

The Step4ward programme

Preparing for adulthood

Information for Commissioners



Programme overview

At Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir) we offer a well-established, blended approach to therapeutic education which helps young people re-engage with learning and the communities around them.

Our Step4ward modular programme is specially designed for young people aged 16-21 who want to develop their social skills, confidence and experience to be successful in work, college or a training environment.

This person-centred, bridging programme can be tailored to support the needs and aspirations of each young person. It promotes a focus on outcomes that are transferable to the real world so students can successfully make choices and manage change.

It follows a graduated approach that is in line with students' needs and includes one-to-one wellbeing sessions.

The Step4ward programme is delivered as a blend of online and face-to-face (F2F) teaching and specialist support sessions.

- Online learning sessions are delivered in real time by tutors with expertise in engaging hard-to-reach students. Communication is through type or voice (no video). A live register is taken at the beginning of each session and if a young person does not log on, absence protocols are followed, including safeguarding oversight.
- Our F2F sessions take place within our very small, nurturing centres in both Milton (Cambridgeshire) or Danbury (Essex). Red Balloon allocates a designated Link Mentor to each young person, who oversees their provision plan.



Curriculum and qualifications

The Step4ward curriculum follows the themes found in the national 'Preparing for Adulthood' initiative.

It includes a choice of academic learning qualifications in a maximum of two subjects. These include GCSEs, GCSE retakes, English and Maths Functional Skills, ASDAN short courses, Art Awards and AQA Unit Awards.

Subject areas may include:

- Maths and English Language (GCSE/Functional Skills)
- English Literature, Psychology, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Studies, History (GCSE)
- Animal Care (ASDAN)
- Art Awards
- Media Studies AQA Unit Awards

The core Step4ward modules include:

- **ILS: Independence & Living Skills**
 - Exploring self efficacy; the decisions young people want to take for themselves and planning their role in decision-making as they become adults.

- Developing an understanding of personal health and self care.
- Acquiring the understanding and skills to manage their money.
- **SC²: Social Communication & Community skills development**
 - Managing and building relationships.
 - Developing and practising social skills.
 - Increasing community involvement and use of community facilities.
- **WE²CV: World of Work, Employability & Entrepreneurship, College, Vocational skills development**
 - Recognising their own strengths, interests, skills and qualities and how these can be transformed into their future goals.
 - Practising workplace communication skills.
 - Developing entrepreneurial endeavours and exploring business ideas.

This programme recognises that some young people have complex mental health needs and require more time to develop their independence. They also need support to develop an understanding of a healthy adult lifestyle, social, communication and community engagement skills. Ultimately they build up their confidence to take the next steps into employment, training or apprenticeships.



Admission and entry requirements

We can support students who have:

- a willingness to come to RBAir and a commitment to attend
- a commitment to show positive regard to others and make progress academically, emotionally and socially (inclusive of being part of group sessions)
- access to a Wifi connection (other IT equipment and servicing provided)
- a reading age of 10+ (to access online learning)
- are able, or are willing to work towards, attending F2F sessions up to twice a week. This would involve travel to our centres in Milton, Cambridgeshire or Danbury, Essex.

We recognise that some young people might need longer to access the F2F element, so we can offer a one year or two year programme. The one year programme is for young people who are able to access group F2F sessions from the first term onwards. The two year programme is designed to build up slowly over a longer period of time. It focuses on establishing trusted relationships, initially online, and then progress through one to one, F2F sessions, moving into pairs or small groups in line with each young person's development.

RBAir's Admissions Team will review each young person's needs and requirements in line with their EHCP outcomes.

Progression

The programme is individualised and student centred, where the outcomes are personalised and focused on each young person's aspirations and interests. Our therapeutic educational approach supports each student

in aiming for meaningful goals within their wider environment and living an independent life.

Academic as well as social progression is monitored, and the programme is adapted to offer appropriate challenges and opportunities within the community to build social and communication confidence and skills.

Support with visits to other post-16 providers and the chance to engage with supported employment partners is incorporated. Our focus is on developing confidence in the world of work or larger college settings, bringing the wider work environment to the fore and to make learning relevant for the 'real world'. Our bespoke work-linked learning programme, helps to find strengths and interests in all our young people.

Funding

Funding for the Step4ward programme is sourced through the young person's EHCP or funded through a private arrangement. The costs are individually assessed and negotiated with commissioners.



Contact us

To find out more and to discuss possible referrals please do not hesitate to contact us. Visits are actively encouraged to both sites. Please phone:

- 01223 354338 to speak to Helen Griffiths, Vicky Ames, or a member of the admissions team in Milton, or
- 07913 842186 to speak with Philip White (Provision Manager) in Essex.
- Alternatively, please email us at admissions@rbair.org.uk. Joining the programme is subject to meeting basic admissions criteria and funding agreement from the young person's local authority.



Example timetable

Duration (example)	1 year (36 weeks)
Professional Link Mentor Support F2F	1 x 50 min session per week
Professional Qualified Therapist Online/F2F	1 x 50 min session per week
Academic Education (retakes/CCSE/FA/AS DAN Short Courses) Online	6-9 x 50 min session per week
ILS Independence & Living Skills F2F	2 x 50 min session per week
WE2CV F2F	2 x 50 min session per week
SC2 Social Communication & Community F2F	2-3 x 50 min session per week

Red Balloon of the Air
Red Balloon Educational Trust

Willow Lodge
37 High Street
Milton, Cambridge
CB24 6DF
admin@rbair.org.uk
redballoonlearner.org/RBAir
Registered Charity No. 109606