



Our Orpheus Transition Offer





Our Intention

From the moment learners arrive at Orpheus, they begin the next chapter of their journey into adulthood, and as it has become known by learners and staff at the Orpheus, their Next Stage. Transition at Orpheus is a time for learners to feel empowered, to have access to a wealth of information, advice, and guidance to support them to make choices and decisions for their futures and promote their independence.

What does transition look like at Orpheus and how do we implement meeting the aspirations and needs of our learners?

- Learners have a personalised curriculum that supports their aspirations and keeps them at the centre of everything that we do.
- Learners have access to work experience in the first two years of the three-year programme at Orpheus, in order for them to explore their aspirations and develop vital employability skills and behaviours.
- In their final year at Orpheus, learners may be able to access our supported internship programme, or work ready programme, that provides practical extended experience of the world of work in line with their transition plans.
- All learners have access to their 'Next Stage Planners' which documents their journey and exploration of their future plans. They have access to personalised transition & impartial careers meetings, tutorials and visits to support community inclusion whilst working towards qualifications that support their progression.
- We explore transition using the Preparing for Adulthood framework/guidance and this allows the learner to navigate key areas that supports their transition planning.
- Next Stage Events at the college that offer learners and their families the opportunity to interact with exhibitors from all the Preparing for Adulthood areas – Housing, Employment, Health and Community based services from local and national levels.





The PFA outcomes

Employment (ETE) – Learners are supported to access individual work experience, group work activities, meaningful employer encounters and enterprise activities in line with their future aspirations or that support their development of vital employability skills and behaviours.



Independent Living & Housing – a high proportion of our learners access the transition team in order to springboard into furthering their independence with sourcing independent housing.





Health - It is crucial that health links are maintained throughout the learners' time at Orpheus, as it increases every opportunity to lead a healthy lifestyle and ensures that access to specialist services are maintained. The promotion of healthy eating and overall well-being are part of the curriculum and the learner's educational journey at Orpheus.



Community – We empower our learners to participate positively in their chosen communities, by identifying activities and opportunities that encourages social inclusion and skill developments that promote independence, choice and safety.





Who do the learners have access to during their transition?

We have a dedicated Transition Team that consists of the following

- **Transition Manager** - works with all learners in college. Works more intensely with final year learners, providing regular 1:1 opportunity to support learners in identifying their independent living ideas/options, supports employment activities, helps learners to identify community and health provision they can participate in their local areas on leaving. There is a particular focus on the role to assist with learners six months after they leave the college in their final year.
- **Work Experience Coordinator** - works with all learners in a work placement related capacity in and out of the classroom – the focus of the first and second years is to gain work experience. In the learner's final year there is a specific focus on them having a substantial placement in the community in the form of a supported internship, work placement or work-related activity.
- **Careers Adviser** –works with all learners to raise their awareness around the world of work in line with their career aspirations, whilst matching their skills and interests to possible career pathways.
- **Learning and Care Team Tutors, LSAs and LSCAs** – The role of the personal tutor is to coordinate a learning programme for the learners in their final year and this will include overseeing the qualifications that the learners will be undertaking. It is complemented by following the Preparing for Adulthood guidance. Tutors are responsible for coordinating tutorials, monitoring learner progress, and providing crucial information for learner reviews. This is all complemented by the learning and care support team who are invaluable in the learning journey of the learners.
- **Supported Housing Officer** - works with tenant-learners with all housing management issues, manages the properties for the duration and oversees all benefits queries relating to housing. They will support the final year learners to find a property commensurate with their aspirations, this applies to all learners, not just those living on site.
- **Job Coaches** - It is the role of the job coach to assist with employability activities in and outside of the College. They employ systematic instruction when coaching and mentoring learners in the workplace.





Successful transition depends on successful partnership working. The core partners may include:

- Housing and Support providers in the learners' local communities.
- Dedicated learning provider staff (e.g., vocational tutors, employer liaison officers, learning support staff)
- Job coaches (whether employed by the learning provider or contracted from an external agency, such as a supported employer);
- Cultivating relationships with families and their friends in the community.
- Local Authority – social services e.g., Transition and Learning Disability Teams, and accessing the SEND offer.
- Employers, job coaches, government agencies and volunteering organisations.
- Health Specialists, therapists, and clinicians
- We have a strong alumni base that take time out of their life after Orpheus to support current learners in a peer support capacity. This may involve visits to their new home or via a virtual platform.

Beyond Orpheus – What can the learners expect?

- A seamless transition to the next stage of their journey after Orpheus.
- Up to at a minimum of six months support on leaving Orpheus as directed by the learner.
- Accessing housing options and ideas.
- Opportunities within their local communities.
- Ensuring that life aspirations are met in terms of PFA outcomes, these are reviewed with the learner periodically when they leave.
- Access to Alumni in order to tap into their experience of transition.

We have a saying at Orpheus 'Transition never sleeps', as the service operates all year round and is available to learners, alumni, and their parent-carers with any questions they may have.





What impact has our transition offer had on our learners?

Many of our learners have transitioned to supported housing in order to embrace their next stage. Some learners may return home with a new air of confidence and strengthened links within their local communities. It is often the learner's intention to seek further education, volunteering, or paid employment when they leave Orpheus. There are a few case studies below that I'm sure will give you a flavour of learner journeys.

Case Studies

Andrew

Andrew is a talented dancer with a real ability to connect with his audience. He claims to have "Dance Syndrome" rather than Down's syndrome and has never let his disability stand in the way of a good cha cha cha. When Andrew came to the Orpheus Centre as a day learner, he found it hard to keep up as he has severe hearing impediments and



had to have a lot of time off for medical reasons. With the patience and support of the learning team he became more confident.

Andrew has really enjoyed his dance tuition at Orpheus. Last year we enabled him to do work experience with different dance professionals working with able and disabled learners in schools. He also took part in a research project with the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) as they explored how to make their formal dance curriculum more inclusive, culminating in a performance at the University of Bedford that was later revisited at U.Dance 2019 at the Southbank Centre.

Andrew auditioned and secured a role alongside actors from Arts Educational in the West End show *Orpheus the Mythical*, written by Orpheus founder Sir Richard Stilgoe. This helped build his confidence for his later appearance on the BBC's Greatest Dancer show and an appearance at Sadler's Wells. He also took part in a McCain's advertisement on television.

Andrew regularly attends both Stop Gap Youth Dance and Candoco Dance Company Youth Squad in London. He is in his final year and living in a supported housing flat at Orpheus and hopes to move into further supported housing when he moves on in August. He has completed his supported internship in a hair Salon in Lingfield who has currently asked him to continue training with them when he leaves. This year he won the One Dance UK Personality of the Year Awards.





Frankie

With her brightly coloured customised outfits, Frankie is a highly creative, confident young woman with a passion for art and fashion and heavy metal music.

At the age of 20, Frankie had her nervous system damaged by a serious illness (acute axonal Guillain- Barre syndrome) leaving her unable to move her arms and legs in fact she lost control of muscles below her neck and even her voice was hoarse. After neuro rehabilitation her recovery progressed and she was able to join us at the Orpheus Centre in her own supported housing flat, with leg supports and with the use of a wheelchair to get

around. Frankie worked hard at her rehabilitation and said, "I am all the stronger for what I have been through, and Orpheus has played a big part in that too."

Now, with the support of the Orpheus Centre's highly skilled tutors, she has found an outlet for her creativity, participating in the Orpheus Centre's fist art exhibition earlier this year and securing several commissions for her stunning masks. Orpheus secured work experience at the Surrey Wardrobe for her, where she assisted with making props for them and sorting and pressing costumes. Frankie joined the Art and Design team for the Orpheus theatre productions and has solely designed the costumes for the last three major productions, assisting in sourcing costumes at an assortment of costume stores.

Frankie can walk now with leg supports, using her wheelchair when tired and improvements are ongoing. Last year as an early riser Frankie assisted every morning in staffing the Orpheus reception. Orpheus was then able to secure work experience for her at a local primary school covering reception and occasional classroom work with the year ones, which she excelled at, to the extent that a supported internship of three days a week was offered to her for the academic year 2019-20. Frankie has had the experience in both areas now and prefers the classroom she has done a short course and been invited back to extend her internship until December with scope for further opportunity to get a job with them in 2021 as a classroom assistant. Frankie has already moved on from us into her own flat in Reigate and has made it home. She is now studying a diploma level 2 in Early Years for Practitioners.





Oliver

Ollie is a friendly and affable young man, always happy to stop for a chat or a joke. Ollie takes pride in rising to a challenge and often surprises himself.

Ollie has dyspraxia tendencies and learning difficulties attributed to this. Although at the start he had no experience of living independently and struggled with communication and interaction today, two years on, Ollie is living in his own flat, organising his own personal assistants and doing his own shopping each week. Living on site in the Orpheus Centre's supported housing has meant that Ollie has been able to put into practice the skills he has learnt during the day in class. He can sort and put his own washing on and with support makes his own dinner each night. He is now imminently moving on into shared supported housing in Caterham.



He lives life to the full, the way he wants to, attending a trampolining class one night a week and going swimming regularly. He enjoys watching wrestling on the television, frequently going with other learners to a live match on the weekend. In the evenings he likes to play on his X Box with friends. Theatre is his big passion, and he belongs to a theatre group as well as acting in the Orpheus Centre productions.

This is Ollie's final year at Orpheus. From September 2019 Ollie attended a 3 day a week supported internship at the YMCA in Sports Leadership and at the Arc as a community helper which is something he has particularly enjoyed and to which he will continue both placements after he leaves us in July 2020. As Ollie grows professionally, he hopes to help with front of house in the local theatre, potentially progressing to backstage, as this is what he wants to do for the future.





Charlie



Charlie is an incredible showman and raconteur with an amazing memory. His autism does not hold him back, on the contrary it makes him who he is. Charlie lives in one of the supported housing flats at the Orpheus. Although sometimes untidy (!) he fends for himself with very little support from personal assistants. In the evening he has been attending an inclusive choir outside in the community but on the whole, he reads a lot and very much enjoys his own space. Charlie is now looking forward to moving into shared supported housing in the Horley area.

Charlie's first love has to be all about the voice, and he eventually wants to be a voiceover artist. Orpheus arranged funding for him to experience a voiceover studio where he spent time with BBC Radios 2 and 4 presenter, Fenella Fudge. She gave him rigorous training, lots of tips on how to start up and stated that Charlie had a particularly pronounced voice and showed real potential.

During his learning time he has also done a work placement at a local community radio station where he prepared the show lists each week, researched artists and then co presented the live feed. Charlie also spent time in a stained-glass studio, where he enjoyed creating original pieces as his second love is art. Through the Orpheus Centre, Charlie has had the opportunity to put his artistic skills to good use and for one production, Around the World in 80 Days, he made a room sized model railway then dressed in his ring master's tails and top hat he demonstrated to the audience where the train was going taking the audience through all the foreign places that were indicated in the production. Charlie also exhibited some of his artwork at the first Orpheus learner art exhibition, including silk screen drawing, photography and mask making and he was delighted to find some of his work sold.





Charlie has also taken part in our theatrical productions most recently as a skirted pirate, Smee, in Peter Pan and with his orator's voice he compered the Orpheus music festival and more recently our Intensive week.

Earlier in the year Charlie auditioned to Portsmouth University for the lead part in a film about an autistic boy called "Milo". Needless to say, he got the part and proceeded to film all over the Easter break living/ working in Portsmouth. He had a delightful leading lady and he interacted with both crew and cast, getting on with everyone. The film was an enormous success. I am sure he will continue auditioning for any further opportunities to his acting career.

Charlie is completing his final year and Orpheus secured a three-day internship for him in his last year with the Cooperative whereas a retail assistant he successfully did till and back office, restocking and customer service. Charlie has now made a bid and received further funding to get his demo tapes for his voice overs recorded and to have the training to teach him how to be self-employed, costing jobs and dealing with invoicing, this will make him work ready and able to run his own voice over business in the future.



Manny

Manny attended specialist college the Orpheus Centre for three years and has just moved on to supported accommodation. This is his story, in his own words:

"I think what has really helped me a lot and has made me a better person is how much I've matured as a man. I used to run away a lot when I got upset and I would also get cross with people and my tutors, I wouldn't talk to anyone and used to find it very hard to listen to other people's opinions. I used to sit on the bench outside and stay out in the cold because I didn't have the confidence, and I was very shy. I didn't feel that I fitted in very well, and sometimes I wasn't very good at being able to show when I got cross, and I didn't express it in a very good way.

Being at Orpheus really helped me to listen to other people's opinions, even if it was different from mine. It's given me a lot of confidence and made me feel that I have a





voice. It's changed how I feel about people and how I feel about the world. It has made me a better person. I am able to not be as cross all the time and control how I manage my emotions. I also talk about how I feel more, which is a lot better for me.

I also feel that I can speak a little more clearly now as well. Being at Orpheus has helped me improve with how I work with people and how I can be more helpful and a great team player. Orpheus has really helped me realize who I am and who I want to be in the world. It's helped me realize what path I want to take in life and what I would like to do with my life. Orpheus helps people have a voice and helps you to become a better person, which then makes a better world. I feel that before I came to Orpheus, my life was falling apart, but now I feel that I've made amazing progress.

About a month ago I moved into Fairways, I was nervous at first because I was worried that I wasn't going to fit in and settle well. However, on my first day I was warmly welcomed by staff members Charlotte and Luke who kindly helped me set up my room the way I like it which made me feel at home and happy.

On my first night I watched a film with staff member, Belle, and sat with my new house mate, Craig, who was playing on his iPad. at the time I was not sure how to talk with him as he appeared to be shy and nervous, and I was not sure how to start a conversation or how to join in when Craig was making silly jokes with staff.

Myself and Craig have become close friends now as I've learnt how to talk with him as I realised he struggles to hold conversations, I will ask him yes or no questions and use a thumbs up or thumbs down which helps him understand what I am trying to say. I also have fun with him and join in with silly jokes he makes- I think he finds me funny, and I think he's a very funny person too.

At first, I thought my other house mate, Thomas, spoke very fast and I was worried that I wouldn't be able to understand what he is saying but now I've learnt to just really listen and have fun with him as he is a very kind person. I feel as though me and Thomas are friends now.

I did lots of activities at Fairways during my transition for example, travel training, sea life centre, Thorpe Park, Chessington, lunch out, bowling and cinema which was very good. If I ever felt overwhelmed, I would stand outside with staff and talk it through in the fresh air which helps me collect my thoughts, I feel as though the staff members working here are always here for me and keep me safe which makes me feel at home and happy.

I am looking forward to continuing with the Brighton Film Course and making some more short films. Because of lockdown, my experience with the Brighton Film Course was cut short, so I am looking forward to getting back to this on more of a long-term basis. I'm very excited to see what it is actually like to work on a big set.

I'm also really looking to taking part in the Oska Bright Film Festival, in Brighton. I'm looking forward to making a short film and having a chance to work with more people





and doing something different. I will also be doing more work with writing, filming and directing a short film and experiencing what that is like.

I am looking forward to carrying on with my exercise and seeing how I progress in life. The advice I can give to someone who is nervous about transitioning is to just be open and honest with staff and talk about your problems with them, because if you don't your problems will not be solved. It is very important to try and share how you are feeling, remember that staff are here to help and support you! Also, show the staff how much you appreciate them and enjoy living there. Feel confident and try to put worries in the back of your head as everything will work out perfectly in the end!"

