

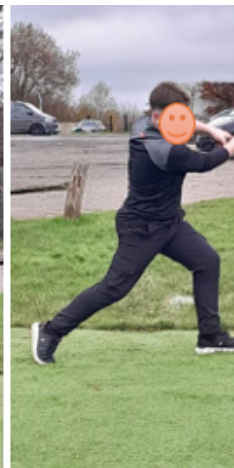
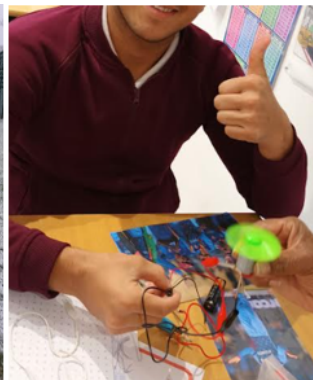
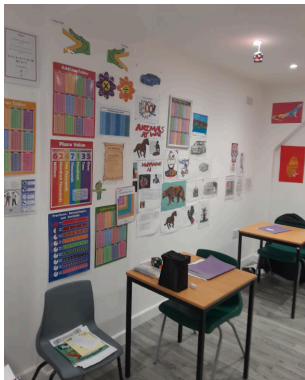


Virtue Therapeutic

Care, Education

VTSS

Virtue Therapeutic School SUSSEX Academic Year 2023-2024



Important Information

School Details

Headteacher: Aletha Saunders

Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex
Oak View
Mayfield Flat
Cross in Hand
Heathfield
East Sussex
TN21 0TU

Contact Details:

Mobile: 07586692376

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Contact Details for the Proprietor is available on request by contacting the Head Teacher via any methods above.

Headteacher's Welcome

On behalf of the staff and pupils, I warmly welcome you to Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex, Oakview. We are a small, specialist school for boys situated in East Sussex. We are a happy and busy school - there is always much going on - and we are committed to changing the lives of our pupils through a collaborative approach of learning, therapy and achievement! We pride ourselves on being a welcoming school, with a tight-knit, family feel and we place our pupils at the heart of everything we do.

At VTSS Oakview, every pupil is valued for who they are and what they contribute to the school as we aim to foster a love of learning, trying your best and achievement.

Kind wishes

Aletha Saunders
Headteacher

School Vision



Connect – Respect – Believe – Achieve

At VTSS, we *connect* with our students to form healthy relationships built on *respect*. We encourage our students to *believe* in their ability to change their lives for the better and to work hard to *achieve* their goals!



Aims

At Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex (VTSS) we look to bring the enjoyment and confidence back into the learning experience of our young people.

Catering for a maximum of 12 students within the school, we offer a tailor-made curriculum which gives academic, vocational and therapeutic opportunities to re-engage in learning, socialisation and achievement.

Students attending the school will benefit from working within a small supportive school environment. We provide a nurturing and stimulating educational offer for students between the ages of 9 and 18 years with a history of trauma. Most will have a disrupted educational background, some may have special education needs or disabilities (SEND) and/or social, emotional and mental health difficulties. (SEMH).

Many of our young people will need a flexible yet stable foundation on which to re-engage. As such we work within the therapeutic model of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy). We understand that behaviour is communication. By working within PACE, our approach is designed around making our young people feel safe and accepted and, in time, giving them the confidence to be able to grow in their esteem, independence and trust.

There is a strong focus on functional literacy and numeracy to ensure that when it is time, our young people feel secure in entering the world of work and the responsibilities which go with being a young adult.

The interests of our young people will be highlighted within their timetable to open opportunities of achievement for them.

Students will work towards AQA Unit Awards, Functional Skills in English and Maths. As the school grows ASDAN, GCSEs and the Duke of Edinburgh Award will be offered.

Our Aims

- We aim to give students an understanding of the wider world and a view to a successful future.
- We prepare our students for taking their place in an ever-changing world by helping them to become confident, independent, self-reliant learners.
- We care about our students and want them to feel safe and supported. We ensure that our school is friendly, welcoming, relevant and inclusive.
- We work hard to ensure that our students are enthusiastic about their learning and know how to behave appropriately. We inspire them to be curious, determined, resilient and reflective.
- We encourage our students to participate fully, learn through their mistakes and always try to do their best.
- We provide a curriculum that is creative, challenging and relevant. We develop our student's critical thinking skills so that they can work using their own initiative.
- We encourage our students to be open-minded, tolerant of other people's differences, responsible, respectful and resilient.
- Our school is a partnership and we continue to build relationships, bringing together teachers, students, parents, home staff and external support workers with shared goals and aspirations.

Admissions

Students at Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex will be resident at the adjoining children's home. As such, the admission process is a dual process between school and home.

When a placement at the home is requested, a copy of the young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and/or other relevant documents will be needed. This is in order to ascertain the suitability of the placement within both the home and school. A planning/ matching meeting will then be held to determine if the placement is appropriate to the young person's needs. If accepted into the home and school, the school will set up an education programme appropriate to the young person's needs. Referrals for placements will come to us directly from the student's local authority.

Transitions

Visits to the school are strongly encouraged once it has been agreed that the young person's needs can be met by the school and home. Please contact the Head Teacher to arrange a visit to the school.

Following admission to the school there will be an assessment period, followed by a Post-Admission Review meeting after 6 to 12 weeks (1 to 2 terms). This meeting will provide a progress update and an opportunity for any additional support needs or concerns identified to be discussed.

Referrals can be made throughout the academic year.

Fees for placement at the school are dependent on the needs of the individual child or young person. Should 2:1 adult support be required the fees will be discussed separately.

The School



The school is a small, supportive provision based on Dr Dan Hughes' PACE principle (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) - focusing on facilitating the child's ability to establish a secure attachment with his/her caregivers.

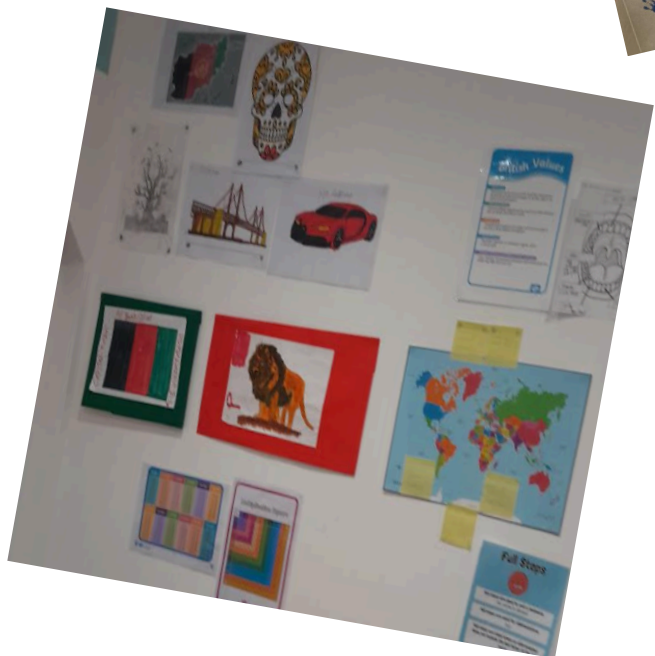
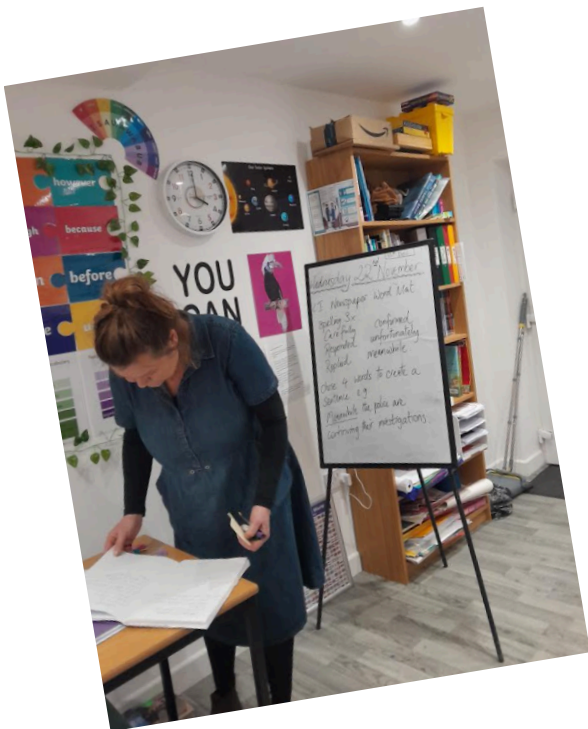
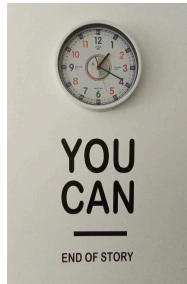
The school will cater for a maximum of 12 students aged between 9 and 18 years, working within a curriculum best suited to their needs.

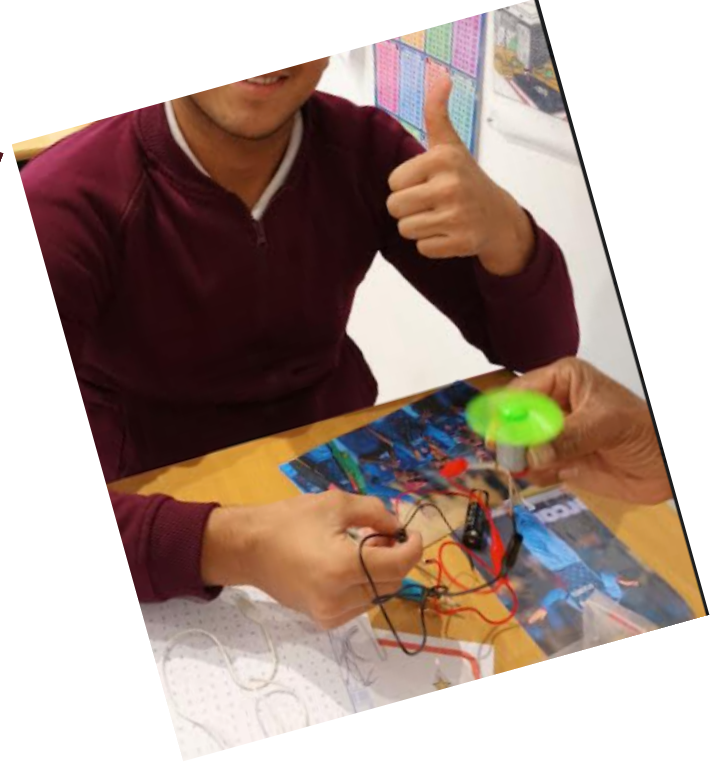
Learning Spaces:

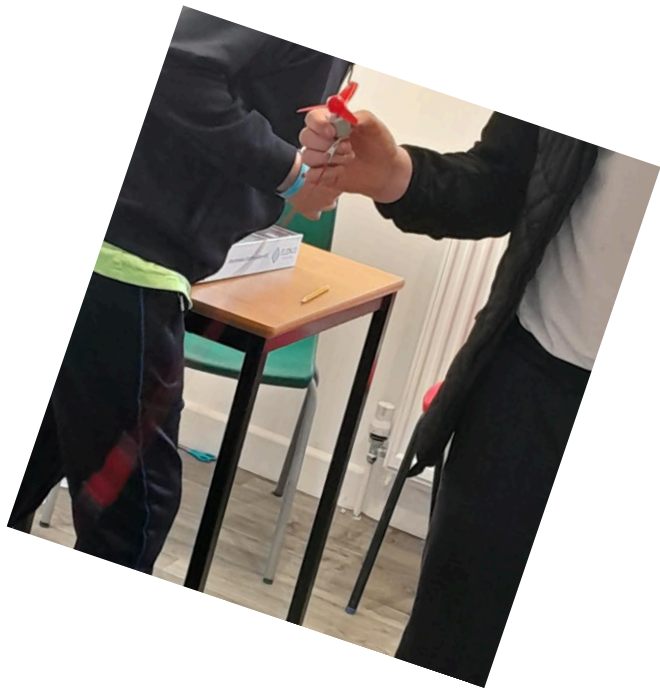


The more that you READ,
the more things you will KNOW.
The more that you LEARN,
the more places you'll GO.









Pupil Voice

Attendance

We recognise how important it is for our students to have excellent levels of attendance as each day away from school is a day of learning and development lost. We work closely with the staff in the home to encourage all students to maintain an excellent attendance record. Our ongoing aim is for our overall attendance to exceed 95%. A recent breakfast morning was held to encourage attendance and punctuality at school. This was well attended. In addition, a new school initiative called 'EVERYDAYMATTERS' has now been launched to reinforce the message of regular attendance at school!



If a young person is required to be absent from school for any legitimate reason, the home will inform the school either verbally or in writing if necessary. A copy of VTSS' Attendance Policy is available on request.

Curriculum

All students have access to a broad and creative curriculum.

Subjects taught cover Maths (Functional Skills), English (Functional Skills), Science, Art, PE, PSHE, Humanities. The school aims to offer bespoke opportunities in areas such as Cooking and Gardening wherever possible.

All students follow a generic timetable but work within the lessons is bespoke and set for the level, ability and needs of each student.

The timetable includes enrichment supported by the AQA Unit Award Scheme which allows students to engage in aspects of education which they particularly enjoy such as gardening/ cooking/ drawing/ music.

Currently the school does not offer GCSEs.

Break times

All students have a 30-minute morning break. Staff are on duty during the morning break and will ensure that activities are available along with fresh fruit and a choice of drinks.

School lunches

All students have lunches provided from the home facility. Young people are involved in choosing and preparing their own meals either hot or cold, along with fruit, salad, yoghurt and cheese. Home staff are on duty during the 60-minute lunch break. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy eating and drinking and are actively encouraged to be involved in food preparation and cooking.

Uniform

The school has a simple and comfortable uniform of polo shirt, sweatshirt and trousers. This is important as the home and school share a site and the physical action of 'dressing for school' gives a natural boundary between home and school similar to that experienced by our student's peers in other schools.

Having a uniform is all part of our approach designed around helping young people to identify appropriate choices and understanding about presenting themselves positively to match the occasions that they will experience when employed.

Personal property

Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex does not accept any liability or responsibility for the loss or damage of personal property. Students are not allowed to bring into school some personal items such as mobile phones, electronic tablets, iPods, MP3 players etc. Students should leave these items in the home where they can be accessed as per their agreements. If students require electronic equipment such as MP3 players these will be decided on and sourced by the school. For health and safety reasons, jewellery is not permitted to be worn during school hours (small plain earring studs are permitted for children/ young people who have their ears pierced).

School/Home Liaison

Both the home and school use the same recording software for the day-to-day reports so liaison between the two is seamless.

The teachers and home staff have a daily briefing each morning to communicate any issues or concerns.

The Class/Head Teacher is always available to discuss any issues or concerns that arise.

Every term our students have an end of term report highlighting their academic, pastoral and social progress within the school.

Therapy



This room is used for both therapy and for quiet times, such as reading and relaxing.

Therapy at VTSS provides:

PACE model: Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy is the foundation of all that we do here at VTSS and informs our practice, interactions within the community and assessment process.

Counselling: We provide weekly Integrative Counselling for all our students at VTSS, drawing on a wide range of approaches and creative interventions to address a person's individual needs and goals.

Community Meetings: We hold daily Community Meeting with the students and home staff, to ensure we are all joined-up in our communication and support of our students' development and needs.

Staff Supervision: We provide therapeutic Supervision to all of the team at VTSS and Oak View to support them and ensure reflective practice.

Positive Behaviour Management

Virtue Education is committed to a therapeutic model of education. We are committed to working with young people who can sometimes display the most challenging of behaviours, accepting them as people who have experienced trauma. We understand that behaviour is a form of communication. Our intent is to prepare young people for a full and productive life after compulsory education and, where possible and appropriate, returning young people to mainstream education to maximise their opportunities.

VTSS works within the framework of Dr Dan Hughes' PACE principle (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy). This approach is a way of thinking, feeling, communicating and behaving that aims to make the child or young person feel safe. It is based upon how parents connect with their very young infants. Within a safe environment the child can begin to explore and build relationships with others around them. They can start to trust.

Rewards

To support the positive management of behaviour the school operates a token economy system which rewards students for being on task and positive behaviour throughout the day. Students 'earn' spending money which they can save to spend on items which they value. Negative behaviour does not receive a reward and can lead to reward spending being delayed. Young people never lose their rewards once earned, however they will be expected to pay a nominal amount for any deliberate damage they choose to cause. Money 'earned' is placed in a savings book so students can learn to budget their money. In consultation with the home, any students who hold a young person's bank account can transfer this money to their account.

Sanctions

The school runs in a non-punitive manner (except for exclusions – please see section below).

This system enables staff and students to be in a constant dialogue about behaviour choices, reparation and expectations. It reinforces positive behaviour and provides a negative reinforcer for unacceptable behaviour without taking a punitive approach.

If negative behaviour is displayed, the student will not be able to receive the full amount of their reward (see section above). Deliberate damage will be 'billed' to the student and there is an expectation that they will take responsibility for righting a situation.

Exclusions

At Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex the sanction of fixed term exclusion is only ever invoked after serious deliberation and appropriate consultation with relevant parties. This would be in response to the most serious of circumstances, where a student has endangered themselves or others in a way which makes their continued presence at the school an unacceptable risk.

A fixed term exclusion is time for staff to revisit support which is in place, making amendments and changes as necessary. A fixed term exclusion is also put in place to allow staff to work with both the student in question as well as their peers who may have experienced a sense of feeling unsafe.

Provision for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

It is expected that some of our students will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We strive to provide a specific, bespoke curriculum to meet each student's individual needs through careful setting of student targeted support/intervention, daily structure/routine and through a detailed assessment procedure. Each student has a Student Learning Plan reviewed half termly, which highlights their specific objectives to support progress and achievement.

VTSS work as part of a multi-disciplinary team alongside the home carers, counsellor and external agencies working on behalf of the care of the student.

Details of the School's Complaints Procedure

In accordance with the Children's Act 1989, all students at Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex have access to a Complaints Procedure. Informal complaints or concerns will be addressed by the class teacher or Head teacher. Formal complaints directly from the child or via a parent/carer or member of home staff should be reported directly to the Head Teacher.

Complaints or concerns arising from adults also follow set procedures. In the first instance the concern should be addressed informally with the school with the class teacher.

Copies of these policies and procedures are available on request.

Safeguarding & Child Protection

Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students. We believe in the importance of working with partner agencies to ensure that students and young people are kept safe, happy and healthy. All staff working here receive specialist safeguarding and child protection training on how to respond to these concerns.

Where we suspect that a student has been abused or neglected, we have a statutory duty to make a referral to the relevant agencies. Any safeguarding concern will be discussed between the Registered Manager of the home in

their role as Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) and Head Teacher as Deputy DSL. Where local procedures allow, we will inform the parent[s] of the referral. The school will share any information relevant to the referral with those agencies and will contribute to any assessments being undertaken.

We have a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy which is available upon request and all staff are supported by our Designated Safeguarding Lead (Registered Manager of the Home) and Deputy DSL (Head Teacher).

Anti-Bullying

We pride ourselves on our warm and caring atmosphere. All members of our community are entitled to safety and protection and therefore bullying will not be tolerated. We have clear policies and guidelines raising awareness in staff, students and young people to signs of bullying. Students have channels available within which they can report any concerns regarding bullying.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is available on request.

PSHE including (Sex and Relationship Education)

All our students will receive age and ability-appropriate Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) as part of our curriculum offer. Relationship and sex education will also be delivered following discussion with the home staff.

Health and Safety

At Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex, Health and Safety is coordinated by Mr Matthew Wakeling (Proprietor). The whole site has internal health and safety checks in place for the maintenance staff to complete, with an action plan put in place to rectify any faults via the shared home and school system.

First Aid/Medical Care

If there are any non-urgent First Aid or medical issues the school will contact the home staff in the first instance. All staff as part of their induction training complete a day Basic First Aid course for children's services. All First Aid training is followed up with refresher training every three years.

The school will not administer prescribed medication, this is administered by home staff who are trained in the administration of medication. All medication is recorded and kept in a locked medical cupboard. Paracetamol and Calpol can only be administered with parent and carer consent held by the home staff.

Staffing and Safer Recruitment

Virtue Therapeutic School Sussex follows a rigorous recruitment process in order that we recruit high quality staff and ensure that students are kept safe. Senior Leaders involved in the recruitment process undertake safer recruitment training and all staff employed within the school are subject to an enhanced DBS check and probation.

