



Royal Society for **Blind Children**

DORTON COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

A pioneering college for visually
impaired 16-25 year olds.

rsbc.org.uk/college



Dorton College student
at partnership college

**Life
Without
Limits**

For Blind
Children

WELCOME

Welcome to RSBC Dorton College and thank you for taking the time to learn more about us. We're looking forward to supporting you on your journey, whether you're taking the next steps into

education, or researching on behalf of a young person you know. We hope this prospectus provides a useful insight into our approach.

At Dorton, our dedicated staff aim to provide first-class support to students who are visually impaired (VI) and also to those who

are VI and have additional needs. Our students come to us from age 16 and are welcome to continue their studies up until they are 25 and ready to graduate.

Dorton College is part of national charity, the Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC), which has a long and rich history of supporting blind and partially sighted children, young people and their families. Dorton works closely with a range of partners, from both mainstream and specialist settings, to ensure that students get the very best from their time with us.

OUR DEDICATED
STAFF AIM TO
PROVIDE FIRST-
CLASS SUPPORT
TO STUDENTS
WHO ARE
VISUALLY IMPAIRED



Ofsted have rated Dorton as 'Good' in every area at our most recent inspection in September 2018.

It also reported; "Students make good progress and achieve well. Students develop increased confidence and a range of strategies and skills to enhance their prospects of employment and independence".

Our ethos of 'Just Enough Support', which means our staff always support students at the right level for the individual needs of each young person, never over or under supporting. This enables all of our students to achieve their potential fully, increase their independence levels and reach their aspirations; enabling all our young people to truly embrace their education and live a 'Life without Limits'. With warmest wishes,

Josie Grainger
Principal - Dorton College

WHO WE ARE... RSBC DORTON COLLEGE

The Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC) has been supporting blind and partially sighted children and young people and their families for over 180 years.

RSBC Dorton College is an independent specialist college, offering a day provision for visually impaired (VI) students between the ages of 16-25. We also support young people who are VI and have additional needs.

At RSBC, we are very privileged to have **Her Majesty the Queen** as our patron.





OFSTED SAID:

“Learning programmes are highly individualised and designed to meet the needs and aspirations of each student; students can access a broad curriculum.”

WHY COME TO US ... WHAT IS INCLUDED?

RSBC DORTON COLLEGE IS A FULL TIME SPECIALIST EDUCATION PROVIDER, OFFERING DAYTIME PROVISION OVER A FIVE DAY WEEK. THIS INCLUDES;

- Access to a range of mainstream partnership providers, with Dorton College specialist VI Learning Support Assistants (LSA's) to support in main programme of study.
- An individualised, 'wrap around' curriculum, enabling students to access both mainstream and specialist education with expert support.
- Access to our VI adapted day provision hub on Bromley High Street, which is close to public transport links and local shops and businesses.
- One to one employment sessions, that tailor the employment ambitions and skills of the individual student and links this with providers in both education provisions and local businesses.
- Opportunities to access Supported Internships and Apprenticeships, where appropriate.
- Habilitation and Mobility sessions, which includes customised independent living skills.
- Specialist services/therapies, such as occupational therapy, (SaLT) Speech and Language Therapy, physiotherapy, and mobility and habilitation, as individual need requires.
- Specialist equipment (as assessed).
- Specialist braille tutoring.
- Weekly one to one Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with VI (QTVI) sessions, to ensure that student progress against Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and overall academic outcomes is being made.
- Access to the most up to date assistive technologies (including most licences), for VI students to enable access to education.
- Weekly one to one tutoring sessions to offer time and space to address any areas for development or concern.
- 'Jigsaw' extended curriculum which covers personal, social and health education, additionally exploring current topics of national and international interest, from a VI perspective.

HOW WE WORK...

THE DORTON EDUCATION JOURNEY

RSBC Dorton College have long established and highly respected partnerships with several local General Further Education (GFE) providers and specialist trainers in London and the South East.

Firstly, students choose the course that they would like to study at the partnership college, as their main programme of study. Dorton College facilitates access onto the chosen course with the GFE College and work around their timetables to build an individualised, package for each Dorton College student; this combines an independent specialist VI education with a mainstream GFE curriculum seamlessly.

Below is a sample timetable of what one of our first year students on an Introduction to Work course would look like;

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
(Study day @ Dorton College hub)	(Course day @ GFE)	(Course day @ GFE)	(Study day @ Dorton College hub)	(Course day @ GFE)
QTVI session 1:1	Intro to work - Catering	Personal and Social Development	Employability Session 1:1	Access in the community
Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
Personal Tutoring 1:1	Maths	English	Braille Session	ICT
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Mobility and Habilitation 1:1	Intro to work - Gardening/ Horticulture	Enrichment	Work Placement	Tutorial (partnership college)
OT 1:1			SaLT 1:1	

Once a student has decided on their main programme of study, Dorton College staff then build the rest of the VI specialist curriculum around that; producing a highly personalised package for each student, aimed to meet individual EHCP and academic outcomes and personal goals, while providing the support at the level that each individual student requires, to enable maximum progression and independence.

Students will also access a 'Jigsaw' curriculum, this is different for each student and fits together rather like a Jigsaw around the individual, so all students build on their previous knowledge, experience and learning. The Jigsaw curriculum includes areas such as;

- Citizenship
- Health and Wellbeing
- Sex Education
- E-Safety
- Personal Safety
- Prevent
- Money Management
- Bullying
- British Values
- Equality and Diversity

Students also learn about current affairs and are encouraged to take part in group discussions and debates, to develop their critical thinking skills, how to challenge and consider different views and the impact of these for young people with VI in today's changing world. We combine this with support from our specialist therapeutic team, to ensure that students have any access or support requirements fully met.

All students participate in a work placement each year in an area of their interest, usually with a local business. As our student hub is located on Bromley High Street, we have optimum access to many exciting opportunities. This, combined with our weekly one to one VI employability sessions, ensure that our students transition out of college with as much work experience and work skills preparation as possible; additionally, developing a 'Professional Pack' by the end of their studies at Dorton College, which can be used for potential future employers, when seeking future work.



PARTNERSHIP COLLEGES

We work with several local General Further Education Colleges in London and the South East.

We have a long standing and very successful partnership with London South East Colleges (LSEC) and work collaboratively, to develop this partnership, enabling young VI students to have equal access to education as their sighted peers, in a mainstream setting. We have robust Service Level Agreements (SLA's) in place, which ensures that we have a strong, efficient and cost effective working relationship with our partnership colleges.

As we offer partnerships with several large mainstream and specialist providers, we are able to offer a much wider choice of main programmes of study to our students. This unique mainstream partnership allows for a more diverse range of learning opportunities.

We provide regular training to our partnership colleges, to both raise general VI awareness and ensure that Dorton Students and their individual needs are understood and fully catered for.

We observe Dorton staff while in the partnership colleges, both formally and informally, to ensure a robust quality of support, making sure that all our students are given "Just Enough Support" and these standards are consistent across the wide range of courses our students take; additionally, in periods of transition around the college campus, or social, unstructured times, such as lunch and break times.

OFSTED SAID:

"Leaders and managers have built very good relationships with several partner colleges to enable their students to access a broad range of specialist curriculum areas. Students study for accredited qualifications from entry level to level 3 in specialisms such as sport and exercise science, media, performing arts, business and massage. As a result, students have access to a broad curriculum offer that enables them to pursue their career aspirations".

ENABLING YOUNG VI STUDENTS TO HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION AS THEIR SIGHTED PEERS

WORK PLACEMENTS AND EMPLOYABILITY

At RSBC Dorton College all students participate in work placements in an area of their interest each year. This can and does lead to paid employment, supported internships or apprenticeships. Our Transition and Employability Coordinator, is a dedicated, specialist member of staff, who delivers one to one employability sessions, organises work placements and ensures a

smooth transition into and during college, mapping and reporting the student's journey along the way to key stakeholders.

We offer Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG) for careers, with a specialist who has knowledge in VI, where possible, additionally working in conjunction with the GFE's where they also support this.

COST

A day placement at Dorton College, offers excellent value for money, as we offer a five day a week, 38 weeks a year 'education and more' package, which is personalised and with VI specialist support at all times, to enable students to meet their EHCP outcomes and reach their aspirations. We exclusively combine both mainstream and independent specialist VI further education, to create a unique provision like no other in London or the south east. Costs are individual to each student, but we aim to ensure that costs represent value for money, whilst yielding the highest output and progress for our students.

We review our placement costs regularly, as we want to offer the best value for money at all times.

A 'typical' placement cost can be requested via our email address dortoncollege@rsbc.org.uk. This would indicate how and what we charge for and a detailed breakdown of each component, education, health and care.

We have a very thorough pre-entry assessment process, which enables us to ensure that a student will have support at the correct level, in the right areas. We aim to keep our costs realistic and meet to review with Local Authorities regularly, or as student need dictates.

Dorton College is unique in its objective to enable VI students who wish to access a mainstream programme of study, yet secure the specialist VI education support they need in order to achieve their outcomes. The bespoke curriculum in our educational provision enables all students to develop their life-long learning, aspirations and independent living skills like no where else in London or the South East. Each costing is clearly broken down into the separate elements, to provide clarity as to exactly what is being funded at each stage and how much it costs. College management, and additional staffing, administrative costs are split equally between the number of students enrolled each year.

OFSTED SAID:

"Leaders and managers make effective use of funding to put in place highly individualised and tailored programmes of study for each student, based on their prior attainment, level of attainment, support needs and ambitions"



LEARNER JOURNEY

During our pre entry assessments we start to map out the student's learner journey and how the curriculum will be planned. This includes what their future ambitions, aspirations, employment ambitions, what EHCP outcomes are, social ambitions and how they would like their time at RSBC Dorton College to enable these.

Once our students have chosen their main programme of study, we take care of the rest. From application process, interview support (if needed), or just finding the right course. We work with the partnership college to make this happen.

TRANSITIONS

Transition in, during and out of college is very carefully planned, monitored and managed.

→ IN

Transition from school or a previous placement is negotiated with the individual student, their family and the team around them. We work hard to establish good working links and named contacts for all of our students, to ensure that everything they need is in place before they start at RSBC Dorton College.

Our Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) will assess a student thoroughly, and a visit to our partnership college/s is also facilitated, so the student gets a feel of it. We work with the EHCP provision requirements to ensure that we are able to provide the correct learning environment for the student to achieve their goals. Students will then spend some time with us at our hub, so we can assess and ensure we are offering the right individualised package.

→ DURING

Transition during a college placement is crucial to the student experience and progress at RSBC Dorton College.

We map out a learner journey at the very start of a students placement and work with the EHCP outcomes to develop individualised targets, which will ensure staged progression towards the EHCP outcomes and individual aspirations. We hold an annual review, which Local Authorities and external specialist professionals are invited to each year, where we map out progress towards the EHCP outcomes and further MDT meetings on an individual basis as needed. We report twice a year on progress against EHCP outcomes.

→ OUT

Transition out of college and into the next stage of a young person's life is critical to ensuring RSBC Dorton College students get the best start to adult life post further education.

We have a dedicated Transition Coordinator who will support through this process, along with local authorities to ensure that the best outcomes are secured once a student has graduated. We also have a fantastic annual student reunion, where students who have graduated return to tell us all about their achievements post college!

→ HIGHER EDUCATION

At the end of a placement with RSBC Dorton College, some students may wish to progress onto Higher Education.

We support the application process and facilitate students to move in the direction they wish, ensuring that they have the correct VI support in place.



A DAY AT DORTON

8:30 GET MOVING

Our LSA's will meet students at the partnership college or a pre arranged location, or at the Dorton College hub in the morning. Students can walk, take the bus or train and it's a great time to practice the routes that will be learned with our Mobility team. If students prefer to travel independently, the LSA will meet them at the college.

9:00 GET SMART

Our highly trained VI specialist LSA's, provide support in class and we make sure all lesson resources are ready, in whatever format, in order to access the course. LSA's work closely with partnership college tutors, Dorton personal tutors and QTVI's to make sure all needs are fully met.

12:00 RE-FUEL

Students will be supported by their LSA (if needed), to get their lunch from the canteen and support to facilitate social contact with peers, or find a space to relax before the afternoon.

13:00 GET AHEAD

After lunch, students resume their course sessions with support of the LSAs depending on timetable, or they may have a study time back at the Dorton College hub.

3:30 GET PRACTICAL

During study times at the hub, there is access to a range of additional activities, such as supported study, QTVI sessions, personal tutoring, Braille, Moon or assistive technology sessions, to help students keep pace with their courses; or OT, SaLT or Mobility sessions.

16:00 GET INDEPENDENT

Students are supported by their LSA to access their transport for their journey home or students can travel home independently.



WHY COME TO DORTON?

STUDENT STATEMENTS

“ I came to Dorton College to complete my level 3 media course that will help me to find a job. I also want to learn new life skills and to improve existing skills that will help me in adult life ”

“ I came to achieve a good grade for my course that will help me for the future. Also, to become more independent and I feel more independent now than ever before ”

“ I decided to come at Dorton College to learn and improve my life skills and to increase my independence. This will give me freedom for my future ”

“ It's a safe place. I say it's safe, firstly because they don't tolerate bullying. Secondly, it's fun. Lastly, they help you to keep on persisting for your dreams and never give up ”

“ I came to Dorton college because I thought I could become more independent and I learnt a lot of life skills like cooking and cleaning here. I have good support on my main programme of study and I really love it, although it is very intense as it's a level 3 course. I know that this course is very hard, but it will get me where I want to be in life ”

DORTON STAFF STATEMENTS

“ I work in collaboration with my students, so that their training programmes are broken down into realistic targets that they want to achieve. This ensures motivation on their part and I believe that it helps them to see the progress that they are making; a huge amount of learning can be accomplished while they are progressing towards their own goals. ”

“ Having a good rapport with students is enormously important; it builds trust; highlights any issues, clarifies understanding and makes the lesson much more fun! Working together and having trust, enables a person to be challenged beyond what they believe themselves to be capable of; helps develop realistic and meaningful objectives. It makes the employment, interesting, challenging and very enjoyable ”

PARTNERSHIP COLLEGE STATEMENTS

“ The specialist support given by Dorton College staff is of the highest standard, providing learning opportunities for students that include English and Maths at the forefront ”

“ Resources are always brought to each lesson in whatever format students need for full accessibility of learning ”

“ The Dorton College LSA ensures her student is learning in a safe and constructive manner both in college classrooms, in the specialist college kitchen and when out in the community using public transport and accessing supermarkets that is stretching his capabilities at all times ”

FULL OFSTED REPORT SEPTEMBER 2018

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50029682>



MEGAN'S JOURNEY

“ I am now a fourth year student at Dorton College and I have really loved my time here. I started as a residential student and was residential for my first three years. Now I am a day student and I really love it! I can use all the independent living skills that I learn here at home now and one day I want to live independently, so Dorton College has helped me achieve this.

I have studied a few different courses during my time at Dorton College, each one building my learning levels. I also study English and Maths exams every year. I study at the Nido Volans part of London South East Colleges (LSEC) which is one of our partnership colleges. Nido Volans loads of amazing specialist facilities, such as adapted kitchens, bedrooms, laundry rooms. They have poly tunnels for gardening and horticulture, an adapted woodwork room and a fully equipped theatre and media suite. I love it there and have made lots of friends both in Dorton College and LSEC. I really do get the best of both worlds!

**I HAVE LOVED MY
TIME AT DORTON
COLLEGE AND MY
ADVICE WOULD BE TO
COME AND VISIT US**

While I am at LSEC I have a 1:1 LSA who is a Dorton College VI specialist LSA and they help me with my Portset and other specialist equipment that I use to enable me to access the courses there. I have two days based at the Dorton College hub and that is when I do all my VI specialist work. I do Braille lessons, personal tutoring, and supported study and mobility lessons.

I also had an amazing work placement at Molton Brown and that inspired me to apply for a fourth year and to study on the Higher Needs Supported Internship; as I want to get a job after college and this will give me the best

opportunities and experience to be able to achieve this.

I have loved my time at Dorton College and my advice would be to come and visit us, see what we do and how we do it. Bring a student here has been the best decision, because they support me but just enough to enable me to develop the independence I need. ”



@RSBCCHARITY

