

## Parent Information Sheet: September 2025

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| <b>Head Office Address<br/>and<br/>Contact Details</b>  | Outcomes First Group Head Office<br>Atria<br>Spa Road<br>Bolton<br>BL1 4AG<br>01204 956899  |
| <b>School Address<br/>and<br/>Contact Details</b>   | Options Higford<br>Higford Hall<br>Near Shifnal<br>Shropshire<br>TF11 9ET<br>01952 630600   |
| <b>Proprietor<br/>Contact Details</b>   | David Leatherbarrow – CEO<br><a href="mailto:David.leatherbarrow@ofgl.co.uk">David.leatherbarrow@ofgl.co.uk</a>                           |
| <b>Chair of Governance<br/>/Safeguarding<br/>Governor</b>   | Melanie Callaghan-Lewis - Regional Director<br><a href="mailto:melaine.callaghan-lewis@ofgl.co.uk">melaine.callaghan-lewis@ofgl.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Head Teacher<br/>Deputy Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>                                       | Samantha Denniss<br><a href="mailto:Samantha.denniss@optionsautism.co.uk">Samantha.denniss@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                        |
| <b>Deputy Head<br/>Deputy Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>  | Jenna Johnson<br><a href="mailto:Jenna.johnson@optionsautism.co.uk">Jenna.johnson@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                                 |
| <b>Assistant Head<br/>Pastoral Lead<br/>Student Wellbeing<br/>Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>    | Eloise Thrower<br><a href="mailto:Eloise.Thrower@optionsautism.co.uk">Eloise.Thrower@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                              |
| <b>Pastoral Assistant<br/>Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>  | Rory Macaskill<br><a href="mailto:Rory.macaskill@optionsautism.co.uk">Rory.macaskill@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                              |
| <b>Senior Teacher-<br/>Assessment and<br/>Accreditation lead.<br/>Sendco/ Designated<br/>LAC Lead</b> | Keeley Jaworski<br><a href="mailto:Keeley.jaworski@optionsautism.co.uk">Keeley.jaworski@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                           |
| <b>Senior Teacher-<br/>Behaviour and<br/>Attitudes Lead<br/>Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>      | James Wild<br><a href="mailto:James.wild@optionsautism.co.uk">James.wild@optionsautism.co.uk</a>  |
| <b>Attendance Officer<br/>Designated<br/>Safeguarding Lead</b>  | Sarah Poultney<br><a href="mailto:Sarah.poultney@optionsautism.co.uk">Sarah.poultney@optionsautism.co.uk</a>                              |

### Admissions

As part of our admission process, the school will review all relevant and recent reports. This will usually include:

- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Most recent School Report/s
- Social History and any relevant reports
- Clinical reports (e.g. Psychology, Psychiatry, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy)/ Diagnostic Information

Parents and the young person will be invited to visit the school site. Higford Senior staff will carry out admission assessments, which usually includes visiting to observe and consult with previous school / settings. Once a Placement has been offered and accepted, an Admission Planning meeting will be held with all relevant parties invited to ensure each young person's start at Higford is well planned in order to best meet their individual needs.

## **Policies**

All key policies are available on our website, including Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour Support, Complaints, Curriculum, Planning, Assessment and Teaching and Learning.

## **Safeguarding**

At Options Higford we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognise that safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people is everyone's responsibility. We follow Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) procedures and acknowledge that the welfare of the child is paramount. It is our duty to respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child. We work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies. Our statutory duties and supporting guidance are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

All staff (including agency staff) are aware of their individual roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including their responsibility to be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We ensure that all staff (including agency staff) undergo an appropriate induction process where they are given copies of the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. On-going support is provided through regular supervision and appraisals to ensure these policies and procedures are put into practice to protect children. All staff are expected to update their child protection training at least every three years. In addition all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

## Positive Behaviour Support

All children and young people at Options Higford have been identified as benefiting from Autism specific and trauma and mental health informed approaches. Our students have difficulties with thinking, social understanding, social communication, flexibility of thinking and sensory issues. Our Person Centred Neurodivergence affirming Positive Behaviour Policy and practice is designed to promote positive behaviour and ensure that young people are safe and their welfare promoted, whilst respecting the different challenges they face. This is based on the concept of “unconditional positive regard” which was developed by the psychologist Carl Rogers, in that we believe that a complete and unconditional acceptance of each child and young person in the school, is the bedrock of any work to improve

behaviour. Unconditional positive regard means accepting that the child or young person is attempting to deal with situations in their lives as best they can.

Many challenging behaviours are closely linked to a young person’s communication and learning difficulties and are the best and most powerful way they currently have of getting their message across or getting their needs met. If we can work out the meaning of the behaviour, we are then in a better position to encourage a more appropriate response. The functional analysis of behaviour is used to assist in the development of behaviour support plans. The Sleuth behaviour recording system is used to help with this analysis.



# **SEN Information Report**

Options Higford caters for students with autistic spectrum condition, challenging behaviour and additional complex difficulties.

We are registered for up to 63 students aged from 5 -19 years of age

The students have difficulties in all four areas of need as defined by the SEN Code of Practice:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

All students have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

We use the principles of the Outcomes First Groups 'Ask, Accept, Develop' strategy in order to maximise access to the whole curriculum.

## **Complaints**

Options Higford encourages all of its young people, and anyone who comes into contact with our services, to raise any matter about which they are unhappy or feel they have cause for complaint. Every complainant has the right to expect to be treated fairly, politely and without prejudice. Anybody making a complaint will not be victimised in any way. We resolve to investigate every issue fully and seek a satisfactory conclusion in all cases.

### **Total Number of complaints logged for 2024 - 2025:**

0

### **Accreditation results 2024 - 2025:**

0