

Aurora Woodlands School



“ Woodlands has helped me to become an adult, one who knows what they want to do and where they are going in life. ”

Specialist education and therapeutic provision in a calm, nurturing environment, for boys aged 10-19 with additional social, emotional and mental health needs.

At The **Aurora** Group

We believe in giving people the opportunities they need to create and lead fulfilling, independent lives.

Established in 2015, we are now the UK's fifth largest provider of education, care and support services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Each of our schools, colleges and residential homes retains its own unique identity while embracing and embodying our group's core values:

- We are caring. We understand that your experience in mainstream care and education may have been a difficult one. We take seriously our responsibility for the children and young people in our care, and are committed to making your time with us as positive and fulfilling as possible.
- We are ambitious. We have high expectations of all our children and young people, regardless of what barriers they may have faced in the past. We encourage them to expect more for themselves, while challenging employers and communities to understand and value their diverse needs and attributes.
- We are collaborative. Everything we do, we do in partnership with you. We actively seek and listen to feedback from students, parents and staff, to find out what's working well, what we can do better, and how we can further develop all our services to benefit the people we work with.
- We are trusted. Our business is funded by ethical investors. They understand that sustainable growth is possible only when we hold ourselves to the highest standards, by delivering consistently top-quality services to every single person we work with.
- We are innovative. We begin planning for each young person's future the minute they walk through our doors. We tailor our approach to their unique needs, and are constantly looking for new opportunities to help them explore, enhance and employ their own skills, talents and abilities.

Welcome

Here at Aurora Woodlands, we understand that your experience of mainstream education may have been a difficult one; that you are now likely looking for a different kind of learning environment that will be a better fit for your child. We believe that you will find that here.

Our highly skilled and dedicated staff help each one of our students to become a compassionate, independent adult who is well-prepared for the demands of modern life.

At Aurora Woodlands, we guide our students throughout their transition into young adulthood, so that by the time they leave us, they can look forward to bright, exciting futures.

Wherever you are in your journey, we hope that we can welcome you soon.

Lynn Burton,
Headteacher, Aurora Woodlands



About Our School

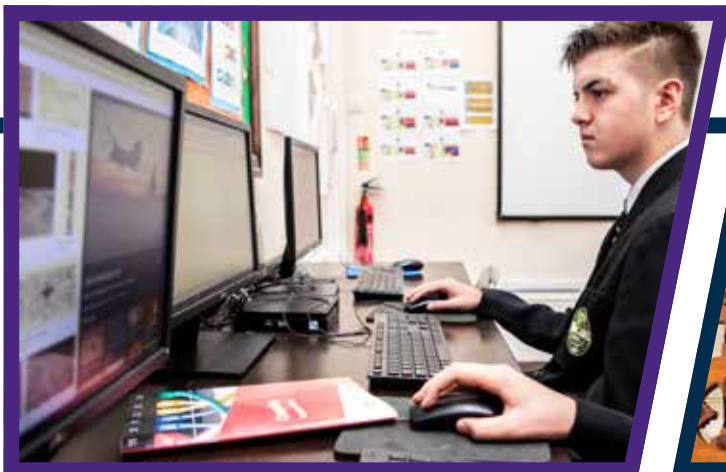
Situated in a beautiful location in the small town of Darwen, Lancashire, Aurora Woodlands is a small specialist school providing personalised, tailored academic and therapeutic support in a calm, nurturing environment. Our team of skilled and experienced practitioners use a 'Thrive' approach to support young people with complex needs, helping them to reach their educational aspirations and prepare for a successful future.

Our students enjoy access to a range of specialist on-site facilities, including an ICT suite, a library with breakout area, a fully equipped design technology workshop, and a five-a-side 3G football pitch, as well as access to local leisure facilities.



“ I know he's happy because he wants to go to school and looks forward to seeing his teachers every day. ”





Our curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to broaden our students' horizons, widen their cultural capital and empower them to be curious about the world around them. Alongside the core National Curriculum subjects of maths, English and science, we offer our students the opportunity to explore, discover and enjoy a wide variety of other interests and skills.

We run a varied Outdoor and Social Education programme, which is designed to build confidence, self-esteem and friendships through a range of exciting activities including kayaking, rock climbing, skiing and fell-walking.

We support all our students to progress to further education, training or employment, offering optional short courses and vocational qualifications in photography, gardening, animal care, hospitality and construction. Every student receives personalised career advice and guidance, and from Year 11, has the opportunity to undertake work experience placements.



Your experience with us

Many of the students who arrive at Woodlands have had negative experiences of school in the past. We strive to offer them a different, more positive experience, working hard to ensure that their needs are identified and catered for; that they feel settled and quickly develop a sense of belonging within our school community.

We promote community and sharing throughout the school day. Staff and students share their meals together, and every morning we hold an assembly centered around a specific theme, which takes place in our large communal hall.

We take a proactive, evidence-based approach to changing behaviours of concern, completing functional behaviour assessments and creating appropriate behaviour support plans that employ Positive Behaviour Strategies (PBS), such as pre-correcting, prompting and nonverbal signals.

In addition to PBS, we are developing our trauma-informed practice by using the Thrive approach. All staff receive regular Thrive training to promote positive mental health and to help them respond to behaviour in a way that helps all our students to flourish and learn.

Establishing positive relationships with our parents and carers is very important to all of us in the Woodlands team. Parents receive weekly calls from their child's form tutor and progress reports three times a year, and are invited to attend school events so they can be part of their child's educational experience. Working in partnership with our families, we ensure that every young person benefits from a fantastic support network.

Nathan's Story

Nathan moved to a large secondary school when he was aged 11. Overwhelmed by the vast number of people around him, he was left feeling unable to cope and became withdrawn and isolated. The lack of social interaction and friendships damaged his self-esteem, and anxiety set in. As a result, he refused to go to school throughout Year 8.



When Nathan visited Aurora Woodlands to look around, he instantly felt at home. The smaller class sizes gave him back the confidence he had lost. He felt able to trust the staff, and over time that trust has grown to create meaningful relationships that will shape his future. For example, staff take Nathan out for walks when his anxiety is overwhelming and find comfortable environments for him to complete his school work. Looking ahead, Nathan has now begun to transition to a construction course at the local FE college. He finds it isn't stressful for him, or hard work – it's enjoyable and fun.

“ The lack of hope I experienced at my old school has been replaced with a new mindset. Woodlands has helped me to become an adult, one who knows what they want to do and where they are going in life.”

What you need to know

Uniform

We provide all students with:

- Aurora Woodlands blazer
- Aurora Woodlands school tie

We require parents and carers to provide:

- Black trousers and a white shirt
- Black trainers or black shoes
- Suitable clothing and footwear for outdoor education

School Meals

School meals are prepared on site and all dietary requirements are catered for. Students are provided with a selection of breakfast each day, including cereal, brown toast, toasted bagels, granola, fruit, pancakes with fruit, porridge and fresh orange juice.

We offer a three-weekly menu consisting of homemade meals prepared using fresh, seasonal produce that is locally sourced wherever possible. Our menu can be found on the school website at: <https://www.the-aurora-group.com/woodlands>

Term Dates

Our term dates are published annually and are available on our school website at: <https://www.the-aurora-group.com/woodlands>

Absence

If your child is too ill to attend school, you should contact the School Office by 8am in order for transport staff to be informed. Please contact us each day that your child is absent.

All routine medical and other appointments should be arranged out of school time wherever possible. In exceptional circumstances, where an urgent appointment is required or for hospital clinic appointments that operate during the day only, please provide an appointment card or letter to obtain authorisation for the absence.

Where the school office has received no reason for an absence, pastoral calls will be made to parents/carers – even where your child has been absent due to illness on previous days. We take our safeguarding responsibility seriously and cannot assume that your child is still ill unless you have notified us.

Persistent absence is a serious problem. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these students at a considerable disadvantage. A student defined as a 'Persistent Absentee' is one who misses 10% or more of school. Schools are challenged by the government to address the problem of persistent absenteeism. The government has strengthened schools' ability to respond by increasing Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) to £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.

Excellent attendance is awarded weekly and is a target linked to rewards trips for all students.

Our commitment to you

Quality Statement

At Aurora Woodlands we strive to provide the highest quality service to young people, parents/ carers and local authorities. We believe that all these groups have the right to comment on the service we provide and to understand the complaints procedure.

If you do have a concern or complaint, we do want to hear about it as soon as possible. Please ask the School office for a copy of our complaints procedure if you would like to know more. We like to know when we are getting things right too, so please feel free to also send us any compliments – our staff are always happy to hear them!

Safeguarding Statement

At Aurora Woodlands we are wholly committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of our students, and we expect all staff and visitors to share this commitment. Safer recruitment practices are followed and all staff have an Enhanced DBS check.

Contact Us

For more information please contact us at:

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www.the-aurora-group.com/woodlands



ADHD, ASC, MLD,
SEMH



10-19



Boys



38 Week Day

Caring

Ambitious

Collaborative

Trusted

Innovative



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