and Language Therapy
- A key worker who is given dedicated time to ensure close and effective liaison between all those involved in their care and support
- All provision is overseen by the Head of HEART and Therapy who leads communication with other professionals both within and outside of school
- The day-to-day smooth running of the department is overseen by the HEART Manager and the Assistant HEART Manager
- Access to a fully flexible curriculum which is designed specifically to meet individual needs and interests. This is overseen by the Curriculum Lead: HEART, supported by the designated HEART teachers
- In addition to the core subjects and options, all HEART students have the opportunity to develop a range of life skills such as cooking and using public transport. They also have the opportunity to gain a qualification in ASDAN
- Our older students have a choice of attending college whilst either remaining under the HEART umbrella or transferring to our 6th Form if they are ready; alternatively, we offer BTECs (Levels 2 and 3) in Art/Textiles, Creative Media, and ICT on-site



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# FINDING THE RIGHT SCHOOL

If you are looking for a school for your son or daughter, we would advise the following:

Do your research, visit the school and ask as many questions as possible. Make sure they have the right balance of support. Education should be at the appropriate level with specific support where needed. Therapy should not stand-alone and should inform school staff in their practices and approach.

If you are considering an independent school, check how they are funded and explore their fee structure. If the Local Authority is funding the placement, you will need to also research your local maintained mainstream and special schools to see if they have appropriate provision. Local Authorities will want to place with the most appropriate and cost effective provision.

Talk to your Local Authority about the school you have selected. Some schools, like ours, will support the application process and will work proactively with you and the Local Authority to find the most appropriate provision.

Ensure any assessments are up to date and relevant. This is the evidence that will enable professionals to make the right decisions around provision and any associated costs. If you disagree with the identified provision or placement you can appeal the decision through a tribunal process.



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# THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Read our literature or visit our website for information on the school and who we are able to support
- Contact us and discuss your child's needs
- Ask your Local Authority to consult with the school and forward relevant SEN/EHCP papers for review
- Arrange a visit to the school, see our provision and ask questions
- For our Junior and Main School, should we feel that we can meet the young person's need, a remote interview and assessment day invite will be offered. For prospective HEART and Residential students, a face to face Interview is offered
- If we are unable to meet your young person's needs we will write a letter of explanation
- You and your Local Authority SEN case officer will be informed of a Placement offer
- Your Local Authority will contact us with their decision from our Placement Offer or you may hear prior - please advise of developments
- We will provide supporting documentation to the Local Authority as required
- Upon funding approval, a home visit or a TEAMS call will be organised. Our Admissions pack and a letter advising of the start date will be sent out
- Transition into West Heath will be carried out by the appropriate team dependent upon which area of the school the placement has been agreed and a member of that team will liaise with you direct
- Assessments will take place during the initial 12-week assessment transition period

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH

High quality and effective staff development is central to fulfilling our mission and purpose, which is to create the conditions in which young people can flourish. West Heath Outreach commits both time and significant resources to ensuring that our staff are fully supported. We do this not only in terms of equipping them with the skills and resources required to perform their roles to a high standard, but also in having the opportunity to themselves demonstrate the commitment to lifelong learning that we want to cultivate in our children and young people.

Having, as we do, a specific charitable objective to; “provide training and support for teachers and other professionals working in the field of education for children with special educational needs” we are determined to share our insights and our expertise with other educational professionals.

To fulfil this objective, through West Heath Outreach, we have embarked on an ambitious training and support programme that sees us deliver a variety of structured courses alongside individually designed, bespoke interventions. Whatever the provision, the aim is to support those working with children with SEND to do so more effectively, and hopefully to make a positive contribution to children and young people being successful in their existing placements.

Our Outreach offer includes accredited Mental Health First Aid training, with half-day, one-day and two-day courses available. We are able to offer both Youth courses, focusing on specific issues facing young people from 8 – 18, as well as Adult courses. As such, we contribute to supporting the wellbeing and positive mental health not just of children and young people, but of those who support them too.



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Feedback from courses demonstrates the positive impact our training and support programme has had.

## QUOTES FROM MHFA PARTICIPANTS:

*"Thank you. David is very knowledgeable and presented the course very well"*

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*"Excellent instructor with great subject knowledge. I really enjoyed the interactive style - letting us have insights into how people feel with the different mental health difficulties was really powerful, thank you!"*

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*"Excellent presentation style. Informative, clear explanations, time to discuss. Good activity exercises, thank you!!"*

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*"David helped me to understand better what my role as a Mental Health First Aider is going to be, I feel more confident, thank you"*

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*"Well adapted, clear training, well thought through and engaging, thank you"*

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*"It was a huge topic to cover in 2 days but was broken down and important points reinforced sufficiently enough to instil confidence, thank you"*

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In addition to delivering Mental Health First Aid to staff working in schools, we have delivered, and are willing to deliver training to parents and other groups too.

As well as Mental Health First Aid courses, we are also able to offer Coaching to Senior and Middle Leaders, recognising the contribution this can make to ultimately improving the support received by children and young people.

Quote from Gillian Lovatt-Young, Head Teacher Shoreham Primary School – Coaching:

*"This (Coaching) has been extremely beneficial in developing the Head Teacher personally and professionally, having an impact on decisions that will drive improvement in her school in the immediate present but also in the future. The Head Teacher has never had the 'luxury' of access to consistent coaching before and is grateful for the opportunity to reflect and focus her decision making."*

Information about what we are able to offer, and how to access it, can be found on the West Heath Outreach website at [westheathoutreach.com](http://westheathoutreach.com) As well as information relating to training, the website offers information and resources on issues relating to wellbeing, ranging from diet, exercise and sleep, to mindfulness and the role of epigenetics in facilitating positive change.



**MHFA England**



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