

Aspris



Aspris Ridgeway
School

A place where everyone wants to be every day

Our prospectus





An orange arrow graphic that starts with a large loop at the top left and points towards the right, ending in a simple arrowhead.

Hello and welcome

It is my absolute privilege to welcome you to our school.

Aspris Ridgeway School will be a centre of autism expertise and excellence, educating up to 55 pupils aged 9-16 with identified autism needs and in receipt of an EHCP.

Our curriculum is designed to be personalised, holistic, and aspirational. Our rationale focuses on addressing the unique needs of the autistic pupil while paving a clear path toward qualifications, independence, and a fulfilling life.

I look forward to showing you around and answering any questions you may have about how we can support your child to reach their potential.

Aspris Ridgeway School: a place where everyone wants to be every day.

Gail Prince

Headteacher



Contents



Page 5	Our values
Page 6	School overview
Page 7	Our mission
Page 8	Curriculum summary
Page 9	Teaching approach
Page 10	Discover, create and thrive
Page 11	Specialist facilities
Page 12	Our therapy support
Page 14	Extra activities
Page 15	Enrolment process

Our values

Our values guide our actions, shape our school community, and inspire our pupils to grow into thoughtful, confident and compassionate individuals. We believe that education is more than academic achievement – it's about nurturing character, encouraging curiosity and fostering a sense of belonging.

Within our supportive school environment, our pupils are empowered to thrive - academically, personally and as they prepare for life beyond school. Together, we create a safe and inclusive setting where every individual is valued, every voice is heard and every success is celebrated.

Read more about our school values below:

Resilient

We face challenges with strength and determination, learning and growing through every experience.

Courageous

We embrace new opportunities and stand up for what is right, even when it feels difficult.

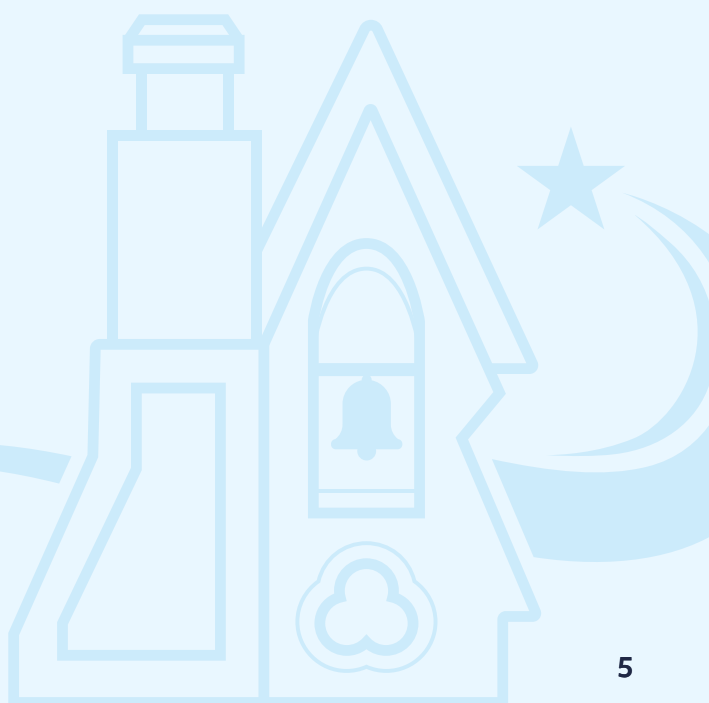
Compassion

We show kindness and understanding to others, offering support and care whenever it's needed.

Belonging

We create an inclusive community where everyone feels valued, respected, and part of something special.

We use the term 'autistic person', as it is currently considered to be the most preferred. With our pupils, we respect and encourage prioritising individual preference.





School overview

Aspris Ridgeway School is a specialist autism centre for up to 55 pupils aged 9–16. We offer a personalised, therapeutically informed curriculum that builds lifelong learning and essential skills, helping every pupil thrive with confidence and independence.

A place where everyone wants to be every day

At Aspris Ridgeway School, we believe every young person deserves the chance to thrive in a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment. Our autism-specialist, person-centred approach ensures each pupil is met with understanding, compassion, and respect, building the foundation for meaningful growth and lasting confidence.

We don't believe in one-size-fits-all education, that's why every pupil has an individual learner support plan based around their unique strengths, needs, and aspirations. Whether they're working toward academic qualifications, developing social and life skills, or preparing for future independence, we support them every step of the way.

We empower pupils to be themselves. We don't ask pupils to fit into a mould, instead we help them discover who they are and what they can achieve. Through a nurturing and inclusive environment, pupils gain the confidence to take ownership of their journey and move forward with purpose.



Our mission

We're here to empower young people to live productive, independent and happy lives as active members of their communities. By removing the barriers that stand in their way, we help them build confidence and make their own life choices.

Dedicated and supporting teams

What sets us apart is our deep commitment to understanding each young person as an individual.

Our team is focused on creating a nurturing, supportive, structured and safe environment where pupils feel empowered to grow.

We recognise how past experiences can affect learning and engagement. This means young people aren't expected to 'fit in', instead we shape environments and our support around them. Therapeutic support is woven throughout everyday learning, from personal development sessions to speech and language support. It is delivered in real-life contexts, ensuring it is responsive, meaningful and functional for each individual.

What we offer

Our pupils will

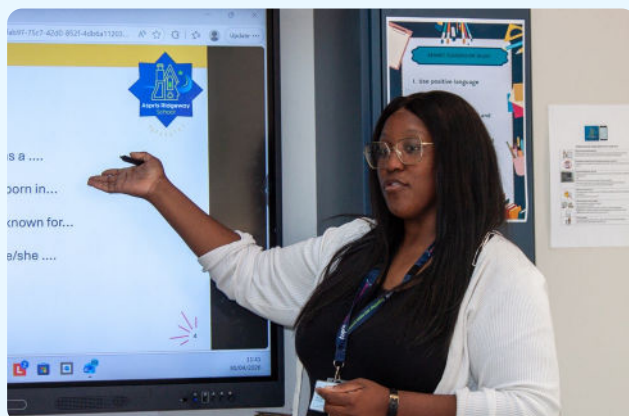
- Be resilient and courageous and have skills for lifelong learning
- Develop the essential life skills they need to thrive in the world with confidence, autonomy and compassion
- Feel a sense of belonging and do the right thing, even when no one is watching

Our staff will

- Be empowered with strong literacy, numeracy and digital competence
- Be highly skilled in their subject knowledge
- Be aspirational and dedicated
- Deliver a personalised, holistic, and aspirational curriculum, which prepares pupils for adult life
- Always go above and beyond
- Instil a sense of belonging through kindness and unconditional positive regard

"It's the first time that I've witnessed my son excited by the prospect of going to school for many years. The space was intelligently designed from a SEN viewpoint and we could both envisage how the environment would suit his needs."

Parent feedback



"The staff and the school are wonderful."

Open day feedback

Curriculum summary



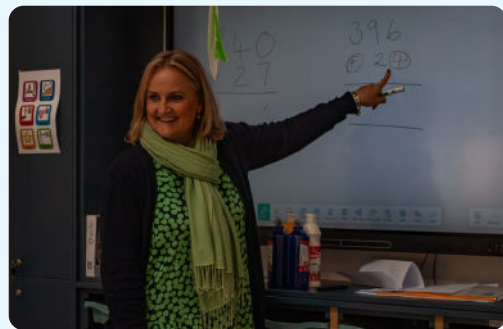
The curriculum at Aspris Ridgeway School is designed to be personalised, holistic, and aspirational. Our rationale focuses on understanding and responding to the unique profiles of autistic pupils, while paving a clear path toward qualifications, independence, and a fulfilling life.

The starting point

Our curriculum begins with the understanding that every pupil is an individual.

Personalised curriculum following assessment: We meticulously identify each pupil's academic, social, and emotional starting point as detailed in their individual EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). This allows us to rigorously identify and close gaps in learning caused by disrupted educational experiences, supporting pupils to re-engage with learning through a personalised and strengths-based approach. This ensures the curriculum meets the pupil at their point of need, setting appropriate, challenging, and achievable learning goals.

Curriculum implementation: Our curriculum implementation is split into two phases - Ready to learn and Aspire and achieve - and is underpinned by specialist, autism-specific teaching and therapeutic practice.



Ready to learn (Years 5-8): Building resilience

Nurture and trust: Pupils must feel safe, engaged, and motivated before academic content can be absorbed. For many autistic pupils, school environments can be overwhelming. That's why our curriculum prioritises creating a positive learning experience through enrichment, outdoor learning, and high-interest activities.

Integrated therapeutic support: Therapeutic input (PACE/TIS) is embedded. Our on-site team provides a holistic assessment and provision, including occupational therapy, ensuring psychological, emotional and communication needs are met.

Specialist environment: Our environment is readily accessible to meet individual needs and reduce barriers to learning and participation.

Subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Computing, Art, Design and Technology, Humanities (Geography, History and Religious Education), Music, PE, PSHE, cooking and nutrition, social thinking and outdoor learning.

Aspire and achieve (Years 9-11): Pathways to qualifications

Integrated therapeutic support: Therapeutic input (PACE/TIS) is embedded. Our on-site team provides a holistic assessment and provision, including occupational therapy, ensuring psychological, emotional and communication needs are met.

Pathways and choice: In Year 9, we engage collaborative consultation with pupils and families to align curriculum pathways (options) with Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) goals.

Assessment as planning: Teachers use rigorous assessment data and progression maps for all subjects to see where each pupil has come from. This data is used immediately to close gaps and ensure learning is challenging, supportive, and meets individual EHCP outcomes.

Subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and PE. Further qualifications will be offered dependent on the cohort and their interests.

Teaching approach

Our vision is to prepare our pupils for the future and support them to overcome barriers so that they can confidently live the life they choose.

Robust and accessible curriculums delivered with excellence

A robust, accessible curriculum is underpinned by essential therapeutic and pedagogical methods.

- **Core academic subjects:** The curriculum includes the national curriculum with strong foundations in English, Reading and Phonics, and Mathematics. These are the fundamental tools for accessing all further learning and life skills. This ensures academic rigour and provides pupils with recognisable, transferable skills and knowledge, promoting access to higher education or employment
- **Aspiration for all:** We set high expectations. Our intent is for the majority of our pupils to leave with at least 5 GCSEs. Our dedication ensures every pupil leaves with accreditation (ASDAN, Functional Skills and/or GCSEs). We never place limitations on what pupils can achieve
- **Personal development:** Our intent is to build five key characteristics for lifelong success: Resilient, Aspirational, Dedicated, Compassionate, and Courageous. These qualities are seamlessly woven into all aspects of the curriculum
- **Therapeutic approaches (including PACE and TIS):** We recognise that pupils often benefit from explicit and supported development of emotional regulation, sensory regulation, communication, managing anxiety and self-understanding. These approaches are embedded throughout the day, not just during specific sessions. This support builds the Aspirational and Resilient characteristics by reducing barriers to learning and promoting wellbeing
- **PSHE, enrichment/outdoor learning, SMSC, digital competency:** To develop the whole person and address key skills for modern life, particularly those that may require explicit teaching and support. This builds Cultural Capital and the foundational skills for Independence and Self-Management, preparing pupils for life beyond school

The path to achievement: Aspire and achieve (Years 9-11 and beyond)

The final stage is focused on translating foundational skills into qualifications and independence.

Aspire and achieve (Years 9-11): The goal is to progress pupils toward meaningful outcomes. Focused teaching ensures pupils are prepared to enter into and achieve qualifications and outcomes that are right for them, whether academic (e.g. GCSEs) or vocational.

Assessment (formative and summative): Assessment must be fair, purposeful, and stress-managed for autistic pupils. Formative assessment guides daily instruction and tracks progress against personalised goals. Summative assessment is used to celebrate achievements and formally mark progress towards final qualifications.

The impact of our curriculum is judged by the progress our pupils make and their readiness for life beyond school.

- **Academic impact (qualifications):** Pupils leave with recognised qualifications in-line with their ability, including functional skills and GCSEs
- **Independence and community impact:** The curriculum is designed to meet needs in independence skills, daily living skills, and social skills
- **Gatsby benchmarks:** Our careers programme will be based on the Gatsby Benchmark framework, ensuring meaningful guidance and exposure to work-related learning to prepare pupils for their next step



Discover, create and thrive

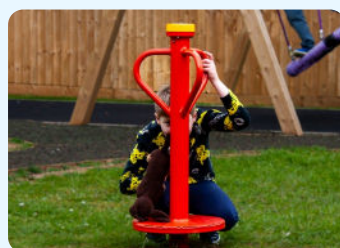
Our extensive campus, spanning three unique buildings - including the magnificent gothic-inspired, Grade II listed 'village school' - often surprises visitors. Described affectionately as a 'tardis', our learning environment is far bigger on the inside, revealing specialised, state-of-the-art resources designed to maximise both educational and therapeutic outcomes.

Spaces designed by our dedicated team

- **Hands-on learning:** Maximise practical application in our modern Science Laboratory and a dedicated Food Technology Room, providing real-world, skills-based exploration
- **Junior foundation - Dragon Hill:** Our youngest pupils thrive in a nurturing, age-appropriate environment with their own facilities. A spacious outdoor area encourages focused group play and collaborative learning, complemented by quiet reflection zones, including a dedicated break-out room
- **Clear progression:** Our main building, thoughtfully divided by the central school hall, ensures a sense of clear progression, guiding pupils seamlessly through their journey - all classrooms and buildings are named after parts of the Ridgeway
- **Creative arts and design space - Ashdown House:** Where imagination takes flight. Pupils master new skills, confidently expressing their creativity across a broad spectrum of arts and design
- **Therapeutic sanctuary:** Our on-site therapy room provides a calm, supportive environment where the therapy team can provide assessment and support, which is then applied in real-life contexts to ensure it is meaningful and functional for each young person
- **Regulation and engagement:** Two interactive sensory rooms are designed to regulate, engage, and inspire calmness and focus, helping pupils achieve their optimal state for learning

Structured and safe

We provide a safe and highly structured environment where young people are given opportunities to thrive. Using an informed, individualised approach that focuses on communication, regulation, and independence, we shape the educational journey, helping pupils grow/develop into the confident, capable individuals they can be. Our highly individualised curriculum prepares pupils with skills for lifelong learning, ensuring that they each develop the essential life skills they need to thrive in the world with confidence and autonomy.





Specialist facilities

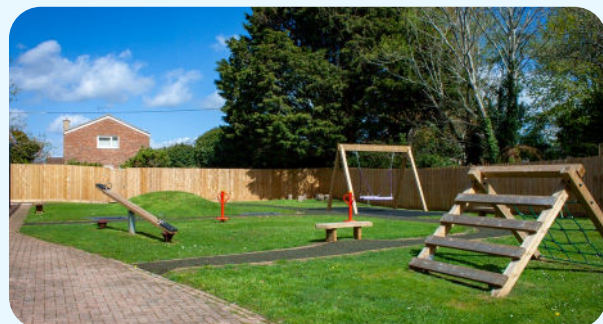
Located on the same site, however split between three buildings, Aspris Ridgeway School provides the following purpose-built areas to ensure that autistic individuals can reach their full potential.

- Two interactive sensory rooms
- Modern science laboratory and food technology room
- Spacious outdoor areas
- Creative arts and design space
- Private, tranquil therapy room
- Quiet rooms

Our space is rich in creativity and character. More importantly, it's a safe base where pupils feel like they belong.

“The buildings have been remodelled and refurbished to a very high standard... The buildings are fitted to a high standard with provision for a number of specialist teaching spaces... Classroom spaces and the school as a whole provide an attractive and welcoming environment for learning.”

Ofsted



Our therapy support

We are committed to providing a holistic and inclusive educational experience for our autistic pupils. We recognise that academic success is closely linked to each pupil’s ability to regulate their sensory world, communicate effectively, and maintain social and emotional wellbeing. We support these areas as part of everyday school life.

The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approach

Our therapeutic provision is led by the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) and delivered through a collaborative MDT, including an on-site Occupational Therapist (OT) and an on-site Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT). This joined-up approach ensures strategies are shared across therapy and classroom settings, promoting consistency, meaningful progress and the generalisation of skills across contexts. The therapy team play a central role in our support structure, enabling pupils to access learning, develop independence, and participate fully in school life.

We use a graduated, three-tiered approach (universal, targeted and specialist), ensuring all pupils benefit from whole-school therapeutic support, with additional input provided as needed. Provision is flexible in response to each pupil’s changing needs. Our therapy provision is also person-centred, holistic and neurodiversity affirming. We work collaboratively with pupils, families and staff to provide evidence-informed, strengths-based support that is tailored to each individual, promoting independence, autonomy and quality of life.

Key focus area:	How this supports learning:
Sensory regulation	Creating personalised sensory diets and strategies to help pupils stay calm, focused, and present in the classroom environment
Executive functioning	Developing skills in planning, organisation, managing transitions and initiating academic tasks
Motor skills and posture	Improving handwriting, seating stability, and the ability to manage school equipment effectively

Key focus area:	How this supports learning:
Social communication (pragmatics)	Teaching the ‘rules’ of conversation, understanding body language, and navigating social situations with peers and adults
Expressive and receptive language	Supporting pupils to clearly articulate their thoughts and needs, and to fully comprehend complex instructions and academic language



Occupational Therapy

We employ a full-time Occupational Therapist (OT) who plays a central role in enabling pupils to access learning, develop independence, and participate fully in school life. Occupational therapy supports the development of the physical, sensory, cognitive, and emotional skills needed for meaningful engagement in everyday school activities.

Our OT works collaboratively with teaching staff, families, and the wider multidisciplinary team to create inclusive environments and individualised strategies that support each young person's unique profile.

Key focus area:	How this supports learning:
Sensory processing and regulation	Developing personalised sensory strategies that help pupil remain calm, regulated, and ready to engage in lessons and the wider school environment
Executive functioning and emotional regulation	Supporting skills such as attention, planning, organisation, flexibility, and emotional control, enabling pupil to initiate tasks, manage transitions, and cope with classroom demands
Motor skills and physical development	Improving fine and gross motor skills, posture, and coordination to support handwriting, physical participation, and overall classroom engagement
Independence and daily living skills	Promoting independence in organising belongings, following routines, and managing self-care, allowing pupil to participate more confidently in the school day
Access and inclusion	Adapting tasks, environments, and resources to ensure pupil can access the curriculum, reduce barriers to learning, and feel included in all aspects of school life

Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

SaLT supports the development of communication, interaction and understanding, enabling individuals to access learning, build meaningful relationships and participate confidently in school life.

Key focus area:	How this supports learning:
Social communication and interaction	Understanding different communication styles, communication breakdowns and social contexts. Enabling connection with others and navigation of real-life social situations
Use of language	Having a functional way of communicating their needs, thoughts, interests and preferences effectively, across different environments, using spoken language and/or alternative communication methods. Promoting independence, self-advocacy and positive relationships
Structural language	The development of vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and narrative skills. Enabling understanding, organisation and expression of more complex language and ideas
Understanding and processing language	Understanding spoken language, instructions and teaching. Increasing independence, engagement and participation in activities
Emotional literacy	Supporting recognition, understanding and communication of emotions in themselves and others. Helping well-being, readiness to learn and social relationships
Speech clarity	Supporting clear and effective speech, so that pupils can be understood across a range of contexts
Communication friendly environments	Environmental adaptations, including the use of visual supports, predictable routines, and adapted language and communication styles. So communication is accessible and supportive across all environments



Extra activities

At Aspris Ridgeway School we believe that high-quality careers education is essential for preparing our pupils for successful futures. Our careers programme is designed to build confidence, develop aspirations, and provide practical experiences that help pupils make informed choices about their next steps.

Activities beyond the classroom

Dedicated enrichment time is built into the timetable for every young person, giving them a chance to explore new skills or develop passions.

Here's just some of the enrichment activities our young people engage in:

- Visit places of cultural, historical, and scientific significance
- Participate in creative arts and performances
- Sensory play and outdoor learning
- Engage with professionals and role models from diverse fields
- Contribute to the community through service and leadership



Careers at Aspris Ridgeway School

What we offer:

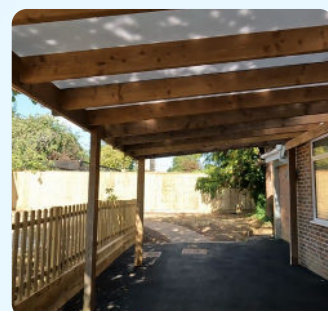
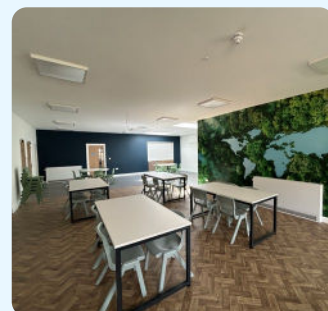
- Careers education is embedded in our PSHE curriculum using a structured commercial scheme of work
- We work closely with local businesses to provide meaningful work experience opportunities
- An impartial careers adviser will support pupils in exploring pathways and making informed decisions

Our aims:

- Help pupils develop self-awareness and career management skills
- Provide real-world experiences and understanding of the workplace
- Increase awareness of education, training, and career opportunities
- Support informed choices about future education and employment
- Promote high aspirations and equality of opportunity

Scheme of work:

- Introduction to careers: Understanding what a career is and exploring personal strengths and interests
- Dream jobs: Discussing aspirations and role models
- World of work: Learning about different jobs and how they are changing
- Enterprise challenge: Teamwork and problem-solving through practical activities
- Local careers: Exploring jobs within the local community
- Reflection: Considering what pupils have learned about themselves and careers



Enrolment process

Admissions criteria

We are a specialist provision for young people in Upper Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 who require an expert, nurturing environment to achieve their full potential. We conduct a thorough and holistic review of every potential pupil to ensure we can meet their needs effectively.

Prospective pupils are typically required to meet the following essential criteria:

- Must have a primary diagnosis of autism
- Must possess a current and approved EHCP
- Able to take part in learning at or near age expectations within the curriculum, or has the potential to thrive with the right support
- Admission only via local authority referral

Admissions process

Once a request for a place is received and the above criteria are met, here's what happens next:

Step 1 Referral received

A formal referral package, which must include the young person's current EHCP, autism diagnosis documentation, and relevant background reports, is received from the commissioning authority.

Step 2 Referral review

Our leadership team carefully reviews all referral documents to confirm we can meet the young person's EHCP needs and provide the right support.

Step 3 School visit

We encourage potential pupils and families to visit us. The visit is a calm, personalised assessment where families meet key staff, explore facilities, and ask questions to feel confident about the setting.

Step 4 Placement decision

If we are confident that we can provide the specialised environment required, a formal placement offer is issued to the commissioning authority.

Step 5 Personalised planning

Our education and therapy team work with families to create a tailored plan covering sensory needs, communication strategies, and EHCP goals for a smooth start.

Step 6 Transition planning and starting

We create a personalised transition plan to make starting with us a calm and positive experience for all. This may include phased visits, photo books, and a gradual build-up to full attendance. We also carry out baseline assessments to set clear starting points and deliver a tailored curriculum from day one.

Let's connect

If you want to find out more about anything you've read in our prospectus or, if you'd like to talk about how Aspris Ridgeway School can support you and your child, please contact us below.

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