



The Windmill School

# Barnet Special Education Trust



Barnet Special Education Trust  
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## WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER DESIGNATE

Many thanks for your interest in The Windmill School. I am delighted to share some information with you whilst we develop our new website. My name is Ginny D'Odorico and I am the Headteacher Designate for The Windmill School. I am based at Oak Lodge School, part of the Barnet Special Education Trust whilst processes are in place for me to formally take on the position as Headteacher.

Barnet Special Education Trust has a long and established track record of offering quality education for children and young people with SEND in Barnet. The Windmill School has a partnership with the Centre for Research in Autism and Education (CRAE) at the UCL Institute of Education: <https://crae.ioe.ac.uk/>

Our rationale for applying to open a new special free school for autistic children, stems from our knowledge of local need in Barnet for autistic children, but also as an autism specialist practitioner and a graduate from CRAE, I was particularly interested in ensuring design environments were autism friendly. I believe there are many autistic children who are not in their right school setting and therefore this is impacting learning potential and therefore, outcomes.

The Local Authority commission places at both Oak Lodge School and more recently at The Windmill, as we have a very comprehensive autism specialist pedagogy. All our training and CPD programs have been positively endorsed by the NAS and only draw on evidenced based autism interventions.

You can view the Oak Lodge website here: <https://www.oaklodeschool.org/>

The Trust website is here: <https://www.bsentrust.org>

These will give you some background and context to Barnet Special Education Trust and our journey to open this very unique autism specific school.

At Oak Lodge School, we have a long and successful track record of teaching autistic children that is positively endorsed by our specialist accreditation awarded by the National Autistic Society (NAS). We are the only school in Barnet to have NAS Accreditation. Further information at this link:

[https://www.oaklodeschool.org/Information%20Content/NAS\\_AdvancedStatus.php](https://www.oaklodeschool.org/Information%20Content/NAS_AdvancedStatus.php)



The Windmill School at 50 Moxon Street, High Barnet is currently under construction and is expected to complete in February 2024.

Barnet Special Education Trust is currently working in partnership with the Department for Education and Barnet Council's SEN department to secure **temporary accommodation** that will enable first admissions in September 2023.

This is a computer aided illustration of the school as it is not completed. However, we have a comprehensive schedule to ensure we have our wonderful new school ready to move into in Spring 2024.



The Windmill School will be a mixed school for up to 90 pupils aged 5 - 18, all of whom will have an Education Health and Care Plan that gives a medically confirmed diagnosis of autism as their primary need. Admissions in our first year are targeted to the upper primary/lower secondary age range, where there is currently significant local need.

The Windmill School will cater for those whose profile is not matching age expected expectations in some or most aspects of the curriculum, but where individuals have academic strengths in some academic subjects.

Our curriculum will have two main, complex, interrelated elements. These enable pupils to leave school with the necessary skills and core competencies for the transition to adult life in modern Britain in a way that is meaningful for them. We aim to support pupils as far as possible in developing sophisticated social reasoning as this will enhance their ability to function well in complex social networks and will revolutionise their lives.



The Windmill School



The two main curriculum elements include:

- explicitly teaching pupils to manage their autism effectively and so develop a positive and realistic self-image; be flexible, resilient and socially competent; develop strategies for negotiation and cooperation, and to have friends.
- developing pupils' academic skills, knowledge and understanding across all subject areas so that, ultimately, they have an appropriate personalised pathway towards externally accredited courses that will lead to access to continued education or employment.

The academic curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with careers and personal, social, health and relationships education. It is designed to be purposeful and motivating to match the special interests of each student, allowing them to excel in their areas of strength and to experience academic and personal success and a sense of achievement.

The Windmill will offer a personalised and low-arousal environment, supported by a multi-disciplinary therapeutic teaching model rooted in SCERTS practice principles. SCERTS (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Transactional Support) is an educational framework for autistic children and young people and their families that is used to develop academic potential and prevent regression.

The prospectus for the new school is currently being finalised it is expected to be published to the school website next month along with other curriculum documents. We will offer the broad national curriculum adapted to ensure it is appropriately building on the strengths and interests of the pupils.

If you think it would be helpful to talk further, please contact me via email to [tw@bsentrust.org](mailto:tw@bsentrust.org) so that we can arrange a convenient time to call. I look forward to hearing from you!

Ginny D'Odorico  
Headteacher Designate  
The Windmill School