



Red Balloon
LEARNER CENTRES
For the recovery of bullied children

Red Balloon NW London

Tailored education and therapy for young people who prefer a different approach

Student-focused provision

Red Balloon NWL is a therapeutic Centre for children and young people who are out of school and unable to attend due to anxiety, bullying or illness.

Students come to us because they are missing out on their education and are becoming increasingly socially isolated at home. We help them re-engage with learning and life.

In September 2019 we featured in the Independent School Association's ISA Awards. We were among the top three finalists in the 'Excellence and innovation in mental health and well-being' category.

Who are our students?

Most Red Balloon NWL students are secondary-school aged. They are asked to agree to and comply with the following three conditions:

- they want to come to the Centre and will work towards attending daily
- they want to learn and make progress
- they will behave with respect and consideration to all members of the community and acknowledge everyone's right to feel safe and to learn.

Why Red Balloon NW London works

Students who attend Red Balloon NWL:

- rebuild their self-confidence and regain their self-esteem
- re-engage with academic learning
- prepare for a return to appropriate education, entry to employment or on to training

Red Balloon NWL's professional reputation is built on over 20 years' experience of supporting vulnerable young people in our four 'bricks and mortar' Red Balloon Centres, which also includes Cambridge, Reading and Norwich, and at our blended online and face-to-face provision, Red Balloon of the Air. Over 1,000 students have benefited from our academic, personal and social development programmes since we began back in 1996.

What makes Red Balloon NW London different?



Tailored learning

Our students follow an individualised timetable of lessons, alongside our effective and carefully planned wellbeing curriculum. Lessons are in small groups, maximum four students, and with qualified teachers, who plan individualised teaching to suit the needs and interests of each child. As the relationships with their teachers develop, students become more confident and resilient learners.

We provide academic teaching from Entry Level to GCSE in subjects of students' interest or which are helpful to them in their future plans, and offer our students PSHEE and Careers Guidance.



An integrated approach

The strength of Red Balloon NWL's programme is its holistic approach. Our highly qualified and experienced staff provide wellbeing sessions, therapy, and experiences such as horse-riding and outdoor activities to support students' mental health and to help them re-engage with the wider world.

The curriculum is negotiated with each student. As they learn, they grow as an individual, develop confidence and resilience, and build the skills they need to successfully return to education, work or further training.



Small class sizes

Students learn in small groups, ranging from one or two students to a maximum of four. New students usually begin with a tailored transition plan, starting with just a few sessions a week and building up to a timetable that suits them, at a pace that is supportive yet which challenges them to push their boundaries. As their confidence grows, they will begin to join group lessons with others learning at a similar level.



A safe space to learn to socialise again

We know returning to a school is a source of anxiety for our students, so our Centres are purposefully based in houses so that they do not feel like traditional schools. We want our students to feel comfortable and safe when with us, so we strive to make our Centres as homely as possible. We have a casual dress code, staff are called by their first names and the student and staff family sit down together to lunch each day.

Students hold an absolute right to be treated with respect and care, and that right is not contingent upon their behaviour or the quality of their academic performance. Each member of our Centre family agrees to our policy of unconditional positive regard - every member of the community (staff or student) should always treat others with respect and dignity, regardless of the situation.



Transition support

Each student has a weekly session with our Transitions Lead. This is the key person who links together our academic, personal and social development programmes and liaises with commissioners. Our Transitions Lead guides our students throughout their time with us, from their first steps to helping them move on to the next stage of their learning and lives.



A registered exam centre

We know that some young people miss out on gaining qualifications because they can't go to school to sit their exams. Red Balloon NWL is a registered exam centre, where students can sit their exams in a safe, comfortable and familiar environment.



Helping commissioners meet their obligations

We know that some schools and local authorities find it difficult to secure the right support for their isolated students. We can help.

Further information including our safeguarding and other policies and practices can be found on our website at rbl.ac/policies

A student's view

"Red Balloon has always gone out of its way to help students and I really couldn't have higher praise. It kept me out of all the bad places and they kept me from doing stuff I probably would have done. If it wasn't for my experience there, I wouldn't be able to cope with day-to-day life. I wouldn't have my voice if it weren't for Red Balloon."

From a parent

"You have made an incredible difference to our daughter. We have watched her really start to blossom. We are amazed at how she is starting to show signs of resilience and how she is even daring to look ahead and think about a plan for her future."



Contact us

Costings available on request.

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Charity no. 1109947



Red Balloon NW London relies on charitable donations to offer the individualised support our students need to flourish. If you would like to help please visit rbl.ac/donate or call us on +44 (0) 20 8864 6433. Thank you.