



Team Around The Setting

Meet the team



Richard Bottomley

Leader

I am the Headteacher at Bradford AP Academy, providing education for permanently excluded secondary students in Bradford, as well as short-term support for those at risk of exclusion. I have worked in education for 23 years across both mainstream and alternative provision.

Following the Covid pandemic, a joint initiative by the DfE and Home Office was launched to reduce youth violence, which led to the creation of the Taskforce. While the Taskforce initially supported only permanently excluded young people, its development into a local authority group now allows 40% of resources to be used within mainstream schools for pupils vulnerable to exclusion.

Our aim is to understand the root causes of behaviour, identify unmet needs, and put sustainable support in place for young people, their families, and schools. Through this work, we help stabilise behaviour, strengthen relationships, and support young people to succeed in school and beyond.



Muhammed Ammer

Youth Worker

I'm Ammer, a Breaking the Cycle youth worker who supports young people both in school and out in the community as they navigate everyday challenges. I focus on building real, trusting relationships and creating safe spaces where youth feel heard, respected, and supported.

My work includes helping improve school attendance, encouraging engagement in education, and supporting positive lifestyle choices. Through consistent mentorship, advocacy, and practical support, I aim to help young people build confidence, develop resilience, and break negative cycles as they move toward healthier, more stable futures.



Rick Heddon
Youth Justice Worker

I work with pupils at Bradford Alternative Provision Academy who are involved with the Youth Justice Service, whether through Out of Court Disposals, Anti-Social Behaviour warnings, or Court-Ordered disposals like Referral Orders or Youth Rehabilitation Orders. I provide extra support to Youth Justice Case Managers, especially for Tier 3 pupils who've been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. My role includes delivering important preventative sessions on topics like weapons awareness, anger management, drugs, ASB, and misogyny. I also support school attendance through safeguarding work, home visits, and holiday activities. Additionally, I help with reparation work, music sessions at CommonSpace, and transport for interviews or appointments. Each week, I attend Monday morning Taskforce meetings with the wider team to help ensure young people receive the right support.



Talish Butt

Youth Justice Worker

I make positive relationships with hard-to-reach students and families. I am able to do one-to-one and group work sessions with students on a wide range of topics to support engagement with education and other services. I deliver a range of programmes to help keep young people safe and supported, including Behind The Blade to prevent knife carrying, Managing Anger to build emotional regulation, and Prevent to raise awareness about criminal exploitation and county lines. As part of the taskforce, I work closely with colleagues from CAMHS, SALT, and NEET teams to carry out assessments, attend meetings, and re-engage pupils across BAPA who are not currently in education. I support young people through both one-to-one and group sessions to help them stay safe and improve their learning opportunities, while also working with parents to build their confidence and resilience. With over 25 years of experience in the local authority, mainly in youth services, I've focused on supporting vulnerable young people to develop their social and interpersonal skills.



Stef Turasz
Family Support Worker

As part of the taskforce, I share updates in our weekly meetings and focus on supporting children, young people, and their families—often through home visits and one-to-one or small group work using ‘School Nurse Support Worker care packages’. I respond quickly to referrals or requests for help, making sure the right support is put in place as soon as possible. I can refer young people into the taskforce myself or help families connect with other services, using background knowledge to tailor the support to their needs. Likewise, the taskforce can refer cases to me if additional input from SNSW is needed.



Alexandra Thornber

Mental Health Practitioner

I offer mental health support within school, helping families with CAMHS referrals and developmental histories, and liaising with staff to better support students' wellbeing. I also carry out assessments like ADOS and QB tests for ADHD and ASD, working closely with the CAMHS neuro team to explore possible diagnoses. When CAMHS isn't the right fit, I help young people access community support. Being part of a multi-disciplinary team makes it much easier and faster to get the right support in place—without long waits or endless referral forms. It also means fewer missed appointments, quicker access to professional input, and the chance to discuss cases regularly, gaining fresh ideas and updated insights that help me give the best possible care to each young person and their family.



Angela Rawnsley

NEET Family Support Worker & Post 16

I support students' mental health in school while also helping Year 11s and post-16 students explore college courses, apprenticeships, and job opportunities. I guide them through writing CVs, completing applications, and even visiting colleges or employers. For vulnerable students, I provide tailored support and work closely with families, SEN teams, and services like Skillshouse and in communities to ensure a smooth post-16 transition. As part of the taskforce, I share regular updates, get quick advice or referrals, and collaborate with others to remove barriers and boost outcomes. This joined-up approach means I have access to background information, can respond quickly to referrals, and benefit from team knowledge and communication—unlike working alone, where delays, long waiting lists, and lack of follow-up can limit impact. I also work alongside the Careers Lead to embed long-term careers support for all BAPA students, especially those who have been excluded.



Susan Abbott

Family support worker - Careers and Transitions - SEND

I support young people with SEND and their families as they prepare for life after school, helping them feel informed and confident about their post-16 options. With over 17 years' experience across mainstream, alternative and specialist education, I have a strong understanding of individual needs, the EHCP process and successful transition planning.

I help young people explore their strengths and aspirations, identify suitable education, training or employment opportunities, and navigate the steps towards their next destination. This can include college visits, taster sessions, applications and EHCP guidance. I work closely with families, schools, careers advisers, SEND professionals and post-16 providers to ensure the right support and opportunities are in place. My approach is personalised and focused on helping every young person achieve a positive and meaningful next step.



Suzanne Parish
Mencap Caseworker

With over 30 years experience working with young people with learning disabilities, neurodivergence, or social, emotional and mental health needs. I have worked mainly in post 16 education but have also taught and supported in a variety of schools across West Yorkshire. I am a Trauma Informed Practitioner and a Mental Health First Aider. I have an excellent awareness of the barriers to learning that some people face and have successfully implemented programmes of support in a range of educational settings. I am totally dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people with additional needs, through successful educational outcomes.



Sarah Schute
Mencap Caseworker

Over the last few years, I have worked in secondary schools supporting young people with SEND to make sure their voices are heard, and their needs are met. I have led both group sessions and one-to-ones, covering topics from travel training and independence to social skills and emotional regulation. I have also facilitated EHCP meetings and collaborated with a variety of professionals to secure a positive outcome for those learners. • I am passionate about supporting people with additional needs and about educating other to do the same. Being neurodivergent myself helps me to connect with and understand the learners I work with. • I am a Trauma Informed Practitioner, a Mental Health First Aider, and have CACHE Level 2 qualification in Counselling Skills.



Ella Waters

Speech & Language Team Leader

I am Ella, a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) and the SALT team lead in BAPA/BPIT. We are a small team and work closely with the wider SALT team in Bradford. We assess, diagnose and support speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) of students attending BAPA and who have been referred to BPIT from other schools, and we support other members of staff in BAPA/BPIT to understand and support SLCN. We are always happy to help where we can!



Jodie Hopkins
Speech & Language

Speech and language therapy support children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). If a student has unidentified needs or if their communication skills have been overestimated. As a team we complete assessments to identify needs and offer advice and support, intervention and training. We also work with families to support needs and contribute towards EHCPs to make sure students are being supported in the best way possible.



Charlotte Sutcliffe

Team Coordinator and Admin Lead

I am the Admin Lead for the Task Force. I have worked in education for over five years, including within SEN settings, where I supported young people with behavioural and additional needs.

In my current role, I support the Task Force by managing administrative processes and ensuring systems and communication run smoothly. This work enables the team to focus on providing the care, structure, and education our young people need to thrive.

I am passionate about working behind the scenes to support staff and ensure every young person receives the best possible support and opportunities.



Bridging The Way

Inspiring through Education

Bridging The Way is a service we work alongside to support students and their families.

They provide targeted support and guidance to schools, focusing on disadvantaged and disengaged students, with a particular emphasis on engaging Roma families in education.

The team has extensive experience across a range of educational settings, including mainstream and alternative provision, and is fluent in Czech, Slovak, and English, enabling effective work with diverse communities.

Committed to quality and integrity, Bridging The Way works closely with experienced educational leaders to deliver impactful services that prioritise pupil well-being and achieve measurable outcomes.