



# Essex Fresh Start Independent School



Essex Fresh Start  
Independent School

## Where every child matters

### Vision – Community Values

As CEO and Schools' Proprietor of TCES Group, my personal vision sees our schools as inclusive, thriving, socially and emotionally healthy communities. This vision is driven by my deeply held belief that human beings thrive in positive environments.

To enable this to happen, Essex Fresh Start School's staff and pupils must be supported to own and deliver the Community and British Values of our schools and services, which are:

1. **Very high expectations**
2. **Hard work**
3. **Mutual respect and tolerance of all**
4. **Authentic 'real' inclusion**
5. **Genuine pupil, parent and staff voice and participation**
6. **A 'We never give up' philosophy for our pupils and staff**

### Social Enterprise

EFS is part of TCES Group, a social enterprise where society profits. Our social mission - developing our pupils as tomorrow's leaders and maximising our pupils' well-being and future opportunities is more important than profits, which are reinvested back into the social mission and purpose.

This reinvestment includes high staff to pupil ratios of 2:6 and a substantial clinical offer and Therapeutic Milieu delivered by a large team of specialist clinicians and therapeutically informed and supported staff.

### Governors Expertise

The TCES Group has a Board of Directors who act as a traditional Board of Governors (not a legal entity) for EFS, distinctly different to any other School's Governors. Our Governors are not volunteers but are full time and paid senior managers with substantial experience, qualifications and expertise in areas of Safeguarding, Education, Finance, HR, Facilities, Clinical and Social Work. This provides a significant element of expertise, professionalism and constructive challenge to the substantial support and strategic management that the TCES Group Governing Body provide to Essex Fresh Start School.



“

From day one Janine has been there, supporting us through everything. I cannot put into words how she has affected mine and Rhys' lives. She has done her job above and beyond the call of duty.

*Parent*

”

# The context of our school

## Pupil Voice and Participation

At EFS we believe that by empowering pupils, who so often feel marginalised, they can actively shape their lives and ongoing education as citizens and take an element of control of their futures.

We do this in two ways:

- Pupils at EFS consistently achieve learning and accreditation outcomes that far outweigh the expectations they arrive with when they start at EFS. They leave EFS with meaningful learning outcomes and a clear understanding of, 'what next'!

Our focus at EFS is to work out (quickly, as we only have some pupils for a very short time in Y11) what pupils like to do (and build accreditation around that), what their strengths are and what they need to enable them to move on to education, work or training at the end of their time at EFS.

- We believe that the often-unnoticed pathway to removing barriers to learning and increasing self-esteem and success lies within the pupils themselves. We have to allow our pupils to discover their own voices by giving them a real voice to begin with.

This challenge cannot be symbolically met by our school and organisation, but must be the central tenet of everything we do. Our pupils must feel empowered to have a strong voice and this voice must be listened to. Evidence of this voice must be seen in the full participation of our pupils in the running of the school and their involvement and full engagement in every aspect of school life.

“

For the last three years Janine has supported both myself and Jordan. She has been amazing. Essex Fresh Start was the best thing from the start. The school and Janine have brought Jordan so far. He never would be where he is today without Janine and the staff. Thank you.

Parent

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## Leadership training

EFS is using the vehicle of 'Leadership Week' to launch a new programme of Leadership training for all pupils. We believe that the often difficult and sometimes traumatic upbringing of some of our pupils instill in them strengths and talents that if channelled properly will lead inevitably to different aspects of leadership. Developing leadership potential has benefits for the individual, their group, the whole school and their communities beyond TCES Group. Leadership development for pupils can shape the positive and promote harmony as well as promoting a strengths-based approach in relation to our pupils by all parents and carers, staff and stakeholders.

## Parent Voice and Participation

At EFS we recognise that the empowerment of parents through real parental voice and engagement can be a very effective channel for encouraging mass engagement and enabling a school community to be formed. As in many organisations, the active parents are not necessarily representative of the parent body as a whole, with the parents who the school needs to engage with often under-represented. Our School Parent Voice and Participation champion is building relationships with Parents and Carers which reduces their marginalisation and helps them to actively participate in the life of the school.

## Engagement Curriculum (Learning Programmes) for very vulnerable pupils

EFS offers an engagement curriculum and off-site learning programme for those pupils who struggle through their ASC or SEMH diagnoses inter-reacting negatively with a wide range of debilitating co-morbidities including anxiety, depression, ADHD, Fragile X, behavioural issues or other mental disorders. These pupils need to rediscover how to engage in small group education through a very personalised and bespoke curriculum which takes place in the community in the first instance.

Working 1:1 with an Assertive Outreach Tutor, pupils build rapport and are supported to develop secure attachments. This groundwork is essential to begin the process of enhancing their social, life, group and independence skills and to ensure that they are given both the opportunity and support to develop clear group-related career pathways. EFS provides significant additional resources for these pupils to benefit from our 5 part curriculum, including Therapeutic Hubs, local resources where pupils who are being educated in the community can work with schools' Clinical and Therapy team and 'touch-base'.

Our 1:1 Assertive Outreach Tutors also attend vocational curriculum and work experience placements with the pupils to ensure they fully engage. It is accepted that these pupils will need several years of on-going provision to counteract their significant gaps in education and their severe SEN disabilities.

“

Clarke was with TCES for a short while, he said he wished he had gone to that school from the beginning. He has come away with qualifications and friends.

Parent

”

“

Nice to see the interaction between teachers and pupils. Thanks.

Grandparents

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## Enrichment Curriculum

Children's lives today can be driven by gaming or television and have minimal connection to the natural world. Helping pupils develop and nurture an appreciation of nature is a fundamental element that not only safeguards our wildlife and environment but also generalises the nurturing approach we take to educating our pupils to the wider world.

Helping to educate future generations on the importance of engagement with the natural world and encouraging care-giving encourages awe and wonder, develops practical skills, empathy and practical, scientific knowledge-gathering.

By teaching children that every animal, all nature and people have the right to life, we encourage the development of a respect and appreciation of nature that mirrors the values-driven by our 'in-school' curriculum.

We recognise that timetabled and meaningful activity with organisations that promote animal care and welfare and teach in and about the natural world, have the ability to decrease vulnerability in those with a range of needs.



## Vocational and work-like experience

EFS believes in the importance of offering every pupil, no matter what their barriers to learning may be, the opportunity to engage with meaningful and relevant work-like experience. To know what lies ahead in the world of work is an invaluable curriculum opportunity which contributes to:

**Intellectual development** - teaching how to think, problem solve and apply solutions in wider problems in other contexts

**Personal development** - increasing sense of self-worth, resilience and self-management through the positive experience of creating working solutions to real challenges

**Wider understanding of the world** - all aspects of human activity in the world of work are being constantly shaped and changed and pupils need to know what is required of them

**Future employability** – each pupil’s access to employment, leisure and life-long learning will be shaped by the knowledge, skills and understanding they acquire at this time.



“

Students waited with patience and maturity to receive their Records of Achievement, all bursting with certificates.

*Kevin Parker*

”

TCES Group is uniquely driven by a vision and principle of real inclusiveness in our school community, where all pupils and not just the most able are a vital part of promoting diversity and the breaking down of all stereotypes that could create division within our school community.



EFS has a real focus around inclusion, which will result in applying for an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) in the autumn term, 2017. This essential inclusion work is done through individual relationship mentoring as well as group work with multiple groups including; Student Council, Anti-Bullying Council, Community Council, Group Process, Tutor Groups, Group and Celebration Assemblies, Leadership Group training and Group Therapy.

“

A big thank you to all the hardworking staff who have made Alex what he is today. He has come so far.

*Parents*

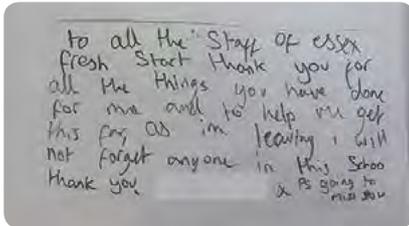
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# Recent tweeting from @TCESgroup

**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

13 Oct 2016

Some well-deserved #feedback for @TCESgroup school, #Essex Fresh Start. Well done to our #teachers for #makingadifference. #PupilAttitudes



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Nov 11 #Essex Fresh Start school just held their first Parent Voice meeting with Suffolk parents in Ipswich Town Hall #parentvoice #EducationForAll



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Jan 4 2017 Here are some of our #Essex pupils exploring natural indicators during their #Science lesson. They used red cabbage to determine pH levels.



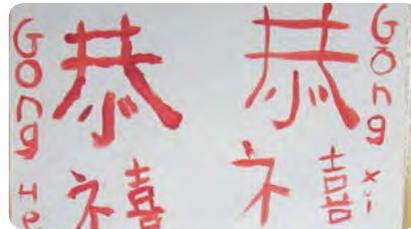
**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Jan 5 Christmas may be over, but we thought the opportunity to share our #Essex #pupils creating their own Christmas jumpers was too good to miss!



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Jan 30 Pupils at our EFS #Witham school have been celebrating the #Chinesenewyear by learning to write #Chinese words. We're impressed!



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Did you know that our #Essex EFS #school is a registered #dukeofedinburgh award centre? Read more in our bulletin:



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 7 Pupils at EFS #Witham dressed up as characters from books for #WorldBookDay. Here's the #EasterBunny from 'Peter Rabbit's Happy Easter'



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 9 For Cultural Week EFS #Witham pupils are exploring European obscure structures. On a visit to @AMOrbit staff & pupils braved the slide.



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 22 #Essex pupil finds missing dog! #Essexlife #education



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 24 Our #Essex Fresh Start #School in #Witham have raised a fantastic £87.80 in their charity bake off for #RedNoseDay #comicalrelief



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 24 Our #Essex pupils took part in a bake off for #RedNoseDay Pupils had fun and were meticulous when it came down to choosing their designs!



**TCES Group @TCESgroup**

Mar 24 Our Yr 6 #Essex pupil creates a #PowerPoint book about #bees <http://www.tces.org.uk/essex-fresh-start-year-6-pupil-creates-book-bees/> ... #EducationForAll #apiology #Witham



# What the councils say about EFS

## Feedback following a Suffolk Independent School Quality Assurance inspection

I would like to thank you, your staff and pupils for making us so welcome during our recent monitoring visit. We were both impressed by the behaviour displayed by the pupils, both in the classroom and during more unstructured times. Those we spoke to, gave positive feedback about their school. They told us that their views are taken into consideration and they showed an appreciation of the atmosphere they experience at Essex Fresh Start.

During our visit, we observed staff engaging with pupils and the majority were focused on work and progress was being made. There were clear systems of rewards and sanctions displayed around the school and which pupils were aware of. Progress is monitored and interventions planned, in line with individual pupils need. The data we were provided with demonstrated progress from baselines. This data is analysed termly and any concerns are raised and dealt with at this point.

You showed us evidence of a rich curriculum offer that focuses on early stages of pupils' time in school focusing on 'quick wins' using AQA awards. We felt the way you use CCTV in the school to reflect on any MAPA interventions was an extremely positive and resourceful use of CCTV to improve the practice of staff in this area.



“

What a privilege to be invited to your graduation ceremony and celebrate your hard work and successful achievements. Thinking about how well you have all done makes me feel very proud and puts a huge smile on my face knowing that Essex Fresh Start have prepared you for your next journey.

*Out of County Special Needs Officer, Suffolk (speaking to pupils)* ”

“The British Values curriculum is clearly displayed on the walls in all areas of the school. This promotes safeguarding. Pupils commented they feel safe and they know who to talk to if they have any concerns.”

“The anti-bullying policy, your anti-bullying week and anti-bullying contracts clearly address bullying both in centre and online.”

“There is a proactive school council that meets weekly with a member of the pastoral team and half termly with the senior leadership team to address any issues that may arise and ideas that are put forward by the pupils improve the school.”

“There are clear expectations of behaviour in school and behaviour system is clearly displayed around the school. Pupils told us that they had no issues with signing the behaviour policy and that they understood it.”

“

I am very confident that Essex Fresh Start will make a success of this additional year for Kiran to undertake a course at college as you've done for another pupil I had on my caseload.

*Out of County Special Needs Officer, Suffolk* ”

## “Pupils are a credit to your school and their tutors”

EFS' Clacton and Witham sites were recently inspected under the CCRAAG (Children's Cross Regional Arrangements Group) Form B monitoring procedures. Although this process is not statutory, it is obligatory to meet their required contractual compliance targets. EFS was inspected by Essex County Council, our designated lead authority for this purpose, on 17 November.

Aside from this intensive inspection, the schools were also inspected by Suffolk County Council through their own Quality Assurance framework on 29 November.

Staff worked incredibly hard on what were two long and arduous days. “It is evident that the school makes huge attempts to engage young people to attend and achieve. I witnessed good rapport and trust between pupils and staff, and the young people I spoke to articulated that they felt safe and empowered within the setting,” inspectors from Essex County Council said.

The feedback also successfully highlighted the strong leadership that is ever-present at EFS. Said the inspectors: “the dedication and leadership enables me to feel confident that anything that is even remotely suggested is then taken and acted upon; the management structure appears well organised. The confidence and trust that the pupils have in their tutors is wonderful and what every parent/commissioner would want: that their child feels confident to raise things that were bothering them and be able to articulate and know that ‘something’ would be done and that they felt listened to and heard. The pupils’ behaviour was exceptional.”

Congratulations to EFS on the tremendous feedback received from Essex County Council. The Suffolk County Council report will be available in the New Year.



“

... although there are difficult moments, it sounds as if things with M are going well and that he is continuing to settle in with you. Many thanks for your ongoing support and the careful thought that you give to meeting M's needs.

*Social Worker, Hackney*

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On behalf of Suffolk County Council and colleagues from the Inclusion Service, Children and Young People's Directorate:

Our feedback on the work Essex Fresh Start do with our young people is positive.

We place some of our most complex and challenging young people with Essex Fresh Start and the individual packages that they put in place is extremely good.

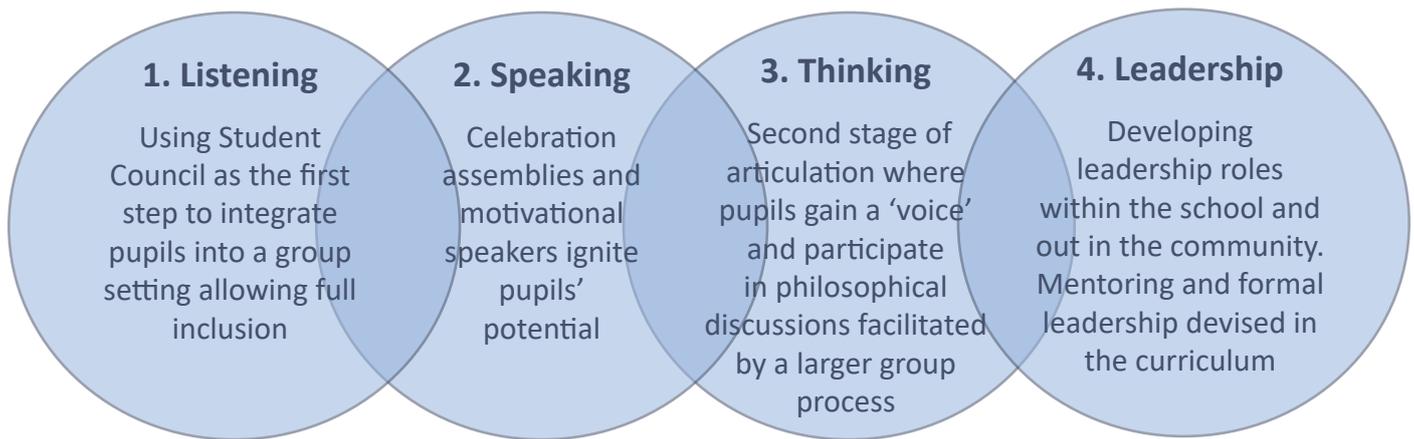
The work Essex Fresh Start work do with the young people and the correspondence we receive is of a good quality.

The transition work and packages of support the young people and their families receive is highly differentiated and truly helps these young people reintegrate back into education in a positive mindset.

*Special Needs Officer, Inclusion Service, Children & Young People's Services, Suffolk County Council*

# TCES Group Inclusion and Socialisation Model

TCES Group's Inclusion and Socialisation Model is uniquely driven by the vision and principle of real inclusiveness in our school communities. The model is based upon four core stages of principal communication strategies designed to enable pupils to learn how to engage as part of a group. We are close to establishing a national model of excellence around inclusion.



## About TCES Group

Essex Fresh Start Independent School is part of the TCES Group. TCES Group schools provide LA funded day-school education for pupils aged 7-18 years whose Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) needs or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) has made it difficult for them to achieve success in a mainstream school. Pupils will often have additional undiagnosed learning needs, Speech, Language and Communication needs (SLCN) or sensory needs which create a complex set of barriers to learning that must be addressed before the pupil can settle into education. Pupils attending our schools often need highly personalised learning programmes and can remain for ongoing provision, specialising in developing independence, preparation for adult life and life after school (including study at college or preparation for the world of work).

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