

SEND Report 2023

Pioneer House High School
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About the school

Pioneer House High School caters for 142 students Y7 – Y14. All pupils at Pioneer House have an EHC plan. They experience a significant learning difficulty.

It has a unique focus in preparing students to become independent and confident young adults who are able to make a positive contribution to the society in which they live. Through carefully structured programmes, curriculum and work placements Pioneer House supports students to develop independence and employability skills so that they are well prepared for their next destination - whether that is college, supported internship, apprenticeship or employment. All students have the opportunity to develop a range of independent living skills which will prepare them for life beyond Pioneer House including money management, independent travel, looking after the home and how to access local medical, social care and leisure facilities. Students should have the capacity to become independent travellers during their time at Pioneer House to develop the potential to progress onto their next pathway.

All students at Pioneer House have an EHC plan. They experience a significant learning difficulty and are working between early years foundation stage and key stage 2 levels. Students in key stage 4 and 5 work towards entry level and level 1 qualifications in a variety of subjects including English, Maths and vocational studies.

Curriculum and teaching and learning

“Leaders refine and improve the school’s curriculum offer continually. They make sure that teachers have the support, training and resources to plan and deliver lessons in the different subjects.” OFSTED report 2019

‘The school has developed a highly positive learning culture throughout the school. There is a strong culture of high aspirations for all students regardless of their starting points and therefore, students’ expectations of themselves are high of what they can achieve. They take pride in their accomplishments and so do their parents. They delight in developing new skills and in knowing they can make a worthwhile contribution to their school and the local community. Their level of independence is greatly increased as they move throughout school. The school’s curriculum offer supports students in developing into mature, confident, happy and responsible young people who are enabled to continue growing and to flourish in the wider world beyond school’. (QA Report Summer 2023)

The vocational curriculum includes an emphasis on Enterprise, Employability and Independence, whilst also providing a broad, balanced and meaningful curriculum across all key stages. In all key stages there is a strong focus on practical skills. The curriculum is structured to equip young people with a significant learning need with the skills to realise their potential:

- To be as independent as possible in adulthood;
- To enjoy sustainable meaningful and fulfilling paid employment opportunities
- To be active participants and contributors within their local community;

- To exercise and enjoy self-advocacy and have the skills to make responsible, meaningful and well informed choices about their lives.

Pioneer House provides a rich learning experience for all students which encourages a curiosity and love of learning, thereby enabling them to make progress in acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century and to enter the work of work.

We do this through:

- A stimulating, challenging, engaging and inclusive learning environment;
- Appropriate teaching and learning strategies, well suited to the learning needs of the students;
- Individualised, appropriate learning opportunities;
- Support for students to make informed choices and decisions in both the school and workplace and throughout their lives;
- Varied and engaging enrichment opportunities so that our young people can engage with leisure, cultural and sporting activities and events in the local community and the wider city;
- A whole school work ethic which encourages students to be immersed in a task orientated culture from the beginning, building realistic expectations and understanding of the world of work.

The curriculum at Pioneer House High School is carefully structured to provide students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to be active citizens and to enable them to take advantage of opportunities for employment and independence as they move into adulthood. We want our students to be engaged and curious learners and our curriculum offers many opportunities for the hands-on, practical learning that builds students character and resilience alongside their vocational skills.

The curriculum has a number of key 'building blocks' which take a systematic and strategic approach to developing and embedding essential skills, knowledge and understanding over time. This allows our leavers to meet the complexities of the workplace with confidence and competence. Through our spiral skills curriculum, students re-visit essential learning as they move through the school to build, develop and refine their skills.

Careful timetabling, personalisation and individual route-mapping ensures that these key components work together to meet the needs of each individual.

- Core curriculum areas of **Maths, English, Science and Digital Skills** are essential to fulfilling the school goals and form a key component throughout the curriculum. In lower school students work on well differentiated and engaging Maths, English, Science and Digital Skills curricula which give the opportunity to learn, recall, consolidate and

progress. As students move into upper school, they focus on using these skills in a functional and applied way, appropriate to independent living and life in the workplace.

- A learning-focused **foundation subject** curriculum provides a structured approach to teaching and learning in History, Geography, Art, RE and Technology throughout KS3, ensuring that students can make connections between their learning and their real life experiences in preparation for options, vocational based learning and work experience in key stage 4 & 5.
- Our **Healthy Lifestyles** curriculum supports students to make responsible, informed choices in school, at home, the community and in the workplace, developing independence skills to equip students for life beyond school. This curriculum includes a strong safeguarding element to support students to learn how to make positive well informed choices to keep themselves safe and healthy, now and in adult life.
- The **Careers** curriculum develops the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to have the employability skills required for entry into paid employment. From key stage 3 they begin to explore and discover the world of work to ensure that they are supported to develop aspirational career ideas and the ability to plan for their futures.
- Our **Enterprise and Skills curriculum** equips students with the essential, executive skills to support successful and active citizenship and life as a member of a workforce. The skills taught, are embedded across all curriculum subjects and include Teamworking, Listening, Creative thinking, Problem Solving, Communicating and Resilience.
- Our **Vocational** curriculum strengthens as students move through school, with an increasing focus on work placements and employability skills. The curriculum is underpinned by strong careers education throughout school and a qualifications framework which helps young people to have a pathway that leads into further study or work.
- The **Accessing the Community** curriculum supports students to understand and access the rich leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities available within the city, providing the skills, knowledge and understanding to apply their developing independence skills to fulfil personal interest and engage with the community in a meaningful way.

Careful timetabling, individual route-mapping and the compiling of personal portfolios ensures that these key components work together to ensure that the needs of all students are met.

School Structure

The School has three departments: Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and the College (Key Stage 5). Key Stage 3 caters for students in Y7 – Y9 (11 – 14yrs), Key Stage 4 caters for students in Y10 & Y11 (14 – 16yrs) and the College caters for students aged 16 – 19 years.

Students are organised in classes with other students from their key stage to access the taught curriculum providing differentiated, personalised learning and teaching strategies appropriate to the individual student's needs. Students may work in different class groups and with different teachers where it is appropriate, for example in vocational subjects and enrichment groupings. The teacher and teaching assistants within the tutor group have a clearly defined pastoral role focussing on the social and emotional aspects of learning.

Vocational and Skills Pathways

When students join key stage 4 or key stage 5 they will be placed on a unique pathway dependent on their skills for learning and life. At Pioneer House we pride ourselves on preparing students exceptionally well for their next steps and recognise that our offer needs to be tailored to suit individual pupils' needs to ensure they have the skills and confidence to live independently and gain paid employment in the future.

Our upper school **Vocational Pathway** offer incorporates a range of bespoke vocational subjects and accreditation to support the personal development of our students. This area of the curriculum provides students with the opportunity to gain nationally recognised and standardised qualifications that are underpinned by The Adult Literacy Core Curriculum and The Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum. This runs alongside our **Skills Pathway** offer which focuses on developing learners' skills for life working towards the preparation for adulthood outcomes. The learning route has an emphasis on accessing the community and developing independent living skills. Both pathways offer the subjects which develop students' knowledge and understanding of personal finance, business, enterprise, independent living and the world of work. Some of this learning is accredited through awarding bodies including Gateway Qualifications, The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, The Princes Trust and AQA Unit Award Scheme.

'Leaders have an unswerving commitment to ensuring that every student has access to an ambitious curriculum. Curriculum leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum that they want all students to learn, including those of lower ability. The curriculum is very well organised, and leaders have thought deeply about the key knowledge and skills that students should learn, and the order in which the content should be taught, making learning relevant and relatable. A wide range of real-life opportunities in different contexts are provided for students, enabling them to practice their skills, through a continuous revisiting of them throughout the school'. (QA Report Summer 2023)

"Not a moment is wasted in the classroom. Teachers plan lessons meticulously so that they engage and enthuse students, build on previous learning and provide suitable challenge, particularly for the most able students" OFSTED report 2019

School terms and closure dates within KS3 and KS4 will reflect those of the Trust and other local schools, supporting families that have a number of children in school; in Manchester this is currently based on a three-term year. Training days for staff will be published annually in advance to enable families to plan for these occasions.

Please also read the School's SEND policy.

Education Health Care Plans

From 1 September 2014, Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN). The purpose of the Education, Health and Care plan is to identify needs across education, health and social care and the desired outcomes and provision needed to

enable these to be met. The person centred reviews are all about the child's life and they encourage decisions to be made with the family and child rather than made for them. They involve all parties that are working with the family/child and they ensure the voice of the family/child is captured and heard. Parents reported how valuable the EHCP process is for them and their pupils'. They felt valued, listened to and respected throughout the process. Further information on Education health Care Plans can be found in the SEN Code of Practice <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-2525>

Educational Health Care Plan meetings

Parents and carers are invited via letter to an EHCP review early on in the academic year. A one-page profile is included and home is requested to add any further information regarding their child. This ensures parents' and carers' are prepared and informed prior to the meeting, giving them a greater voice. All professionals working with the child will be invited to the annual review. If they cannot attend, it is anticipated that they will forward a report that can be shared at the meeting. Pupils' will be invited to join the review. The needs of Looked after pupils' within our school are catered for in line with all other pupils. There is a designated member of staff who ensures all multi agency professionals, parents and carers, and fostering agencies are invited to the PEP, LAC and EHCP meetings.

In addition, parents and carers are invited into school on a termly basis to discuss their child's EHC plan and progress they are making towards achieving their statement objectives. Learning outcomes are reviewed and reset for the forthcoming year together with a member of the senior leadership team and class tutor.

Keeping our pupils' safe

'The safeguarding and welfare of pupils is a priority for all staff at Pioneer House and is embedded through daily practise and procedures. Due to the heightened vulnerabilities of the pupils who attend the school, safety is of paramount importance and is managed through small class sizes, the low stimulus environment, safe spaces, staff training and through interactions with pupils. Staff know their children and families well and understand the importance of building relationships so that any concerns can be managed in a timely and effective manner'. (External Safeguarding Audit Spring 2023)

"Safeguarding is effective. Students are exceptionally well cared for. Students are highly knowledgeable about the potential risks to them, both at school and in the community, and how best to manage these." OFSTED report 2019

All staff are training in all areas of safeguarding in line with the KCSIE 2023 updated documents. Risk assessments are planned for very specific reasons to keep pupils' safe they include:

Individual Pupil Risk Assessments for Behaviour, Individual Pupil Risk Assessments for Moving and Handling and other Health Care Plans, Curriculum Risk Assessments where necessary, Risk Assessments for Offsite Educational Visits.

Disclosure and Barring Checks are carried out on all staff appointed to the school. Risk assessments for the school premises are carried out regularly including fire safety, moving and handling, electrical supply etc. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and in line with school policies on a regular basis; the school also carries out dynamic risk assessments to meet changing needs. Staff are trained in accordance with their roles and responsibilities across the school, to be able to carry out assessments of risk and plan to reduce and manage the risk; staff with key responsibilities are named in respective policies.

Many of the students attending Pioneer House arrive at school on home to school transport, managed by the local authority. There are procedures in place for all staff to receive the students' off the vehicles in the morning and to return them to their vehicles in the afternoon.

Some students are assessed as being competent independent travellers, students working towards competency are offered travel training by the Travel Coordination Unit. Other students are brought to school by parents and carers, an Early Birds club offers a safe and welcoming place for students who arrive at school before the student start time of 8.45am. On arriving and leaving school students were registered by a member of SLT or the teaching team.

Students' are registered in classes in line with the schools attendance policy and first day absence calls are made to parents when reasons for absences are not known. At the end of the school day students' leave the premises in a well organised, managed, safe and controlled way. Parents/carers collecting students' wait in the cafe area until their child is brought to them by a member of their class team before they are signed out of school by a member of the teaching team.

Parking areas are provided for students to be picked up and dropped off. Parents, carers, contractors and visitors are welcome to park within the school grounds. There are clearly marked parking bays for disabled badge holders, taxis and private cars. The vehicles entering and leaving the premises with students' are managed in a safe way.

Supervision of pupils' during breaks and lunchtimes

Break time arrangements are managed by teachers and support staff in each class according to student needs; students are supervised throughout this time. During lunchtimes we have a team of lunchtime organisers who join class teams to ensure there is a smooth transition between the morning and afternoon teaching times; supporting students in the dining hall, facilitating social interactions, supporting and delivering enriching activities in a variety of lunchtime clubs. Ensure students participate in some meaningful recreational activities and ensuring they return to their class ready to learn in the afternoon.

Arrangements are made depending on students' individual needs and class need.

Promoting Good Behaviour

'Behaviour is exemplary. The vast majority of students are taking ownership and effectively learning to self-regulate. Where this still provides a challenge for a small number of students, staff manage it extremely well, so that its barely noticeable and doesn't distract others'. (QA Report Autumn 2022)

"Students' behaviour, both in lessons and around school, is calm and orderly. Students quickly learn to regulate their own behaviour so that incidents reduce in frequency and severity. Students are sensitive to each other's needs and offer unsolicited support and guidance to each other."
OFSTED report 2019

At Pioneer House we stress the positive achievements of students and value the contributions that all students make to the life of their School. Good discipline is an essential pre-requisite for good learning. No matter the extent or nature of challenging behaviour, it is a barrier to learning and teaching for the individual concerned and for their peers. We believe that each child has a right to the best education which can be provided in a partnership between their school, parents and the community. We therefore aim, through strong, consistent and fair management of student behaviour, to establish a happy, secure and purposeful environment in which each child may develop his or her full potential. A key factor in achieving this good learning environment is ensuring that all students are given the support to develop appropriate behaviour for learning. Every child is therefore asked to conform to a code of conduct in school and parents are kept closely informed so that they can support the systems in use.

Help for families

During the EHCP meeting, and at any other formal and informal meetings and discussions, staff within school are able to offer support to parents with a wider range of queries or concerns they may have with regard their child's education. If parents and carers require support in completing forms, they are able to contact the school office who will then ensure that the school is able to offer the relevant support from either the child's class teacher or a member of the leadership team. Relevant paperwork will be completed in conjunction with parents and carers ensuring that confidentiality is maintained at all times. We will support families with the use of social stories, individual reward systems, bespoke lessons and activities around good behaviour, ensuring that we are consistent in maintaining a professional dialogue with all families to support the maintenance of positive working relationships between home and school. Parents feel welcome to contact school in relation to any support or advice they may need and can be confident that they will be signposted to relevant advice and support when requested.

The school works closely with pupils' families and social care, complex families and family intervention support staff where there are safeguarding or child protection concerns. Families will be signposted to appropriate service and support including assessments for short breaks.

'Plans are shared with parents. Examples were shared where school has gone above and beyond to support families. One parent said 'this is a future creating school, not just a school for special needs children'. Plans regarding the use of the on-site café to increase engagement have begun'.

'The school's offer of support to families is extensive and is a true reflection of the sense of community and belonging that is apparent throughout the school'.

(External Behaviour Audit – Summer 2023).

Induction and Transition Arrangements

For students with significant learning disabilities successful transition is a key to engagement with learning. Pioneer House takes great pride in ensuring that all transitions into, within and beyond school are well planned and structured through a programme of personalised support. The annual review process forms an important element of the transition process, both before students arrive at school and as they progress through. Transition planning in Y7, 9 and 11 is carefully structured to support students as they make the transition from one key stage to the next and as they transition to their adult life.

Transition from Y6 to Y7

Individual student needs are carefully considered to ensure that Pioneer House High School is an appropriate placement for each child, thereby being able to provide the most suitable educational environment to meet individual student need. EHC Plans inform admissions (taking in to account both prior levels of attainment and additional needs) in addition to a range of other information relating to each individual. Meetings with parents, visits to students in their current schools, discussions with current school staff and the views and opinions of other professionals working with the child, all provide a valuable insight into the child's needs which in turn informs the decision making process and support appropriate placement.

Once it has been agreed that the school can provide the right educational experience for an individual, the child is invited to participate in a transition programme in the Summer Term, prior to them joining Pioneer House in the Autumn. This programme offers a number of supported visits to Pioneer House High School, over a period of weeks which are initially supported by staff from child's the current school, wherever possible. Transition is supported by printed and digital resources, summer school transition visits and personalised materials to allow familiarisation with the school before arrival and admission.

Transition within school

It is equally important that student needs are taken into account at the time of transition between Key Stages. As a student progresses through the school the balance of time allocated to vocational curriculum elements is considerably enhanced. Starting in KS3, transition planning is an integral part of the Annual Review process, where individual future aspirations are discussed with students, their parents / carers and other professionals. Students are equally supported when they make the transition from KS4 into the 16-19 provision. All sixth form students receive independent careers advice which inform EHC plans to ensure that the student has chosen the correct accreditation/options pathways to fulfil their potential and realistic future aspirations.

Transition from school into the world of work

At Pioneer House High School, we aim to ensure that each individual has as much support as possible to achieve their longer-term goals and aspirations with regards to employment. Based on realistic careers education in KS3 students begin to consider future possibilities in Key stage 4 and develop these in the Sixth form. Careers education includes opportunities to meet students who have successfully gained sustainable employment through a range of routes, including post-19 pre- internships and supported internships.

Those students for whom internships with local employers are a realistic aspiration follow a pre-internship programme to support their transition to work. The school is proactive in establishing links with local employers; independent and supported work experience placements are offered according to the needs and aspirations of students and their families. Visits to colleges and work placements both on and off site are programmed in throughout KS4 and KS5 to ensure that leavers are able to make an informed choice regarding their post 16 and post 19 destinations.

'It was truly remarkable and inspiring how a group of school leavers are able to have an adult conversation with the QA and strongly demonstrate how they have developed and grown as mature, self-confident, self-assured young adults, passionate about what they are going to do in employment and clear about the journey to get there'. (QA Report, Summer 2022)

Extracurricular activities

Pioneer House has a lively and comprehensive programme of enrichment activities both within and outside the school day. Students access sporting events across the city, visit art galleries and museums, make use of libraries and bookshops and access outdoor leisure destinations such as Chorlton Water Park or Delamere Forest. Students will also have the opportunity to attend off-site residentials as part of a developing programme in school including the leavers residential trip to London.

'The range of opportunities made available to the students is getting wider and more diverse. They are accessing more of what is on offer to mainstream students, locally, regionally, and nationally. Expectations of what the students can achieve are high; staff are ambitious for their students'. (QA Report Autumn 2023)

Working together

We believe co-operation and discussion between parents and staff is essential, and that establishing an effective partnership between home and school will give each student the maximum opportunity for development.

All students have a home school diary, which is completed on a daily basis at school and is used for communication between home and school. The weekly timetable is included in the diary. The diary is a useful tool to support communication between parents and carers and the class tutor. A newsletter is sent home to parents on a regular basis over the year. This contains information about forthcoming events together with information on topics of particular interest.

There are many events in school during the year, to which parents are invited. Staff and students work hard to prepare for these occasions and an audience is always appreciated.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school at any time. Parents' are asked to telephone school beforehand to make an appointment if they wish to see someone in particular.

As a student enters school, they (if appropriate) and their parents are made aware of the home/school contract. This states clearly what is expected from school and home:

The School will:

- Welcome, value and support our pupils through school and as they make the transition to the world beyond school
- Provide an environment, a curriculum and opportunities which enable pupils achieve their targets and their potential, with particular focus on preparation for adult life
- Expect and reward high standards of conduct, effort, and attendance – attributes which will be important in the world beyond school
- Care for the wellbeing and safety of pupils by following its policies which include those on bullying and safeguarding
- Be open and welcoming to all parents and carers, encouraging them to be involved in the life of the school and informing them about school matters and the progress of their pupils'
- Involve those agencies which can support pupils and their parents through the period of transition to the world of work, training and further education.

Parent/carers will try their best to:

- See that my child attends school, when medically fit, and on time wearing appropriate uniform/clothing, and provide PE kit and necessary equipment
- Communicate to school directly when my child is absent
- Support the school's policy on conduct and rules in school or activities beyond school such as work experience or after school events
- Support my child in home learning as well as in tasks in the community and work with school to achieve the targets agreed at your child's annual EHC Review
- Let the school know of any problems or concerns that may affect my child's work or behaviour

- Attend Parents Evenings and Annual Review Meetings and well as support the transition of my child to the world beyond school
- Ensure that I can be contacted at all times during the school day

School Council

Pioneer House has a well -established school council which is well supported and managed by Higher Level Teaching Assistants. The school council is made up of student representatives from each class who meet regularly to discuss a range of topics relating to the school.

We want students to be fully involved in school life and to help make important decisions such as how funds are raised and spent, to taking part in staff recruitment. This is an important aspect of student voice within the school.

'Significant strength is in the school's culture in character building, through provision enabling many leadership opportunities (school council, sports leadership, ECO group, Mental Health Champions) as part of the students' personal development, to prepare them in successfully moving on from school and taking their place in the real world'. (QA Report Autumn 2022)

Complaints procedure - a detailed complaints policy is available on the school website.