

# Strathmore College Local Offer

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## 1. What does your service do?

Strathmore College provides individualised courses for learners aged 16-25 who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The college is situated in a lively and diverse urban environment with most activities taking place in the community. We have our own college-owned retail outlets and factory unit to develop vocational skills and provide real work experience. Our students needs range from mild to severe learning difficulties and include; social, emotional and communication difficulties, finding engagement extremely challenging and who are often not in education or training.

We support learners who require an environment where they can be calm for periods to enable them to access and cope with demands reducing levels of anxiety. We also provide support or learners who require a highly structured approach or who have sexualised behaviour and may need small group or an individualised approach.

We aim to provide every young person with an individually tailored programme of education, care, work experience, leisure and life skills and training within the community, to enable them to live as independently as possible. Our dedicated team of staff create a safe, secure and independent living environment where our learners have a sense of belonging within their group and a sense of ownership of their home.

Our approach enables young people to develop the confidence and skills they need to progress towards adulthood, including further or higher education and sustainable independent living in the community.



We have well established links with local employers to provide work placements in retail, catering and horticultural environments.

Strathmore offers day, weekly, termly and 52 week placements in our CQC registered homes in the community where students have the opportunity to experience independent living and social integration.

## 2. How are decisions made about who can use your service?

We have a comprehensive pre entry assessment process, developing to transition arrangements when a placement is secured. Following an application to the college, a process to gain a comprehensive insight into the learners needs commences. All assessment information is requested in the form of, a section 139a/ Education, Social and Health care plan, psychological, speech and language assessments, school reports, community care assessments, existing behaviour plans and risk assessments and any other relevant supporting evidence.

Experienced staff will visit the learner in either school or a familiar environment, to make an initial assessment. Ongoing contact and discussion is held with the family and relevant agencies throughout this process. Pre assessment meetings with relevant stakeholders are arranged to discuss and identify the programme outcomes, where felt appropriate, to ensure the needs of the complex learners are clearly indentified and planned through assessment.

An individualised approach is planned for the learner to visit the college for an assessment. Following assessment completion and funding agreement transition arrangements are made. Learners, families and other relevant stakeholders are invited to a transition meeting where initial outline of the programme is agreed and the timetable given. The most up to date information is shared to add to any draft support plans and risk assessments. The learner has opportunity to revisit the college and spend time before the commencement of the placement. Learners and stakeholders have the opportunity to ask questions and gather any other information required about the college. Key personnel from the college are introduced and or identified at this stage.



### **3. How will college staff support the child/young person?**

We offer learners, families and prospective carers an individual approach to how they wish to be supported to understand what is on offer. We also take a more personal approach and offer people the opportunity to visit, discuss needs and also experience aspects of the programme on offer.

Frequency and pace of these visits is dependent on the learners need. The programmes are tailored to the individual and can be delivered in a personalised way, taking into account individual need and are delivered in small groups of up to four learners and one to one support. We offer high levels of support on the level of risk and need of the young person.

The college is community based and staying safe in the community is an important aspect of the programme. We offer supervision at all times covering break times etc.

We offer learners individual tutorial support throughout the programme and to ensure that the programme is meeting the needs, keyworkers are allocated time to support learners and to make observations. Planned weekly tutor meetings can address any areas of concern. Half termly progress reviews ensure progress and achievement is monitored and programmes are meeting need. Actions are taken in instances where the programme or support is not meeting need, and formal reviews are held in line with requirements and more frequently if required.

Keyworkers communicate with families and other relevant others on a planned regular basis. Reports on progress are shared and any other areas discussed. Families who request additional support benefit from input given by the therapy team and advice and guidance is given to signpost families to other supporting professionals if required. Learners also benefit from advocacy services and careers support.

### **4. How will the curriculum be matched to the child's/young person's needs?**

Our approach is to support the learner to be more involved in every aspect and decision making. We ensure that learners are involved at an appropriate level in making choices and decisions. They learn to communicate their wishes and aspirations and learn that these are achievable given the correct support. We aim to develop the level of independence to reduce the level of support throughout the programme.

The programmes of study are personalised to meet the individual needs and are based from the pre entry and baseline assessment and planned in line with the learners aspirations, needs and destination outcomes. A holistic approach is taken to enhance the skills, abilities, self esteem and confidence of the individual to maximise their life opportunities. Qualifications are used in meaningful ways which focus on the progression routes to employment and pathways to further education.

We use the pre entry and baseline assessment to form the approach to the development of English and Maths. The development of English and Maths is embedded in all aspects of the programme and where individual support is required, tuition is given. Learners are able to work towards qualifications progressing to a level 1. We support learners to focus on the development of communication skills which is a fundamental part of all learners development.

We offer entry to level 1 qualifications in the following:

1. Catering
2. Horticulture
3. Carpentry/Woodwork
4. Floristry
5. Business Admin/IT

We also offer a general qualification in Skills for Working Life. Additional programmes can be developed dependent on need.

## 5. Do you offer any therapeutic services?

We contract with a Speech and Language therapist who provides initial and re assessment, individual support and develops individual developmental programmes and communication support plans to meet needs.

Individual communication targets and strategies are embedded throughout the programme, which includes the use of visual timetables, timelines, task cards, visual information to suit the learner. Makaton is used, with an ongoing programme for development of staff.

We contract with Psychological services providing individual support to learners. The approach used is adapted to meet the individual need. Cognitive behaviour therapy can be used and individual positive behaviour and de-escalation plans are developed and reviewed.

## 6. How does the college celebrate the success of children with SEND?

The college regularly celebrates achievement through presentation evenings, community events and regular reporting and discussions with students, parents, carers, and other agencies.

Academic, independent, and social skills targets are set with the young person every term and these are reviewed and discussed in weekly tutorials. Personal Tutors contact parents/carers on a weekly basis to discuss the young person's progress. Formal Review meetings are held on an annual basis where progress is discussed in details.





## 7. What support will there be for the child's overall well-being?

Strathmore College offers a variety of support in order to enhance the overall well-being of our students. We support learners to;

- Understand their disabilities and how to become more responsible for their own behaviour and manage their own emotions
- Develop and manage their relationships, live a healthy life style and become a more responsible adult
- Learners' health needs by accessing the General Practitioner and community health team. Staff are trained to administer medication and are trained in first aid.
- We offer an independence programme to learners who require ongoing support and whose aim is to increase their personal level of independence.
- Understand health and fitness through a programme of physical and sporting activities

We offer a programme of independent life skills which focuses on developing the learner's ability to be more independent and aims to reduce the need for support and services. Learners work towards living in supported living or independently.

Strathmore College can also provide emotional and psychological support to enable learners to successfully develop coping strategies, reduce anxieties and continuously progress to attain their long term goals.



## 8. What specialist services, training and expertise are available at or accessed by the college?

- Teaching qualifications as recognised by the governing body
- Vocational competence in the specific subject area
- Level 5 diploma in Literacy
- MA in Autism
- Assessor and Verifier Qualifications
- Learning support staff hold a first level teaching qualification and a N.V.Q level 3 qualification
- Staff undergo team teach training which is refreshed every 18 months. The training needs of staff are reviewed in line with learner need and a more advanced training can be accessed

- Makaton trainers. Staff undergo Makaton training annually
- All members of staff receive training in AS awareness, mental health/self harm, safeguarding and many other relevant subjects. In addition to this all staff members are expected to work towards and achieve relevant NVQ's/diplomas, level 3. All staff have received specific disability awareness training
- Mental health awareness level 2 training

**9. How will children/young people be included in activities outside the classroom and how does the college ensure that children with SEND are able to access leisure and residential activities?**

The college offers a wide range of community based activities through well established partnerships. Annual college activity challenge weeks give learners the opportunity to experience varied sporting activities and social development with peers on residential weeks with the college.

In addition, volunteering opportunities abroad enable learners to experience different cultures and to give back to the community and others. A structured programme of sporting opportunities enables learners to develop skills, broaden social networks, improve general fitness and compete in tournaments. A variety of enrichment activities enable learners to develop social networks and skills to access activities as independently as possible.

**10. Does your college offer any outreach?**

The college works with local GFE colleges and other specialist provision in providing joint training opportunities. We also access community as part of the curriculum on offer and our young people work in our cafe and retail outlets. We work closely with employers to develop work experience and have a number of varied work placements on offer.

We also offer support to enable learners to transition into successful independent living.

**11. How accessible is the college environment?**

The college has been made accessible to learners who use a wheelchair and DDA compliant residential accommodation is available. We are able to offer transport in the local area. The programme focuses on independent travel training where appropriate to the learner.

**12. How will the college prepare and support the child for transition or the next stage of education and life?**

Transition planning starts at the beginning of the learner's final year. It is expected that all stakeholders attend to agree actions to identify other agency support, complete assessments and to agree the programme pathway to achieve the destination outcomes.

Strathmore College has well established links with mainstream FE providers and work collaboratively to extend programmes. We are also establishing a social enterprise with a local FE provider and local University, and voluntary services to enhance the work opportunities and outcomes for learners. The aim is to provide sustainable work opportunities for learners post college.

We offer specific vocational areas, developing skills through practical community activities in horticulture, catering, business admin/ IT, floristry and carpentry. We also offer work mentoring on an individual basis for learners to follow their progression route into chosen employment and have links with voluntary agencies to widen the scope to work opportunities.

### 13. How is the decision made about what type and how much support the child will receive?

Levels of support are discussed with the young person, parents and local school or referring agency. The programme offered to young people will initially be set at admission days, but regularly reviewed during the first term and termly afterwards.

### 14. Do you have a children's/young persons council?

Learners are fully involved in the review of all aspects of the college through the learner voice council.

### 15. Where do young people go when they leave your service?

Young people at Strathmore College usually move on to either employment, supported employment, independent or supported living or further education.

#### Get in touch

To make the process of referring a young person into Priory Education and Children's Services as seamless as possible or for further information about Strathmore College, please contact our dedicated enquiries office today on **01782 647 380.**