

Aspris



Making every
second count







Hello and welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to Rugeley School, where we proudly provide specialist education for children and young people aged 5-19. At the heart of our work is a commitment to helping young people with autism lead happy, fulfilling lives and prepare them confidently for the future.

Our 88-place provision allows us to offer highly-individualised support, ensuring every pupil benefits from the time, attention and expertise they need to thrive. We offer a bespoke curriculum, integrated therapy, and a nurturing environment designed to support each pupil's unique strengths, interests and needs.

Our offer extends beyond school years too; with a dedicated Post-16 provision, we provide meaningful support around careers, next steps, and life beyond education. That could be developing day-to-day living skills, exploring employment opportunities, or continuing further study.

We are also proud to have a thriving Forest School, where pupils gain valuable learning experiences outside the classroom. This helps build confidence, independence, resilience and a deeper connection to the world around them.

I warmly invite parents/carers to get in touch if you would like to explore a placement or learn more about how we can support your child. We look forward to welcoming you to Rugeley School.

Lisa Price

Headteacher



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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.

We believe in more than just academic success. Our aim is to support each young person to build resilience, rediscover their confidence and leave school ready for a happy, healthy and fulfilling life.

Through education, therapy, and life experiences, like volunteering and work placements, we help pupils find their voice and place in the world.

Read more about our values below:

Be

Resilient

We keep going even when it's difficult - We understand that challenges are a normal part of learning and growing. Being resilient means we take things one step at a time, stay positive, and ask for help when we need it. Even when something feels tough, we don't give up - we keep trying until we get there.

Empowered

We all have a role in everything we do - Everyone in our community has a voice and something valuable to contribute. Being empowered means we are encouraged to make choices, share ideas, and take responsibility. We work together, support each other, and understand that every person's role matters.

Adaptable

We have the skills if things change - Life doesn't always go to plan, and that's okay. Being adaptable means we're able to adjust, stay calm, and use our strengths to find a new way forward. When routines shift or new situations arise, we use our problem-solving skills and stay open to new possibilities.

Determined

We have the courage to reach for the stars - Determination helps us aim high and believe in our potential. It means having the confidence to set goals, work hard, and keep going even when progress is slow. With courage and commitment, we know we can achieve great things.

Yourself

We can be ourselves and still succeed - Everyone deserves to feel accepted, valued and understood. Being "yourself" means feeling safe to express who you are, without pressure to change. We celebrate individuality and recognise that success looks different for everyone - and that's something to be proud of.



School overview

We're an independent specialist school that supports young people aged 5-19 years with a diagnosis of autism and associated learning difficulties within the moderate to severe range.

Tailored to individual needs

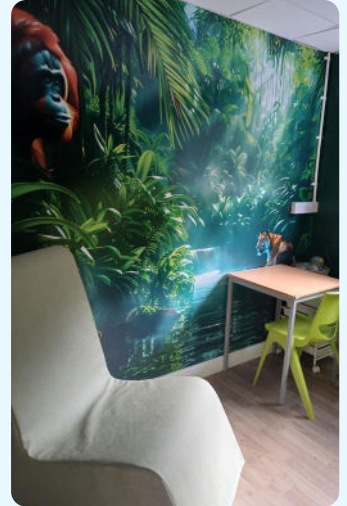
At Rugeley School, we offer an exceptionally personalised approach to learning. Our young people enjoy a safe, warm, welcoming and relaxed, yet structured environment, which encourages them to develop social, educational and practical skills.

Our aim is to give more meaning to the environment in which young people with autism exist and to help them lead fulfilling, happy, meaningful lives and prepare them for an independent adult life.

We are proud to champion an inclusive and diverse learning community where every pupil is valued, supported, and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our commitment to sustainability is woven into daily practice, inspiring learners to make responsible choices that contribute to a greener, more resilient future.

Our vision is for every pupil to feel safe, understood and supported to develop the skills they need to thrive in school and beyond.

- Be safe
- Be respectful
- Be ready to learn



Our mission

Our mission is to enable pupils to belong, achieve and thrive at school. This is achieved by fostering relationships with emotionally available adults, encouraging resilience through a growth mindset and building confidence to live the life they choose.

A unique journey for each pupil

At Rugeley School, our aim is simple: to help every pupil grow, achieve and feel proud of who they are. We celebrate each child and young person as an individual, recognising their strengths, interests and aspirations. By using what they enjoy as a starting point, we make learning engaging, accessible and meaningful - helping pupils build confidence and develop new skills in ways that feel positive and fun.

Every pupil's journey with us is unique. Learning and support are shaped around the individual, with pupils encouraged to have a voice in their education. They work closely with our specialist team, their families and other important people in their lives to create a personalised programme built around their needs and goals. This collaborative approach means pupils feel listened to, understood and supported every step of the way.

"The difference in my son is phenomenal, he's a lot more relaxed, I'm now able to have a full conversation with him, and he's just come on so much. They're absolutely outstanding in every aspect and their staff are amazing!"

Parent of a pupil



Therapy and support services at Rugeley School

We know that emotional wellbeing is central to learning and progress. When pupils feel calm, understood and safe, they are far more able to engage, try new things and enjoy their school experience. That's why therapy and support are woven into everyday life at Rugeley School, rather than added on as an extra. It's part of how we help pupils build confidence, develop resilience and feel ready to learn.

Our therapeutic provision includes:

- **Speech and Language Therapy** – supporting pupils to develop communication skills, express themselves confidently, understand others and build positive relationships. This may include social communication work, vocabulary development, interaction skills and targeted programmes based on each child's needs.
- **Occupational Therapy** – helping pupils with sensory regulation, motor skills, emotional development and practical everyday tasks. Our OT team works closely

with pupils in class, in dedicated therapy spaces and around the school to help them feel settled, comfortable and able to take part fully in learning.

- **Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)** – focusing on understanding the reasons behind behaviour and teaching pupils the skills they need to communicate, regulate and thrive. Our approach is proactive, compassionate and person-centred, helping pupils feel secure and supported.

In addition to these core therapies, our school has access to a wider range of specialist services when needed. This flexibility means we can tailor support to each child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes, ensuring that every pupil receives the right help at the right time. By working closely with families and professionals, we build a truly holistic approach around each pupil so they can learn, grow and succeed in a way that feels right for them.

Curriculum summary

We provide an ambitious and varied curriculum that supports pupils to develop knowledge and skills as appropriate to their age, ability and stage of development.

Designed around each learner

At Rugeley School we understand that for each young person with autism, learning is about so much more than academic progress. It's about feeling safe, confident and understood. It's about having the time, space and support to grow in their own way, at their own pace, while building the skills they need to have a positive future. Our curriculum and therapeutic approach work hand in hand to make sure every pupil feels secure, valued and ready to learn.

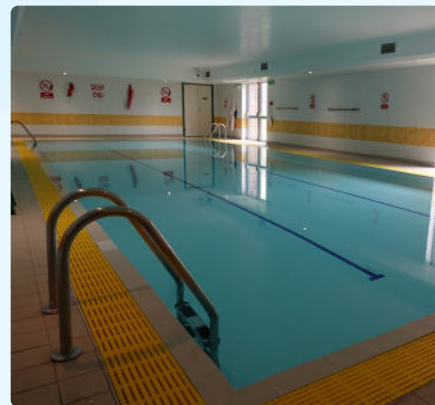
Every pupil is unique, which is why our curriculum is carefully tailored to suit a wide range of learning needs, strengths and, learning styles. This is supported by small class sizes, typically no more than six. Throughout the school pupils follow one of two fluid curriculum pathways - sensory or progressive - depending on their individual profile, peer group, and cognitive abilities. Both pathways offer structure, consistency, and opportunity to develop strong foundations which are built upon over time, in ways that are meaningful and appropriate for each learner.

Students who enter our school in KS1 access an adapted EYFS curriculum that encompasses a balance of structured lessons and enhanced provision. The students take part in a range of child-led learning tasks that are extended by the staff to challenge their thinking and learning. Through this approach students are supported to develop and build on strong foundations which will support them throughout their learning journey.

The sensory curriculum is guided by the EQUALS informal curriculum and delivered through a non-subject specific approach. It is designed to support learning through exploration, sensory experiences, and practical activities. Learning focuses on communication, interaction, life skills, independence, and emotional regulation, all woven into rich, engaging themes. Lessons are designed to be calming, predictable and supportive, enabling pupils to develop at a pace that feels safe and achievable.

The progressive curriculum follows a subject-specific teaching approach, supported by topic-based lessons linked to broad, motivating themes. This pathway is suited to pupils who are ready for greater structure, challenge, and academic progression. They experience a balanced curriculum that nurtures core skills - such as reading, writing and numeracy alongside emotional understanding - whilst helping them explore their interests, deepen their knowledge, and build confidence as independent learners.

Whichever curriculum pathway a pupil follows, it continues seamlessly into Key Stage 5, where students become 'learners for life'. At this stage, young people begin to take part in structured, destination-led transition activities that prepare them for adulthood. Class groups remain small ensuring highly personalised support and strong relationships with staff. Transition experiences may include community learning, life-skills development, work-related activities, and tailored visits to future educational or vocational providers. The aim is to equip each young person with the confidence and practical skills they need to take their next steps.



Teaching approach

We understand that for young people with complex needs, learning is about more than just academic progress, it is about feeling safe, confident, and supported to grow in their own time and way.



Working with pupils to achieve their aspirations

At the heart of our approach is a strong commitment to positive behaviour support. We believe that all behaviour has a purpose, and understanding this helps us respond in a compassionate, structured and effective way. We focus on building supportive strategies that help them develop emotional regulation and, where possible, greater self-regulation over time.

A key part of the Rugeley philosophy is ensuring pupils take part in regular physical activity. These sessions help young people release excess energy and achieve the emotional and physical balance needed to access learning successfully.

They also bring a range of additional benefits, including:

- Reduced frequency of negative self-stimulatory behaviours
- Reduced aggression and self-injurious behaviours
- Improved attention and focus
- Enhanced motor skills
- Greater readiness for developing positive learning behaviours
- Better proprioception and vestibular functioning
- Increased self-awareness and overall wellbeing
- Improved tolerance of more complex environments

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Resilient: We keep going even when it's difficult

Empowered: We all have a role in everything we do

Adaptable: We have the skills if things change

Determined: We have the courage to reach for the stars

Yourself: We can be ourselves and still succeed

What we offer

- 88-place provision for young people with an autism diagnosis
- A safe, structured and positive environment that prepares pupils for adulthood
- A focus on helping young people with autism lead happy, meaningful and fulfilling lives, promoting as much independence as possible
- Strong partnership working with pupils, parents, carers, education professionals, social workers and health/employment services to achieve the best outcomes
- Support and guidance for parents and carers to help build resilience and develop effective risk-management strategies for important life changes and challenges



Tailored experiences that help every child thrive

Our personalised approach means every learning journey is unique. We integrate a strong support network and personalised learning plans to ensure each pupil can thrive academically and socially.

Enriching pupils experience

We offer two curriculum pathways that run throughout the school – **Sensory and Progression**.

These pathways are flexible and fluid, allowing us to adapt learning to each pupil's interests, strengths, and needs. Staff take the time to understand what helps each child feel confident, motivated, and ready to learn. We also work closely with families, using their insight to shape each pupil's individual plan. This collaborative approach enables us to introduce new ideas and experiences as pupils grow and develop.

We know that many of our pupils need support in developing the everyday skills that build confidence and independence. These skills grow best through real-world experiences, so from their very first day, pupils take part in community-based learning. Whether visiting local shops, using public facilities, or joining community projects, every activity is carefully planned to help them practise social communication, problem-solving, and daily living skills in a safe and supportive environment.

Post 16 at Rugeley School

As pupils move into Post 16, their experiences are enhanced through our destination-led curriculum for both Pathway P and Pathway S.

Each pathway is designed to prepare learners for adulthood by building the skills, confidence, and knowledge they need for their next steps. The Post 16 curriculum provides opportunities for impartial careers advice, college link days, residential visits, weekly work experience placements, and participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.



Moving on...

When the time comes for our pupils to move on, we ensure that bespoke, well-planned transitions are in place.

These plans are supported by staff who know the learners best, enabling us to prepare them thoroughly and guide them through each step of the transition process. By working closely with families, external providers, and future settings, we help pupils move confidently into their next destinations.

Our aim is to ensure that placements are sustained and that every young person is equipped to lead a happy, fulfilled, and meaningful life. By adapting learning in this way, we ensure that all pupils feel understood, valued, and supported. They develop practical skills, resilience, and a strong sense of self -helping them feel prepared and confident for the future.



Specialist facilities

Our school is equipped with a wide range of specialist spaces designed to support pupils' sensory, physical and emotional development. These environments play an important role in helping our young people feel calm, confident and ready to learn.

- **Purpose-built sensory rooms**

We have several fully equipped sensory rooms, each thoughtfully designed to meet different sensory needs. These calming spaces include features such as ball pools, soft play equipment, projectors and soothing light displays that help pupils regulate, relax and feel secure.

- **Large multi-use sports hall**

Pupils can take part in sports such as cricket, tennis and badminton, as well as fun physical activities like rollerblading and trampolining. These sessions support fitness, coordination, teamwork and confidence, with opportunities tailored to each young person's ability and interests.

- **On-site swimming pool**

We are proud to have our own swimming pool, allowing every young person to enjoy at least one swimming session per week. Swimming supports physical development, water confidence and sensory regulation, and many pupils find it a calming and enjoyable part of their routine. Sessions are delivered by trained staff who ensure safety, comfort and personalised support.

- **Fitness suite**

For pupils aged 12 and over, our fitness suite offers a variety of gym equipment suitable for individual or small-group sessions. Sessions can be adapted to personal goals, whether that's building confidence, improving fitness or preparing for future leisure or community activities.



Rugeley's Forest School

Our Forest School has an outdoor, pupil-centred learning ethos that focuses on the learning style of the individual pupil. Forest School allows pupils to go at their own pace, with regular sessions that are designed to help pupils to develop and succeed. Here we support building confidence, nurturing self-awareness and developing problem-solving skills, by introducing risk in a safe and natural environment.

The Forest School Lead has developed a pupil-centred curriculum, focussed on providing a varying range of learning opportunities, and activities to support the development of fine and gross motor skills, communication and social skills.

The long-term aim of our Forest School looks to develop a deeper connection between learners and nature, improving mental health, cognitive processes and supporting the development of independent learners.

Working together

We know that when a young person joins our school, their whole family is part of the journey. That's why we keep communication open, expectations clear and support consistent so you always feel informed and involved.

Below, you'll find practical information about day-to-day life at Rugeley School.

School day

Our school day is structured to support focus, balance and wellbeing:

- **Monday to Friday: 8:50am – 3:20pm**
- **These hours help young people manage their energy, build routine and still have time to rest or reflect at the end of the day**

Catering at Rugeley School

Our dedicated catering team prepares a range of fresh, nutritious meals, snacks and drinks throughout the school day. They work closely with families and staff to understand any allergies, sensory preferences or dietary requirements, so every pupil can enjoy food that feels safe and appropriate for them. Mealtimes are also an important part of our daily routine, providing opportunities to develop social skills, independence and confidence around food.

Levels of support for pupils

The level and type of support each young person receives is based on the individual's EHCP, close work with our therapeutic team and ongoing communication with parents or carers. Most pupils receive a standard ratio of one adult to one child in the classroom. During the admissions process, we identify whether a young person may need additional support by reviewing reports, conducting observations and discussing needs with parents.

Support levels are reviewed termly. If a pupil becomes more independent or shows a reduction in challenging behaviours, their support may be adjusted.

Any changes are always seen as a positive sign of progress.

Keeping you informed

All pupils at Rugeley School will receive an annual written report at the end of each academic year detailing your child's progress and attainment. In addition to this report, termly progress reports will be provided and you will be invited to a progress meeting to discuss achievements.

Positive quotes and stories

Discover a range of quotes from Ofsted following our latest inspection, to learn more about how our dedicated and experienced team support pupils to settle in, enjoy their learning and succeed.



The beating heart

“Relationships are the ‘beating heart’ of this special school. Staff work closely with parents and carers to understand pupils’ special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps staff know how best to support the pupils. Some parents describe their child’s experience at the school as life-changing. This is because of the care, understanding and support the school provides for its pupils and their families. Every child is a valued member of the school community, and staff go ‘above and beyond’ to include them in all aspects of school life.”

Ofsted

Safe school environment

“Staff provide pupils with a positive experience, which for some pupils is a fresh and caring new start. Staff work to reduce the barriers to pupils’ learning and wellbeing. They successfully re-engage pupils in learning. Pupils show great enjoyment across the curriculum. Many pupils make considerable progress from their starting points. This is especially true in relation to pupils’ communication and engagement with learning. The increase in pupils’ attendance, from sometimes very low starting points, is testament to how happy they are at this school. They feel safe in the school environment.”

Ofsted

Preparing students for life

“Leaders have created a post-16 curriculum that is deliberately focused on students’ futures. This aims to prepare students for life after Rugeley. The learners for life curriculum offers 2 pathways that focus on the different needs of the students. Both pathways emphasise independent living skills to prepare students for adulthood.”

Ofsted

“Pupils are proud of their leadership roles.”

“Pupils value the wider opportunities the school offers. These include horse riding, competitive sports, lunchtime rollerblading and getting muddy in the forest school. Pupils are also proud of their leadership roles. They help serve snacks every breaktime and are members of the school council. Older pupils develop important life skills through the carefully considered opportunities to learn off site. They organise their own timetables for physical education, as well as learn how to cook and how to use public transport. These important skills prepare them well for their next stage.”

Ofsted



Extra activities

We know that learning doesn't just happen in the classroom. That's why we offer a wide range of enrichment activities designed to help young people build confidence, explore new interests and discover what makes them feel good; mentally, physically and emotionally.

Taking small steps



We provide opportunities for our young people to try new things in a way that suits their learning style. If gentle encouragement is what it takes, then we take small steps. We believe that developing skills and connecting with their community should feel meaningful and fun.

Our bespoke enrichment programme helps to enhance curriculum outcomes, promote social skills, develop creativity and innovation and enable pupils to discover new hobbies and interests, which can lead to lifelong passions and career aspirations.

Lunchtimes are utilised as an opportunity for learning, developing skills and socialising through a lunch club of their choice. Activities include roller-blading, cycling, playground games, yoga, massage and swimming.

Throughout the year, our young people also have the opportunity to engage in a range of enrichment activities which are aligned to termly themes, cultural events and the interests of the current group of pupils. These include African drumming, Zoo2U, circusology, planetarium, karate, table cricket, Chinese dance, foam parties, combat archery and more.



Connecting with our community

Connecting with our community is a vital part of helping young people grow in confidence, independence and purpose. That's why we actively build strong relationships with local businesses, charities and community organisations. These partnerships open the door to meaningful opportunities where pupils can gain experience, give back to their community and feel proud of the contributions they make.

Our off-site programme is carefully planned to meet individual needs, ensuring every pupil can take part safely and confidently. Activities are varied, engaging and designed to support learning across social, emotional and practical areas.

Examples include:

- Educational visits to museums, galleries, libraries and places of interest
- Trips to local parks, cafés and shops, which help pupils practise communication, money management and everyday living skills
- Visits to local landmarks and cultural buildings, supporting learning around history, geography and the wider world

Throughout the academic year, we also provide enrichment days and themed enrichment weeks. These offer a wide range of exciting experiences, giving pupils opportunities to explore new skills, develop new interests, and learn in different ways.



Enrolment process

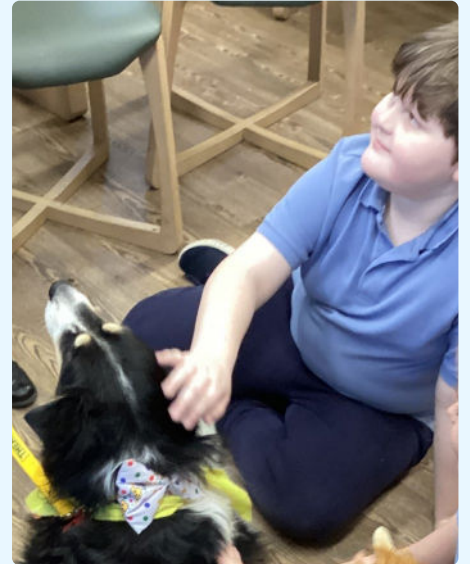
At our school, we work closely with families and local authorities to make sure our setting is the right fit for each young person. Using tailored care and support, we shape your child's life helping them grow into the person you know they'll become.

Admissions criteria

We consider each placement carefully to ensure that all pupils get the best from our provision. Many of the current pupils at Rugeley School are on the autism spectrum, ranging from high-functioning autism to those with complex behaviour needs. Due to the very wide spread of ability of our learners, we work in a highly individualised way.

Potential pupils must meet the following criteria:

- A primary diagnosis of autism or evidence of behaviours, which are in accordance with such a diagnosis
- Learning difficulties within the severe to moderate range
- Age 5-19 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)



Admissions process

Step 1 Referral recieved

Our team will review the referral, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and supporting documents to decide whether our school is suitable for the young person.

Step 2 Invitation to visit

We will invite parents or carers to visit our school. This is a great opportunity to ask any questions and for us to learn more about the young person's needs.

Step 3 Meeting the young person

We will arrange a visit to meet the young person in their current placement with our Head Teacher or a senior leader.

Step 4 Review

Our senior management team will review all the information gathered by our assessment team and make a final decision. If we feel we are able to provide the right environment for the young person, we will make a placement offer.

Step 5 Placement offer

Once a placement is accepted by the young person, their family and any involved professionals, we will make arrangements to transition them into our school and set up an initial meeting.

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 Rugeley School can support you and your child, please contact us below.

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