

ST. JOHN'S



**A specialist day
and residential
college for autistic
young people
aged 16–25.**

Prospectus



**“Residential care,
in collaboration with
education, therapy
and behaviour support
has helped B to make
unprecedented progress
at St. John’s College.”**

Parent testimonial

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Welcome from the Principal

I am delighted that you are considering St. John's College for your young person. We are committed to making sure our learners feel safe and that we promote a nurturing environment, where learners can explore their interests and develop skills to improve their quality of life as they move into adulthood.

St. John's College is an independent specialist college of further education, situated in the diverse and vibrant city of Brighton and Hove. We provide education, care, and therapy for autistic young people, aged 16-25, who may have additional diagnoses of learning disabilities.

St. John's College is a place where learning is shaped around young people's hopes and aspirations. Our courses are tailored to meet young people's goals. Learner voice is important. We respect choices and help learners to consider different ideas and new experiences. Our highly skilled, trans-disciplinary, specialist staff team is dedicated to helping learners to achieve.

At St. John's College, we promote learners' sense of belonging and encourage everyone to take an active part in college life and to engage with opportunities in the community. The college has strong links with many organisations across Brighton and

Hove, giving access to exciting employability placements and learning activities, in areas such as catering, horticulture, music and leisure.

We welcome learners to attend on a day or residential basis. We have five residential houses – three positioned on-site and two along the East Sussex coast, at Peacehaven and Telscombe. Learning is enhanced through our waking day curriculum, where our residential team support the development of independent living and social skills and access to the local community.

This prospectus is designed to give you lots of information about life at St. John's College, but we invite you to visit and find out more about our unique approach first-hand.



Karen Grist
Principal



“Learner voice is important. We respect choices and help learners to consider different ideas and new experiences.”

Karen Grist, Principal

“We could not be happier with how well J’s needs have been met and all the support everyone at St. John’s College has given us all.”

Parent testimonial



Ambitious about Autism vision and values

St. John's College is part of Ambitious about Autism, the national charity for autistic children and young people. We provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change.

Through TreeHouse School, The Rise School, Spring School, Ambitious College and St. John's College, we offer specialist education and support. We stand with autistic children and young people, champion their rights and create opportunities.

Our values define how we work to ensure that autistic children and young people are at the heart of all that we do.

Our values



Ambitious Approach: How we deliver our curriculum

The Ambitious Approach is the model of education practice used across all Ambitious about Autism education settings to support autistic children and young people.

At St. John's College, we have high aspirations for our learners. Our goal for all learners is that when they leave our settings they will have the opportunity to access employment, further education or training and to live as part of the community of their choice.

The Ambitious Approach is the educational approach we have developed and adopted to put quality

of life at the centre of all we do. It is based upon a learner's indisputable rights to be:

- treated with dignity and compassion
- valued
- listened to
- supported to have the best quality of life possible
- empowered to make choices and decide on how they want to live their life.



The Ambitious Approach has three areas of focus:

The curriculum

The curriculum in our settings focuses on equipping learners with the knowledge and skills they need for quality of life. Learning is tailored to support autistic learners to live the life they want to lead.

Curriculum delivery

We recruit and train staff in our settings to provide high-quality teaching. This includes having a deep knowledge of the subjects they teach, specialist knowledge of how autistic learners learn best and creating environments that support and nurture physical and psychological needs.

Collaboration

To afford dignity, respect and compassion, learners are placed at the core of a setting so their voices are heard and so we can support them with what is important to them. Staff in the settings work closely together, sharing their expertise, to address barriers to learning and support the best possible outcomes.

We are constantly developing, searching for and open to new ethical and evidence-based approaches that help our young people. We share our experiences and knowledge with others to enhance expertise in the field of autism education.

St. John's College is subject to Ofsted inspections, which are published online, on our website and by Ofsted.

Our residential homes are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Learner voice

Learner voice at St. John's College is extremely important. Weekly learner voice sessions and key worker sessions give learners the chance to discuss college and residential-related issues. We have a Learner Council comprised of learner ambassadors who help to promote college events and awareness campaigns, produce a newsletter and represent the college at nationwide events.

Learner ambassadors also share the views and suggestions of their peers with the senior leadership team so we are continually listening and responding to learners and helping to make improvements.

“College staff are highly trained and provide a seamless education.”

Parent testimonial



Our curriculum

At St. John's College, we provide quality education through a curriculum that offers a wide range of learning opportunities. Our curriculum is intended to meet the individual needs and aspirations of our learners, to inspire continuous engagement, and to unlock potential.

The curriculum is designed to be delivered on a personalised basis where study programmes are comprised of learning activities that are relevant to each learner. Our curriculum aims to

prepare learners for adult life so they can be an active participant within their community. Our study programme aims to promote and develop:



Wellbeing
the basis of
effective learning



Communication
to underpin engagement
in society



Skills development
supporting
a productive life



Employment
paid and voluntary



Independence
a fundamental human right

There are four key curriculum learning areas:

Core skills

Functional Maths and English are taught as discrete classes and lead to accredited qualifications. They are also embedded across the learning subjects and in different contexts. Attainment in core skills promotes opportunities for further education and learning. Communication and interactions, digital skills, and problem-solving are embedded throughout the curriculum.



Life ready



This learning area promotes skills and knowledge that support learners to be part of their local community. It focuses on key aspects of the PSHE curriculum including British values, radicalisation and extremism and relationship and sex education. Learners are supported to know themselves, their strengths and skills, and to build upon these to develop personal growth and confidence. We support learners to have a sense of belonging and to understand the world around them and their place as citizens.

Rosie's story

Since Rosie joined St. John's College, her progress has been significant. She initially struggled to enter the college campus from the car park but thanks to innovative strategies and dedicated support from the college's trans-disciplinary staff team, she began to access her tutor room with other learners. Inclusive communication strategies have helped Rosie to be understood and heard.

Rosie now has more confidence and has gained greater independence. She now accesses the whole college site and regularly takes part in off-site activities and events.

Special interests

This curriculum area offers learning in key purposeful activities that may stimulate future aspirations, areas of self-interest, or support skill development, in conjunction with work placements and future employment. Subjects are taught by teachers who are specialists within each subject area. They include:

Performing arts

Based in our fully equipped Wolfson Theatre, learners develop individual and group performing skills including mime, acting, improvisation, role play, stage craft, sensory movement and dance via the use of immersive theatre technology.



Music

Our music rooms include our recording studio where learners have access to a range of musical instruments and music technology. Our student band regularly entertains the college community.

Creative media

Learners can make films and animations, develop a photography portfolio and create professional publications. Learners can also develop digital editing skills and learn how to stay safe online.



Eco College

An opportunity for learners to access wild places, visit the coast, community gardens, and woodlands; in order to develop individual responsibility for these places and to work towards conserving them.



Sport

We offer a range of sport and physical activities which supports our learners to lead and participate in healthy and active lifestyles.

Alice's story

Alice is in her third year at St. John's College and has gained a range of cooking skills which is her particular interest. With the help of her staff team, she is engaging positively in her studies and has worked especially hard on her literacy skills.

Alice has excelled at her work placements, where she has acquired increased knowledge and skills in catering. At the end of her second year, she completed a qualification in professional barista skills and is now being supported by college staff to undertake a Level 1 course in hospitality and catering at Brighton Metropolitan further education college.

Work experience is a great way to learn what it's like to work in different industries. This enables learners to gain vital knowledge and skills associated with the world of work and to prepare them for future employment opportunities. Learners start with work placements on campus and then progress to external work placements in Brighton and Hove, or work opportunities closer to home.

College campus work placements include:

Scrummies Café and Deli

Our on-site café gives learners the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge relating to food safety, hygiene, food preparation methods and techniques. Working alongside catering professionals, our learners practice skills, and gain knowledge and work behaviours vital to the hospitality and catering industry. There is also an opportunity to gain a specialist barista qualification.



Inklusion Print

This social enterprise initiative enables learners to create a range of print-based products and offer professional design and print services to the college community. Inklusion instructs learners in the use of current design software, print technology and processes using industry-standard equipment. They also develop teamwork and customer service skills.

Zest car valeting

Our professional car valeting team learn how to follow step-by-step processes to clean, polish, and wax vehicles with attention to detail and working safely.



Groundwork

Our gardening and horticulture project enables learners to cultivate, care for and prepare plants for use in Scrummies Café and Deli. The programme maintains our outdoor spaces and supports the development of skills, such as using tools and equipment safely, and quality control. Learners also develop knowledge of plant varieties.



Dog agility

Dog agility teaches learners how to use their voice, movement, and various body signals to train an animal. The programme teaches learners about essential animal care and animal handling.

Business administration

Business administration supports learners to gain administrative and office skills. There are opportunities to progress to internal placements within the college, gaining experience of roles within our reception, finance, HR and IT teams.



Tidy Team and laundry services

The Tidy Team helps to clean and maintain our on-site environments, such as Scrummies Café and Deli. The programme supports the development of skills and knowledge relating to the correct use of cleaning tools and equipment, following a cleaning schedule, health and safety, quality control, waste disposal, recycling and cleaning in the home.

Job centre

Our job centre provides learners with resources, information, and guidance on employment opportunities whilst at college and for life after college. The hub supports the development of skills and knowledge; including CV writing, job applications, interview skills, workplace visits, industry and job research, and travel skills for work.



Work experience in the local community

We offer a comprehensive range of work experience opportunities with local businesses, helping learners develop work skills that support and meet their interests and aspirations. Local partners include the Real Junk Food Project, St. Luke's Church, the Fitzherbert Centre, Fareshare Sussex, Gladrags Costume, Moulsecoomb Forest Garden, Phoenix Art Space, Be Creative, Woodstore Brighton and Rock Farm.

Supported internships

St. John's College has secured a partnership with Project Search and Brighton and Hove Council to run a supported internship programme from September 2024.

The programme will take place in a range of council departments. Learners will be totally immersed in the workplace, learning through continuous feedback and gaining real employability and work skills.

Interns are supported through on-the-job coaching and improvement strategies, the ultimate goal being to help them obtain paid employment.



Curriculum



Events and activities




Throughout the academic year, there are opportunities for the college community to come together to watch or perform in drama and music productions. Young people can participate in external visits, and become involved in community projects.



Qualifications

All learners are individually assessed and supported to study relevant qualifications during their college placement. These are reviewed annually

to ensure they remain current for each learner and that they continue to support progression towards learners' aspirations and destinations.

 <p>Pre-entry level</p>	<p>St. John's College programme pre-entry level foundations for learning and life (RARPA), inclusive of resilience curriculum and community inclusion</p>	<p>St. John's College award in Maths (entry 1 and 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using number and number systems • common measures, shape and space • handling information and data. 	<p>St. John's College award in English (entry 1 and 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speaking, listening and communication • reading • writing.
 <p>Entry 1 to entry 2</p>	<p>St. John's College programme entry level foundations for learning and life (RARPA), inclusive of resilience curriculum and community inclusion</p>	<p>Edexcel award/certificate in pre-vocational study (entry 1 and 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging in new situations • communicating with others • engaging in a team activity • working towards a target • using digital skills • helping with running an event • producing a product • taking part in a creative activity • participating in a performance • producing a basic document • exploring an enterprise activity. 	
 <p>Entry 3 to level 1</p>	<p>St. John's College programme entry level/ level 1 foundations for learning and life (RARPA) inclusive of resilience curriculum and community inclusion</p>	<p>Gateway certificate in vocational studies (entry 3) Gateway certificate in vocational studies (level 1) Selection of subject skill units in product enterprise, performing arts, music, photography, gardening.</p>	
	<p>Gateway award/certificate in preparation for employment (entry 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing a workplace task • conduct and personal presentation • setting and meeting targets at work • using tools and equipment in the workplace • dealing with work related problems • working safely. 	<p>Gateway employability skills (level 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct at work • working safely • customer services skills • working with colleagues • setting and meeting targets at work. 	
	<p>Edexcel functional skill award in Maths (entry 3 and level 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using number and numbers systems • common measures, shape and space • handling information and data. 	<p>Edexcel functional skill award in English (entry 3 and level 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speaking, listening and communication • reading • writing. 	

Our trans-disciplinary support team

At St. John's College, we deliver our Ambitious Approach through a trans-disciplinary team. Where the learner is the central focus at all times.

This means that our staff is made up of a range of professionals, each trained in a different discipline. They work together to produce individually tailored approaches to learning and support. The team includes:

- Qualified teachers responsible for delivering the curriculum.
- Qualified registered managers responsible for individual residential services.
- Speech and language therapists (SaLTs) who support learners to develop their communication and social skills.
- Occupational therapists (OTs) who help learners to manage sensory issues and develop functional life skills.
- Positive behaviour support (PBS) practitioners who work with learners to overcome behaviours that may create barriers to learning.
- Employment specialists who support learners to develop vocational skills and get work experience.
- Specialist education and residential support staff who work alongside learners throughout their waking day, supporting them to develop skills.

St. John's College SaLTs, OTs, and PBS practitioners work across our education and residential settings in support of our waking day curriculum. This means our learners have opportunities to learn throughout their waking day, not just in college time.

All staff receive regular training and support to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to work effectively with all learners. We also invest in continuous professional development, including an in-house, autism-specific training programme, teacher training and talks and training from external experts, and the opportunity for postgraduate study.

“Thank you at St. John's College for all the support you have given. It's been a wonderful journey.”

Parent testimonial

Positive behaviour support

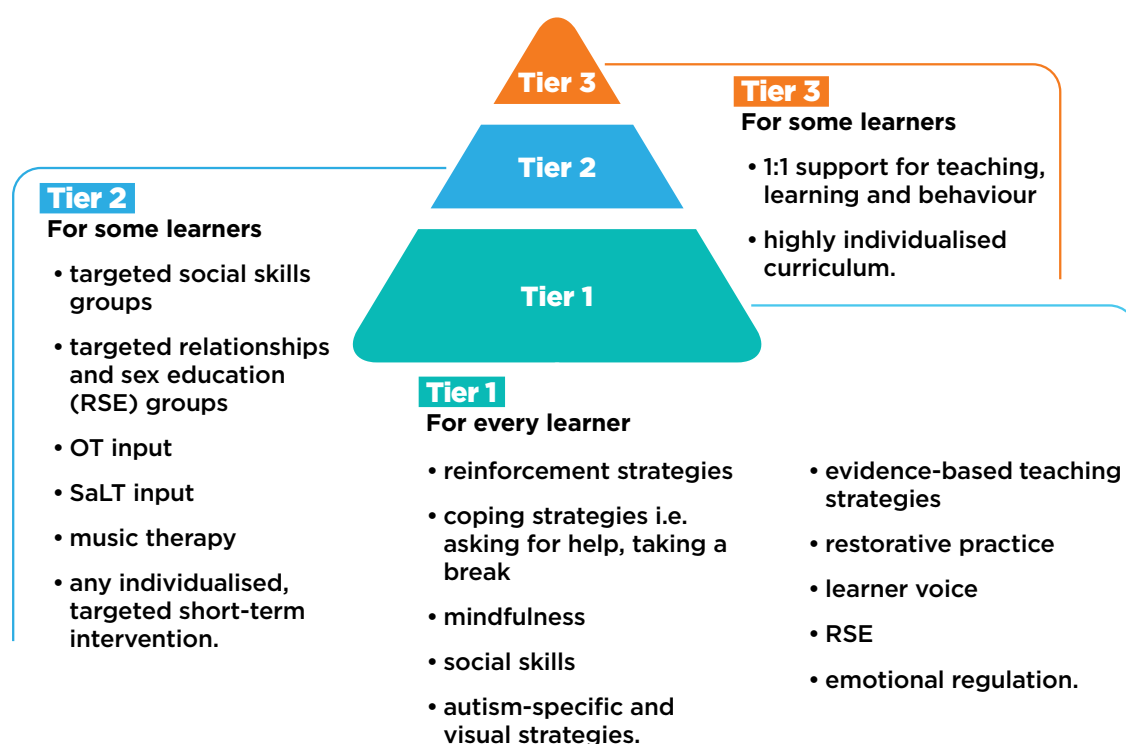
Our staff support our learners to acquire new skills and take part in everyday life. They do this through a college-wide Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach.

PBS is a values and evidence-based framework for delivering the behaviour support needed to improve educational and social outcomes for all learners. In practice, this means providing support that is:

- personalised for each individual
- based on an understanding of how each young person learns and what their behaviours mean to them
- planned, implemented and monitored consistently
- evidence-based
- proactive and uses the least restrictive approaches.

This approach helps our learners overcome behaviours of distress by developing coping strategies and acquiring new skills. In turn, this provides more opportunities for them to learn effectively and achieve long-term goals.

We use the three-tiered support framework shown in the diagram to make sure all learners learn new skills that will enhance their quality of life. Our aim is for all of our learners to lead their lives as independently as possible, with as few restrictions as possible.



ST. JOHN'S

EMPOWERING VOICE. ENABLING CHOICE



CollegeView



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Living at the college

St. John's College can offer weekly, fortnightly, termly or 52-week residential placements at one of our five houses.

Each house is registered with Care Quality Commission and undergoes its own individual inspections. You can see our up-to-date CQC ratings here: st-johns.co.uk/residential/residents-for-college-students.

The support offered to residents is based on individual need. Some may require assistance to carry out tasks such as washing and dressing. Other residents may need less or no support in these areas but require support with other tasks, such as budgeting and the skills required for semi-independent or independent living.

We maintain a focus on enabling residents to become active members of their local community, and so the majority of activities are based in Brighton and Hove and the surrounding areas.

Skills for adult life

All residents are supported and encouraged to develop their skills for living which are needed for adult life. This approach is individualised for each resident, based on their lived experience and preferred approach to learning. The waking day curriculum is embedded throughout our residential settings and opportunities

for developing and building upon functional skills, such as numeracy and literacy, happen every day. Money skills, shopping, food preparation, laundry and household tasks are all a core aspect of each resident's programme.

The residential teams work collaboratively with the education, wellbeing and therapy teams to share information, best practice and targets for each resident. This ensures that all teams work in a consistent manner and support all learners to reach their goals and aspirations.



Keeping our learners safe

Living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right for every person. All staff at St. John's College have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of our learners. We take our responsibility to safeguard learners and adults at risk seriously. We have designated safeguarding leads and robust practices in place to ensure learner safety.

It is also important to teach our learners how to stay safe in all aspects of their lives, including online. We help prevent learners from being exposed to radicalisation by upholding and promoting the fundamental British values:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

The designated lead for safeguarding (DSL) is the Head of Learner Services. Our safeguarding policies and our preventing extremism and radicalisation policy can be found on the college website.

The DSL is further supported by a team of safeguarding leads who represent education, therapy and residential services. This approach ensures that safeguarding issues are managed in the most appropriate and person-centred way.

Learner and family engagement officer

We know that helping our learners achieve their goals is all about working together in partnership. That's why we provide a member of staff to work with parents, learners and other professionals. Their role is particularly focused on supporting a smooth transition out of college into adult life.

Parent and carer support

The involvement of parents and carers is essential to helping learners make good progress. The more closely we all work together, the more positive the outcomes.

We provide parents and carers with full and regular updates on their young person's progress, and there are many informal and formal opportunities for parents and carers to visit the college.

These include:



Annual reviews

This is a meeting to review the learner's progress towards EHC plan outcomes. We also use this meeting to update the learner's EHC plan, if necessary.



Parent newsletters

Newsletters are sent out once per term to inform families about the learning for the term and offer advice on how to support learning at home.



College events

All parents and carers are invited to attend a range of events throughout the year to celebrate our learners' achievements.



Transition reviews

These meetings are held very early in the last year of college life to plan for the next stage of a young person's life.

Admissions

If you are interested in a placement at St. John's College, please contact our admissions team. They will be able to talk through any questions you may have, organise informal visits and advise you on the admissions process.

We meet the needs of learners across London and the southeast as well as many other UK local authorities.

Before being offered a place at St. John's College, all learners will have an assessment. This will involve key members of staff looking carefully at reports and available documentation, the young person

spending one day at St. John's College and sometimes our staff visiting them at home or in their current placement.

St. John's College will only consider making an offer of placement once an assessment has been completed. If you are seeking a privately funded place, we are happy to talk you through this process.

Transition from St. John's College

Transition can be an emotional and challenging time for learners and parents or carers alike.

St. John's College offers bespoke support for learners and parents or carers to consider the options available after college. We work collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes. The St. John's College transitions team provide the following support:

- advising parents and carers on the transition processes
- identifying options after college
- matching young people's views, wishes and aspirations to these options and supporting visits to potential future services or settings
- liaising with local authorities to secure funding
- providing parent information days
- running an alumni service for graduates to keep in touch.



“We want everyone to know how grateful we are for the care, support, love and kindness you have shown our son.”

Parent testimonial

ST. JOHN'S

We are Ambitious about Autism

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity standing with autistic children and young people.

We believe every autistic child and young person has the right to be themselves and realise their ambitions.

We started as one school and have become a movement for change. We champion rights, campaign for change and create opportunities.

Contact us

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How to find us

Public transport

St. John's College is a short 10 min drive from Brighton Railway Station. The 37 City Buzz bus runs direct to our site.

Travelling by car

Please input the postcode BN2 0AF into your GPS for navigation to St. John's College. Parking is available on request.



Ambitious about Autism is a registered charity in England and Wales: 1063184 and a registered company: 03375255.

Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust is an exempt charity in England and Wales and a registered company: 08335297.

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