

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

January 2025

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Phoenix School (Sheffield), and Forestwood (Bury) are DfE registered special schools, providing education for young people admitted to their co-located hospital services.

Our schools are regulated by OFSTED you can read their last inspection via the websites.

[Forestwood School](#)

[Phoenix School](#)

News

Following the renaming of the CAMHS hospital in Bury to Forestwood, we have taken the opportunity to rename our school. As such Excel and Exceed has changed its name to Forestwood School – all other details for the school remain unchanged.

The school name will be launched and celebrated over the course of the coming weeks!



What we've been up to..



The Phoenix School has received exam results for young people that sat the November GCSE Examinations in Maths and English at the centre.

Our young people were thrilled to receive their results, and we can proudly confirm that the majority of exams that were sat have resulted in our candidates receiving GCSE qualifications in Maths and English. These will form the cornerstone of their next steps, allowing them to move on to Further Education, apprenticeships and employment much more easily.

We have also had a recent increase in the number of young people sitting Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English, gaining qualifications from Entry Level 3 up to Level 2 (GCSE equivalent).

Three of our young people have also completed, and successfully passed, Level 1 courses in Health and Social Care. We could not be more impressed with the hard work and dedication that our students show despite their circumstances.

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) takes place every year on 27 January. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust states that the day is

'to remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, and millions more people murdered through the Nazi persecution of other groups and in the more recent genocides recognised by the UK government'

These include the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

Holocaust Memorial Day this year marked the 80 year anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in Poland.

Students at the Phoenix School marked the date by watching a Holocaust survivor John Hajdu MBE's personal account of the atrocities faced by his family and other Jewish people in Hungary. Students then engaged in a discussion about why HMD is important, and what the concept of 'memorial' meant to them.

Given the task of writing an acrostic poem about the Holocaust with the prompt "flame" one young person created this brilliant piece:



Families left in desperation as
Leaves continue falling
As Nazis make life
Miserable for Jews but
Everybody will remember

by RS. Service user on Pegasus Ward

Students at Forestwood had a clay day with top local potter Dave Partington from Partington Pots in Salford. "Pottery Portraits" were produced, based on the term theme of SPACE. This was done by considering the negative space between the facial features that makes everyone unique. Pottery skills included working the clay, pinch pot making, joining clay pieces together and creating texture through mark making and the use of tools. Dave took the creations back to his studio and returned them glazed and fired. What a motley crew!



Every student in a Cygnet CAMHS school gets independent 1:1 careers advice from a visiting careers advisor. On a daily basis, Charlie Dwyer, is the Forestwood school careers expert making sure that our students are well prepared for their onward journey into the world of work or further education.

Charlie uses the guidance of the national standard GATSBY BENCHMARKS to provide a clear framework for organising the careers provision in our school. This renowned framework of eight benchmarks is designed to be linked together to deliver the very best careers provision in schools, special schools and colleges. Our annual audit ensures that we continue to improve our service to make sure that every student is "learning to be all that they can be"

GATSBY BENCHMARKS

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| 1 A stable career programme | 5 Encounters with employers and employees |
| 2 Learning from labour market information | 6 Experience of workplaces |
| 3 Addressing the needs of every pupil | 7 Encounters with FE and HE |
| 4 Linking curriculum learning to careers | 8 Personal Guidance |



Phoenix School has received National Autistic Society Accreditation

What was the process?

Phoenix School, under guidance from Cygnet Schools National SENDCo Rachel Rix, started the process in 2022.

The process started with a self-assessment audit of our current practice which was completed collaboratively with education staff, autistic service users, and their families. This allowed us to comprehensively assess our baseline, highlighting areas for improvement as well as our current strengths.

The education team used the findings of this audit to inform their next steps towards gaining the accreditation, making improvements where weaknesses had been noted.

This cycle was repeated over a two year cycle of audits, student voice, training, improvement planning and development.

In December 2024 school underwent a three day inspection from NAS assessors who interviewed staff, audited the school environment, spoke to service users and observed sessions. Surveys were also sent out to autistic service users and their families to gain their views on the support that is available at Phoenix School.

Outcomes and Feedback

Phoenix were thrilled to receive "Accredited" status in the Autism Specialist Award category.

The NAS provided quality feedback on their observations and the decision making process of the committee. Overall the feedback was very positive, giving constructive points for areas of growth.



Some of the quotes from the report include:-

"Staff have a comprehensive understanding of evidence-informed approaches associated with good autism practice. They adapt these specialist approaches to ensure support is person-centred and tailored to individual abilities, interests, preferences, and challenges."

"Autistic young people and children develop skills in communication and social interaction, becoming more confident in carrying out tasks independently and being empowered to make their own choices, which enhances their control and autonomy in their lives."

"Case studies also demonstrate the positive impact that personalised support programmes have had on the quality of life of individuals"

The full report will be made available on our website upon receiving certification.

Next Steps

The changes and improvements that we have made over the two year process will make our provision better for all of our students, not only our autistic students. The Phoenix School will endeavour to maintain high quality support for autistic service users. Advice given in the report is that micro transitions between lessons be planned more effectively with students being given additional time to process these changes whilst maintaining minimal disruption to lessons.

The report also advised the introduction of communication boards to aid non-verbal interactions.

The team are already working towards improving these areas and implementing strategies based on the advice of the report.