



PROSPECTUS

Education for Choice
and Empowerment



Welcome to Oakwood Specialist College

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Welcome from Principal

As Principal of Oakwood Specialist College, I am delighted to welcome you in finding out more about this very special place. Oakwood Specialist College is a Specialist Independent College where young people achieve amazing things, supported by a team of dedicated, caring and committed staff. We celebrate the diversity of every individual in our college community and work hard to ensure that students enjoy a blend of happy, creative and positive learning opportunities and achieve stretching targets that enable them to progress on to their next steps after College.



Preparing for the next steps is really what college life is all about, and our varied curriculum and fantastic enrichment opportunities are designed to ensure that everyone realises their potential. We are proud of our excellent opportunities for work experience which are a key feature of study programmes, and of the progress our students make through the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme – all firmly focused on personal development and empowerment. I am particularly proud of our therapeutically informed approach to learning, using strategies across the college, complemented by specialist input from our excellent multi-disciplinary team including Speech and Language Therapy and Counselling.

You cannot fail to feel the energy, positivity and warmth when you arrive at Oakwood so I would encourage you to come and visit us, and I hope that you choose to make our college, your college.

Esther Williams,
College Principal

Oakwood at a Glance

	Age	Residential	Day	Admission Locality
Dawlsh	16 - 25	Yes	Yes	National
Torpoint	16 - 25	No	Yes	Commutable distance (within 1hr)

Course Start Dates:

Most new learners join us in September, though we have flexible entry throughout the year, if required.

Maximum Learner Numbers:

We are registered for 65 learners across both sites.

Course Duration;

Courses are over a 38 week period although learners can stay for up to 52 weeks.

Enrolment criteria:

Any young adult with special educational needs (SEN) can apply. There is an expectation that each applicant has an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). Learners can come from anywhere in the Country.



“

I have learnt a lot in work experience and how to be more independent

Cameron
Student

About Us

Oakwood Specialist College is an independent specialist college located in the beautiful South West of England. Oakwood Specialist College offers a holistic, broad and balanced curriculum which enables learners to flourish academically, vocationally, socially, physically and emotionally. We encourage a 'can do' culture at the college, recognising learners individual needs and developing their particular strengths to help them to achieve their full potential.

Located across two campuses one in Dawlish, Devon and the other at Torpoint in Cornwall we provide a specialist provision for young people aged 16 - 25 years, designed to meet the needs of young people with Learning difficulties/ disabilities, Autism, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) conditions and complex behaviour to help prepare for adult life, gaining confidence, and to live independently.

A multi-disciplinary team consisting of highly qualified and experienced tutors, learning support assistants, speech and language counselling, Occupational therapist and psychologists are all available to help individual learners achieve their goals.

Our main campus site situated in the coastal town of Dawlish in Devon is situated a short walk from the town and the golden beach with excellent transport links via bus or the Great Western main line to Exeter, Plymouth or beyond. At Dawlish we provide for around 45 day and residential learners who enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities. Residential facilities range from large properties with individual bedrooms and communal areas, to self-contained single

and shared flats. Day and residential part time or full time 38 and 52 week placements are available.

Our Torpoint campus located in Cornwall is just a couple of minutes' walk from the town and ferry port providing access to the adjacent 'ocean' city of Plymouth with its enviable maritime history or the unique Cornish rugged 'Poldark; county coastline famous for its mining heritage. The campus provides a suite of day programmes for approx. 20 learners. Torpoint offers the same ambitious programme as Dawlish within a smaller, more intimate setting.

We are committed to safeguarding and our emphasis is on nurturing the individual to enable them to flourish and achieve their full potential.

We are regulated by both Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and have been rated good with outstanding features underpinning our commitment to quality. We are a member of natspec - The association of national Specialist colleges.

We carefully assess each applicant to Oakwood Specialist College and ensure a safe and appropriate mix of learners.

Courses & Accreditation

Every young person at Oakwood has a unique set of individual needs. Each new learner enrolls on Oakwood's preparation for life and work course.



Students make excellent progress in their personal development and behaviour they gain skills that can help them to be more independent in their daily lives

Ofsted 2018

Our focus is to develop each learner's skills to prepare them for independent life, living and work. Staff embed a Total Communication approach to supporting the development of speech, language and communication skills and strategies to support students with their individual Sensory Integration needs. These are embedded throughout the whole curriculum to maximise learning and improve independence.

The College is an approved examination centre for entry level to level 2 externally accredited qualifications that along with bespoke in-house awards allow celebration of success.

The range of examination boards include:



QUALIFICATIONS



Functional Skills: Literacy, Numeracy, Communication and ICT	Employability	Vocational Subjects: Catering Animal care Land based studies Hospitality Enterprise - Art Enterprise - Woodwork
	Skills for Independence	
	PSE	
Personal Development	Duke of Edinburgh Award	
Work Experience	Sensory therapy	

Assessment

Assessment progress within the college is monitored both formally and informally through the college developed tracking systems called Assessment of Personal Progress system (APPs) and Tracking Academic Progress System (TAPs). Each term reports are available to evidence progress made.



Students benefit
from exceptional work
experience placements
Ofsted 2018



Employability and Vocational Training

Preparing our learners for the most suitable life pathway is integral to Oakwood's curriculum. We enable learners on leaving college to seek the most appropriate occupational avenue, which includes paid work, voluntary work or supported employment.

Learners are supported to choose from a wide range of vocational options through taster sessions during the first half of the autumn term. During the vocational tasters, learners are individually assessed so that future teaching and learning builds upon their current skill level.

Learners then choose vocational pathways they wish to continue to study throughout their course and build pathways to their next steps.

Work experience is an important part of college life and preparing for the future.

Placements are provided by our extensive range of partners in the local community and, where needed new placements are developed to match the learners aspirations. Learners are supported to undertake the roles and responsibilities set at the placement by our Learning Support Assistants (LSA), where appropriate.



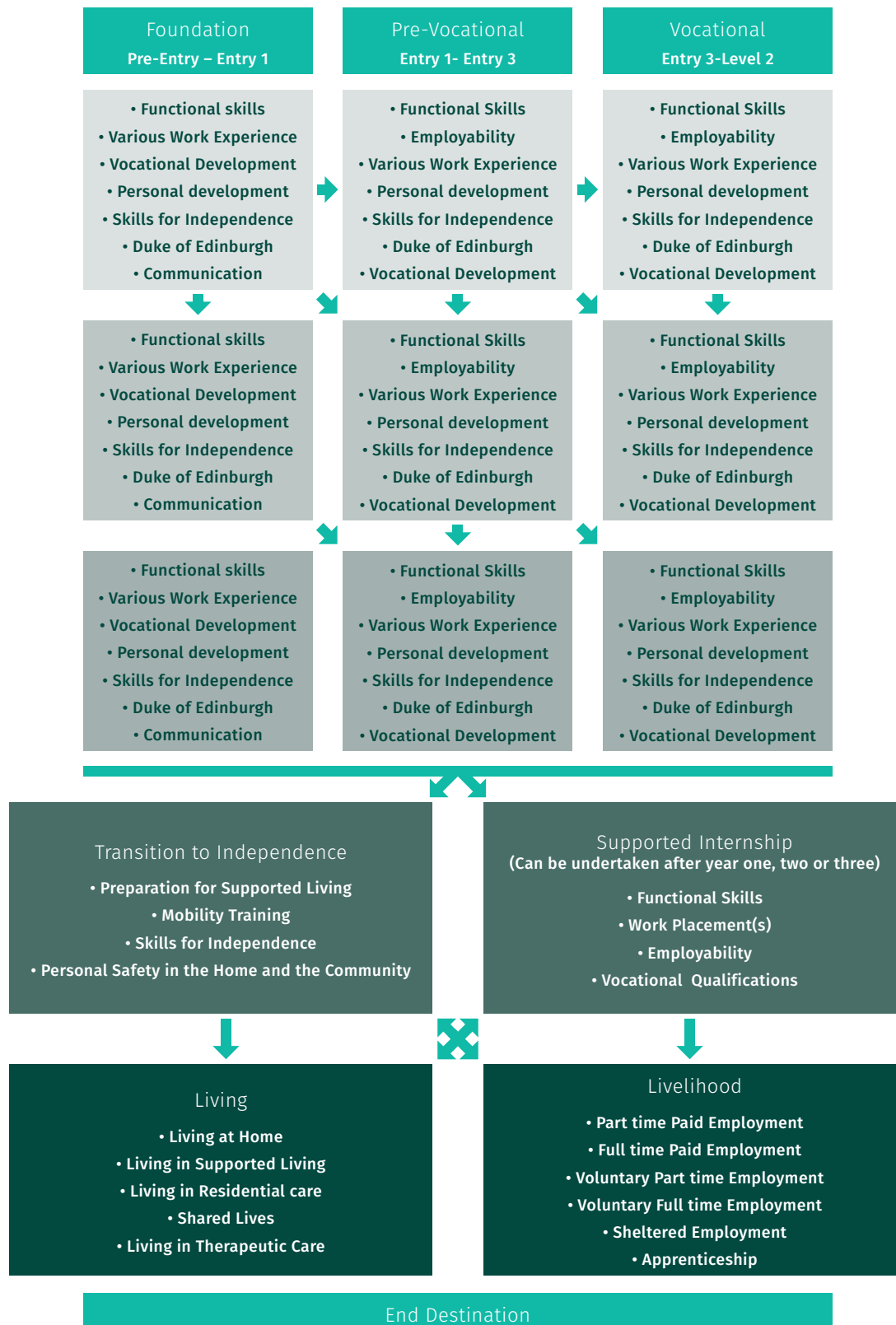
Students are extremely well
prepared for employment they
have good opportunities for work
experience and develop very
good employability skills

Ofsted 2018

Education & Employment Pathways

Pathways to Adulthood – Employment, Health, Independence, Community Inclusion.

Therapies are available for all learners (Counsellor, SaLT, Ed Psych, and OT)



Skills for Independence

Learners gain practical life skills which benefit them long after they leave education. Cookery lessons teach learners to prepare sweet and savoury recipes from around the world and learners are encouraged to think about healthy food choices and how to budget for food and ingredients. Learners are introduced to personal finance, how to budget and live independently and make sense of the financial implications of personal life choices.

Life skills are carried over into our residential provision as part of the extended curriculum. The extended curriculum within the residential provision is well planned to build upon and use the skills learned at college.

The PSE curriculum enables learners to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to manage their personal lives and wellbeing now and in the future, enabling young people to take responsibility, preparing them for their future roles as responsible adults.

Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award programmes take between one and two years to complete at Oakwood. The Duke of Edinburgh award encourages learner's development, social, economic and personal wellbeing. The programmes are at three progressive levels which, if successfully completed, lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

With assistance from trained DofE leaders participants choose their objectives in the following areas:

- **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community.
- **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities.
- **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests.
- **Expedition:** planning, training for, and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK or abroad.
- At Gold level, learners complete an additional fifth Residential section, which involves staying and working away from home/college for five days, doing a shared activity.

I have learnt how to
socialise and interact with
others better

Danny
Student

To achieve an award the learner, works on each section for a minimum period of time. Each progressive level demands more time and commitment from students: Bronze 3–6 months; Silver: 6–9 months; Gold: 12–18 months. Learners are required to show regular activity and commitment to the award for the duration of their DofE programme, which is usually at least two hours per week.

Life @Oakwood

Extended Curriculum

At Oakwood learning should be embedded throughout the waking day. Learners are supported by highly skilled staff to develop their skills for independence take all opportunities and ownership of their new environment.

Regular house meetings are held across Oakwood so that learners can feedback on ideas or concerns. Topics range from issues relating to the residence, improvements that could be made and suggestions for leisure activities.

Each learner has a key worker who works to develop each learner's interests and support them to plan their social and leisure time. Key workers help learners to stay in touch with their families, arrange family visits and provide any other support the young person may require.

Social and leisure activities play a very important role in college life and within the wider community with plenty on offer including social and sports clubs, leisure activities and access to some of the most beautiful beaches and towns in the country.



**Students enjoy an
outstanding variety of
enrichment activities
Ofsted 2018**



**Learner Personal
Development, Behaviour and
Welfare is Outstanding.
Ofsted 2018**

Oakwood is also a place to relax and spend time making friends. All rooms have Wi-Fi and many learners enjoy spending time skyping their family and friends.

**Above all, Oakwood is about moving into an adult
life, developing skills,
being happy and having fun!**





People were happy living at Oakwood and told us they felt safe. People continued to be protected from the risk of abuse and avoidable harm

CQC 2019

Living @Oakwood

Residential Learner Accommodation

Oakwood Residential is a great place to come and live while studying at Oakwood Specialist College. Ideally situated close to Oakwood Specialist College we provide an environment of communal living, with a homely feel; where young people are actively encouraged to be fully involved in the decisions and running of the service.

We look to create a homely environment where independence, choice and community inclusion can flourish. Young people personalise their rooms and have access to well resources communal cooking, eating and relaxing areas, they are also quieter areas for reading and relaxing. Communal living supports development of social skills and provides opportunities for young people to develop skills and express themselves in a safe environment. We ensure that there are opportunities for young people to learn new skills and build on existing skills within their home and in their local community; everyday life skills that will give them a sense of achievement and increased opportunity for the future.

Throughout their time within the residential service young people will be supported and encouraged to plan and take part in events and activities, making the most of their local community; help them make new friends, try new things.

We believe that living within the residential accommodation should be fun – it's a great way to make friends with people from a variety of backgrounds, and really helps young people to get the most out of their time at Oakwood Specialist College.



This is what young people living with us think:
“I’m happy”

“It feels like a proper home”

“I also like Camelia house because you can go and visit your friends and the other students”

“Great place to spend time with friends and staff in the lounge area”

“I feel safe”

What our staff say:

“I can honestly say hand on heart that observing a service user from a distance having built up their trust, slowly move forward whereby you can almost see them physically grow with confidence, reminds you as to why we are here”

“Each and every day is different and rewarding, knowing that you’ve tried your best to help the learners overcome their own obstacles, worries and learning something new. It makes me feel proud to be part of this team”

“Working here is so rewarding, supporting young people to grow and develop and know you’ve been a part of it”

Overall rating for our service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service effective?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●



People benefitted from a home that was well led. The provider had systems in place to review, monitor and improve the quality of service provided. People and their relatives were involved in making decisions about their care. The registered managers worked in partnership with health and social care professionals

CQC 2019



Extended Support Team

Speech & Language Therapy

The specialist Speech and Language Therapy service at Oakwood Specialist College offers a range of programmes to support individual learners to develop their communication skills and maintain their health, safety and wellbeing. Learners will have the opportunity to develop speech, expressive language and comprehension, fluency, voice and social interaction skills to reach their communication potential. The Therapist works as part of the college multi-disciplinary team and with families, carers and external partners to ensure communication needs are understood and strategies are embedded across the 24-hour curriculum. An ongoing training programme is provided for all staff, so that at a universal level the communication needs of learners can be met by everyone across the 24hr curriculum. Learners may receive targeted or specialist input overseen by the Therapist and embedded by the college team. Our Therapist will also support learners during their transitions in to college and at the end of their placement support will be given to prepare for the transition back into their community, providing information, advice and guidance on supporting their communication.

Occupational Therapy

Our Occupational Therapist offers a range of specialist programmes that are designed to improve and develop the independent living skills of learners and enhance the health and wellbeing of learners through the therapeutic use of occupation. These skills are practiced in real life situations and settings within the college and local community, and give learners the confidence and skills they need to live as independently as possible after college. As part of their occupational therapy, learners may be introduced to a wide variety of adaptive equipment and enabling technologies, as well as strategies that develop self-help skills. These include direction of others, sequencing, planning and organisation skills. Our Therapist will also support learners during their transitions in to college and at the end of their placement support learners to prepare for the transition back into their community, providing information, advice and guidance on disability adaptations, housing and occupation.

Counselling

Our Counselling and integrative therapist gives the opportunity for learners talk to a trained counsellor about their worries/concerns and personal situations. Integrative counselling aims to promote healing and facilitate wholeness - ensuring that all levels of the learners being and functioning (mental, physical and emotional health) are maximised to their full potential. In particular, the integrative counselling approach helps learners face each moment openly and authentically without having formed an opinion, expectation or attitude beforehand. This enables them to better focus on the fears and hurts that limit their psychological freedom, and recognise specific triggers that may be causing disruptive patterns of behaviour. The process of integrative counselling is very much centred on the active exploration of experience - a phenomenological view of reality. It is the role of an integrative counsellor to foster this by using specific techniques and key concepts drawn in from various approaches that are appropriate to each individual. Some of the issues that learners have spoken about are: Being away from home for the first time, Friendships/ Relationships, Why do I have a disability?



Managers, tutors and learning support assistants are passionate about work and use excellent strategies to help students learn
Ofsted 2018

Student Voice

The Student Voice at Oakwood is to ensure that the students are fully represented as stakeholders in the college community. The Student Voice is comprised of representatives from each class or year group within Oakwood.

Each Student Voice member will serve one year on the Student Voice body then there will be new elections at the beginning of each academic year. The voting procedures were undertaken to elect the members of the Student Voice also teaches the wider student body about the democratic principles involved in the process.

The students who sit on the Student Voice body are responsible for acting as the conduit between the staff and student body. In this role, they will voice the suggestions, aspirations and concerns of their peers specifically related to continued improvements.

Membership of the Student Voice allows for the development of leadership skills in addition to learning various aspects of the meeting, communication, chairing meetings and cooperative skills. The existence of the Student Voice serves to teach the entire student body about the importance of democratic representation.

The Student Voice will meet once a term and feedback their finds to senior management and attend annual Student Voice forums and represent the SEN voice nationally.

Safety, Equality and Inclusion

Oakwood Specialist College is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. Our Admissions and Transitions team are available to any student or family member and can offer free, confidential and impartial support to all.

The College does not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic status. Therefore, Oakwood Specialist College provides equality and fairness in all activities. This is achieved by responding to peoples' individual needs to ensure they have an equal chance to contribute and achieve their potential, whilst maintaining student voice. It is not about treating everyone in the same way.



Personalised Learning Service

OCC - PLS

OCCPLS provides a unique care and educational programme for young people who exhibit a greater level of challenging behaviour than is usually experienced in college settings. This behaviour emanates from different conditions, for example, autism, mental health or other difficulties. Many learners have a history of significant complex behaviours and therefore (following assessment) will have a bespoke package aimed at supporting them to learn within the wider college community.

The aim of the programme is to prepare these young people with strategies and skills that will enable them to join the college population or to follow a vocational route outside college to prepare them for further learning or employment.

Our tutors and educational and care support staff are trained and experienced in dealing with challenging learner behaviour. Tutors have specialist knowledge, skills and understanding of assessment, delivery techniques that enables learners to learn and develop. Tutors and support staff in this programme are emotionally resilient and have a clear vision of the aims of the programme and its development.

Learners following an OCCPlus programme have full access to the wider therapeutic support teams such as Speech and Language, Occupational Health and complimentary therapies.



**I have learnt temper
control, better support and
better success**

**Kyle
Student**







Transitions and AIG

Learners Admissions and Transitions is a friendly and hardworking team.

Contact with our team is often the first experience learners and their parents/ carers will have with Oakwood Specialist College. We aim to provide information and support to learners and their parents/carers, feeder schools/colleges and commissioners, to enable a smooth and successful transition to Oakwood.

“

I can't thank-you enough, especially for the support given last year, not just to my daughter but to us as a family too

Parent

We process student transitional applications and complete EHCP reviews and updates, communicating with all relevant bodies throughout the process. We also work closely with our academic team to ensure that EHCP outcomes are met and adhered to. When a student is approaching transition the next steps after Oakwood, we provide advice, information and guidance to learners and their parents/carers on the options available post college.

We work collaboratively with external agencies to ensure smooth transition out of Oakwood. We support visits to local colleges, training providers and supported work placement opportunities in line with the young person's aspirations, as well as visits to potential future supported living or residential placements.

“

Students take tremendous pride in their achievements

Ofsted 2018

“

Students grow in confidence and are very well prepared for work through work experience and internships

Ofsted 2018



How to enrol

After reading through the prospectus we would welcome you to come and visit us to experience it for yourself.

We would love for you to come and visit Oakwood Specialist College and to see what we have to offer. If you would like to and visit Oakwood for yourself and meet the learners and staff, please do not hesitate to contact us on:

Admissions Team

Telephone: **01626 864066**

Email: **enquiries@oakwoodcourt.ac.uk**

At the first visit to Oakwood, a member of our admissions team will meet with you and discuss next steps and go through all the details and funding process that will be available to you. If, however you require immediate information relevant to your personal situation please do not hesitate to contact the admissions team.

When considering college which campus it is worth bearing in mind that the Torpoint site is day College and does not have any residential places. Commuting distance must be within 1 hour or what is appropriate for the Young Person. Dawlish site is where learners requiring residential places will be located.

After visiting the college if you feel you would like to pursue an application for admission we will then arrange a time for your child to come and complete a detailed initial assessment. During this, we will assess your child's academic level, desires and needs. We also encourage all learners to also embrace the opportunity and be involved in college life to be able to make a choice if Oakwood is the where they would like to study.

A member of our admissions team will remain in close contact with you through all stages of your application and is available to answer any questions and provide any support you may need.

We look forward to hearing from you!



How happy my son is to attend college every day, he thoroughly enjoys his work experience placements and attending Animate

Parent



Contact us

We warmly encourage any students considering applying to Oakwood Specialist College to visit the College so you can experience its friendly, welcoming atmosphere.



Torpoint

Head of Campus. Sam Fox
t. 01752 812873

Oakwood Specialist College
5/7 St James Road, Torpoint
Cornwall PL11 2BJ

Dawlish

College Principal. Esther Williams
t. 01626 864066

Oakwood Specialist College
7/9 Oak Park Villas, Dawlish
Devon EX7 0DE

oakwoodcourt.ac.uk

DfE: 878/7905 URN: 131947 UKPRN: 10004841

Part of the Phoenix Learning and Care Group



Support Hub

Unit 5, Chinon Court, Lower Moor Way,
Tiverton Business Park, Tiverton, EX16 6SS
t. 0330 135 8 135 e. enquiries@plcl.org.uk
phoenixlearningcare.co.uk



Oakwood Specialist College adheres to the values of the Phoenix Learning and Care Group: Honesty, Empathy, Aspiration, Respect and Teamwork - our values that go to make the HEART of Phoenix.