

# EMA - GILLINGHAM

2024 - 2025



Find your future...

# Head of Education's Welcome...

## Welcome to EMA – Gillingham!

Our new campus prospectus provides an overview of the unique and diverse opportunities at EMA, where we support, guide, and celebrate everyone who attends. I have been part of the EMA team for six years and have served as Head of Education for the past three. It is with great pride that I introduce you to our Gillingham site. At EMA, we are committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment where every student is empowered to thrive. This ethos is the cornerstone of everything we do.

Our Gillingham campus features modern facilities designed to meet a wide range of needs. Supported by a passionate and experienced team of professionals, we foster a community where everyone can achieve their full potential. Recent developments at the campus have brought significant improvements, and we can't wait to show you around.

From hands-on learning experiences to developing essential skills for your future, we are dedicated to supporting you at every step of your journey. Our study programmes cover a variety of subjects and levels. We've recently introduced new pathways in hospitality and retail, utilising our training kitchen and retail learning space. The campus also boasts dedicated outdoor and sensory areas, a new independent living suite, and supported internships—all designed to create a personalised learning experience that equips you for a successful future.

We understand that every individual's journey is unique. From the moment you arrive on campus to the day you transition into the local or wider community, we are here to celebrate your progress and help you grow into a more confident, independent version of yourself.

Your journey with us can start with a tour, a taster session, or even an informal chat. We'd love to hear from you and look forward to helping you find your future.



**James Dunham - Head of Education**

*Thank you!*



## Gillingham Campus, All About Me session

*Daily sessions where students get the chance to meet with their Tutor and go through the work they are doing towards their EHCP Outcomes.*



# Learning at our Gillingham Campus

**Our Gillingham campus is a welcoming and inclusive environment designed to meet the needs of students with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) and other special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We provide a safe, supportive space where students can grow, thrive, and achieve their full potential, with access to tailored resources and dedicated staff, ensuring students are fully prepared for their future through individualised learning pathways.**

We offer a range of study programmes designed to empower students and support their transition into adulthood, including:

- Preparation for Adulthood Study Programme, focusing on developing essential life skills and independence including Arts, Sports and Music.
- Support for Employment Study Programme, aimed at equipping students with the skills needed for meaningful employment opportunities.
- Supported Internships, providing real-world work experiences in a guided and supportive environment.
- Transition Study Programme, helping students smoothly transition from EMA to their chosen future pathway.

All programmes include English, Maths, Digital Skills and vocational learning tailored to each student's skill level and needs. This approach ensures that students receive a balanced education, combining functional, practical, and career-oriented skills. Additionally, we offer:

- An Independent Living Suite to learn skills in a real environment
- Sensory spaces to support engagement and learning.
- Accessible facilities, including adapted classrooms and outdoor areas.
- Highly trained staff who provide individualised support.
- A focus on assistive technologies and learning plans to meet every student's needs.
- Hospitality training kitchen and café designed to provide students with a professional and immersive learning experience offering a realistic working environment to simulate industry standards.

By combining functional, vocational, and life-skills education, we ensure our students are equipped to reach their full potential and transition successfully into adulthood.





# CAREERS

EMA is committed to enabling and encouraging all students to explore and experience different vocational and academic areas ensuring they have the tools to make meaningful decisions about their future career pathways. EMA recognises that Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance is crucial for our students' success and are committed to embedding the eight GATSBY standards using the Compass Tool that benchmarks good Careers Guidance across the curriculum.

These are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Our Careers lead at Senior Management Level works in collaboration with the Senior Management Team, Work Placement and Next Steps Coordinator and wider colleagues to oversee and monitor the Policy and Careers Strategy, identify priorities and improvement plans, and works with external Careers IAG professionals to ensure all students have access to a career programme that is differentiated to meet their needs.



## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Our connection to the local and wider communities of Gillingham, Shaftesbury, and beyond is a key part of the experience at EMA, and is something we continue to maintain and develop through a range of projects with students at their heart. Students are encouraged to utilise skills they have been developing in all areas, to plan and deliver various events on and off-site, along with visits to local groups, and even charity fundraising.

We host afternoon tea and lunch events for parents, carers, and feeder schools, visit local care homes and social care provisions, take part in community litter picks, charity bake sales, car washes, and are deeply involved with Shaftesbury's entry into Britain in Bloom. Student efforts, together with the assistance of EMA Day Opportunities users, have resulted in Shaftesbury in Bloom becoming award-winning for the second consecutive year and this annual undertaking is a project we will continue to take part in, and build on. We have also previously decorated our polytunnels for seasonal events, offering a 'Winter Wonderland' at Christmas open to the public, which was developed from a previous collaboration with a local theatre company, who hosted an immersive experience at our Gillingham site and we look forward to doing more of this.

These community connections promote teamwork, communication, planning and execution, while also boosting confidence. They give students the opportunity to take pride in something they've built, or funds they have raised, and also help to show everyone in the community our students' enthusiasm, drive, and creativity.



### **Students working on Shaftesbury in Bloom**

*An award winning annual collaboration with Shaftesbury town.*



## ON-SITE WORK PRACTICE

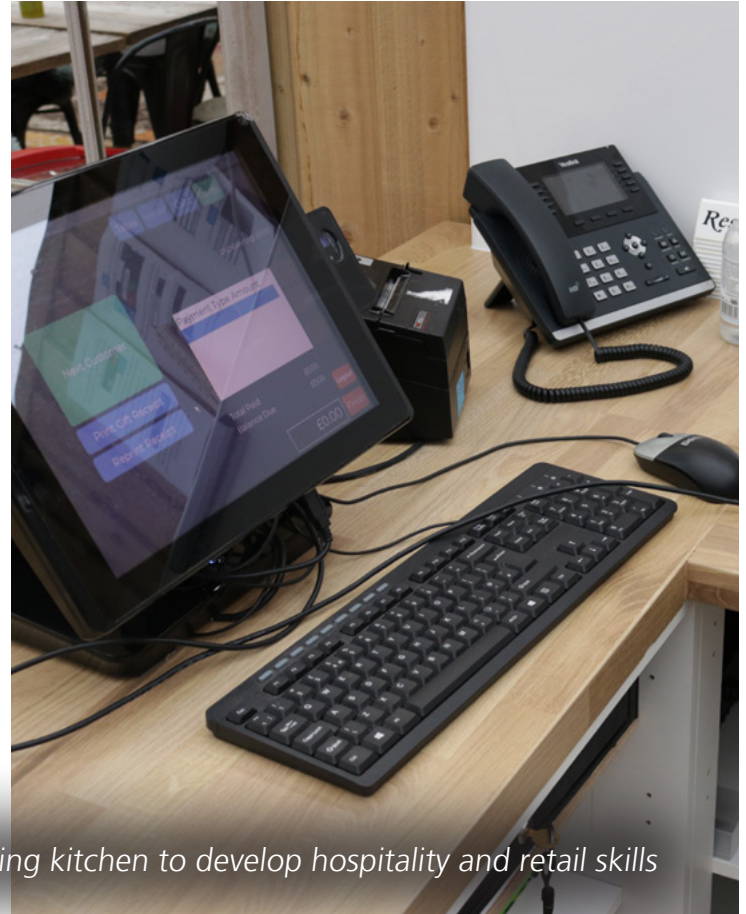
Students benefit from frequent experience in our training kitchen, café and shop designed to provide students with a professional and immersive learning experience, offering a realistic working environment to simulate industry standards.

Students have timetabled and structured vocational sessions where they will learn the skills they need to prepare them for independence in their career pathway after EMA. Students have short term individual outcomes designed to help them develop their skills and continually progress and further their practical knowledge.



### Training Café

*A dedicated space with an industry standard training kitchen to develop hospitality and retail skills*



## OFF-SITE WORK EXPERIENCE

Students on our Supported Employment, Supported Internships and Students without EHCPs study programmes will be supported to develop a range of basic skills in their vocational range. They will be supported to find an off-site work experience placement of their choosing in their local area so as to encourage independent travel to their workplace. The off-site placements are fully supported by a member of EMA staff to ensure the student feels secure and supported for as long as is necessary. We like to try and give our students a placement for one full day a week to encourage a routine and to maximise the development of their skills within this setting. Once the employer and student are comfortable, we reduce the support if appropriate so they can gain independence in the workplace.

Short term outcomes are agreed between the student and the employer. These outcomes are reviewed at six week intervals to encourage continual growth and challenge. We have a wide range of local employer partners in the hospitality, horticultural, retail and animal care sectors across Dorset and surrounding areas who facilitate these placements. They provide the real world experience our students need to progress and we are always grateful for their assistance



“ On-site work practice and off-site work experience placements are a vital area for our vision at EMA. It provides the stage for our classroom learning to be expressed in the real-life working environment. This is where we really see our students progress and it is a pleasure to watch them grow both with their confidence and their social skills. ”

- James Dunham, Head of Education



## STUDENT SUCCESS



### Newman

Newman graduated from EMA education 2023, and has since transitioned into our adult social care branch where he currently attends 3 days per week. Newman requires support but this hasn't stopped him from continuing to develop his own independence and participating in a range of activities which keep him busy and enable him to put learnt skills into practice.

Newman's mum says "He is so much better at using his own voice, and is able to build strong relationships with people, like the one he has with his personal trainer, with whom he attends the gym every week, doing his best to keep healthy, and track his body fat loss progress. He is really happy and it's brilliant to see."

He is involved in diverse community projects with EMA's adult social care such as Shaftesbury in Bloom. He has moved into Supported Living with his own flat.

### Sam

Sam graduated from Gillingham in July 2024, and since leaving EMA he has continued to develop his skills and even moved into paid employment!

Sam works as part of the front of house team in a café in Sherborne, and the Manager there has nothing but praise for him. During his time with EMA, Sam completed internal work experience in hospitality, and developed both his front of house and basic cooking skills. We're thrilled to see him adapting these skills at his job within the local community.

Sam has also enrolled at a Supported Internship with Yeovil College and we wish him continued success for his future.



[Find even more student success stories on our website and social media.](#)

# SUPPORTING STUDENT'S DEVELOPMENT

## Careers Strategy

We understand that making decisions about future career paths can be daunting for young people. We are committed to providing a supportive environment to help our students explore their career options. We provide guidance and advice on career options, as well as activities and resources to help young people make informed and confident decisions about their future.

We provide a range of learning opportunities that help students explore and develop their career interests including work experience, community projects, visits to next steps providers, CV writing and interviews, our curriculum provides students with the skills and knowledge they need to progress, developing the right attitude and behaviour and supporting them to make successful careers choices.

Our Work Placements and Next Steps Coordinator works with students to develop a pathway plan that is suitable and ambitious with a focus on the Preparation for Adulthood themes of:

- Good Health
- Employment and Careers
- Independent Lives
- Friends, Relationships and Community

Once the plan has been agreed, it is reviewed with the student to make adjustments as they gain more understanding of their choices. This ensures that the student remains on track to achieving their career goals and that any changes in the student's needs or interests are added to the plan.

## All About Me

These are daily sessions where students get the chance to meet with their tutor and go through the work they are doing towards their EHCP Outcomes. Tutors will meet with students 1:1 and go through the evidence that has been captured on their vocational and functional studies each week and recorded on Evidence for Learning and how it links to their outcomes. They will also go through their wellbeing and what they have been doing with their work experience. Classes will also follow the tutorial scheme of work which covers tasks and topics that link to EHCP categories Cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social, emotional and mental health, independence and physical & sensory.



## Listening to our Students

Students can access our Talk About group where they can explore how to express their feelings and build friendships and have an understanding and respect of other people and their feelings. We are committed to our student voice being at the very heart of everything we do at EMA. We have an active student council that meets every half term and has a representative from each tutor group. Our 'you said, we did' board lets students know how their suggestions have developed and changed the college.

Alongside our student council we are committed to extending activities to ensure all students have the ability and opportunity to contribute to curriculum planning and the assessment of their college experiences. We are committed to increasing the reach and influence of student voice activities.



## Enrichment at EMA

Enrichment is all about boosting students' overall wellbeing to help them to perform at their best at college. They can improve their study performance through curricular enrichment and enjoy time away from their studies through extra-curricular enrichment.

Throughout the academic year, we run a range of tutor-led enrichment activities, including trips and offsite activities linked to students' academic and vocational outcomes. At the end of each term, students have the opportunity to engage in a week of extra-curricular enrichment provision which gives students varied opportunities to try something new or develop an interest alongside their main studies. Our student council take an active role in shaping and planning our extra-curricular enrichment offer so that it best meets the interests of our current students. Previous activities have included exploring local landmarks, arts and crafts projects, and inviting a 'bug experience' to site to learn more about fascinating insects.

At the end of each year students, families and staff enjoy the EMA Graduation Celebration. It's a chance for our graduating students to celebrate their fantastic achievements with friends and families as we wish them an incredibly proud goodbye.

## Speech & Language Therapy

The speech and language therapy (SALT) team at EMA aims to provide and promote a high quality, responsive and inclusive communication environment for all our students. We support students to work towards their EHCP outcomes, acquiring speech, language and communication skills and strategies which equip them for their futures. We do this using a combination of small group therapy, classroom support and specific short term interventions, taking a flexible approach according to what works best for each individual.

We adopt a multi-sensory approach to learning and communication throughout EMA, utilising a wide range of communication tools (e.g. signing, visual schedules, voice notes, Mind Maps™) to support understanding, recall and use of language. The whole education team at EMA receive ongoing support and training from the SALT team to enable them to create an environment where all methods of communication are valued and responded to.



Some of the aspects of communication we support our students with include:

- Understanding and using the specialist vocabulary used in their courses
- Developing the social communication skills needed to make and maintain friendships and working relationships
- Identifying, expressing and managing emotions.
- Employing appropriate support strategies (such as visual schedules) to enable students to successfully carry out home and work tasks as independently as possible as they progress into the adulthood.



## STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

EMA receive a small budget from the government for financial bursaries each academic year. These bursaries can help with the cost towards traveling to and from EMA, course equipment and college activities. This financial support helps students in completing their courses.

EMA also receives money from the government to support eligible students with free meals whilst at college.

The funding we receive from the government is not set and changes from year to year depending on what they have available to spend.

All applications are on a first come, first served basis and can be submitted each term.

**Further information, eligibility criteria and application forms can be found on our website:**  
**[www.employability.org.uk/aboutus/studentfinancialsupport](http://www.employability.org.uk/aboutus/studentfinancialsupport)**

**Alternatively, call reception on 01929 405685 for further information.**



# SAFEGUARDING

EMA are dedicated to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all our students and staff. Our commitment to safeguarding means that we take proactive measures to identify and mitigate potential risks, provide appropriate support, and maintain a culture of respect and dignity for all. We share the belief that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and have a dedicated safeguarding team that promotes awareness and is always available to provide support to students, their families and our staff team.

All staff, volunteers and trustees are trained in both children and adult safeguarding, and we have established safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Safeguarding themes are embedded into our curriculum and we pride ourselves in going above and beyond to make college a safe, happy and thriving environment for all.



*Sammie Eaton*  
Designated Safeguarding Lead  
for EMA



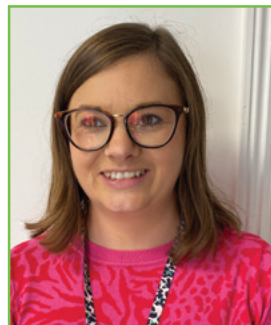
*Susanna Powell*  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead  
for Gillingham



*Helen Munday*  
Deputy Safeguarding Officer  
for Gillingham



*James Dunham*  
Deputy Safeguarding Officer  
Moreton & Gillingham



*Sadie Paradise*  
Deputy Safeguarding Officer  
Moreton & Gillingham



*Bradley Kendrick*  
Deputy Safeguarding Officer  
Moreton & Gillingham



# Gillingham students charity car wash

Raising funds for Dementia UK





# ASSESSMENT

If you are interested in finding out more about us and would like to have a look around. We are more than happy to organise this. Just contact us on 01929 405 685 or email us at [referrals@employmyability.org.uk](mailto:referrals@employmyability.org.uk). We believe every young person is different and we embrace this individuality, ensuring each young person's transition is tailored to meet their needs.

## Visits

If you would like to come and visit us and have a look at EMA and meet staff and students, this can be easily arranged.

## Referral

Once you have decided EMA is the place for you, you can make a referral. We will send / email you a referral form to complete or complete it during your visit. Students, parents, carers and professionals can make referrals.

## Taster Sessions

We are more than happy to organise taster sessions for young people to give them an insight into what we do and support them in making their choice about their future.

## Student Assessment

After we receive your completed referral we will arrange a time for our assessment to be completed. One of the team will come out and meet with you and your family in order to complete the assessment. This ensures we have all the information we need to support you academically and emotionally.





## EMA INITIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL FORM



<b>Name of Student</b>			
<b>Address of Student</b>			
<b>Contact Number</b>			
<b>Next of Kin</b>			
<b>Date of Birth</b>		<b>Allergies / Medication</b>	
<b>Current Provision</b>		<b>Site</b>	<b>Gillingham</b>

**Please note all students will be required to complete the induction skills package and will be encouraged to have taster sessions in a number of vocational areas.**

<b>Pathway you would like to do:</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
Preparation for Adulthood -All Vocational Areas and Functional Skills (Pre-Entry-Entry 2)	
Support For Employment - One Vocational Area (below) and Functional Skills (Entry 2-Level 2)	
SFE-Hospitality	
CTH Hospitality Courses	
Supported Internship	
SEND – No EHCP	

**Continue form on reverse of page**



	Name	Email	Contact Number
<b>Social Worker</b>			
<b>SEN Worker</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

<b>Referrer</b>			
<b>Contact Number</b>			
<b>Contact Email</b>			
<b>Relationship to Student</b>		<b>Date</b>	

**Additional comments:** .....

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Please declare whether you have any unspent convictions or current proceedings against you.

**Yes / No**

If you answer yes we will ask you for further details. Your response will not stop you from being offered a place at our college. We need to have this information to ensure your safety and the safety of our students and staff and make our decision based on your full assessment, not on your answer to this question.

Please return to:

By post: Employ My Ability, The Walled Gardens, Moreton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8RG

Email: [referrals@employmyability.org.uk](mailto:referrals@employmyability.org.uk)

Tel: 01929 405 685



EMA over the years...



# EMA

## Find Your Future

Follow our story



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