



Bedford School

Prospectus 2025-2026

eslandbedfordschool.co.uk



**Changing
children's lives
for the better**

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Welcome from Rhett Cameron our headteacher

Dear students, parents and carers,

I'm pleased to welcome you to our SEN (Special Educational Needs) school and would like to share a little more about what we do.

Our school provides an inspirational learning environment for 8 - 18 year-olds with a range of needs, including autistic spectrum condition (ASC), speech-language and communication needs (SLCN), social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH) including anxiety and emotionally based school avoidance.

We have our own unique identity, ethos, and approach to our curriculum, and we use the Turning the Curve™ education model to support students who, depending on their background and circumstances, may be at different stages in their education.

We understand that every student has embarked on a unique journey that has led them to our school. This fuels our commitment to cultivating a warm, welcoming, and supportive culture that recognises and celebrates individual achievements.

Our primary goal is to equip students with diverse academic qualifications and social skills that will accompany them throughout their adult life. Their progress in these areas will lay the groundwork for future success in their careers and independence and shape them into influential members of their local communities.



We recognise that learning is an ongoing process and shouldn't be limited to the time young people spend with us at school. That's why our curriculum develops their academic knowledge and broader skills to help them become positive members of society.

Our education staff's support is fundamental in ensuring positive outcomes for our students. It allows them to make informed decisions, mitigate risk, and improve resilience and self-esteem while working towards challenging academic targets. As a team, we're very proud of the positive impact we have on the lives of the young people attending our school and welcome the opportunity to discuss our work further.

Please don't hesitate to contact the school for more information.

Yours sincerely,



Ethos

A broad and balanced curriculum

Students at Esland Bedford School have access to a broad and balanced curriculum offer that enables them to progress through a range of appropriate qualifications so they can access further education, employment, or training.

Alongside their academic learning, students are given individualised support in overcoming barriers linked to broader developmental needs, providing them with the skills and confidence to navigate the world beyond school into adulthood.

Students are grouped according to a range of factors, but we feel it's important for them to work with others at a similar stage of learning. Qualified teachers plan, deliver and assess all learning, and a dedicated Teaching Assistant is present in each class, providing additional support.

When students first join us, they complete several academic and therapeutic assessments to form a learning profile. This profile helps our staff adapt learning opportunities to their needs so that they can get the most out of every lesson.





Many of the students we teach have struggled in a mainstream setting, so we pay particular attention to the school's environment to ensure it enables young minds to develop holistically. We do this by keeping class sizes small, with five children and two staff members per class.

As students move into higher year groups, they move more regularly between classrooms, helping to develop their independence and organisational skills. Students have personal sensory diets, so we ensure they have the relevant equipment when they need it and schedule sensory breaks into their day. Our classrooms are designed to be sensory-friendly, too. Everything from their layout to the soft colours and lighting are geared towards creating the perfect learning environment.

From September 2025, some students who have spent significant periods of time out of school will be taught in our specifically developed Nurture provision, enabling the curriculum to be delivered in a way that supports the development of a sense of psychological safety with regards to school.

Our school

A sensory-friendly learning environment

Esland Bedford School is set on the beautiful grounds of Wrest Park. The main school building sits on an open site containing ten teaching spaces, including specialist art, science, and cookery classrooms.

The school has a sports hall nearby, where students can play basketball, badminton, and football, among other physical education activities. Teaching staff use the external grounds to support learning outside of the classroom, including the sports fields for PE, and Wrest Park's adventure playground and wider site.

We believe in exposing our students to broader experiences, too, so we visit several alternative provision settings, including animal care, music production, plastering, and swimming, amongst many others.



Our curriculum



We believe in holistic development

At Esland Bedford School, our curriculum is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, we also plan and differentiate from the programme to meet our students' individual needs. Our curriculum aims to prepare our students for a fulfilling life as adults where they can reach for opportunities they may not have been able to achieve before.

Key Stage 2 & 3

English (including phonics)
Mathematics
Science
PE
PSHE
RE
Food & Cookery
ICT
Humanities
Art

Key Stage 4 & 5

English
Mathematics
Science
PSHE
PE
Options subjects which are tailored to the interested of Students.



Therapeutic approach

Therapeutically informed approach

At Esland Bedford School, our therapeutic approach is rooted in the understanding that behaviour is communication. Many of our children and young people have experienced trauma, adversity, or disrupted attachments, which can impact how they relate, regulate, and learn. We create safe, predictable environments where relationships are prioritised, and every adult is attuned to the emotional needs beneath behaviour.

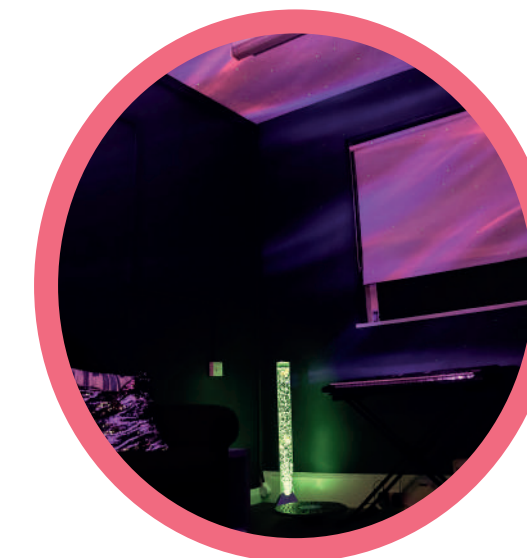
Our approach is trauma-informed, attachment-aware, and neurodiversity-affirming. We draw on psychological theory and evidence-based practice, including Polyvagal Theory, the PACE model (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy), and the concept of emotionally available adults. Staff are trained to recognise signs of dysregulation and respond with co-regulation strategies that support young people to feel safe and understood.



All Esland schools either use or are in the process of implementing Motional, a digital tool that helps assess and track emotional development, resilience and wellbeing over time. This helps us to better understand our learners, tailor support, and measure progress in soft skills – especially for students who may find traditional learning difficult to access.

Our Education Clinical Lead oversees the therapeutic offer across all schools, ensuring consistency and high standards of practice. Each school also has access to clinical input, including assistant psychologists, therapists, and where needed, specialist provision such as speech and language or occupational therapy.

Our goal is not only to support academic progress, but to help every child feel safe, understood and capable – developing the emotional tools they need for lifelong learning and wellbeing.



Admissions process

Students are placed at Esland Bedford School following a referral by their Local Authority (LA). Our panel will review the referral paperwork, and if we feel we can meet the young person's needs, we'll ask for the LA's permission to complete an assessment to determine their suitability for a placement.

Our assessment process involves young people visiting the school with their parents/carers (where applicable). We'll give them a tour of the school, discuss the provision, and what additional adjustments may be required.

In some circumstances, we may contact previous school placements and other professionals working with the young person to gain additional feedback that will support their referral paperwork.

Once the assessment is complete, and if both parties agree to proceed, we'll approach the LA a formal placement offer before contacting the parents/carers to begin transition arrangements.



Admissions criteria

We'll consider referrals for students who:

- Are aged between 8 – 18 years old
- Have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)
- Have a primary need related to:
 - Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
 - Speech, Language and Communication needs (SLCN)
 - Anxiety
 - Emotionally based school avoidance
 - Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) related to any of the above
- Are able (or have the potential) to:
 - Access a broad and balanced curriculum resembling the National Curriculum.
 - Access the teaching primarily as part of a small group
- May also present with:
 - Challenging behaviour within mainstream settings (due to needs above not being appropriately met)
 - A history of school refusal and/or placement breakdowns
 - Barriers to learning such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
 - Additional communication and/or sensory needs
 - Academic progress below age related expectations
 - ADHD, OCD, ADD, PDA, Tourette's Syndrome (as a secondary or additional diagnosis to those listed above)

"Esland has an excellent understanding of Sarah's needs and is able to offer me helpful information, advice and guidance."

Sarah's mum

"A big thank you for accepting my daughter for who she is and for giving her the right educational environment in order for her to flourish and for her to feel safe and included, all the staff are amazing."

Emily's mum



Admissions and referrals

Local Authorities



If you represent a Local Authority and would like to consult with us, please complete the form on the link below or scan the QR code. Once submitted, a member of our team will contact you to discuss the next steps.

eslandbedfordschool.co.uk/consultation-form

Parent/carers enquiries



If you're a parent or carer and would like to find out more about our school, please complete the form on the link below or scan the QR code. Once submitted, we'll be in touch to book you a place at one of our open mornings.

eslandbedfordschool.co.uk/pc-form

Contact us

Esland Bedford School

Unit 54, Wrest Park, Silsoe, MK45 4HS

Phone: 01525 863 805

Email: bedfordschool@esland.co.uk

Opening times: 9:15am – 3:05pm

Proprietor:

Esland North Limited

Suite 1, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, DE56 0RN

Phone: 01773 823989