

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Development Plan

Strategic priorities for The Haven, 2025/26 to 2027/28

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1. Purpose

This Development Plan sets out the strategic priorities for The Haven over a three-year planning horizon. It supports governors, commissioners, staff and families to understand what we are building and why. It is a working document, reviewed annually and updated to reflect progress, learning, and any change in operating context.

2. Context

The Haven was launched in September 2025 in response to the growing number of neurodivergent young people unable to attend mainstream school. We are a specialist online provision serving young people whose needs are not met elsewhere, predominantly autistic girls and gender-diverse young people, often with co-occurring needs including anxiety, ADHD, demand-avoidance profiles, and mental health difficulties. Our cohort is funded through private, school-commissioned Alternative Provision, and Local Authority EOTAS routes.

The Haven is operated as a non-profit specialist education provision under a registered charity, with all surplus reinvested into the provision.

3. Vision and strategic aims

Vision: Every neurodivergent young person has access to learning that fits them — without having to mask, mute or disappear to be included.

Strategic aims for the three-year period:

- Establish The Haven as an Ofsted-accredited specialist online provision that Local Authorities can confidently name on EHCPs.
- Grow capacity sustainably while maintaining the relational quality that defines our work.

- Build evidence and case study material that demonstrates outcomes for the most complex cases.
- Embed identity and re-engagement work — Back to Balance, Neurodiversity University, Preparing for Adulthood — as core, not peripheral.
- Strengthen governance, quality assurance and financial sustainability in line with the charity's growth.

4. Year One priorities (2025/26)

4.1 Quality and accreditation

- Progress the application for Ofsted Online Education Accreditation.
- Embed termly quality assurance cycles in line with the Quality Assurance Policy.
- Complete a digital accessibility audit of the learner platform.

4.2 Provision development

- Stabilise the Back to Balance programme as a defined 12-week pathway.
- Build the part-time and full-time curriculum to GCSE level.
- Roll out Neurodiversity University and Preparing for Adulthood as standard inclusions.

4.3 People and culture

- Recruit additional neurodivergent educators to meet demand.
- Establish reflective supervision as part of every educator's routine.
- Strengthen induction for new staff and volunteers.

4.4 Governance and finance

- Refresh and approve the full policy estate at governor level.
- Diversify income streams to reduce dependency on any one route.
- Strengthen the risk register and governor reporting cycle.

5. Year Two priorities (2026/27)

5.1 External recognition and reach

- Secure Ofsted Online Education Accreditation.
- Pursue inclusion on Local Authority frameworks where appropriate.
- Publish outcome data and case studies.

5.2 Service development

- Expand subject offer in response to learner voice.
- Strengthen examination access arrangements pathway.
- Develop transition pathways into post-16 provision.

5.3 Workforce

- Build a clearer career structure for educators.
- Invest in continued professional development in neuro-affirming practice and trauma-informed delivery.

5.4 Community of practice

- Develop a sustainable community of practice for our neurodivergent educator team.
- Strengthen links with relevant professional networks and academic partners.

6. Year Three priorities (2027/28)

6.1 Sustainability and scale

- Achieve financial sustainability across diversified funding.
- Maintain quality and relational integrity at increased capacity.
- Demonstrate measurable longitudinal outcomes for learners.

6.2 Influence and advocacy

- Position The Haven as recognised contributors to national policy on neurodivergent young people.
- Translate operational evidence into systemic recommendations for schools, Local Authorities and government.

6.3 Refresh

- Conduct a full strategic refresh in light of three years of evidence and any change in operating context.

7. Risks to delivery

Key risks to the delivery of this plan, as held on the governor risk register, include:

- Funding volatility, particularly in commissioned routes.
- Workforce capacity, especially recruitment of suitably experienced neurodivergent educators.
- Regulatory change affecting online education or alternative provision.
- Demand exceeding sustainable growth.
- Safeguarding complexity in a cohort with high mental health need. Mitigations are documented in the governor risk register, reviewed quarterly.

8. Monitoring and review

Progress against this plan is reviewed termly by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to the Board of Governors. A full plan refresh is conducted annually.

9. Related documents

- Statement of Purpose
- Quality Management Framework
- Quality Assurance Policy

- Reserves Policy
- Risk Register (governor-held)
- Charity Annual Report and Accounts

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