

Statement, Principles and Practice

Breckenbrough School is a non-maintained residential Special School. The school is a limited company by guarantee governed by a registered charitable trust school with a Quaker (Society of Friends) Foundation.

The Quaker ethos at Breckenbrough School underpins all we aspire to build in our students: respect, tolerance, equality, understanding and forgiveness. We deliberately avoid punishment and forced discipline, believing that resolution of conflict can come about through behaviour modelling and restorative practice. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for all our students through nurturing and sustaining their intellectual, social, and emotional development in working towards a healthy, happy, and successful adulthood. We achieve this through an inclusive, effective, and caring community, encompassing empathy, trust, and respect for all its members.

There are eight specific objectives:

1. To encourage the students to genuinely believe that they can become worthwhile and accepted members of society through academic and social success.
2. To encourage each student to recognise his own individual differences and work to understand them through a relaxed and supportive environment, which emphasises care, control, safety, responsibility, and holistic progress.
3. To help each student develop appropriate personal and social skills by encouraging and supporting them to take greater responsibility for their own actions, thus developing their self-awareness and improving their interpersonal skills.
4. To help each student appreciate the individual differences of others and to support others in overcoming their difficulties.
5. To emphasise the importance of education and to use academic, vocational, and social success to build up self-esteem and confidence, both during their time at Breckenbrough and for when they move on to further education, higher education or the world of employment and training.
6. To plan, with the support of Beyond Breckenbrough (our aftercare charity), the successful transition to further education, higher education or the world of employment and training.
7. To encourage students to develop individual talents, abilities and interests through high quality teaching and care via a broad and balanced curriculum, incorporating individual programmes of academic and social skills learning, in order to gain a wide life experience.
8. To develop and sustain effective active partnerships between students, the school, family/guardians, and external agencies.

The ethos for the students reflects the Quaker philosophy and is designed to embrace Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Silence is used for reflection, particularly in assemblies.

The atmosphere in the school is deliberately relaxed and calm, aimed at reducing anxiety levels and the opportunities for conflict, yet remaining safe and purposeful. Each residential student, and some day students, have their own room to provide personal space and security. Day students are encouraged to stay on after school and participate in evening activities as and when the occasion allows. The school does not have a fixed uniform policy, but is flexible which allows for individual needs, preferences and is supportive of any sensory processing needs.

The school traditionally has a low turnover of staff, allowing for the formation of purposeful and effective relationships with students, whilst at the same time providing a stable and nurturing environment.

The curriculum reflects the ethos of the school in both content and delivery. The students understand and appreciate this and strive to achieve and progress, which for the most part they do, despite experiencing considerable barriers to learning and often struggling in their availability to learn. A holistic approach is adopted to allow students to address their problems and progress through flexible planning and a student-centred approach, supported by highly individualised programmes of learning.

The teaching and residential environments are well supported by the work of our therapeutic team and our purpose-built facility for the delivery of interventions. The team comprises of a full-time psychologist, who uses a range of approaches, including cognitive behaviour therapy, an occupational therapist, who delivers interventions to meet sensory processing needs and supports the students in developing a greater degree of regulation, and a speech and language therapy, who supports our student's communication needs. Other therapists are brought in as and when required.

The school places very high importance on all aspects of child protection and safeguarding. The Head of Social Education is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and is supported by deputy DSLs and a Governor with a safeguarding brief.

Simon Bannister

Headteacher

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Next review September 2025