

living and learning together

# BRADSTOW SCHOOL

within a Culture of Gentleness



nurture    teach    sustain

“The school successfully attends to the needs of a student in any situation ‘so that learning and healing’ takes place in the context of a trusting, respectful and genuine relationship.”

Ofsted 2013



### In our Bradstow Community, we Nurture, we Teach, we Sustain

- We create ordinary lives for people in an extraordinary community
- We develop individualised provision for all our students
- We create personalised living and opportunities for learning in a safe environment
- We recognise the importance of supporting, training and developing our staff
- We work together reflectively, asking questions and being willing to learn new ways of working
- We work to create a culture which helps people to be open to new ways of thinking and learning
- We challenge long held beliefs about people with learning disabilities and believe that anything can be made possible
- We develop opportunities and access for all in the wider community.

# WHAT WE DO

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Welcome to Bradstow, a residential special school, registered as a children’s home. The school is maintained by the London Borough of Wandsworth, standing in 14 glorious acres of parkland and situated in the seaside town of Broadstairs in Kent. We were rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2013 for the educational and residential care we offer children and young people with autism, severe intellectual disabilities and associated complex behaviours.

Bradstow is unique, as is the range of provision we offer children and young people aged 5-19. We provide individualised, 24-hour care with access to full educational and therapeutic support, in an environment that is safe, loving and predictable.



“ Alfie’s future learning before joining this wonderful school was very uncertain. He has been blessed with receiving the care and attention from dedicated, caring staff. Coupled with their in-built passion and commitment, they have embraced the school’s approach for Gentle Teaching, which demonstrates the empathy and understanding that my son desperately needed. I myself consider that we have an extended family from Bradstow staff. ”

Parent



### Bradstow is proud to be a UNICEF Rights Respecting School.

This means that Bradstow is recognised as a school that champions the rights of children and young people, whilst creating and maintaining a rights-respecting ethos at every level.

[www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk](http://www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk)





# OUR APPROACH

At Bradstow our values are at the heart of everything we do. These six key values are integral to our relationships, and also in creating the optimum environment for teaching and learning within an inclusive, supportive community.

## RESPECT

treat others as you want to be treated

## RELATIONSHIPS

unconditional, trusting and reciprocal

## COMPASSION

everyone needs tolerance and understanding

## CONSISTENCY

keep the objectives in mind

## CREATIVITY

what if...?

## TENACITY

we don't give up... ever...



“ My grandson Joshua joined Bradstow School in 2011 after a difficult period for Joshua and us. I use the word “joined” because I immediately felt we were part of a large family working jointly to improve the life and outcomes for Joshua and the other young people at Bradstow. The whole ethos of Gentle Teaching brings positive and innovative ideas to enhance the lives of the students and their families on a daily basis. ”

Grandparent

“Young people feel valued and this is routinely demonstrated through their behaviours towards the staff team. Loving and caring relationships are nurtured. These are appropriately balanced with clear behavioural expectations which teach young people about living successfully within a wider society.”

Ofsted 2015



“The promotion of equal opportunities is extremely well embedded in all aspects of the school’s work. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Students are never left out.”

Ofsted 2013



# GENTLE TEACHING

“Comments from parents include ‘My child has come on so much, there were many things we couldn’t do as a family before but we can now.’ Positive outcomes for such young people are having a tremendous impact upon their own families.”

Ofsted 2015



## What does a ‘Culture of Gentleness’ mean?

At Bradstow, we’re committed to creating a Culture of Gentleness, an inclusive environment built upon the principles of Gentle Teaching.

Gentle Teaching is a unique relational approach centred on building safe, loving and engaging relationships in both its values and methods.

The four pillars of Gentle Teaching are taught through repeated acts of love, shared activities and moments to build healthy interpersonal relationships of reciprocity and fairness. This approach helps create a dialogue where the individual feels listened to and is more willing to communicate in ways that are less “hurtful, disruptive, controlling and obsessive”.

Gentle Teaching creates the pathways to develop these safe and caring relationships through providing leadership, invitation and example rather than trying to impose control. Within this context, challenging moments are met with warmth and understanding and are better anticipated, prevented and refocused.

Our role at Bradstow is to listen deeply and provide just the right support to assist the development of caring relationships and meaningful lives for our children and young people. Creating a Culture of Gentleness requires everyone at Bradstow to be a learner.

“ In this place I feel safe. With these people I feel loved. ”

- SAFE
- LOVED
- LOVING
- ENGAGED

“Incidents of challenging behaviour are looked on as opportunities to discover what questions the student is asking through their behaviour. By managing the environment positively, students learn to understand how to behave appropriately.”

Ofsted 2013



“The powerful values and ethos were demonstrated by the behaviours of all the staff I met who are clearly passionate about helping children and young people live as independently as possible and to realise their potential.”

Dawn Warwick, Director of Education and Social Services,  
Wandsworth Borough Council

“Young people are thriving within a stimulating and nurturing environment. They make good or excellent progress across all areas of their social, behavioural and educational development.”

Ofsted 2015



## HOW WE NURTURE

“Students with communication difficulties... make huge strides in their communication skills.”

Ofsted 2013

Bradstow offers a vast range of specialised support and provision for children and young people. Our expertise is recognised nationally and our staff undergo extensive induction and comprehensive professional development to enable them to effectively support the complex needs of the children and young people in our care.

We recognise that our staff are our most valuable resource and ensure that we recruit and retain the very best people. But we are never complacent. Recruitment procedures are robust, staff are routinely enhanced DBS checked and stringent child protection training, measures and monitoring takes place.

This focus on safeguarding is crucial if we are to provide a safe, secure environment in which our children and young people can flourish.

“High staffing levels ensure the children and young people choose their own activities in accordance with their own preferences and interests.”

Ofsted 2015



### A Healthy School

All the children and young people at Bradstow are registered with a local GP, who holds a surgery at the school each week. We have a school nurse and also a learning disability dental team who visit the school regularly.

The school employs two speech and language therapists and an occupational therapist with a focus on sensory needs who support the children and young people throughout the working day.

All food is prepared on site to provide nutritious, well-balanced meals and we can cater for individual dietary requirements as required, including specific allergies.

The school takes the emotional and physical well-being of both young people and caregivers very seriously. The school offers a range of facilities to promote physical activity e.g. swimming, cycling, yoga, sports clubs, gym memberships, etc.

# HOW WE TEACH



“The improvement in my child’s challenging behaviour has been impressive. She loves the school and is now so happy and calm.”

Parent

Learning takes place 24 hours a day throughout a school community which is innovative, creative and, above all, gentle.

Bradstow uses Gentle Teaching approaches to embed meaningful ‘flows of life’ and functional communication skills alongside a bespoke creative curriculum which is tailored to meet the individual needs of each child and young person. We achieve extraordinary outcomes for our young people, not just academically but by enabling them to understand and develop coping skills to lead ordinary lives in their community.

There is extensive use of speech, language, occupational and music therapies. The school has interactive sensory rooms where young people are supported by staff trained in sensory approaches. The Learning Resource Centre at the school adapts and creates augmented communication systems for individuals. This enables children and young people to understand their environment and feel safe within it.

As our children and young people move through the school we teach more vocational and life skills. We introduce ASDAN’s Transition Challenge at KS4 and the Towards Independence Award scheme at KS5, preparing for adulthood with a greater focus on experience in the community, Work Related Learning and collaborations with other schools and colleges.

Bradstow’s 14-acre site extends to an amphitheatre, all-weather football pitch, indoor swimming pool, polytunnels and unique interactive bike track. Our curriculum is enhanced by further opportunities for all kinds of learning experiences - horticulture, drama, story-telling, sailing, dance, PE, Yoga and Tai Chi to name but a few.

“Students make excellent progress in all aspects of their personal development due to an outstanding 24-hour curriculum and very good teaching.”

Ofsted 2013



For more details of our KS4 and KS5 provision visit [www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk/schoolclasses/upper-school.html](http://www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk/schoolclasses/upper-school.html)



# HOW WE SUSTAIN

## A Holistic Approach

Our self-contained homes are each overseen by a Home Manager and residential care team. Working collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team across the school, they provide consistent and integrated approaches throughout the day and night.

Bradstow endeavours to support parents, families, carers and external agencies as well as the children and young people we support every day. Our aim is to strengthen relationships, facilitate progress and enable positive outcomes for all concerned, and we encourage regular visits, phone calls, letters, video calls and emails between our children and young people and their family or carers.

Everything is done in partnership with parents and carers, and nothing is done without consultation and permission. Advice and resources are always available and we provide parent and family workshops as well as family events throughout the year. We have dedicated accommodation on site, where parents and carers are invited to stay during visits to the school.

## Investors In People

Bradstow is proud to be an Investors in People Champion. We believe there is a direct correlation between the emotional well-being of our staff and that of the children and young people in our care.

“Everybody learns at Bradstow – not just the children and young people. We are a learning community that is positive and purposeful. Our approach is proactive, individualised, holistic, collaborative and multi-disciplinary.”

Sarah Dunn, Headteacher

We implement a range of initiatives and encourage staff to be dynamic and flexible whilst remaining calm and compassionate. By valuing our staff we can empower the delivery of extraordinary levels of care.

## Flexible and Extended Provision

Every family’s situation is different, so our educational and residential provision is meticulously planned around individual needs. Children and young people can access provision that ranges from attendance daily, term time for 38 weeks with short term breaks or up to 52 weeks. All within a framework that allows complete flexibility to adjust provision as situations change.



“The school inspires students of all ages to make exceptionally rapid progress in their understanding of emotions and the way they relate to others as well as in their academic work.”

Ofsted 2013





# OUR COMMUNITY

“The majority of students make progress which is significantly above that expected nationally, and their achievement is outstanding over time.”

Ofsted 2013

## Out and About

There are frequent opportunities for engagement and connecting with the local community, be it on shopping trips, visits to the cinema, going to the pantomime, theatre, youth clubs, sailing, climbing, attending church, playing golf or just walking on the beach which is minutes from the school.

As well as using public transport such as the local bus and train services, the school also has a range of cars and minibuses to enable access to activities locally and further afield.



Bradstow is a fully integrated and active member of the community. We host and support local workshops, fun days, visits and community events, all of which offer precious opportunities for social interaction both in and out of school.

There are many opportunities for our children and young people to contribute to local projects and voluntary scheme in the community.

As an employer of more than 260 local people, Bradstow is well known within the community. We actively nurture this relationship, for example, by inviting local organisations and schools to visit and work with us, by hosting regular community events and instigating long-term projects linked with the local community, such as the Eagle Festival.

Social participation is essential for enabling ordinary lives for young people and for a positive transition into adult life. We seek out Work Related Learning opportunities and use all our knowledge and experience to support children and young people through their transitions into and out of our school.



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## FIND OUT MORE

Please do not hesitate  
to contact us to  
find out more about  
Bradstow School.



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