

Excellence in Special Schools and Alternative Provision

Merrywood Education



Merrywood Education is a special social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) school for children who have experienced trauma, inequality from the traditional school system and/or have SEND. We have two campuses within Surrey and London and work with children aged 5-16 years of age and their families.

Most of our children have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and have attended more than one school, causing significant psychological impact.

The school was founded in 2020 by Michelle Quayle a social activist working towards social change for women and their families who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse.

Starting with five children, the school now educates and supports 66 children and 66 families. Michelle's vision was clear, each and every child and family deserve the best possible educational and social environment, free from harm!

As Michelle spent time consulting for pupil referral units, mainstream schools and police officers, it was clear that children who had experienced trauma were often misunderstood and classified as 'naughty and unteachable' or seen to be 'youth offenders'. These labels lead to high levels of unconscious

biases and affect the way in which a child feels from others. Through Michelle's dedication and commitment to changing the educational system, Merrywood has developed a neuroscientific model that not only increases children wanting to attend school and feeling safe, but they thrive in all areas of their childhood.

Merrywood's model 'Nurturing Children through Education' is based on the neuroscience of children who have experienced significant trauma from the womb to date. The model increases professionals understanding of children's neurodevelopment and the impact that trauma has on a child's social, emotional, behavioural and academic development. Helping adults to see behaviour as a form of communication and responding in a non-judgemental and reflective manner.