

**A non-maintained  
special school for  
children and young  
people with complex  
autism aged 3–19**

**Prospectus**



**Ambitious  
about Autism**

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**Standing  
with autistic  
children and  
young people**

# Welcome from the Head of School

**Thank you for your interest in TreeHouse School, a non-maintained special school founded in 1997 by parents of autistic children and young people.**

We are based at the Pears National Centre for Autism Education in the thriving community of Muswell Hill, North London. TreeHouse School educates autistic children and young people with additional learning difficulties aged 3–19 from across London and the Home Counties.

It is a very special place to work and to learn. All our young people have an Education, Health and Care Plan. Through this, they receive individual and personalised learning and support.

Our highly skilled, trans-disciplinary, specialist staff team includes: teachers, specialist teaching and behaviour support staff, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and behaviour analysts.

With this trans-disciplinary focus, we ensure that we understand and respond to each pupil's unique abilities.

To further support our pupils' health, happiness and wellbeing, we also have a part-time art therapist, a drama therapist and a yoga teacher.

The school sits on wonderful grounds and has links with many local businesses, schools and community projects. Some of our oldest pupils are in successful work experience placements in the area.

We compete with pride in sports competitions, are involved in gardening projects at Saplings, our outdoor learning area, and take part in many arts, drama and performing arts ventures.

In December 2017, we were able to maintain our outstanding rating from Ofsted, which was justly earned for being an extraordinarily special community.

It is a delight to be the new Head of TreeHouse School, a place that believes strongly in the voice of young people and their parents and carers. Family support is especially important to us, because we recognise that every child and young person has different needs.

I really do hope you enjoy looking through this prospectus – which offers just a flavour of how we make the ordinary possible for our pupils. The best way to find out about life here is to visit us and see for yourself what a remarkable and unique environment we have at TreeHouse School.



Joanna Dziopa  
Head of TreeHouse School





“

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education.”

Ofsted, 2017



# Ambitious about Autism

## vision and values

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity for children and young people with autism. We provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change.

Through TreeHouse School, The Rise School and Ambitious College, we offer specialist education and support. Our ambition is to make the ordinary possible for more children and young people with autism.

Our values define how we work to ensure that children and young people with autism are at the heart of all that we do.

### Our mission

TreeHouse School exists to help children and young people with autism learn, thrive and achieve.

### Our vision

TreeHouse School is ambitious for children and young people with autism. Our vision is to make the ordinary possible for them.

### Our values

Our values underpin everything we do at TreeHouse School and create the foundation for our approach to teaching and learning.

We believe that early diagnosis and intervention are critical to giving all children with autism the best start in life. Effective education has the power to transform the lives of children and young people with autism.

We understand and respond to each young person's individual talents, interests and potential. You will see the following values displayed and demonstrated throughout the school:





## Our curriculum

“

Leaders and staff are skilled in personalising the curriculum to inspire and challenge in equal measure.”

Ofsted, 2017

## Our curriculum

**Our curriculum is tailored to each pupil's unique qualities, specific needs and individual starting points. In this way, we can set accurate targets for progress.**

In these individualised learning programmes, we assess each pupil extensively and consider the strengths and difficulties associated with autism in general.

Our curriculum is creative and flexible, using our natural environment to extend pupils' learning. You are as likely to see maths being practised in the shop, the community or the garden as you are in the classroom. Where appropriate, our curriculum is linked to and, where necessary, differentiated from the National Curriculum's requirements.

“

**The school's carefully designed curriculum is impressive.”**

Ofsted, 2017



## English

**English and literacy at TreeHouse School offer pupils the ability to shine, regardless of their academic ability.**

We use Bag Books, which provide multi-sensory stories and story messages to captivate our pupils and encourage them to experience a book through their senses. Also, where appropriate, we run a wide-ranging reading, writing and comprehension programme to enable our pupils to become readers.

Our programme encourages pupils to develop phonological awareness – the ability to recognise sounds so that they can start to associate the sound of words with how they appear in written form.

We aim to instil a lifelong passion for reading in our young people by having daily story times, celebrating narratives from around the world and having surprise readers visit us occasionally.

One of our biggest celebrations is World Book Day, when staff and pupils dress up and share their favourite stories or poems.





## Maths

**At TreeHouse School, we believe that maths can help us to make sense of things around us by developing the ability to calculate, reason and solve problems.**

Without an understanding of numbers and their many varied applications, such as money and time, large areas of day-to-day adult life would be closed or incomprehensible.

At the earliest stages of development, where thinking centres around concrete situations and events, we support pupils to make sense of experiences and sensations by learning to recognise changes in patterns, quantities, space and time.

Maths is also a useful language – a worldwide system of communication. Its special signs, symbols and patterns teach our young people to handle numbers and concepts.

As our pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world grows, we encourage them to develop important maths-based skills: making comparisons, identifying differences, investigating relationships and establishing connections. These are tools they can use across the entire curriculum.

We aim for our young people to develop a sound understanding of basic mathematical concepts through interactive whole-class teaching and a range of activities.

All pupils follow a broad and balanced maths programme. We encourage them to use and apply their mathematical skills in meaningful situations throughout each day.

We also believe it's essential that our pupils enjoy their maths work and gain a sense of achievement at all levels, including, where appropriate, through external exams in Sixth Form.







## Music

**Music is a powerful and unique form of communication. For some children, it is one of crucial importance.**

At TreeHouse School, everyone has an opportunity to develop their musicianship and forge a lasting relationship with music, regardless of their natural ability.

Performing arts, including music, underline our key values and can be a gateway to taking part in a meaningful way in community groups.

Music may also be a key part of a pupil's heritage and therefore an integral part of developing their identity as a learner, citizen and human being.

We supplement weekly music lessons from a specialist teacher with: regular in-school workshops and concerts, weekly drumming lessons, group music-making, end-of-term productions and educational trips, as appropriate to each child's targets, interests and abilities.



**Pupils feel happy and enjoy their time in school. ”**

Ofsted, 2017



## Taha speaks the language of music

Taha is an eight-year-old boy with a diagnosis of autism. When he came to TreeHouse School three years ago, he didn't want to come into class, didn't speak and had difficulty engaging with others appropriately.

Taha's trans-disciplinary team arranged weekly group music for him, as well as one-to-one drumming sessions and opportunities to work with visiting performing arts specialists.

Taha loves music, which has become an important building block of his teaching and learning programme. He now attends hour-long music lessons with his friends, using language and music to communicate effectively, acquiring valuable transferable skills at the same time.

Patxi Del Amo, Performing Arts Lead





## Art

**Art underpins lifelong learning, flexibility, problem-solving and communication.**

Here, at TreeHouse School, we encourage pupils to explore visual expression as a means of understanding themselves and communicating with the world around them.

There is also a strong focus on developing skills linked to creative and imaginative thinking, with pupils supported at each key stage by qualified teachers and specialist art teachers.

Pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole-school art activities, such as making sets and props for school shows, parades and gallery visits. They also get to work with visiting artists as part of the artist residencies programme.

We celebrate our pupils' artwork and value it highly as a meaningful expression of their voice in the school.



## Physical education

**A team of specialist teachers delivers an outstanding physical education (PE) curriculum featuring a broad range of sporting and physical activities that allow pupils to thrive.**

PE helps develop fundamental movement skills, agility, balance and coordination. As children progress, they begin to apply these naturally, start to develop basic tactics for gameplay/competition, and improve their understanding of healthy living.

Inter-school competition on sports days and at themed events such as Sport Relief are prominent features in the PE calendar. In recent years, external competition and sporting fixtures have been very successful.

TreeHouse School pupils have successfully represented Haringey at the Panathlon swimming, football and multi-sport events in London, with some pupils even achieving a Guinness World Record in skiing.

Alongside the PE curriculum and sporting fixtures, the department leads an extensive community sports programme that includes: swimming, bowling, gym, skiing, horse riding, squash, tennis, cycling and ice skating.

In all PE and community lessons, the focus is on Individual Education Plan targets and developing group skills for a thorough cross-curricular approach.

This all contributes towards our end goal of providing our pupils with positive, enjoyable experiences and equipping them with the essential skills needed to take part in lifelong physical activity.



# Social curriculum

## Art therapy

**Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses different art forms to help children express themselves, communicating and exploring feelings that are, at times, confusing and difficult to convey with words alone.**

It can also help them to communicate, interact and express themselves more than they normally would. It supports their emotional and psychological development, and helps them to develop greater self-awareness.

Art therapy is provided individually, in groups or with parents, depending on the child's needs.

## Occupational therapy

**Pupils with autism frequently have difficulty carrying out everyday tasks independently and successfully.**

Our occupational therapy support aims to improve their ability to perform such tasks, helping them to take part in schoolwork, self-care, leisure and playing with peers.

It takes into consideration all aspects of a pupil's daily life, including their abilities, experiences and hopes, their environment and the importance of a particular task or activity in their life.

Our behaviour analysts and occupational therapists assess each pupil's strengths and difficulties. They then devise individual learning plans that cover areas such as fine motor activities, movement breaks and sensory regulation activities. These plans are then built into their curriculum.

## Yoga

**Yoga is a practice that combines gentle breathing techniques, simple meditation, bodily postures and relaxation to enhance health and wellbeing.**

Our yoga classes are designed to help regulate heightened moods and behaviours, and have proven to be highly effective. One of the techniques taught is gentle pressure massage techniques, which help promote self-management and regulation in pupils.

Pupils can work one-to-one or in small groups in person-centred classes that support specific needs. We hope that, with regular practice, our pupils will take part more confidently in the classroom and in the community.

## Personal, Social and Health Education

**Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is at the centre of our mission to respond to each pupil's unique needs.**

Regardless of their ability, we support all pupils to be physically, emotionally and socially healthy in a safe and enjoyable learning environment, where they can achieve their full potential.

The PSHE curriculum explores specific topics such as sex and relationships, staying safe and understanding different cultures and customs.

Pupils also take part in Pride Patrol, where they take turns to keep the environment safe, clean and tidy. This ties into our core values by encouraging them to make responsible choices and fostering a desire to do their best.





## Sixth Form

Pupils in the Sixth Form continue to follow a highly personalised curriculum. They work on Individualised Study Programmes, which see them achieve against the four pathways highlighted in our Preparing for Adulthood Curriculum.



Employment



Independent living



Community access



Improved health

Each study programme consists of:

- Personal, Social and Health Education, which includes relationships and sex education
- functional English, with an emphasis on expressive and receptive communication
- functional maths: numbers, money, time and shape
- information and communications technology
- work-related learning, which includes opportunities for work experience at school and in the community, along with termly enterprise projects.

Increasingly, the emphasis is on learning and applying skills in the community, including supported community placements, work experience on a local allotment or membership of a sports club.

Pupils' achievements, where appropriate, are externally recognised through nationally accredited awards and qualifications such as: OCN London

Awards and Certificates in Personal Progress, Independent Living Skills and Using Employability Skills, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Jack Petchey Awards, and a range of other subject-specific award schemes.



**Sixth Form students take part in a well-supervised employability programme, including work experience in the local community. This grows students' independence and strengthens their interpersonal skills. ”**

Ofsted, 2017





**Ambitious  
Approach**

# Ambitious Approach

## How we deliver our curriculum

**Ambitious about Autism's mission is to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism.**

We work directly in our schools and colleges, and nationally, to transform policy and practice in autism education.

Each of our services has a governing body made up of a range of people, including parents and carers, with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to support and challenge our services.

We also have a board-level Education Committee that oversees performance across all of our services.

We believe all children and young people with autism have a right to the best education that meets their needs and enables them to learn, thrive and achieve. When they leave our settings, we want them to find employment, go on to further education or training, and live fully as part of the communities of their choice.

Our Ambitious Approach across all our educational settings is person-centred, values based, trans-disciplinary and underpinned by a whole-organisational Positive Behaviour Support framework.

Children and young people in our education settings mostly have an Education, Health and Care Plan, which outlines their aspirations, outcomes, needs and support. We regularly and comprehensively monitor, evaluate and report on progress.

We offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, highly personalised to the particular needs, talents and interests of all our learners. They have access to

a range of qualifications and non-accredited learning, according to their interests, desired outcomes and abilities.

We also place importance on nurturing and supporting the wellbeing of all our learners and fostering as much independence as possible.

We work with parents and carers in a partnership that works for the child or young person and their future plans and hopes.

We also value the voice of our learners in decision-making about their future. As communication can be difficult for many of them, we invest in the skills and resources that allow them to take part in a variety of ways.

The safety and security of our learners is paramount. We have in place robust child and adult safeguarding policies and processes.

We are constantly developing, searching for and open to new ethical and evidence-based approaches that help our young people. We share our experiences and knowledge with others to enhance expertise in the field of autism education.

Our services are subject to Ofsted inspections, which are published online, on our website and by Ofsted.



## Our trans-disciplinary team

**TreeHouse School has 140 members of qualified, dedicated and enthusiastic staff who work together to create a positive and supportive environment for our pupils.**

Our trans-disciplinary team roles include:

**Qualified teachers and class leaders** who plan, teach, assess and lead on learning in the classroom.

**Behaviour analysts (BAs)** who assess, design and lead on functional behaviour support plans to help pupils overcome barriers to learning.

**Speech and language therapists (SaLTs)** who assess and deliver support programmes to learners to help develop their communication and social interaction skills.

**Occupational therapists (OTs)** who assess and deliver support programmes to learners to help them manage sensory issues and develop functional life skills.

### **Teaching and behaviour support staff**

who work under the guidance of teachers, class leads and the BAs, SaLTs and OTs; they are responsible for individual behaviour support and learning plans, using teaching techniques based upon the principles of behaviour analysis.

Our BAs and OTs assess each pupil's strengths and difficulties. They then devise individual learning plans that cover areas such as fine motor activities, movement breaks and sensory regulation activities. These plans are then built into their curriculum.

All staff receive regular training and support to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to work effectively with all pupils and learners. Staff are regularly supervised and supported.

We also invest in continuous professional development, including an in-house, autism-specific training programme, teacher training via Schools Direct, training and talks from external experts, and the opportunity for postgraduate study.







## Gion finds his voice

Gion joined TreeHouse School in June 2017. Since then, he has made great progress academically and socially.

He was quiet and timid when he first joined us, but has grown in confidence during his time in Chestnut class. When he arrived, he knew a lot about using his iPad for speech, but now uses his own voice more and more.

His speech started to develop as he watched music videos during circle time. Now, he comments on the characters he sees on the screen, saying, for example, “pink sheep!” or “blue whale!”

In individual sessions with the class’s speech and language therapist, Gion works on his articulation of words. His speech is now clearer and louder. He’s also become more assertive and is now able to say: “No!”

Gion loves interacting with his teachers and will ask, verbally, for “more tickle!” or “squeeze!”

Throughout the school day, staff encourage him to be independent by pausing at the door when it’s playground time and, without prompting, Gion will speak or use his iPad to say: “Open door.” He’ll also ask for “open crackers” during snack time.

By watching his peers, Gion has also learnt imitation skills. We had one pupil who loved to copy the actions to songs. Gion would watch him carefully and now gets up and performs the actions too.

By using his Token Board and Now and Next Board, Gion has also made great progress in his individual learning programmes, including phonics, counting and word-to-picture matching.

We’ve been able to increase the amount of time Gion works at the table before receiving a token. Once he has earned all his tokens, he can choose an activity such as playground, the soft play room or animal toys.

It has been a pleasure to watch Gion bloom in his time at TreeHouse School.

**Charlotte Jones**, Chestnut Class Teacher and Primary Lead



# School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support

**At TreeHouse School, many of our pupils behave in ways that can be challenging for themselves and others. That is why we work within an evidence-based School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SW-PBS) framework.**

This three-tiered approach reduces challenging behaviours by teaching pupils new and safe ways of getting their needs met, with the overarching aim of improving their quality of life and that of the people around them.

We teach our pupils how to regulate and understand their emotions and behaviours, helping them to find more positive ways to express themselves. We do this by creating responsive environments and

developing individualised and integrated behaviour support plans to meet their individual needs. This is done using a functional understanding of behaviour that is evidence based to assess, design and monitor these teaching and support strategies.



**School-Wide Positive Behavioural Interventions and Support (PBIS) is a framework for delivering both the whole-school social culture and additional tiers of behaviour support needed to improve educational and social outcomes for all pupils. ”**

Horner & Sugai, 2015



**TreeHouse School introduced SW-PBS using the following three-tiered approach:**

**Tier 3**

**For some pupils**

- 2:1 support for teaching and learning and behaviour
- bespoke community access programmes (e.g. daily community outings)
- behaviour analyst specialist input (e.g. input from senior behaviour analyst)
- SaLT/OT specialist input (e.g. sensory diets, home visits)
- child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)

- 1:1 mental health first aid support
- specialist input for relationships and sex education (RSE), Image in Action/1:1 RSE support
- targeted social skills training
- 1:1 art therapy
- 1:1 intervention for phonics and reading comprehension

- bespoke support to access entry level exams in English and maths
- GCSE intervention support
- 1:1 support for medical needs
- specialised social skills groups
- specialised staff team and spaces allocated for teaching and learning and behaviour
- regular or ongoing home visits

Tier 3

Tier 2

Tier 1

**Tier 2**

**For some pupils**

- behaviour analyst targeted input (e.g. in-depth functional analysis)
- SaLT/OT targeted input (e.g. sensory regulation and Food Explorers programmes)
- targeted input for RSE (Image in Action)
- small group intervention for phonics and reading comprehension intervention group
- small group for entry level exams in English and maths support
- additional resources/support for community access
- external training for transport and respite services
- external training for parents in the home and community
- support to access mainstream lessons

**Tier 1**

**For every pupil**

- 1:1 support for teaching and learning and behaviour
- function-based reinforcement strategies
- coping strategies taught (e.g. taking a break, asking for help)
- social skills teaching embedded throughout curriculum
- individual targets mapped against our core values of being safe, doing your best, and making responsible choices
- ASD-specific and visual strategies used consistently
- individualised Behaviour Support Plan and rewards
- evidenced-based teaching strategies using Individualised Learner Support Profile
- individualised lesson plans
- individualised group skills targets

- access to behaviour analyst universal input (e.g. functional behaviour assessment)
- access to SaLT/OT universal input (e.g. activities of daily life support)
- weekly community access
- daily morning movement sessions
- broad and balanced curriculum across school from Reception to KS5
- work experience for KS4–5
- college links programme for Year 14 pupils
- multi-disciplinary support and input with families and external agencies
- residential trips for KS3–5 pupils
- access to key worker



Our school culture has been defined by our core values: **Be safe, Do your best and Make responsible choices**. The TreeHouse community discussed and agreed these values. We teach our pupils skills that demonstrate these core values and make sure they are reinforced in everything our pupils and staff do, and in all interactions with families. Pupils complete activities showing how they demonstrate these values at school, at home and in the wider community.

We use the three-tiered support framework shown in the diagram to make sure all pupils learn new skills that will enhance their quality of life. Our aim for all of our pupils is that they lead their lives with as much independence as possible.

All pupils benefit from our Tier 1 support, which includes:

**Autism-specific strategies and good practice:** e.g. using visual support consistently across the school.

**Teaching all pupils coping strategies such as:** being able to ask for help or a break when needed; or asking to take a five-minute break from a task.

## Positive handling plans

**TreeHouse School uses the term ‘positive handling’ to describe a range of risk-reduction strategies, which include non-verbal, verbal and – where absolutely necessary – physical interventions.**

We use a positive handling package called Team-Teach, an externally credited holistic approach to behavioural support and intervention.

When appropriate, we will write a positive handling plan to provide an assessment of the risks that may be present and how we will work with the pupil to overcome these risks. This document is used to describe to the pupil (where possible), staff and families the planned and agreed strategies we will use to provide the pupil with security, safety and a feeling

of acceptance. All staff are trained in this area, and interventions are carefully supervised, monitored and reviewed at all levels of the school.



**Exceptional levels of care and guidance facilitate significant improvements in behaviour and emotional wellbeing. ”**

Ofsted, 2017





## Community links

**TreeHouse School plays a key role in the local community, having long-established links with organisations and businesses in Muswell Hill and across North London.**

We actively seek to involve our pupils in the community through a range of visits, activities and work placements.

We also have a close relationship with several local mainstream schools, encouraging a two-way flow of staff and pupils.

Our 'reverse inclusion' project brings pupils from across London to interact and learn with our pupils. TreeHouse School pupils also get to attend mainstream schools, with support from familiar TreeHouse School staff.

“

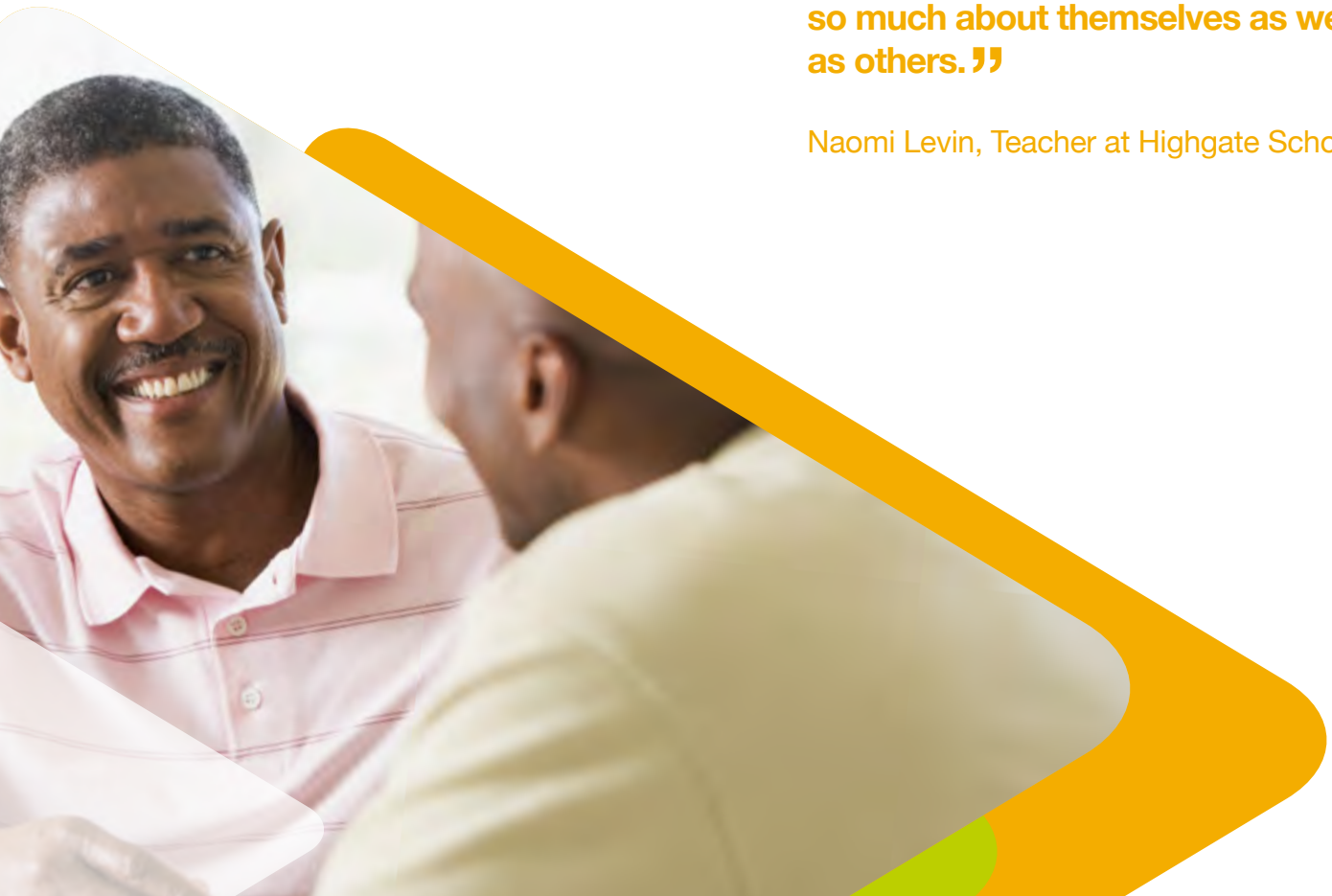
**We've loved being able to get creative with the Year 12 class. The opportunity to take time out of our normal routine, getting to know the children and the school, has been rewarding and fun. ”**

Year 12 pupil from Highgate School

“

**It's fantastic being part of the partnership programme between our schools. Our pupils gain a tremendous sense of perspective visiting TreeHouse School and benefit greatly from the experience. Through carefully planned (and fun) activities, our pupils seem to learn so much about themselves as well as others. ”**

Naomi Levin, Teacher at Highgate School



## Work-related learning (14–19 years)

**Work-related learning can be defined as a planned activity designed to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of employment and the workplace.**

Work-related learning involves work simulations and mock interviews, work experience or enterprise activities, and subject-specific vocational work.

Our aim is to enable young people to develop career awareness and employability skills. We provide opportunities to learn by doing and encourage positive attitudes to lifelong learning.

Since April 2018, our pupils have been gaining retail skills at the local FARA charity shop and Sainsbury's store, catering and hospitality experience at local cafés, and office skills at Action for Kids.

### Theo cultivates confidence

In the autumn term, Theodore was signed up for weekly work experience at 'my AFK' Edible Garden. The principle of this work experience is to enable pupils to gain valuable employment skills and develop additional confidence in terms of independence and decision-making skills.



During his time at the Edible Garden, Theo showed he could overcome his anxiety about being in new places by engaging with the people and the tasks in a relaxed and positive manner. By the final week of the placement, his support worker was surprised and delighted to see the skills and confidence Theo had developed. He had previously shown little interest in working at the school allotment.

Theo was then able to take part in an additional five-week placement at another horticultural environment, Wolves Lane Community Gardens, where he used the skills he had learnt and worked independently, with little support, planting seeds and cutting plants as well as working at the potting station.

He was also able to follow sequential steps independently, completing tasks and listening for further instructions. Towards the end of this placement, he was even using fewer visual prompts. For Theo, the benefits of working outside the classroom and being part of the local community were valuable and sustainable.

Effrosyni Stafyli, Job Coach at TreeHouse School



## Enrichment

**Pupils at TreeHouse School enjoy many educational trips, including visits to the local shops and cafés, or places of interest in London and further afield. Educational visits are an important part of the vibrant curriculum experience.**

They provide opportunities to generalise classroom learning into other environments, and allow pupils to experience new situations outside the school environment.

We plan all visits carefully on an individual pupil basis and conduct risk assessments to ensure the safety of all. Parents and carers are informed and involved, and we may ask for voluntary contributions.

We have excellent outdoor and indoor play facilities, so that our pupils learn to play appropriately, taking turns and interacting with other young people.

We celebrate a wide range of festivals in the school. Highlights from the past year include fairs and parades for Chinese New Year, Easter and Christmas. Our pupils worked in enterprise classes to produce themed items to sell at these fairs.

Pupils in Years 7 and beyond enjoy a residential visit each year. This starts with a one-night overnight stay at a local Scout park for those in Years 7 and 8, followed by a two-night stay when in Years 9 and 10.

Pupils in Years 11 and 12 get the chance to spend two nights slightly further afield at a residential facility up to an hour away from TreeHouse School.

Pupils in Years 13 and 14 spend four nights at an activity centre in the New Forest.

TreeHouse staff have partnered with workers' food co-operative OrganicLea for the Saplings Project. Orla at OrganicLea, who coordinates the box pack, has been working with staff and students from Treehouse. She said:

“The care and enthusiasm of the staff was spot on. They are very supportive and work excellently with the students.”

“

**Residential trips are a substantial achievement, as for some pupils it's their first time away from home.”**

Ofsted, 2017





## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

As our motto states, we are trying to make the ordinary possible for our young people. Something ordinary in many schools throughout the country is the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), a voluntary, non-competitive and personalised award that pupils can choose to do from Year 9.

We now offer the DofE Bronze Award at TreeHouse School. Pupils have to learn a new skill, or improve on one, take part in a physical activity and do some volunteer work over a three- or six-month period.



“

Pupils make substantial progress over time.”  
Ofsted, 2017

Participants also go on two expeditions, journeying under their own power for two days and one night.

Pupils who complete all four sections receive their Bronze DofE Award.



# Keeping our learners safe

**All staff at TreeHouse School are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check and are appointed through safer recruitment procedures.**

All staff also receive training in child protection, both generally and specifically in relation to autism. This training is refreshed and updated on a regular basis.

Staff at TreeHouse School recognise the important role they play in child protection and are sensitive to the special educational needs of the pupils.

Parents and carers should, therefore, be aware that where a member of staff is concerned about a pupil's physical or emotional wellbeing, these concerns will be reported to the headteacher.

In some circumstances, and in accordance with policy and practice, this concern may be reported to the local authority or social services.

The school has in place a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure, including the safeguarding of young adults. For more detailed information, visit our website.

Senior staff in the school work with the relevant local agencies, including the local Safeguarding Children Board. Pupils at the school are supervised at all times by qualified and experienced staff.

Named staff are qualified first aiders and a clear procedure is in place for documenting and informing parents of any accident or injury sustained at the school.

Through social skills development, each pupil learns to treat others with respect, and any form of bullying is taken seriously.

## Security

Security is a high priority at TreeHouse School because of the vulnerable nature of the pupils. All visitors must sign in at reception prior to entering any part of the building and must be escorted at all times.

## Equal opportunities

It is a priority for TreeHouse School and Ambitious about Autism that all pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, class, ethnicity or disability. To maximise opportunities, activities are planned taking into account every individual's background.



**Staff are vigilant and take all necessary steps to keep pupils safe.”**

Ofsted, 2017

# Parent and carer support

**We believe that the involvement of parents and carers is essential to helping pupils make good progress. The more closely that school and home can work together, the more effective the learning.**

We provide parents and carers with full and regular updates on their young person's progress, and arrange many informal and formal opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school. These include:



## **Pupil progress reviews**

These are an opportunity to share learning gains and concerns, and ensure consistency at home and in school.



## **Parent and carer evenings**

Held each term, these evenings are a chance for parents and carers to meet and talk with the teacher and all staff who work with the pupil, see examples of their work and discuss progress.



## **Annual review**

This is a meeting to review and agree progress and set targets for the year.



## **Parent newsletters**

We send these out once per term, telling families about the learning for the term, suggesting how they can support this at home.



## **School events**

All parents and carers are invited to attend a range of events throughout the year to celebrate our pupils' achievements, e.g. concerts, fairs and sports days.



**Parents use words such as 'wonderful' and 'amazing' to describe their children's experience at TreeHouse School. ”**

Ofsted, 2017



## Medical arrangements

**The school's medical service provides each child with optimum healthcare, health monitoring and health education.**

An experienced specialist paediatric dentist visits monthly, helping all pupils to learn about appointments with community dentists and the services they provide.

We have in place a policy and procedure to follow with parents and carers, should we have to give a pupil medication during the school day. A copy is available upon request.

We also have in place a care plan for those pupils with additional medical needs that might affect them during the school day. The plan is regularly revised.

## Education, Health and Care Plans

**It's common for pupils with autism to have an individual Education, Health and Care Plan.**

This official document records a child or young person's additional needs and states:

- their diagnosis and needs
- any extra support or therapy to which they are entitled
- the name and type of school that can meet their needs
- intended outcomes, including parent and pupil voice.



**Very few pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, are persistently absent from school. ”**

Ofsted, 2017









# Admissions

TreeHouse School's admissions team is happy to arrange parent and carer visits. To book a place at one of our regular open days, telephone the team directly or contact them through the website.

Admission to the school depends upon a diagnosis of autism, or a related social communication need, and upon the child or young person's local authority Education, Health and Care Plan.

## Admission process

The admission process typically involves:

-  1. A visit from the parent or carer, followed by the school receiving papers from the local authority and a detailed discussion as to whether TreeHouse School can meet the young person's needs.
-  2. An observation of the child or young person in their school or home.
-  3. An assessment of the child or young person at TreeHouse School.
-  4. An offer of a place to the local authority, if TreeHouse School is assessed to be appropriate.
-  5. An agreement by the local authority to fund the placement.
-  6. A transition plan, including home visits by TreeHouse School staff and visits to the school.

## The provision at TreeHouse School offers:

- a broad curriculum with an emphasis on the development of social, communication and independence skills
- a structured and specialist teaching and learning approach
- consistency and continuity between key stages
- a planned curriculum taught 1:1 and in groups, personalised to suit the young person's specific needs
- a Positive Behavioural Support approach as an integral part of the educational programme.

We also produce transition booklets to support your child. These A5 illustrated books can help allay your child's fears about starting at TreeHouse School.

Detailed assessment takes place during the first half-term of the young person's placement. The findings form an integral part of the six-week review, during which detailed discussions take place between families and TreeHouse School staff.

Precise targets are then set, which inform the Individual Education Programme and are used to plan the next stage of their journey.



## School fees

**TreeHouse School only admits pupils funded by their local authority, except when there is no statutory entitlement to such funding – for example, if a child is a foreign national temporarily living in the UK. In these cases, an alternative source of funding, such as an employer, may be acceptable.**

The school does not charge parents or carers for any activity or resource that is essential in the delivery of education. However, we may request a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of some activities.

For further information on our Charging and Remissions Policy, visit our website.



**Adults focus on helping pupils achieve their goals rather than on what they cannot do.”**

Ofsted, 2017

## Thank you

TreeHouse School is at the heart of Ambitious about Autism. While we work hard to make the most of government funding and fees, they only go so far. We also rely heavily on other sources of income to go above and beyond with the services, facilities and opportunities that we provide. We are most grateful to The Pears Foundation and all of our generous donors for helping us to provide a school where our pupils can thrive and achieve their full potential.

**Pears**  
Foundation





# TreeHouse School

**Ambitious about Autism** is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

## Contact us

### TreeHouse School

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education  
Woodside Avenue, London N10 3JA

☎ 020 8815 5424 📠 020 8815 5420

✉ [admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](mailto:admissions@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

🌐 [treehouseschool.org.uk](http://treehouseschool.org.uk)

## Follow us

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## Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is a registered charity in England and Wales: 1063184 and a registered company: 3375255.

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## How to find us

### Public transport

We're a short walk or bus ride away from Highgate and East Finchley Tube stations. Both are on the High Barnet branch of the Northern line. Bus routes 43 and 134 run nearby from Highgate Tube and routes 102 and 234 from East Finchley Tube.

### Travelling by car

Parking is available on our premises if there is space available. Cars should be parked in designated spaces only.

