



# Oak Lodge School

Your Child, Their Future, Our Priority

**Oak Lodge School**

Ofsted 2020: A Good School

**Phoenix House**

Ofsted 2024: A Good Provision



# Welcome to Oak Lodge School

Throughout this prospectus, D/deaf is used to describe students who are Deaf (British Sign Language users) and deaf (who are hard of hearing and tend to communicate more orally).

## Foreword: Headteacher Caroline Rowlandson says...

I wish you a warm welcome to our unique school.

### A special place to work and learn

I am immensely proud to represent our school community as Headteacher. Oak Lodge school is a friendly and happy place where students feel good about themselves. We work hard together to achieve great things... and have fun doing it!

### A unique school with a unique educational offer

We give all of our D/deaf and SCLN pupils individual and personalised learning packages, tailoring them to meet their specific needs. Many of our students have additional learning challenges, so we need to be flexible in how we differentiate the curriculum and provide support. This means we are very used to treating every young person as an individual - there are no one-size-fits-all policies at Oak Lodge.

### Language and communication-rich learning

Our communications strategy provides our students with the opportunity to reach their full language and communication potential. Our specialist Teachers of the Deaf, many of whom are D/deaf themselves, provide an education using a total communication philosophy. This means we use the full spectrum of spoken and signed communication learning strategies delivered within a framework of unyielding support.

### Shared aims and strong partnerships

Another crucial facet of our community is you - our Oak Lodge parents and carers. As you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us.

We encourage and value strong partnerships and home-school links. From the beginning, we will emphasise the importance of your involvement and develop shared aims to nurture your child. Together, we enable your child to develop the tools and language they will need for a successful future.

### Get in touch

This prospectus is simply the beginning of the conversation we'd love to have with you about Oak Lodge School. The best way to get a true feel for who we are and what a remarkable environment we share here is to come and visit us. Please arrange this by calling us on 020 8673 3453.



**Our Core Values:**  
Happiness,  
Responsibility,  
Excellence, Ambition,  
Respect, Friendship &  
Togetherness

# Jessica enjoyed all the opportunities for work experience arranged for her by the caring staff at Oak Lodge School

Florence and Simon have two daughters, Jessica, aged 22, and Elly, aged 20. Jessica is deaf and blind and has Charge syndrome. She was a pupil at Oak Lodge for three years before going to college at the age of 19.

### Exciting opportunities

Now Jessica is at college, she is enjoying working in a community café near her home for a few hours a week as well as furthering her studies. Her mum, Florence says: "Jessica has the confidence to do this, thanks to her time at Oak Lodge School, because the staff there arranged work experience opportunities in areas that interested her, which she really enjoyed, and it gave her a good start. First, they arranged for her to work at a garden centre, which played to her strengths as she always enjoyed gardening with her dad. Then they let her volunteer in the school kitchen, which was brave of them, as she has only 20 per cent vision in one eye, but she absolutely loved it."

### Valuable experience

Florence says Jessica's most successful placement was at the local Co-op, where she cooked pastries and then stacked the shelves with someone from Oak Lodge supporting her. "The manager said she was a hard worker and they sometimes had to persuade her to take a break. She always wanted to complete each task and would finish her drink quickly to get back to work. The placement was meant to be for six weeks but she ended up staying six months. They were considering offering her a few hours of paid employment, but it didn't happen in the end as unfortunately the manager was moved to another store."

### Impressive reputation

Jessica had joined Oak Lodge School when she was 16. Florence says: "We took her away from a previous school because we didn't feel they had enough ambition for her. They seemed to have written her off because she was deaf and blind and had complex educational needs. We always knew Oak Lodge had a good reputation, but neither we or the school felt they could cater for all Jessica's needs at the time she was due to go to secondary school. However, we revisited it after she left the other school and felt certain then that they would be able to meet her needs."

### Excellent progress

Florence says it was decided Jessica needed help with social skills and making friends so, with the agreement of the local authority, they agreed to let her board at the school for one night a week to enable her to interact with other students. "At Oak Lodge, Jessica was in Skills for Life class and studied ASDAN qualifications for personal, social and employability skills. She made good progress and exceeded expectations. She learnt Maths, English and IT and how to live independently. Oak Lodge also gave her many other great opportunities, such as doing the Duke of Edinburgh bronze award."



### Well-trained staff

Jessica is profoundly deaf and has language and processing difficulties. "She can now use sign language and understand what people sign to her, but has difficulty communicating in return. Boarding one night a week helped her to make progress because she had people around her to communicate with directly. Both Jessica's one-to-ones were very good with her and Oak Lodge sent staff for extra training so they could learn more about supporting a deafblind student. Jessica was able to have speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy on site and the staff implemented the recommendations of the therapists," Florence says.

### Successful outcome

"I would recommend Oak Lodge to other families without any hesitation. It was a steep learning curve for the staff after they accepted Jessica, but we were very happy that they grew to love her. They were willing to run with the challenge and take external advice in order to meet her needs and we think they did an extremely good job with her."

### Children say

Florence says Jessica's favourite thing about Oak Lodge was doing the work placements arranged by the school.



# School day: settling in

The school day starts at 9am and finishes at 3.00pm.

## Arrivals and departures

Pupils may arrive at school after 8.50am to enjoy breakfast in the canteen before school starts. As a special school, most of our non-resident children arrive and depart in pre-arranged taxis provided by their local authority. If you would prefer to bring your child to and from school yourself, this is no problem. Children should be in their classrooms by 9.00am and collected at 3.00pm.

## Uniform

We encourage children to wear uniforms at Oak Lodge School because we believe it helps create a sense of community, pride and belonging. Our uniform consists of a blue Oak Lodge sweatshirt, school tie and optional blazer.

## School meals

A free, healthy breakfast is provided for all students at the Oak Lodge breakfast club from 8.50-9.00. The National School Breakfast Programme provides the breakfast, which includes bagels and various cereals.

The meals are prepared onsite by our cooks and our hospitality and catering students. We also provide work experience and training opportunities for Life Long Learners. This works well as it provides positive role models for our students.

### Break-time and drinks

If children require snacks during the school day, they should bring this from home. All students should bring a water bottle from home, which they will be encouraged to drink throughout the school day.



# Lilly can now communicate fluently and help her fellow pupils thanks to the supportive staff at Oak Lodge School

Lilly, who is 14, lives with her nanny and grandad. Lilly is profoundly deaf and has been attending Oak Lodge School since she was 11. She is a day pupil but spends one night a month as a boarder.

### Signing skills

Mandy and Richard have been delighted with the support they have received from staff at Oak Lodge and the progress their granddaughter, Lilly, has made since starting there. Mandy says: "Oak Lodge have helped us to support her needs and have encouraged Lilly to sign and she can now talk fluently. Lilly has learnt to do Face Time on her mobile phone and talks to other deaf children by signing, which is worthwhile, as deaf children can feel very isolated."

### Learning independence

Mandy and Richard have seen Lilly grow in confidence since joining the school. "Lilly now loves to show new children round Oak Lodge and help them with their reading. We have been told she is popular and we encourage her to do activities and keep in contact with her friends. It is helpful that she can board at the school one night a month as it is good for her to mix with other deaf children and learn to do things for herself," Mandy says.

### Vital support

Lilly's teacher at primary school had told Mandy and Richard that Oak Lodge was a good school and would be able to provide the support Lilly needed. "We have been very satisfied with the school and, even though Lilly has ADHD, a learning disability, and behavioural problems, she settled in

well. She couldn't talk at all when she first came to us at the age of six, but she has flourished ever since and Oak Lodge have helped us by giving her the support she needed."

### Pastoral care

The school have also supported Mandy and Richard with Lilly's behavioural problems. "She could get very frustrated expressing her emotions and the Wellbeing team have been so helpful in teaching her ways to regulate herself. Communication is very good between us and the school. I used to go to the BSL family communication classes at Oak Lodge which was helpful. I can't go on the day they are held now, so I attend BSL classes locally with Lilly on Saturdays and meet other people with deaf children from our area," Mandy says.

### Bespoke education

"Staff at Oak Lodge understand the needs of deaf children and provide them with the support they need to flourish, become more confident and feel less isolated. There is now good technology to help deaf children, such as mobile phones. Texting helps with writing and spelling, because deaf children often write just how they sign. Lilly's writing has improved and she now loves Maths. Each child follows a curriculum tailored to their needs and interests, which helps them learn more. The staff are very supportive and there is



also a wellbeing team on hand to help, who have given us strategies for coping with Lilly at home," Mandy says.

### Building confidence

"I would encourage other families to choose Oak Lodge over a mainstream school, where the other children can't understand what it is like for a child to be deaf. Staff at Oak Lodge teach the children how to express themselves and help build their confidence, which is crucial. They will give your child opportunities to learn and progress and grow in self-esteem. We believe it is vital for a deaf child to attend the right school and receive the right support."

### Children say

Lilly says she likes Oak Lodge because she has lots of friends there. She loves welcoming new children and likes to teach them and make them happy. She says it is a great school, where everyone is very helpful.



# Curriculum: a roadmap to a fulfilling and confident future

## Curriculum overview: engaging and inclusive

The Oak Lodge School’s curriculum is built on a framework that empowers all students to excel both academically and socially. We develop the whole person through a broad range of subjects; students experience, explore, create and enjoy learning as they engage with topics across different fields.

### Total Communication

We deliver education to D/deaf students through a total communication approach. This incorporates all means of communication.

All lessons are taught through BSL and SSE and English.

Each student works towards communicative competence in their first language (BSL, SSE or spoken English). We aim to develop students’ functional language and communications skills so they can leave school confident, competent communications.

### Specialist teaching staff

Our teaching staff are highly skilled at teaching Deaf students, with relevant BSL qualifications and specialist training. They excel in delivering their particular curriculum alongside support for D/deaf students. Each department creates a curriculum plan that includes lessons related to age-appropriate content, with a focus on closing gaps in knowledge or skills. This means students follow an individualised study programme with clear sequences of learning development mapped out inspired by the national curriculum.

### Work related learning

We provide a planned careers education programme that offers impartial, engaging advice across Years 7-13. The aim is to encourage high aspirations for independence and access to an ambitious range of career options.

## Learning at Oak Lodge

At Oak Lodge School, we offer two main types of learning for our students:

Skills for life pathway - designed to prepare students for adult life: this curriculum promotes the development of communication, emotional wellbeing, functional skills, preparation for next steps, confidence and independence.

Vocational pathway - designed to prepare students for further education and work: the ‘vocational’ curriculum enables all students to access the range of national curriculum subjects, personalised to facilitate access based on the pupil’s individual needs.

## Enterprise in education

Enterprise in education helps with the personal growth of our young people and can enhance their life chances and choices. It can help them to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society and at work, with a clear understanding of their roles in the world.

It also allows an opportunity for staff to be creative and offer a wider curriculum, using their interests and skills.

These skills will be achieved through offering structured activities

- **Team work** ( sports activities, D of E, performance/ drama, manufacture, horticulture, cooking)

- **Challenge** ( learning something new ie sport, craft, D of E, fitness, new skills performance – circus, volunteering, apprenticeships)
- **Resilience** (sports, D of E, design, horticulture, mindfulness, yoga )
- **Entrepreneurial skills** – to create a “enterprise / fundraising opportunity”, website design and management, selling school products. Making / growing products to sell.

## Subjects

- English, Literacy & Communication and BSL.
- Maths, Numeracy and Science.
- Healthy living - including PE, Horticulture, Food Technology, Design Technology, Textiles and Catering & Hospitality.
- ICT, Computing and Digital Media.
- Personal Development & Independence (including PSHE, SMSC & RSE, History, Geography, D of E, Life Skills, Work Skills and Enterprise.)
- Creative & Expressive Arts (including Art, Media, Drama and Music.)



# Aaryan is making good progress and his communication has improved thanks to excellent support from caring staff at Oak Lodge School

Denise and Mahdi live with their sons, Aaryan, aged 16, and Aarman, aged seven. Aaryan has a D/deaf and has been a pupil at Oak Lodge School since he was 11.

### Keen pupil

Denise and Mahdi are pleased they chose Oak Lodge School for Aaryan because of the good progress he has made since starting there. Denise says: “Aaryan absolutely loves going to Oak Lodge and is always keen to get up and go every day. He has learnt a lot since joining the school and has passed English and Maths qualifications and enjoys woodwork and working with computers.”

### Valuable therapy

Denise says Aaryan is deaf, and has a learning difficulty. “He has benefited from speech and language therapy and now speaks comfortably with people who know him. He has learnt BSL and can also sign to communicate. At home we talk and sign to him and he will both talk and sign to us.”

### Held back

Aaryan missed a lot of education when he was younger because his hearing impairment was misdiagnosed twice. Denise says: “We didn’t know he was profoundly and severely deaf until he was seven years old. He had been exhibiting challenging behaviour at primary school, but it was only when he was sent for a hearing test for the third time that his hearing impairment was finally diagnosed. He then attended a primary school with a deaf unit where they were able to give him the help he needed.”

### Making friends

Aaryan’s primary school recommended Oak Lodge to Denise and Mahdi when it was time for him to go to secondary school because they would be able to meet his needs. “He has made lots of friends there and is a very popular boy. He meets up with some of his friends out of school now,” Denise says.

### Wellbeing support

Denise and Mahdi are grateful that Oak Lodge also have an excellent wellbeing team who help the children deal with their emotions. “Aaryan has ADHD, which is controlled by medication, but staff from the wellbeing team will sit down and talk to him about his feelings. They explain that there are consequences to be faced if he does the wrong thing and now that he is 16, they make him aware of the boundaries he has to respect. The wellbeing team are very proactive with the children and will help them with any emotional issues.”

### Bespoke education

“The staff communicate well with us and keep us informed about what’s going on and we know we can always go to them for advice. They do an annual review for each child and will invite us in to talk about Aaryan’s progress and tell us what areas he has improved in and what plans they have for him next year. The education for each pupil is carefully tailored to suit the needs and interests of the child in order to bring out the best in them. Now Aaryan is in the sixth form he attends Lambeth College once a week, where he is learning life skills to prepare him for leaving school. He has also done work experience at Nando’s, which he enjoyed, although he said it was hard work,” Denise says.

### High quality teaching

“We have been very satisfied with Oak Lodge and Aaryan is very happy there. I would recommend the school to other families because of the way the staff look after the children and the quality of education they provide for them.”

### Children say

Aaryan likes going to school each day and seeing his friends and enjoys doing woodwork.



# Enhanced curriculum

## Trips and visits

Alongside our classroom curriculum, we offer enrichment opportunities and out of hours learning. We arrange trips to cement learning that help students learn important life skills, develop cultural capital and ground learned concepts in a real-life context. Examples of recent trips include:

- Trips to local places of worship.
- London zoo.
- Duke of Edinburgh.
- PGL residential trips.
- Colourscape art installation.
- Football trips.
- Robotics challenge.
- 6th Form work experience at retail and hospitality outlets.
- Weekly 6th Form visits to Nightingale working farm.
- Deaf Interschool Football competitions.
- London Youth Games.

In addition to taking students out to experience the world, we bring incredible experiences to them by inviting special visitors into the school. Examples include:

- The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Project.
- Mobile zoo.
- Enrichment Dance Project.
- Remark London - who support students with travel training and deaf clubs.

## Sports

Physical development is so important to all Oak Lodge students, and our sports facilities enable us to provide ample opportunity for exercise and sporting achievement. We have two tennis courts and a sports hall with a sprung wooden floor. In addition to our PE curriculum, we offer weekly hockey lessons, bike-ability and attend sporting trips. We offer swimming lessons for Years 7 & 8 and our Skills4Life students.



# Francesco is now flourishing and communicating more confidently in the supportive environment of Oak Lodge School

Michaela and Vincenzo have two sons, Francesco, aged 18, and Stefano aged 15. Francesco, is blind and deaf, non-verbal and has CHARGE syndrome. He has attended Oak Lodge School since he was 13.

## Exciting opportunities

Michaela and Vincenzo are delighted with Francesco's progress during his six years at Oak Lodge School. Michaela says: "We are pleased the school have been able to stimulate Francesco and given him opportunities to make progress. He loves Science and enjoys wearing a lab coat and doing experiments. His teacher has told us his concentration is amazing and he can now communicate more confidently."

## Accommodating school

Michaela and Vincenzo were relieved when Francesco was offered a place at Oak Lodge as he had spent a year at home by the time he started. Michaela says: "Francesco initially went to another secondary school, but it could not meet his needs and eventually we had to take him out. We went round various schools with him but he was always turned down. Because he is both deaf and blind, the schools thought they wouldn't be able to cope with him. He was disappointed to have to spend a year out of school because he had attended a good mainstream primary with a signing unit and he often asked why he wasn't going to school."

## Willing staff

The breakthrough came when Oak Lodge were prepared to interview him and offered him a trial period.

Michaela says: "What we loved about Oak Lodge was that although they had not had much experience with multi sensory impairment, they were willing to take Francesco on and send their staff to be trained to support his needs. On his first day, he was proud of his new uniform and went in with his head held high and a big smile on his face. Considering he had been at home for so long, he settled well. Because he has CHARGE syndrome, he gets tired easily and when he was at primary school, he used to spend every Wednesday at home. But he was determined to go full time at Oak Lodge and was able to map his new environment mentally so that he could find his way around."

## Accepting advice

Michaela and Vincenzo were pleased Oak Lodge allowed other professionals to come in and advise them about supporting Francesco and that they adapted lessons for him. Michaela says: "Other msi children who have started since Francesco joined have benefited from the experience the staff have gained. The school have been very good about contacting us to discuss things such as trips and we love the way they consider his individual needs all the time. He has got to know all the staff and the other children in his peer group well and loved going away on a residential trip with them."

## Skills for life

"Francesco has very limited sight but he has flourished in an environment where everyone signs to each other to communicate. He has been learning skills for life and studying for an Asdan entry level qualification. He has achieved well in most areas, but particularly in Maths and Science, and he has enjoyed practical subjects, such as woodwork," Michaela says.

## 6th Form link course

"Francesco has enjoyed doing land-based studies and going to a farm one day a week with support from an intervenor trained in msi. He has learnt about animals and how to use a wheelbarrow and would like to continue this at college and possibly work on a farm one day. Francesco has had a better experience at Oak Lodge than we could ever have hoped for and we will be sad when he leaves. We would wholeheartedly recommend Oak Lodge School to other families."

## Children say

Francesco enjoys the independence he has at school and, although he uses a cane outside, he doesn't need it to move around the building because he knows it so well.



# Post 16 Provision: independence and preparation for adulthood

## Pathways

Students in the 6th form follow a highly personalised curriculum. Young people can achieve against three different pathways at this stage:

### 1: Pre-vocational pathway

The focus is preparing students for their next steps into further education. Study includes functional skills maths, English, ICT and (where appropriate) GCSE Maths. Qualifications include Level 1/2/3 qualifications in BSL, Hospitality & Catering, Hair and Beauty. Woodwork, Vehicle Maintenance and Construction.

### 2: Vocational pathway

Students attend full time college to study qualifications from Level 1 to Level 3. Supported by Communication Support Workers and note-takers if necessary.

### 3: Skills for life pathway

This curriculum is designed to meet learning needs using a personalised learning approach. Students with more complex needs enrol in the ASDAN Personal Progress Award Scheme, which consists of a core curriculum and enriched activities and therapies designed to meet their individual needs. Students complete personal progress units that cover all core subjects. All work incorporates adult-oriented, real-world skills and applications.

## IDEALS

At Oak Lodge School, we have a specialist support program for International Deaf Learners (IDeALs) that are here for a variety of reasons (e.g. refugees or have relocated to the UK).

Our IDeALs often arrive with varying previous educational experience and expressive skills (in their first sign language). Therefore, we offer a bespoke curriculum with a specialist team (BSL Tutor/HLTA/Qualified Teacher of the Deaf) who support their BSL acquisition and wider SEMH development. Our curriculum is bespoke depending on the needs of the IDeALs. For example, for some we need to teach basic numeracy and literacy skills whilst others can be fast tracked and begin learning English using ShapeCoding and Visual Phonics.

In addition, our IDeALs attend regular day trips to develop invaluable life skills (e.g travelling, culture, money and planning etc). This give our IDeALs a valuable real-world language learning opportunity as well as exploring London's rich history and its modern culture.

Our IDeALs gradually transition into the school by first attending lessons that promote interaction with peers in appropriate lessons (e.g. FT, PE and/or Maths) until they have acquired sufficient language for them to integrate into a class full time.

Our previous IDeALs have successfully integrated full time into their classes and have gone on to acquire qualifications in BSL and functional skills.



# Alfie is progressing in leaps and bounds in his 'home from home' at Oak Lodge School

Jo and John have five sons, Max, aged 17, Alfie, aged 14, Jack, aged nine, Ted, aged eight and Paddy, aged six. Alfie, who is profoundly deaf and has autism, is a residential pupil at Oak Lodge School in Wandsworth.

### Confidence boosted

Jo and John are delighted with the progress Alfie has made since becoming a residential pupil at Oak Lodge. Jo says: "As well as being deaf, Alfie has complex learning needs, so we are amazed by how he has come on since becoming a boarder. His communication has improved a lot and he has become more confident. He will now travel all over London on buses and the underground and is willing to try new things. He oversees all his own personal care and helps with the chores and loves making himself a cup of tea at Phoenix House, where he stays during the week."

### Learning independence

Jo says when she picks Alfie up on Fridays, he is now a lot more communicative and will sign to her to tell her what he has been doing during the week and when he did it. "He is now much more independent and, although he used to be a creature of habit, he will now try different foods and be happy to go on outings. Even if he doesn't enjoy them all, he is willing to try things."

### Understanding staff

Jo says Alfie attended a mainstream primary school with a specialist hearing department, where he got on well. "When we started looking for a secondary school for him, we went to visit one school, but Alfie got upset because he was in unfamiliar surroundings.

The staff just asked us to leave immediately and we could tell it wouldn't have been suitable for him. Fortunately, someone suggested Oak Lodge. We liked it as soon as we walked through the door. Alfie got upset again, but the staff understood immediately that he didn't like change and coped with him brilliantly and took him to see the sensory room where he calmed down."

### Improved communication

Jo says: "Right from the start we knew the staff would be great with him. Alfie boarded in Phoenix House, the residential provision at the school, from his first week. He settled in fine because we made his room just like his room at home and the staff were all kind to him. He is now in Year Ten and in his fourth year at the school. He uses sign language for all his communication and interacts well with his teachers. He will now sign back to answer any of their questions."

### Excellent environment

Jo says before Alfie started at Oak Lodge, he dictated everything the family did at home. "Now we can take him anywhere and he understands when I sign to tell him where we are going and accepts we must do a few different things while we are out before we can go home again.

We think the teaching staff and residential staff at Oak Lodge School are amazing and that being immersed in an environment where everybody signs to each other to communicate has been a huge benefit to Alfie. Having deaf adult men as role models has been very good for him and I can't praise Kevin, Alfie's TA, enough. He has been crucial to Alfie's progress and manages to get the best out of him. I would recommend letting your child be a boarder because Alfie is surrounded by deaf people and they sign to each other all the time because they have BSL as their common language," Jo says.

### Happy home life

"Alfie can now manage his emotional well-being better and has far less meltdowns. Our communication with him at home has improved, which is important to us. We have a much better level of understanding with him now. When we first walked into Oak Lodge it felt like coming home. It is an amazing school and we know Alfie is happy there."

### Children say

Kevin, Alfie's TA says that at school Alfie likes talking about the movies and his weekend journey. At breaktime he enjoys going to the exercise area.



# Therapeutic Provision

## Therapies and treatments

When students enrol in Oak Lodge School, we baseline their communication and language needs as well as any therapy or treatment they might require. We tailor our approach to each student, using their preferred language. Therapy may include:

- SALT, OT and/or PT individual or joint working sessions.
- Work within the classroom in collaboration with teaching staff.
- Supporting teaching staff to develop functional language and functional communication strategies.
- Working closely with families, other professionals (including Deaf CAMHS), and health care providers to support continued development of critical skills.

## Speech Therapy

The team of specialist Speech and Language Therapists and assistants offers expert support to students to develop and extend their language and functional communication skills, as well as higher level reasoning and literacy skills.

The team provides intervention based on each child's EHCP and individual assessment. Their expertise helps students develop their language, communication and social skills, as well as emotional literacy to their full potential. The SALT team also works with students' local dysphagia teams where necessary and can support alternative or additional means for communication like voice output communication aids (VOCA).



## Occupational Therapy

At Oak Lodge, the Occupational Therapist (OT) is an integral part of a team that works to implement therapeutic programmes throughout the entire school. The OT's primary role is to help students develop the skills they need to become more independent. OT support aims to build skills for life in preparation for adulthood. Support includes overcoming sensory processing challenges and issues with organisation and self-regulation as well as physical challenges.

## Physiotherapy

Oak Lodge School's physiotherapist works with other members of the school's therapy team and teaching staff to help students achieve their physical development goals. Physiotherapy is delivered through comprehensive assessment, advice and an individualised program of exercises coordinated with the Occupational Therapist and PE teachers.

The PT will assess and advise on the provision of any equipment or orthotics, as well as their maintenance. They also liaise with external professionals—such as local Physiotherapists and tertiary NHS services—and contribute to EHCPs (education, health care plans) and annual reviews.



## Audiology

At Oak Lodge School students with hearing aids, cochlear implants and other audiological equipment are supported by an audiologist, who ensures that their devices are being used effectively so they can develop functional communication skills. The school buildings have been designed around the needs of D/deaf children, so classrooms are designed with optimum acoustic conditions for listening. The Audiologist provides regular testing and support as well as routine maintenance. The school audiology department works closely with each child's hospital-based audiology team, manages day to day issues and ear moulds can be made at school to reduce the number of times a child needs to leave lessons for audiological support.



# Residential Living: Phoenix House

## Welcome to Phoenix House

We provide residential boarding for young people from Wandsworth and all over the UK with support needs related to their education and social development. Phoenix House offers up to four nights a week of term-time, weekday boarding for students aged 11-19.

### Safe and caring environment

Our Ofsted-rated 'outstanding' facility can accommodate up to 17 students, and is staffed by a professional team specialising in working with young D/deaf people with additional needs. We offer our boarders a safe, caring environment where they can enjoy educational, social and leisure activities in a warm, family atmosphere.

### Life skills

We provide young people with the skills they need to lead full and active lives and engage them in a variety of educational, social, recreational activities.

### Becoming responsible, confident and independent young people

The team works closely with parents, carers and teachers to ensure that all residents get the support they need. Our boarders thrive in this environment—becoming responsible, confident and independent young people ready for higher education or employment.

### Parent/Carer Comments

"Great independence skills are learnt at Phoenix House."

"My son has developed over the years he has attended Phoenix House. He is now able to integrate into the community, he has also made lots of lifetime friends and his social skills continue to improve."

"My daughter looks forward to staying over at Phoenix House. It's a wonderful experience for her to socialise with friends."

"I am in awe of the quality of staff that they manage to recruit."

### Ofsted Comments

"The actions of the staff within the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people."

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"Staff are excellent role models for children. Being deaf themselves, staff bring a unique insight into understanding the support that deaf children need in order to thrive."

"Staff enable children to make exceptional progress in their communication, behaviours, social skills and independence."

"Staff have created a highly supportive and nurturing environment. The home has a lovely atmosphere, which is calm and jovial."



# Admissions and getting involved

The admissions process at Oak Lodge School is different to that of mainstream schools. Students will already have an EHCP, and your local authority will write to you in September of Year 6 to seek your preferences and consult with schools on your behalf. You do not need to apply to Oak Lodge. If you feel Oak Lodge School can meet your child's needs you should consult with your local authority, who will send us the paperwork to consider. Naming the school in which a child will receive Statement/ Education and Health Care Plan support is usually done by Local Authorities, with collaboration from parents.

### Invited to visit

Once Oak Lodge receives the paperwork from your Local Authority, we will invite you and your child to visit Oak Lodge School so you can have a tour of the school and meet with staff. We will carry out a short assessment with your child to ensure we can meet your child's needs.

### Admissions decisions

Admissions decisions are made by the senior leadership team of Oak Lodge School and communicated to your local authority. If admission is refused you're entitled to appeal through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). If you would like to request a residential place for your child, they will need to be assessed within the residential provision as well, as to be negotiated with the referring authority.

Our admissions contact is Karen Duggan-Stevens, who you can email at [admissions@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk) or call on 020 8673 3453.

## Getting involved

### Friends of Oak Lodge

By signing up to Give As You Live, you can raise money for us by shopping online. A percentage of everything you buy is turned into a donation—it's that simple! Visit: <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/charity/friendsofoaklodeschoolfor-deafyoungpeoplelimited>

### Volunteering

Oak Lodge welcomes the involvement of our community in the school's efforts to meet the needs of all its students. Volunteers have a distinct and complementary role on our team alongside our paid staff. Anyone who would like more information about volunteering at Oak Lodge should contact our volunteer coordinator by email at [recruitment@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk) with your CV and a cover letter. Please detail whether you know BSL, what you'd like to help with, your availability and outline how your experience would be valuable to the school.

### Governorship

Our school benefits from the good support of an active governing body. It's the role of the governors to ensure that the school fulfils its duties.

Our governing body is made up of members from the local Community. There are also parent governors, who give parents a voice in decision-making and act as a conduit between parents and the school.



# Wellbeing and Safeguarding

## Wellbeing

The Wellbeing team are on hand to support pupils' social and emotional wellbeing in all aspects of school life. The team follows a trauma informed approach to behavioural incidents, ensuring that a good student-staff relationship is maintained. Our Wellbeing mentors provide 1:1 personalised support for all pupils. Students with complex SEMH needs are given a Positive Relationship Plan. We use Zones of Regulation, known as Colours of Emotions at Oak Lodge School. This supports students with their emotional wellbeing and self-regulation.

The Wellbeing team also provide additional support for pupils around online safety and bullying and children's mental health. The team are integral in helping new joiners and their families transition smoothly to senior school life. The team work along-side external agencies like Deaf CAMHS, CAMHS and Social Care.

They arrange BSL Family Communication Classes in school to help parents communicate with their children. The Family liaison mentor helps to set up positive communication and behaviour strategies at home. There is a Wellbeing room that provides a safe space for pupils to help support their emotional regulation.

## Safeguarding

The safeguarding team at Oak Lodge School are responsible for keeping children safe at home and at school. There are Designated Safeguarding Leads onsite.

We have a whole-school policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers are provided with safeguarding training to ensure that they are confident in identifying and raising concerns. Designated Safeguarding Leads are confident in responding to and referring concerns and working with other agencies to protect children.

We work closely with families to support them and their child if there are any concerns at home. We have a Family Support worker in our school to support and develop the relationship with our families out in the community.



# Alliyah's self-esteem has been boosted thanks to support from the dedicated staff at Oak Lodge School

Alliyah, who is 15 and is deaf, lives with her mother, Basirat. She has attended Oak Lodge School as a day pupil since she was 11.

## Fluent speech

Basirat is proud of the progress her daughter, Alliyah, has made since starting at Oak Lodge School and is pleased that she has become much more confident. Basirat says: "Being able to talk fluently now has definitely helped boost Alliyah's confidence because she used to be very shy, but she now believes in herself to the extent that she can help other pupils."

## Academic progress

The staff at Oak Lodge are giving Alliyah an excellent education and she is enjoying learning and is thriving at the school, Basirat says. "I am pleased that they give Alliyah an individual learning plan that is tailored to her interests and focuses on the things she needs to improve. She now reads very well and has progressed academically a lot since she started at the school and has improved in everything."

## Signing school

One of the teachers at Alliyah's primary school introduced Oak Lodge to Basirat when she was looking for a secondary school for her daughter because they thought the school would meet Alliyah's needs. Basirat says: "I took Alliyah to look round the school and to talk to the staff and then I asked her if she liked Oak Lodge and she told me she wanted to go there. We both wanted her to go to a signing school where she would also be able to have help with her speech as Alliyah wanted to both talk and sign."

## Great progress

Basirat says Alliyah now has some hearing because she wears hearing aids. "She had some speech when she first started at Oak Lodge but she can talk much more fluently now, thanks to the help she has had from the staff. They started by teaching her the basics and she has made amazing progress. She did not sign much before she started at Oak Lodge, but she is now able to both talk and sign to her teachers."

## Improved confidence

"Oak Lodge have done a great deal to help Alliyah. She can now listen to the news and tell me what they are saying. Before she started at Oak Lodge she wasn't at all confident in her own abilities, but she is very confident that she can do things now and I think this is because she can talk fluently. She will even help me with my English now, if I don't know how to spell something," Basirat says.

## Helpful prefect

"Alliyah loves being one of the prefects and likes being able to help the other children. It is lovely how the other children look up to her and are inspired by what she has managed to achieve herself. One of her favourite subjects is Maths and she also enjoys doing PE. She really enjoyed going to do work experience in a charity shop and it is testament to her new found confidence that she was able to cope with the experience of working somewhere different."

## Boosting self-esteem

Basirat says she is pleased that Alliyah is happy at Oak Lodge and has made some good friends there and that she loves all the teachers. "The staff began by working on the roots of her issues and have improved her wellbeing and self-esteem and helped her overcome her shyness. I can see how learning to speak fluently has made a big difference to Alliyah. I would, without hesitation, recommend Oak Lodge to other families and advise any parents with deaf children to consider sending them to the school. Alliyah settled in happily right at the start and began to make progress from the moment she joined the school."

## Children say

Alliyah enjoys reading and Maths and being a prefect at school which enables her to help other children.



# Life Long Learning

We run short courses through the year for D/deaf adults aged over 19, funded by Wandsworth Lifelong Learning. Course subjects include English, Maths, Employability, Digital skills and Introduction to Hospitality. We also run a Woodworking/hand tools course, and Art and Craft to support mental wellbeing.

Courses are free and are organized in short, six-week long blocks. This means you do not have to wait too long to join one of our courses!

Classes are small with about 6 students, taught using BSL and SSE. All our tutors are experienced in their subject areas as well as in working with D/deaf learners. Some classes are taught by a D/deaf tutor.

Our aim is to support progression into other further education courses and work, whilst developing skills and experience. Some students chose our courses to help develop their skills in everyday life. We include trips to consolidate learning in real life situations.

For more information please contact Sue Hillyar – Lifelong Learning Lead [shillyar@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:shillyar@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk)



# Amit is succeeding academically and enjoying school life thanks to the dedication of the staff at Oak Lodge School

Jotti and Haxhi live with their sons, Krishan, aged 26. Amit, aged 14, and Amir, aged 11, who are all deaf. Amit started at Oak Lodge School as a day pupil when he was 11 and Amir is set to join the school after he has completed his primary education.

## Rising to the challenge

Jotti and Haxhi are proud of what Amit has achieved since starting at Oak Lodge. Jotti says: "Amit has made fantastic progress since joining the school. He follows the programme of study set out by the national curriculum, but he has been given more challenging work as the years have gone by. He is always very focused when he does his homework and his computer work and he is working very hard."

## Approachable teachers

Jotti says they chose Oak Lodge for Amit, already knowing it was a good school because she had attended the school herself. "My son has a problem with his heart and so I didn't want him to go far from home. I wanted him to be able to travel to school by transport and have only a short journey. When he first started in Year Seven at the age of 11, he was quite overwhelmed because it was a big transition after primary school, but he was given lots of support in the classroom. If he didn't understand something he knew he could ask the teacher for help which was very good. The staff provided a lot of one to one support for Amit and made sure he always had good communication access in the classroom."

## Making friends

Now Amit is settled at Oak Lodge and is used to the school, he is very happy there, Jotti says. "He has a group of close friends and they all have a lot of laughter and jokes with each other. We are also proud that Amit is now a prefect. His favourite subjects are Maths, computer studies, art, photography, and drama. He really enjoys drama and would like to do more drama in the future to help preserve the reputation of deaf people in the drama world."

## Communication skills

Jotti says because she is deaf herself, Amit could already sign when he first started at Oak Lodge. "We sometimes use home signs for things that are a bit different, but Amit has learnt how to sign to communicate with other people now. He can also do lip reading, like me. Amit is naturally very intelligent and enjoys learning new words. His vocabulary is excellent now, which makes us very proud of him."

## Good support

Jotti and Haxhi have been very happy with all the staff at Oak Lodge, but have been particularly impressed with the dedication of the staff in the wellbeing team. "If Amit has had any problems, or worries, he has been able to ask for support from the people in the wellbeing team and they have helped him by clarifying things and explaining things to him."



The medical lead at Oak Lodge has also helped him with his health issues. It has helped us a lot to be able to have regular chats with the staff and to feel confident that they will always be around to help us when we need them," Jotti says.

## Thriving at school

"Amit enjoys his education, loves his friends, and has a good rapport with all the staff. He is happy at Oak Lodge because everything is communicated to him in BSL. That is his language and he can understand everything that's being said to him, which is why he is doing so well at school."

## Children say

Amit says: "I like Oak Lodge School. I enjoy learning maths and English."

# Mission statement

To empower, inspire, encourage and challenge our young people to become thinking, resilient citizens who can succeed in a changing world.



**Oak Lodge School**  
101 Nightingale Lane  
Balham  
London  
SW12 8NA

**Phone:** 020 8673 3453

**Email:** [info@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:info@oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.oaklodge.wandsworth.sch.uk>



@OakLodgeSchool

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