

Refocus Intervention Programme Information Guide

Programme Overview

The aim of the Refocus Intervention Programme is to provide targeted intervention for students to address behaviour that prevents access to learning and places the student at risk of exclusion. The programme offers a 14 week full time placement at Horizons Academy and is suitable for primary and secondary students.

The Refocus Programmes offers full time study including a personal and social development curriculum based on cognitive behavioural strategies that aim to support students to manage their way of relating to other people and situations that may otherwise cause problems and obstacles in a mainstream educational setting.

In addition, all students participate in the Reintegration Success Programme which is delivered each week. This programme is designed to address the individual reasons leading to exclusion by targeting the underlying difficulties contributing to common behaviours exhibited by children and young people. Managing feelings and responses to situations, dealing with conflict, positive social interaction and accepting the direction of adults requires a level of emotional intelligence often lacking in students excluded from school. Our aim is to support our children and young people to build these skills using interactive group sessions as part of the Refocus Programme.

Primary students in year 6 and all students within our secondary provision participate in the Targeted Outreach Project delivered each term through the Refocus programme. The Targeted Outreach Project is a thought provoking and hard hitting workshop designed to address the impact and reality of risk taking behaviours on vulnerable young people. Topics covered include substance misuse, offensive weapons, gangs and joint enterprise, exploitation, healthy relationships and county lines. The programme targets specific challenges faced by children and young people whilst focussing on how to make positive life choices in order to improve life chances both in school and the community.

A weekly report is produced regarding student engagement and attendance with a full report focussing on attendance, behaviour and progress in core subjects included at review meetings throughout the placement. All students attending the Refocus Programme receive reintegration support in the home school upon completion of the programme to ensure continuity of progress.

Referral Selection Information

All referrals are considered by the New Horizons Panel. The panel consists of colleagues from multiple agencies and convenes every fortnight to ensure swift and timely allocation of places when required. Representatives from schools and academies are encouraged and always welcome.

The panel review each case individually and compare the information against the referral criteria. Telephone contact followed by a notification email is sent to the school advising of the panel's decision or recommended outcome.

The panel are responsible for ensuring places are allocated in accordance with priority of need. Where there are more referrals received than places available, the panel will compare the referral against suitability criteria and will review what action has been taken by the school to address the student's difficulties including the use of external referrals, assessments and implementation of behaviour strategies and recommendations.

***Suitability Criteria:**

The Refocus Programmes are available for mainstream students in KS1, KS2 and KS3 who display challenging behaviour not associated with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties.

The programme should be considered where behaviour has escalated beyond in school support, has resulted in repeated exclusion or where a break in the cycle of negative behaviour is required.

Whilst we will consider referrals for students where formal exclusion has contributed to absence, we are unable to offer places to students where attendance to school is less than 60%. Where attendance is below 90%, we expect there to be targeted support provided by the home school to improve the level of absence from the start of the Refocus placement. This information should be included in the referral form submitted to panel.

Reasons for referral may include:

A student has;

- Specific behaviour/behaviours which have not responded to school based intervention and places the child at risk of exclusion,
- Received a programme of in school New Horizons Outreach Service support and now requires next level of intervention,
- An alternative to permanent exclusion following a serious breach of the school behaviour policy. *This will be with the agreement the child will return to the home school or transfer to a new school through the managed move process following completion of the programme. The managed move must be arranged and organised by the home school.*

The Refocus Programme is **not suitable** where:

- A specific developmental difficulty or behaviour disorder such as Autism or ADHD has been diagnosed, but presents no *specific* behaviour,
- A statement or EHC plan has been awarded to meet specific educational needs and no SEN provision is available,
- Statutory assessment process is due/ has been initiated and alternative provision is required as a holding bay until the process completes,
- An EHC application has been declined by the SEN panel and the home school require a new educational setting,
- Low literacy or ability levels have been identified and the student is struggling to access the curriculum,
- Where the presenting issue is poor attendance or mental health difficulties and no behaviour change can be achieved,

We are unable to offer Refocus programme in response to parental requests or through the local authority admissions route.

Where multiple concerns are identified or agencies are already involved, a professionals meeting may be required to establish a team around the child before a preadmission meeting is arranged. This is to ensure all areas of support can be secured so the student fully benefits from the Refocus Programme. All professionals meetings will be arranged by the home school and a member of the Horizons Academy team will attend to ensure Refocus Programme is a suitable intervention.

It is important we ensure places are suitable to maximise the impact and effectiveness of the programme and to address the specific behaviour placing the student at risk. All programmes are for a 14 week period only. Whilst there may be occasions whereby flexible extensions are agreed due to exceptional circumstances, we are unable to offer extensions or repeated placements to students once the programme has been completed. Schools should therefore ensure all actions agreed at the point of referral and recommendations made by the Horizons Academy team at formal reviews, are completed throughout the 14 week placement to maximise the use of the time and to ensure students have the best chance of reintegration success.

Reintegration Planning and Support

At the preadmission meeting held at Horizons Academy, all schools must appoint a key worker from within their pastoral teams who will participate in planned sessions during the Refocus Programme and will lead on the home schools reintegration support following their students return to school. The Horizons Academy Outreach and Reintegration Service will provide transition support and will work in partnership with the home school's key worker to help the student transfer the positive strategies they have learned throughout the Refocus Programme back to school.

Please refer to the Outreach and Reintegration Service: Reintegration Guide for more details.

SEN Assessment Places

Where statutory assessment has been initiated and an assessment place at Aspire Academy or Endeavour Academy agreed by the SEN panel, extended placements on the Refocus Programme may be offered to prevent unnecessary movement and to maximise transition success. Timescales will be dependent upon individual circumstances and will apply only where an assessment place has been agreed within a New Horizon specialist academy. We are unable to offer extended placements to students awaiting assessment places at other schools and academies or completion of EHC plans.

Selection Process

To ensure fairness in the selection process when comparing referrals, school action and recommendations from external agencies such as Educational Psychologist will be used to assess priority of need. This will also help inform our approach and provide information on what strategies have been successful and those where there has been limited success. Where there are more referrals than places available, the panel will consider the referral indicators as described above and may recommend the school implement outstanding behaviour strategies and re refer to the panel if behaviour does not improve.

Availability to Schools

The Refocus Programme operates a 'revolving door' approach to ensure spaces are readily available to all schools when needed. This ensures access is available to students on an on-going basis as pupils will start with us and leave us on a weekly basis. It is unlikely that any school will need to wait more than 2 weeks for a place to become available. Where a school makes more than one referral for linked peers, placements will be offered on a staggered basis to best meet the needs of the child. Referrals are accepted from schools and academies located outside of the London Borough of Bexley. Please see HAB admission and charging policies for full details. ***Permanently excluded students are our priority and capacity for the Refocus Programme may be limited where the number of permanently excluded students exceeds the number of Refocus places.***

The Power to Direct Students to Alternative Provision

In accordance with the 2013 DFE guidance on Alternative Provision: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, schools and academies have the power to direct students off site for education to improve behaviour.

Horizons Academy Bexley welcome referrals from maintained schools and academies where the power to direct is exercised. To ensure directed students access full time education in a swift and timely manner, Horizons Academy Bexley processes must be adhered to within the timescale set. *Please refer to the Horizons Academy Framework for Directed Students.*

Capacity and Waiting Times

Time limited placements will ensure spaces are available. In the event a place is not immediately available, support may be offered by the outreach service in partnership with the home school to support the student until the place is available*. The process of a "revolving door" will mean that pupils are moving through the provision steadily and the waiting time will be very low.

Responsibility of the Home School

The Refocus Programme is an intervention offered to students on roll at mainstream schools and academies. Horizons Academy will provide weekly information to schools regarding attendance and behaviour. Whilst we will work in partnership with schools to address concerns, responsibility for the student remains with the home school at all times.

This includes;

- 1. Referral Procedure:** All referral forms must be fully completed and supported by all requested documents as outlined on the referral form. This must include a full risk assessment. Information must be current and accurate with details of multi-agency partners and assessments undertaken or pending. ***Please note:*** where information is incomplete or missing, the panel will be unable to review the referral. A request will be made to the home school to complete the referral form fully and resubmit the referral at the next available panel meeting.
- 2. Partnership Working:** A school representative must attend all meetings as stated and as required throughout the placement. Dates and times are agreed at the preadmission meeting and must be adhered to in order to measure progress, address concerns and action recommendations.
- 3. Directed Students:** All schools and academies using the legal power to direct students to offsite provision must attend the referral panel to present their case. Any referrals not presented by a representative of the home school will not be considered.
- 4. Attendance and Punctuality:** The referring school must maintain full responsibility for attendance and punctuality. All concerns must be addressed through the home schools internal procedures and services throughout the placement. It is essential students have regular attendance and punctuality to fully benefit from the intervention. Where a home school fails to address attendance or the student's attendance falls below 60% during the programme, the placement will be terminated. *Please see terms and conditions on our website for more information.*
- 5. Special Educational Needs:** Any requirement for Educational Psychologist or application for statutory assessment must be initiated by the home school and completed within a timely manner. This will ensure an effective use of the timescale the student will be on the Refocus placement. *The Refocus programme cannot be extended or repeated for students who are awaiting the outcome of assessment or EHC to be finalised or where EHC applications remain pending or have been declined.*

6. **Home School Responsible Officer:** In order that information sharing remains accurate and confidential it is the responsibility of the home school to provide a responsible key person who will disseminate information to the home school team. *If the details of the key person change, it is the responsibility of home school to notify Horizons Academy Refocus coordinator.*
7. **Home School Key Worker:** An allocated key worker from within the home school must be appointed to oversee the home school's reintegration plan. This will include participation in sessions preparing the student for reintegration as part of the Refocus Programme.
8. **Multi-agency or Safeguarding:** The Refocus Coordinator must be informed of any changes relating to circumstance, multi-agency working or safeguarding/ child protection status.
9. **Professionals Meeting:** The home school must arrange a meeting within two weeks of the Referral Panel notification. Places on Refocus cannot be reserved and all requirements for placement must be addressed swiftly to prevent unnecessary delay or missed opportunity.
10. **Terminated Places:** Where a place has been terminated due to the home school's noncompliance or student's low attendance, the home school must assume responsibility for full time education within 48 hours notification from Horizons Academy.

* Where a referral does not meet the suitability criteria, other New Horizons services may provide support to the student. **Please note:** There may be a cost for services provided to primary and secondary academy schools. For further information please contact Emma Stubbington, Head of Outreach and Reintegration Services or refer to the New Horizons Website for full terms and conditions.

Additional Support Services available;

- Outreach Service;
- SEN Advisory Service;
- Statutory Assessment Application Support;
- Observational and Assessment Places;
- Long Term Provision (available for KS4 only)

For further information please contact:

Michelle Lawrence

Admission Coordinator

Michelle.lawrence@horizonsbexley.org.uk

0208 312 2746 ext.217