



Willow Park
SCHOOL

Belong | Commit | Achieve

WILLOW PARK SCHOOL

Willow Park School is a specialist **SEMH** setting that recognises and responds to additional needs wherever we can meet them well. We exist to be a place where every child feels safe, valued and able to grow. We believe that who they are is already enough and who they can become is limitless. Our school is a community of belonging and hope, where healing and learning sit side by side, and where every young person is met by adults who see them, hear them and never give up on them.

With small class sizes averaging just eight pupils, every child is known deeply. This allows us to build strong, trusting relationships that help pupils rediscover confidence, reengage with learning and grow into the strongest, safest and most assured version of themselves.



We aim to equip every pupil with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to be successful in their future.

A Trauma-Informed, Relational and Clinically Supported Approach

Our approach is grounded in strong, consistent relationships between pupils and staff. Adults work intentionally to build trust through calm presence, reliability and genuine care. We prioritise transitions, notice emotional cues and respond thoughtfully, helping pupils feel seen and understood. This relational foundation enables pupils to regulate, reengage and learn.

A key strength of Willow Park is our **onsite clinical team**, which includes a psychologist, occupational therapist and speech and language therapist. Their daily presence ensures therapeutic support is woven into school life, bringing powerful benefits:

- Immediate access to specialist expertise for emerging needs
- Integrated strategies across classrooms, social spaces and home
- Holistic understanding of each child for personalised plans
- Regular collaboration with teachers, mentors and families

Alongside this, our **SENCO** ensures every pupil's special educational needs are understood and met. Working closely with teachers, **Progress Leads** and the **Inclusion Team**, the SENCO coordinates tailored support and compliance with statutory requirements.



Progress Leads provide skilled classroom support, trained by experienced professionals in SEND, while the **Inclusion Team** delivers targeted interventions using a trauma-informed approach. Together, these teams create a safety net of expertise and care around every child.

Partnership with parents and carers is central. By working closely with families, sharing strategies and maintaining open communication, we create consistency between home and school, so every decision keeps the child at the centre.

Our Inclusion Team delivers targeted support and interventions using a trauma-informed approach. They work closely with staff and families to address individual needs, reduce barriers to learning and help pupils develop resilience and confidence.

Partnership with parents and carers is central. By working closely with families, sharing strategies and maintaining open communication, we create consistency between home and school, so every decision keeps the child at the centre.

Our small, nurturing
environment helps pupils
feel safe, valued
and ready to learn.



Our Curriculum

We offer a curriculum aligned to the national curriculum but shaped flexibly around individual needs. Small class sizes allow for adaptive teaching rooted in clear routines and trusting relationships.

Pupils study core subjects alongside food technology, PSHE, geography, history, PE and Life Skills all delivered in ways that feel relevant, achievable and engaging. Progress, effort and positive choices are recognised and celebrated, helping pupils see their successes and stay motivated.

Meaningful qualifications, including AQA Unit Awards, ASDAN awards, Functional Skills and GCSEs, provide clear pathways to achievement and positive next steps.

Enrichment and ExtraCurricular Opportunities

Learning at Willow Park extends far beyond the classroom. We offer a rich programme of extracurricular activities — many of them offsite — designed to broaden horizons, build confidence and deepen pupils' sense of belonging.

Outdoor learning, sports, creative arts, community projects and realworld experiences help pupils develop new interests, practise social skills and discover strengths they did not know they had. These opportunities enrich the curriculum and enhance the overall pupil experience.



Learning begins with feeling safe, understood and valued.

Attendance Through Belonging

We understand that attendance improves when pupils feel safe, valued and connected. Many of our pupils have experienced disrupted education, so we focus on building belonging first. Through strong relationships, predictable routines and compassionate support, we help pupils rebuild trust and reestablish positive habits. Every step forward is recognised and celebrated.

Safeguarding: A Culture of Safety

Safeguarding at Willow Park is not a set of documents — it is a culture. Every adult shares responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Staff are trained to notice changes in behaviour or wellbeing and respond with curiosity, care and professionalism.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum, trusted relationships and everyday conversations. They learn about healthy boundaries, online safety, managing risk and how to ask for help.

We work closely with parents and carers, communicating clearly and openly so families feel informed, supported and confident that their child's safety and wellbeing are always our priority.



We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment where every child feels valued, protected, and able to thrive.

VISION

Our mission is to be the school of first choice for young people needing a fresh start, where every pupil feels they belong, rebuilds confidence and take meaningful steps forward. Through trauma-informed practice, creative teaching and strong relationships, we support wellbeing, build life skills and reconnect pupils with learning, leading to real pathways including into further education, training, or employment.

MISSION

At Willow Park we create a safe and compassionate community where pupils belong, commit and achieve. We recognise the story and strengths of each individual, working first to understand and respond to the trauma and barriers they carry. From there we build trusting relationships, use trauma informed and neuro-affirming practice and teach with ambitious expectations, providing fun life experiences that every young person can re-engage with learning, grow in confidence and move towards a hopeful, purposeful future.



CORE VALUES



Belong

We create a community where every pupil feels seen, safe and included. Relationships are the starting point for learning.



Commit

We expect and model effort, attendance and perseverance. Staff and pupils stick with the plan, even when it is hard.



Achieve

We focus on meaningful progress in learning, wellbeing and life skills so that every pupil moves towards a positive future.



WHERE WE CAN MEET NEED

PROTOCOL IN PLACE FOR LOW ATTENDANCE

Our team recognise that many of our students have had low attendance at previous settings or been out of education settings for a period of time. We work with families and local authorities to put a transition plan in place when students join us. This can include part time hours, use of alternative provision or home visits. We review these plans with the student, family and local authority and adjust accordingly.

Once students are on roll, our team monitor attendance carefully. Students who are not in school receive welfare visits, in line with our safeguarding and attendance policies. Those who fall below the measures for good attendance are supported by our Family Liaison Officer, Inclusion Team and others to develop an attendance plan. This may include the engagement of outside agencies or services, where appropriate.

ANNUAL REVIEWS TIMEFRAME

The SENCO plans and maintains a timetable of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Reviews in line with statutory responsibilities and required timescales. Where it is not possible to meet these timescales, the SENCO liaises with families and the Local Authority to agree the most appropriate timing, ensuring that decisions are informed, transparent, and in the best interests of the student.

ADDITIONAL THERAPEUTIC PROVIDERS

The school has an established clinical team on site that works collaboratively to support students' wellbeing and access to learning. Where students are already supported by external professionals or agencies, the school actively engages with those services to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach, that aligns with therapists own regulations. Relevant information and recommendations outlined in students' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are used, where appropriate, to inform planning, interventions, and decision-making, with the aim of achieving the best possible outcomes for each student.

CURRENT PLACEMENT VACANCIES

We offer a range of flexible learning spaces and currently have places available. Students are grouped based on their individual learning styles, needs, and comfort working alongside others, rather than by year group. This helps us make sure every child is carefully considered and supported in an environment where they can feel safe, confident, and ready to learn. Therefore, we may be able to welcome a student from any year group depending on their individual needs and compatibility with the current cohort.

DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

We use PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) and trauma-informed strategies throughout the school to support emotional regulation and de-escalation. These approaches help us understand the reasons behind behaviour and respond calmly and consistently so that students feel safe, listened to, and supported. Where appropriate, and only when necessary to ensure the safety of students, we also follow CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) guidance, which is a trauma-informed approach to physical intervention.

" This is the best school I have ever been to. I could have stayed at home today but I wanted to come in. I have never wanted to come to school before."



WHO WE SUPPORT

Pupil Profile

Our pupils typically present with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and experiences of trauma, often alongside additional diagnoses such as autism (ASD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). We also support a number of students with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) profiles. Where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), this is carefully considered and used to inform provision, support strategies, and planning. Our approach recognises the complexity of each child's needs and focuses on providing flexible, understanding support to help them feel safe, settled, and ready to re-engage with learning.

Our provision is designed to meet the needs of students with SEMH and trauma-related profiles, and we carefully consider whether we are the right setting to meet a child's needs before offering a place.

For further information please contact: admin@willowparkschool.co.uk



SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Headteacher > **Paul Chambers**

Deputy Headteacher for Quality & Outcomes > **Lisa Witheyman**

Head of Safeguarding (DSL) and Wellbeing > **Vicki Gunner**

Assistant Headteacher for Teaching & Learning and Curriculum > **Lauren Mulvaney**

Assistant Headteacher, SENCO > **Amy Guest**

Assistant Head for Regulation and Inclusion > **Stuart Johnstone-Wilson**

Clinical Lead > **Charlotte Lopez Ellis**

School Business Manager > **Debra Pearce**

A photograph of two young people in a forest setting. On the left, a boy in a black jacket and white t-shirt stands looking down. On the right, a person in a green hoodie sits on a tree stump, using a red-handled tool. They are under a large, light-colored tarp that filters the sunlight. The background is filled with green trees and foliage.

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A specialist school in Milton Keynes
for young people aged 9 – 16
with complex needs

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