

# Ufton Court Launch Second Alternative Learning Provision for The Nest

Submitted by: Ufton Court

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Children's education charity, The Ufton Court Educational Trust, is set to expand its alternative learning programme – The Nest, with a second on-site provision.

Set within the grounds of Ufton Court, the dedicated building is designed to provide even more support to a larger pool of children who are experiencing challenges in their lives and the classroom. The Nest focuses in helping children and young people who face difficulties at school with friendships and managing their emotions in a formal school setting. The aim is to provide positive experiences that boost self-esteem, self-awareness and the tools to build the foundations essential for learning.

The approach some schools are forced to take has led to school exclusions having increased by 44 per cent between 2021/22 and 2022/23. What's more, SEN students are up to five times more likely to face exclusion than neurotypical students.

Did you know that between 2015 and 2020, there was a 60% rise in the number of pupils permanently excluded from England's schools? More than 22,000 children aged 5 and 6 were excluded or suspended in primary schools in England in 2022, with persistent disruptive behaviour cited as a reason in 55% of all suspensions and 49% of all permanent exclusions.

The National Education Union state that intervention is an important tool to reduce the risk of such exclusions. Nature-based learning experiences are proven to have socio-emotional, academic and wellbeing benefits (Front Public Health 2022) improving learning in the classroom, and benefiting behaviour, attendance and confidence (The Paul Hamlyn Foundation 2015).

Ufton Court is a historic mansion dating back over 500 years, and an established history and outdoor learning centre based in Reading. Set within 44 acres of ancient woodland, it is a leading provider of nature-based, residential and day trip programmes for children providing:

- Immersive history school trips linked to the national KS1 and KS2 curriculum, from the Tudors, Saxons and Ancient Greeks to Stone Age and Prehistory to WW2.
- Outdoor learning residentials and day visit programmes including Bushcraft for KS2 and KS3 students eager to learn the art of survival in the wild, and Outdoor Challenge, designed to foster personal growth and teamwork.
- Therapeutic alternative learning provision, The Nest, partnering directly with schools to support small groups of children through a day-a-week, term-time programme focusing on the holistic development of children's social, emotional, and physical well-being, in addition to learning progress.

Ufton Court is run by The Ufton Court Educational Trust – a children's experiential education charity that subsidises history and outdoor trips and placements at The Nest for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Nest is led by highly qualified and experienced staff, where a trauma-informed and therapeutic approach is used to create a nurturing space where children feel valued, understood and supported. The Nest helps to foster positive relationships between children and teachers, providing opportunities for success that boost children's confidence and self-esteem, empowering them to take ownership of their learning, and uses proven strategies to effectively manage challenging behaviours, creating a conducive learning environment for all.

The Nest programme includes unique features that are personalised to each child such as: outdoor learning including woodland experience and animal therapy, creative and practical learning opportunities, challenge and personal growth, and more.

Kayleigh Forbes, Head of Education at Ufton Court, said:

"It is a privilege to be able to support even more schools and children with our second dedicated provision for The Nest. With the rising number of children who face challenges at home and at school, what we do at Ufton Court is more important than ever. Schools and teachers are under so much pressure already, and alternative learning programmes like The Nest can help them ensure that the needs of all children are met."

The Nest can support up to 8 children from one school, per session, focusing primarily on Year 1 to Year 5 children. The new, second provision will welcome 11-14 year old young people, especially those with anxiety that results in low attendance and school. Children attending Ufton Court must be within 30 minutes of the site. Ufton Court provides transport to collect and drop children back at school on Nest days.

Senior school leaders, SENCO, and Inclusion leads at Reading and Basingstoke Primary schools are invited to contact Ufton Court and The Nest for more information: <https://www.uftoncourt.org.uk/the-nest>

Case Study – \*Jamie was put on the NEST program as he struggled with social interactions in school often exhibiting bullying behaviours which disrupted the learning environment. Following consistent weekly engagement in the NEST program, he has substantially reduced disruptive behaviour. Today, he actively embraces leadership roles, influencing peers by guiding and supporting them throughout activities and daily interactions.

\*not real name

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