



Inspiring, nurturing and
empowering young people
with a vision impairment

PROSPECTUS

A young man with short dark hair, wearing a black suit jacket over a black shirt and large black headphones, is seated at a desk. He is focused on playing a red digital piano keyboard. His eyes are closed, and he has a slight smile. In the background, a music studio environment is visible with various equipment, including a desk lamp and other instruments. A white quote box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

There is a strong emphasis throughout the school on academic achievement, maximising independence and preparing pupils for their future lives

Ofsted 2022

Welcome from the **Principal**

NCW has a proud history and heritage; a legacy that has stretched for over 150 years. Whilst that affords us great experience and solid foundations, it is the future of the children and young people in our care that drives our work forward and provides the focus for continual improvement. We aim to provide the highest standard of education for our learners, outstanding residential care and a welcoming and inclusive environment; where our students can thrive, blossom and prepare themselves for a life of independence in a modern world. Our residential status affords a waking day curriculum, where skills learnt during the school day can be practised and are embedded in the residential setting with the support of Residential Care Leaders, House Parents and Key Workers.

Creating a curriculum that really meets the individual needs of our young people, who are all vision impaired, ensures they are able to make excellent progress. All of our teaching staff, as well as being subject specialists, are also either fully qualified teachers of the visually impaired (QTVIs) or working towards that qualification. A broad range of qualifications offered, from entry level to A-Level, means that while many of our leavers go on to study at University, others take up apprenticeships, go into the workplace or enrol at a local college of further education to pursue their personal goals. The additional curriculum of skills; Independent Living Skills, Access Technology, Braille and Mobility, compliments the academic programme, ensuring our young people really are prepared for adult life beyond NCW.

Whilst I am proud of all that we achieve here, we refuse to be complacent and we aim to constantly develop our provision to ensure that having a vision impairment is not a barrier to young people achieving their dreams. For many of our students, they are truly included in their education, they have a peer group and a best friend perhaps for the first time and feel that they truly belong. This combination of academic ambition, provision of key life skills and a happy, fun and secure social environment is what truly makes NCW special.



Rachel Perks Principal





Our **Vision**

To be a world leader in education and care for young people with a vision impairment.

Our **Mission**

To inspire, nurture and empower young people with a vision impairment to achieve their potential

Our **Values**

- Inclusion, diversity and acceptance
- Providing opportunities and encouraging participation
- Creating a community and a sense of belonging
- Creativity and problem solving
- Building effective partnerships and being a good partner
- Promoting a sense of fun and enjoyment of life



At NCW she's not just getting an education from school, she is literally learning how to live outside of school hours; how to thrive, how to connect with people, how to have empathy for others

Parent



Our top priority is that NCW Students make excellent progress

Our aims include:

- For parents and carers to be an integral part of their young people's education with effective two-way communication
- Providing an excellent provision in all areas to ensure students make outstanding progress academically and through the specialist VI curriculum
- That all students will have high expectations of themselves and are empowered to be as independent as possible
- That students can envisage a bright and successful future for themselves
- For Safeguarding to be of the highest standard
- All staff delivering excellent provision and collaborating and communicating effectively with all parties involved with any student.
- All staff to be equipped to deliver elements of the specialist VI curriculum and have access to high quality Continuing Professional Development
- For the whole NCW community to be looked after and supported to have positive wellbeing and robust mental health. A number of key staff have completed training with Trauma Informed Schools UK and MHFA England to enable effective support for the mental health of students



The Same But **Better**

The same as a mainstream school.

At NCW there are many things that are similar to any mainstream secondary school. We teach Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 of the National Curriculum; core subjects and a full and diverse range of options for GCSE and A Level. We also offer a selection of vocational and foundation level courses. We strive for the highest academic achievement for each individual student.

We are a residential school - students leave their living accommodation in the morning much like they would if they were living at home, ready for the school day. Attendance in lessons is compulsory and all students are included in lessons, meaning they get to take an active part in PE lessons, Science practical lessons and Art classes that may have been unavailable to them in mainstream school, as there are no barriers preventing them from joining in.

After school there is a wide choice of after school activities, homework support and clubs. Extra-curricular interests in Sport, Music and community groups are actively encouraged.

Students at NCW are the same in many ways to all other young people, managing the complex demands of a changing world as well as their own personal development alongside their friends and classmates. They want an inclusive, fun and productive school life and to be able to move on from NCW as independent young adults with bright futures.





How NCW can be better for your child with a vision impairment:

- **All NCW lessons are adapted to be accessible to every individual.** This includes those subjects where accessibility can be a challenge for students who are vision impaired such as Mathematics, Science, Art and PE. NCW teachers have expertise in specialist Braille codes such as Music.
- **Class sizes are small** – up to just eight students per class – to maximise learning potential.
- **NCW timetables include individually tailored skills lessons** in Mobility, Access Technology, Braille and Independent Living Skills, which are crucial for young people navigating the world with a vision impairment.
- **Our residential status affords a waking day curriculum,** where skills learnt during the school day can be practised and are embedded in the residential setting with the support of Residential Care Leaders, House Parents and Key Workers.
- **NCW students will have a peer group, friends and a community.** It can be difficult in a mainstream setting for young people with a vision impairment to find acceptance among peers and at NCW there is no social isolation. There is no stigma attached to vision impairment and there is an incredibly supportive environment between students across all year groups.
- **All students are vision impaired and each person's vision impairment is different from the next.** This means that no-one is perceived as the different one and students offer one another support and understanding.





Home from Home

We realise that contemplating a residential setting for a child is an enormous step for any family. We know that making that sort of decision goes against our instincts as parents, to keep our children close and guide them through the complexities of life. Because we understand that, we do everything we can to provide a living environment that is a home away from home, to ensure that children are nurtured and encouraged as they would be at home and cared for with the same level of dedication.

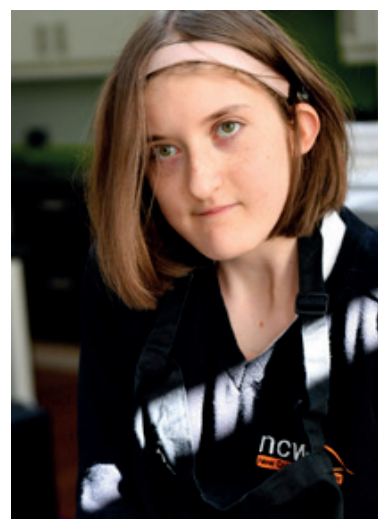
What we hope, is that the benefits for a child being here – the learning that occurs both in and outside the classroom, the friendships that will last a lifetime and the opportunity to become independent, will outweigh those difficulties.

Students keep in regular contact with families via telephone and home weekends and our on-site guest house is available for families to use if visiting their child on campus.

Younger students are accommodated in our welcoming lower school houses, which have a layout similar to any home with a kitchen, living room, study room, bathrooms and bedrooms. Each is led by a Residential Care Leader supported by a team of house parents who care for the students after school and at weekends. The junior houses are mixed gender and year groups and most rooms are twin rooms, shared with another student of the same gender.

In the Sixth Form there is an expectation and encouragement of greater independence. The accommodation in the Sixth Form Hostel is arranged similarly to many University halls of residence with students sharing same-gender, self-catering style units of six students, all assisted by their Key Workers who support them in the development of their independence skills. There is a communal laundry facility, common room and a comfortable lounge where students can mix with one another and staff during their leisure time.

Meals are provided as a combination of catered meals in the dining room and lower school houses or produced collaboratively with Key Workers for senior students on a self-catering basis.



The Additional Curriculum for Learners with a Vision Impairment

We follow the Curriculum Framework for people who are vision impaired (CFVI), a framework launched in 2022 to support children and young people with vision impairment to access an appropriate and equitable education.



The framework presents outcomes within 11 teaching areas:

- **Facilitating an Inclusive World**
- **Sensory Development**
- **Communication**
- **Literacy**
- **Habilitation: Orientation and Mobility**
- **Habilitation: Independent Living Skills**
- **Accessing information**
- **Technology**
- **Health: Social, Emotional, Mental and Physical Wellbeing**
- **Social, Sports and Leisure**
- **Preparing for Adulthood**

It provides a shared vocabulary to be used by children and young people, their families and professionals in the UK who work with them. A shared vocabulary supports both better communication and purpose.

Whilst these strands are weaved throughout the whole curriculum offer at NCW, we are also unique in being able to offer young people with vision impairment specifically timetabled opportunities to develop skills to improve their life chances and employability, via the Additional Curriculum.



He seems to embrace the waking day curriculum and doesn't seem to realise he is learning at the same time. He has come on such a long way in the last few months, it is unbelievable

Parent



Braille and Braille Support

In addition to the wonderful advances in technology, we believe that learning Braille is still one of the most important things our students can do. Our one-to-one personalised teaching approach gives the confidence and skills to ensure that Braille can be part of their lives. The ability to read Braille fluently and accurately can be life changing and can open up a world of possibilities and safeguard independence for the future.

Mobility and Orientation

The ability to get around the campus and the wider world with confidence is central to the future success of our students. Each student has their own mobility programme to equip him or her with the skills to travel independently in any setting, supported by our mobility officers and using a range of mobility aids including a cane. As confidence grows, students learn to navigate busy city centre environments and travel further afield using public transport.

Access Technology

Technology advances at an astonishing pace and at NCW, our technology experts are at the forefront of those changes, teaching students how to get the best from technology to enable them to lead independent lives. Whether it is the latest device for reading and writing Braille, the newest function on a smart phone or the latest accessibility App, we know about it and can teach our students how to use it.

Independent Living Skills

Independent Living Skills lessons, often abbreviated to ILS, involve teaching students activities that are necessary to take care of themselves, family and home in order to live as independently as possible. They involve the introduction and continual reinforcement of processes and methods that those with sight often take for granted. As well as teaching about nutrition and how to safely and effectively prepare food, students are also taught laundry skills and clothes care, personal safety and first aid, how to create their own signature and methods for budgeting and independent money management.





Health & Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of students is an absolute priority.

Safeguarding is a top priority both during the school day and in the evenings and weekends, with a robust and active Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place.

Contact with home is actively encouraged, between the students and families and the NCW staff and parents.

Health Care – the NCW Nurse and Health Care Assistant ensure that all medical requirements are met and form a hub of care between parents, the student, teaching staff and outside healthcare agencies to ensure that all students are kept safe and well. Students also have access to a Counsellor.

Social inclusion – friendships formed at NCW often last a lifetime and bonds are formed between students which offer them support and confidence beyond NCW.

NCW is a Trauma Informed School, which means staff across Education and Residential Care are equipped to support children and teenagers who suffer with trauma or mental health problems and whose troubled behaviour can act as a barrier to learning. Trauma Informed training empowers and enables key staff to be able to respond effectively to mild to moderate mental health problems. Staff are also trained in mental health first aid.





Extra-Curricular Activities

One of the unique aspects of NCW is the access to a programme of extra-curricular activities which will challenge, excite and entertain.

Music – There are many opportunities to learn and participate in music. We have a wonderful choir, rock school, jazz band, guitar club, musical theatre club, folk band and ukulele club, alongside a full programme of music lessons to choose from, delivered by NCW and a team of peripatetic music teachers.

Sport – There are many sports to get involved with, as part of an NCW team or a team in the community. Goalball, VI cricket, athletics, football and even rugby are all made accessible and participation is encouraged.

Action and Adventure – Our Activities department organises trips and outings that will challenge the most adventurous! Residential and camping trips, rock climbing, indoor skydiving and tandem riding are just a few regular activities.

Travel – Travel to support cultural learning and for pleasure are available, including foreign exchange trips, ski trips and long-haul adventure travel.

Clubs and Societies – Alongside its own mix of clubs, groups and societies students are also supported to get involved in community groups such as Youth Theatre, Scouts or Faith groups. If a child has an individual talent or interest they will be supported to get involved or continue with that activity whilst at NCW.



The thing I like about NCW is that the size of the classes is a lot easier to handle, the teachers are all really nice and it's not rush, rush, rush all the time - they let you do things in your own time

Jamie, Year 9

Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at NCW offers an unrivalled centre for young people with a vision impairment to study at A Level, alongside a programme of learning that will prepare for transition to the next phase of their lives.

A wide range of subjects is available at A Level as well as a selection of BTECH qualifications, additional GCSEs and other Level 2 qualifications.

The Sixth Form at NCW is the perfect place to access subjects that can be challenging to learn at A Level, such as Maths, Music and Art – with adapted materials available and qualified expert teachers. The NCW Exams Officer is experienced in ensuring that exams run smoothly with all papers presented in the appropriate format and our in house Transcription department is at hand for any last minute adaptations that are required for exams.

Alongside lessons, the Sixth Form is ideal preparation for the next phase of life – whether that is university, further education or the world of work, providing the chance to perfect skills for living independently. Via our Activities for Daily Living programme (ADL) senior students are taught crucial living skills including using public transport, how to access benefits, banking and finance, self-care and nutrition.

NCW offers high quality, bespoke careers education and guidance, alongside work experience opportunities to ensure that each student can look towards a fulfilling future with confidence. Internships and extended work experience placements are also an option for students to combine with their studies and skills programmes.







Get in Touch

If you are interested in NCW you can find out more information on our website

www.ncw.co.uk

You can also find us on Social Media:

 @NewCollegeWorcester

 @newcollworc

 @newcollegeworcs

 New College Worcester

If you would like to arrange a visit at any time, please contact us by telephone or by email and ask for the Liaison Officer:

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