

THE WILDFLOWERS ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Delivered by Anima Youth C.I.C.

A girls-only alternative provision for social communication, mentoring, life skills and work experience

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document answers the questions we hear most often from local authorities, commissioners, schools, SENCOs, parents and carers. Our full Admissions Policy will be sent to you upon your initial enquiry. If you have a question that is not answered here, please contact us directly and we will respond within 2 working days.

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About The Wildflowers

Q What is The Wildflowers?

The Wildflowers is a specialist, girls-only alternative provision delivered by Anima Youth C.I.C. It supports girls and young women aged 11 to 18 who are unable to access mainstream education due to SEMH needs, anxiety-based school avoidance, social communication needs, trauma, disrupted education or complex contextual circumstances, and girls whose EHCPs name social provision, mentoring, emotional wellbeing or preparation for adulthood outcomes with nowhere to receive them. It is built entirely around four strands: small social communication groups, group and 121 mentoring, life skills for girlhood and independence, and a rolling six-week work experience programme with real employers. It is not a school. It is a structured, part-time, specialist provision designed to form part of a wider educational, EOTAS, EHCP or re-engagement package.

Q Is The Wildflowers a school?

No. The Wildflowers is a non-regulated alternative provision. It does not replace a school place or the statutory duties of a placing school or local authority. Learners attend one three-hour session per week. It sits alongside and supports a broader educational package, whether that is an EHCP, EOTAS plan, reduced timetable or home education arrangement.

Q Who delivers The Wildflowers?

The Wildflowers is delivered by Anima Youth C.I.C., an award-winning specialist organisation that has worked exclusively with girls and young women for over a decade. Anima Youth delivers girls-only Safe Space provision, a young mums' space, Ofsted-registered supported accommodation through Zintarah Haven, and commissioned programmes with multiple local authorities. It is MOPAC DASA recognised. The Wildflowers is the natural extension of this work.

Q Why is it girls-only?

Research and practice consistently show that girls with SEMH needs, social communication differences and trauma histories present differently to boys, are more frequently under-identified, and respond better to single-sex, therapeutically informed environments. Mixed-group AP settings can feel unsafe, overwhelming or socially complex for girls with the profiles we support. Our girls-only environment removes those barriers and creates the conditions in which girls can finally build friendships and an appropriate peer group.

Q Where is The Wildflowers based?

The Wildflowers is based at our own specialist children's centre at 81–83 High Street, Caterham, Surrey: a beautiful, calm building with a sensory integration room, a sensory calm room, a creative studio, a learning hub and a café. The provision has exclusive use of the whole centre during its session hours. We welcome referrals from Surrey, Croydon, Bromley, Sutton and across South London.



The Provision: Sessions, Programme and Structure

Q What is the programme?

The programme is built around four strands, each explicitly delivered and evidenced:

- **Strand 1, Social communication groups:** Small, structured groups guided by the Talkabout framework, developing conversation, friendship skills, assertiveness and confidence, so girls build an appropriate peer group and real friendships.
- **Strand 2, Mentoring:** Group mentoring and 121 mentoring focused on confidence, emotional wellbeing, resilience and girlhood.
- **Strand 3, Life skills:** Girlhood and independence: self-care, money, travel confidence, relationships and boundaries, everyday independence.

- **Strand 4, Work experience:** Every six weeks, a new employer. Our 11 to 13s meet founders and professionals who come to them; our 13 to 16s and 16+ go out in supported groups to real workplaces. Every block builds each girl's CV.

Q How many days per week does a learner attend, and on which day?

Each learner attends one three-hour session per week. Sessions run 10:30am to 1:30pm on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday depending on age: Monday for ages 11 to 13, Tuesday for ages 13 to 16, and Wednesday for ages 16+. The session day is fixed by age because the staggered structure is central to how peer groups are safely and appropriately matched. Additional 1:1 therapeutic mentoring can be commissioned separately and is available up to five days per week.

Q What does a typical session look like?

Each session follows a consistent, predictable structure: arrival and regulation check-in from 10:30; a social communication group block; a movement and snack break with the sensory rooms available; a life skills or group mentoring block; communal lunch; a second strand block (121 mentoring rotations, employer-programme preparation or project time); reflection and celebration of effort; and safe departure by 1:30pm. In employer-cycle weeks, one session per cycle is replaced by the visiting speaker or the workplace visit. Predictability supports regulation, and practitioners flex the plan when a learner's needs require it.

Q How big are the groups?

Groups are a maximum of 6 to 8 learners, with three specialist practitioners on site during every session (a 1:3 ratio at capacity). The small group size enables strong, trusting relationships, careful safeguarding oversight and effective peer-group matching.

Q Who is in the room during a session?

Every session has a Lead Practitioner (experienced in education, SEND, SEMH or AP) leading the session; a Therapeutic Practitioner (trauma-informed practice, regulation support, mentoring group work); and an Assistant Practitioner supporting learners throughout. All baselines, targets, assessment and reporting are overseen by our SEN Specialist, a qualified teacher or SEN specialist consultant who quality assures the provision and observes delivery at least monthly.

Q How does the work experience programme work?

It runs on rolling six-week cycles across the year, and staff attend every visit, always. For ages 11 to 13, employers, founders and professionals come to the girls: a visiting speaker or workshop within each cycle. For ages 13 to 16 and 16+, the girls go out in small supported groups to real workplaces for hands-on experience. Every block is prepared for (expectations, travel planning, communication practice), reflected on, and evidenced into each girl's growing CV and her EHCP or IEP record. No visit happens without a signed employer agreement, a risk assessment and DSL sign-off. Young people with SEN face some of the highest employment barriers of any group; this programme starts removing them at 11.



Eligibility and Admissions

Q Who is eligible to attend?

The Wildflowers supports girls and young women who are: female or female-identifying, aged 11 to 18; unable to access traditional education due to SEMH, anxiety, social communication needs, trauma or complex need, or whose EHCPs name social provision, mentoring or preparation for adulthood; out of school, on a reduced timetable, flexi-schooling, electively home educated, or awaiting a placement; and accessing provision under Section 19, EOTAS, an EHCP, or through a parent-funded arrangement. We do not support learners whose needs require clinical registration or who present risks that fall outside the scope of a non-regulated AP. We will always be honest with you if a referral is not the right fit.

Q Do you accept learners without an EHCP?

Yes. We support learners with and without EHCPs. For learners without an EHCP, we use IEP-style individual targets and progress tracking. All learners receive a baseline assessment on arrival and regular written progress reports. Where a learner is being assessed for an EHCP during their time with us, our reports can be used as supporting evidence for that process.

Q What is the admissions process?

Our full Admissions Policy will be provided upon your initial enquiry. In brief: Step 1, contact us (we respond within 2 working days). Step 2, share relevant information (latest EHCP or SEN support plan, recent reports, safeguarding background). Step 3, we carry out a compatibility review with our Lead Practitioner and SEN Specialist. Step 4, an optional taster visit, which we actively encourage. Step 5,

placement agreement signed. Step 6, start date confirmed, with the baseline assessment completed across the first 1 to 3 sessions and an initial report issued within 3 weeks.



Q How quickly can a learner start?

Where information is shared promptly and a place is available, learners can start within two to three weeks of initial contact. Getting the peer group match right is important for the safety and wellbeing of all learners, so we do not rush that step.

Q Do you offer taster sessions or visits?

Yes, and we actively encourage them. For many of the girls we support, seeing the centre and meeting the team before they start removes a significant amount of anxiety, and the building, with its sensory rooms and calm spaces, does a lot of the reassuring for us. Please request a visit when you make your initial enquiry.



Progress, Reporting and EHCP Evidence

Q How do you track progress?

Every learner receives a baseline assessment in their first 1 to 3 sessions, led by our SEN Specialist, including a Talkabout-informed social communication baseline. Progress is tracked through practitioner observations after every session, social communication progress against the baseline, wellbeing and confidence measures, attendance and engagement, life skills and independence steps, the work experience log and growing CV, and individual targets reviewed every six weeks.

Q What reports will we receive?

Depending on your role and funding tier: an Initial Placement Report within 3 weeks of start; a 6-Week Progress Report at the end of each employer-programme cycle; EHCP Review Evidence on request; an Annual Review contribution (written, or attendance for EHCP, LA and school-funded places); and an End of Placement Summary on exit. All reports are written or reviewed by our SEN Specialist. You will not receive attendance logs dressed up as progress reports.

Q Can your reports be used at an EHCP Annual Review?

Yes. Our reports are specifically structured to provide evidence against EHCP Section E outcomes and Section F provision. For EHCP, LA and school-funded places, Annual Review or TAF meeting attendance is included within the placement fee.

Q Which EHCP outcome areas do you address?

We provide evidenced support and progress reporting across: Communication and Interaction (social communication, conversation and friendship skills, self-advocacy); SEMH (emotional regulation, confidence, relationships and boundaries, resilience); Preparation for Adulthood (work experience, life skills, independence, employability, a real CV); and Social Participation (an appropriate peer group,

positive friendships, community confidence). For many of the girls we support, we are the setting that can meet the social inclusion, peer group and social interaction outcomes no one else can deliver.

Q Do you work alongside other professionals supporting the learner?

Yes, and we actively encourage it. We work alongside Educational Psychologists, CAMHS, social workers, school pastoral teams, early help practitioners and Virtual School Heads. We attend TAC and review meetings on request and contribute written reports. We do not work in isolation and we do not compete with the support already around a learner.



For Parents and Families

Q My daughter has not left the house in months. Is she ready for this?

This is the most common thing parents tell us when they first get in touch. You do not need to wait until your daughter is ready. The Wildflowers is designed for girls at exactly this point. We start slowly, with no pressure in the first sessions. The group is small and consistent, the adults are the same people every week, and the centre itself is calm and beautiful, with a sensory calm room she can use whenever she needs it. For many girls the first day is the hardest and it gets easier from there. We recommend a visit before the first session so she can see the space and meet the team on her own terms, with you beside her.

Q My daughter is home educated (or on EOTAS). Is this for her?

Yes. Many of our families are home educating or on EOTAS packages and cannot find provision covering exactly what their daughter's plan names: an appropriate peer group, social communication, emotional wellbeing, mentoring and work experience. The Wildflowers provides that structured social provision without disturbing the educational choice that works for your family.

Q How will I know how my daughter is getting on?

You will receive a written progress report at the end of each six-week cycle, covering her progress across all four strands and her work experience reflection, written in plain English. Between reports we are available by phone or email, and we will always contact you if something significant happens, positive or concerning. You will not be left without information.

Q What if my daughter finds it hard to engage or has a difficult session?

This is expected and normal, particularly in early weeks. Our Therapeutic Practitioner is in the room throughout every session specifically to support regulation, and the sensory calm room gives any girl a safe place to settle and rejoin when ready. We use break cards, agreed signals and individual regulation plans. If a learner is consistently struggling, we will speak with you promptly and think together about adjustments. We do not manage difficulties by quietly reducing expectations.

Q Can I fund the placement myself?

Yes. Self-funded places are available at a discounted rate of £155 per session (£930 per 6-week block, £1,860 per 12-week term), with simple progress reports. The discount reflects the lighter administration compared with EHCP and LA-funded places. We ask for a minimum 6-week commitment to allow relationships to form and progress to be meaningful, and we are happy to discuss payment arrangements.

Q My daughter is still on a school roll. Can she still attend?

Yes. Many learners attend while remaining on roll, including learners on reduced timetables, managed moves, at risk of exclusion, or on phased reintegration plans. The school commissions the placement, your daughter remains on roll, and we liaise directly with her SENCO and feed progress reports back to the school.

Q What happens when my daughter is ready to move on?

We begin thinking about next steps from the moment a learner joins us. Transitions are never abrupt. We work with you, the school or the local authority to plan the next stage, whether that is returning to school, college, training, employment or another provision. Where your daughter has been part of Anima Youth's wider Safe Space community, that connection can continue beyond The Wildflowers.



For Schools and SENCOs

Q Can we refer a learner who is still on our roll?

Yes. Schools regularly commission The Wildflowers for learners who are still on roll but struggling: reduced timetables, risk of permanent exclusion, returns from PRU or hospital provision, and managed moves. Your learner remains on your roll and your statutory responsibilities remain in place. We are an AP provider, not a school.

Q Will you contribute to SEND reviews, TAC meetings and Annual Reviews?

Yes. We provide written progress reports aligned to your SEND documentation and EHCP outcomes, attend TAC and review meetings on request, and provide Annual Review contributions (attendance is included for school and LA-funded places). We can also produce interim reports for specific meetings.

Q What if the placement is not working?

We will tell you. We do not hold on to learners who need something we cannot provide. If a placement is not working for the learner or the group, we will raise it promptly, explain our reasoning and work with you on next steps.

Q Can we do a flexi-school arrangement?

Yes. Flexi-school arrangements, where a learner attends The Wildflowers on her cohort day with the school's agreement, are welcomed at the school-funded rate.



For Local Authorities and Commissioners

Q What commissioning routes do you accept?

Local authority Section 19 commissions; EOTAS packages within an EHCP; school-funded AP; flexi-school arrangements; and parent-funded placements. We are experienced in working with LA commissioning and procurement processes and happy to work through supplier registration or approved provider requirements.

Q What is your safeguarding framework?

A named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy, trained to the appropriate level; enhanced DBS with barred list checks for all staff; annual safeguarding training; a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy aligned to Keeping Children Safe in Education; individual risk assessments for every learner; Missing from Provision procedures; signed employer agreements, visit risk assessments and DSL sign-off for every work experience visit; and a full policy suite reviewed annually. Full documents available on request.

Q What oversight is there of quality?

All baselines, targets, progress tracking and reports are led and quality assured by our SEN Specialist (a qualified teacher or SEN specialist consultant), who observes delivery at least monthly. Weekly staff planning and debrief sessions are built into the operational model.

Q Can you provide provision for looked-after children and Virtual School referrals?

Yes. We regularly support looked-after children and work closely with Virtual School Heads, including PEP meetings and the heightened consistency needs of care-experienced learners. Our small team, stable staffing and consistent environment suit learners who have experienced multiple placement moves and disrupted attachments.



Fees and Commissioning

Q What are the fees?

Our 2025–2026 fees are introductory launch prices, reviewed annually. All fees include the full four-strand programme, the work experience programme with staff accompaniment, baseline assessment, progress tracking and reporting. There are no hidden costs. All fees are shown exclusive of VAT; VAT is charged where applicable.

Place type	Per session (3 hrs)	6-week block	12-week term
EHCP, LA and school-funded place: includes in-depth reports responding to EHCP outcomes, school and LA liaison, and Annual Review or TAF meeting attendance	£185	£1,110	£2,220
Self-funded place: family funded, with simple reports	£155	£930	£1,860
1:1 therapeutic mentoring, standalone girls' service for ages 6 to 18 (at the Wildflowers; home and community rates below)	£65 / hour EHCP, LA and school; £55 / hour self-funded (ex VAT)	Variable	Variable

Q How are placements invoiced?

All placements are invoiced in advance, per 6-week block or per term (termly fees are based on a 12-session term; shorter terms are adjusted accordingly). A signed placement agreement must be in place

before the first session.

Q What is the minimum commitment?

One 6-week block: the minimum time needed for relationships to form and meaningful progress to be made and evidenced. Placements can be extended on a rolling 6-week basis or commissioned for a full term.

Q What is the 1:1 therapeutic mentoring service?

1:1 therapeutic mentoring is a standalone service for girls and young women aged 6 to 18, commissioned separately from the AP day and open to girls who are not enrolled in the AP, including primary-age girls (6 to 11) who are anxious, school-avoidant or struggling with friendships and social communication. It is available up to 5 days per week in sessions of 1, 1.5 or 2 hours, in three settings: at the Wildflowers (£65 per hour for EHCP, LA and school-funded referrals; £55 self-funded); at home, with the mentor travelling to the young person (£75 / £65 per hour including up to 30 minutes' travel each way, plus a travel fee of £15 per visit within 10 miles of the centre or 45p per mile beyond); or in the community (£90 / £80 per hour, minimum 1.5 hours, with activity costs, food and the mentor's travel all included). All mentoring fees exclude VAT; VAT is charged where applicable. Sessions are delivered through cooking together, art-based sessions, community outings, regulation work and confidence sessions. It is particularly useful for learners not yet ready for the group session, or who need a trusted adult available more frequently during a high-anxiety period.

Still have a question? Please contact us directly; we respond to all enquiries within 2 working days. Our Admissions Policy will be sent to you upon your initial enquiry.

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