Why we do what we do

We know that in order to learn and play with interest and enthusiasm our children need to feel:

- Socially included
- Emotionally and mentally well
- Physically strong and capable

This has not always been our children's experience.

They come to us with an educational history that is marked by low, intermittent or non-attendance, suspension, permanent exclusion, social isolation and stigma, and a lack of academic engagement. Often, they themselves have low expectations of their own abilities and have to overcome a sense of failure and rejection which has impacted on their sense of self, their self-esteem and their confidence. Often their social histories have been punctuated with trauma, either because they have been under-served by the education system or because they have experienced significant domestic or environmental challenges (adverse childhood experiences). Whatever the reason, and whatever labels a child has been attributed, these circumstances lead our children to feel hopeless, helpless, and powerless, to have difficulties with attachment and to experience significant challenges in self-regulating and managing their emotions safely, outside of societal norms.

The pandemic has magnified the challenges that our children face. Our children now come to us, often having had very little experience of school and of being around other children. More often than not, our children have attended at least two schools prior to Haywood Grove and for some, as many as six.

Our Helping Hands Curriculum is designed purposefully to not only mitigate against these multiple barriers to learning but to re-engage and inspire a life-long love of learning. It is designed to ensure that our children thrive and continue to flourish beyond their time at Haywood Grove. We aspire to influence our children's lives so that they can achieve the positive, constructive, happy, and independent futures that they want.

Our Helping Hands Curriculum is ambitious, creative and progressive and represents our ethos in action. Its framework is purposefully dynamic ad flexible ensuring that it can be adapted and evolve to respond to the unique needs and talents of each child and continue to capture imagination and interest, regardless of circumstance.