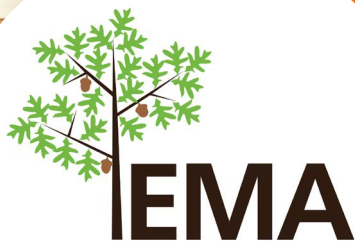


EMA - GILLINGHAM

2026 - 2027



Find your future...

Head of Education's Welcome...

Welcome to EMA – Gillingham!

A very warm welcome to EMA. We're delighted to share what we do with you. We are proud to be much more than a college; we are a supportive and inclusive community where every young person is known, valued and encouraged to grow.

EMA's Gillingham campus features modern facilities designed to meet a wide range of needs. With our training kitchen, classrooms, independent living suite, multi-use games area, sensory spaces, vegetable garden, hygiene and physiotherapy rooms, we are fully equipped to support young people with PMLD and SEND through a person-centred, individualised approach delivered with compassion and professionalism.

Supported by a devoted and experienced team of professionals, we pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone can achieve their full potential. From hands-on learning experiences to developing essential skills for the future, we are committed to helping every student succeed at each stage of their journey.

We recognise that every learner is unique, and we take real pride in celebrating individual strengths, supporting progress and creating opportunities for everyone to shine. Our staff care deeply about the young people they work with and are committed to creating a positive and nurturing environment where students feel confident to try new things, celebrate success and persevere when things feel challenging.

Whether you are a prospective student, a family member or simply finding out more about us, we hope this prospectus gives you a genuine sense of who we are and the difference EMA can make.



Heather Helm - Head of Education

Thank you!

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), anxiety disorders, 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.

At Gillingham, our study programmes and curriculum are designed to empower learners to develop meaningful life skills, independence, and a sense of belonging within their community.

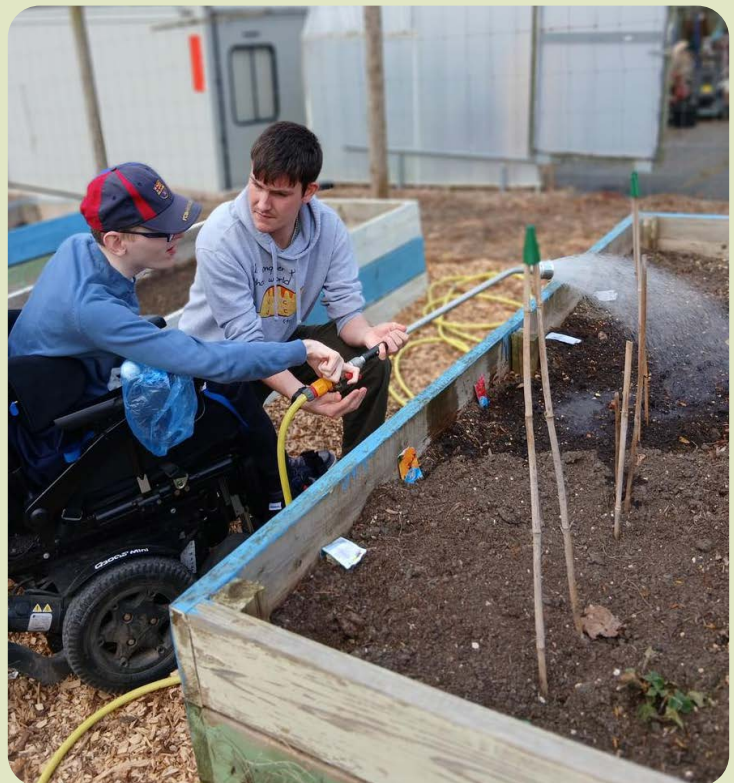
- Preparation for Adulthood
- Functional Skills
- Community Inclusion
- Discovery Pathway (interaction and sensory focused)
- Horizon Pathway (advanced independence and next steps preparation)
- Transitions

All programmes include English and Maths 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 next step skills. Additionally, we offer:

- An Independent Living Suite to learn life skills in a real environment
- Sensory spaces to support engagement and learning
- Physiotherapy and hygiene spaces

- Multi-Use Games Area
- Hospitality training kitchen
- 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

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



PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD

At Gillingham, our focus is on Preparation for Adulthood (PfA), making sure every young person is supported to build the skills they need for their future. This means that alongside communication, independence, wellbeing, thinking skills and creativity, our curriculum is always linked to the four key outcomes of adulthood: employment, independent living, community inclusion and good health. Whether it's through learning practical life skills, gaining confidence in the community, or exploring pathways into work, every part of the timetable is designed to help students prepare for their next steps.

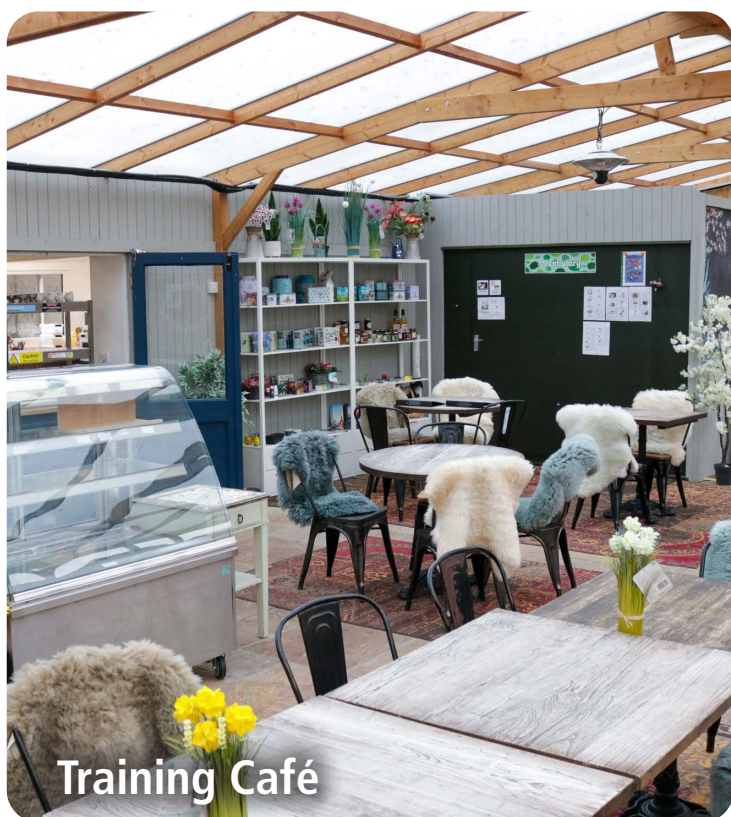
The Independent Living Suite plays a key role in developing students' independence. With a fully equipped kitchen, dining area, bedroom and bathroom facilities, the suite mirrors the kind of environment students may encounter at home, with various appliances, utensils, and furniture. It provides a safe, supported space where they can build essential life skills.

Our approach is sensory-based, recognising that meaningful learning often happens through experience and engagement with the world around us. From sensory cooking and outdoor gardening to wellbeing sessions and creative projects, students are encouraged to explore, make choices, and build self-advocacy in ways that match their individual needs. By embedding sensory regulation, comfort and emotional wellbeing throughout the curriculum, we create an environment where students can thrive, grow in independence, and develop the confidence to move forward into adult life.



The training café includes a fully equipped kitchen and front-of-house area utilised to host Pop-up cafés, where staff, students, and visitors are invited for communal lunches, put on by the students. Pop-up cafés are a central part of our curriculum, giving every student the chance to take part in a real-life, hands-on project. In the café, students work together to plan menus, prepare food and drinks, serve their peers, and manage the running of the space. It's a fun and practical way for young people to apply their learning, with each element of the café linking back to our core curriculum areas, from communication with others, to money handling, problem-solving, and creative menu design.

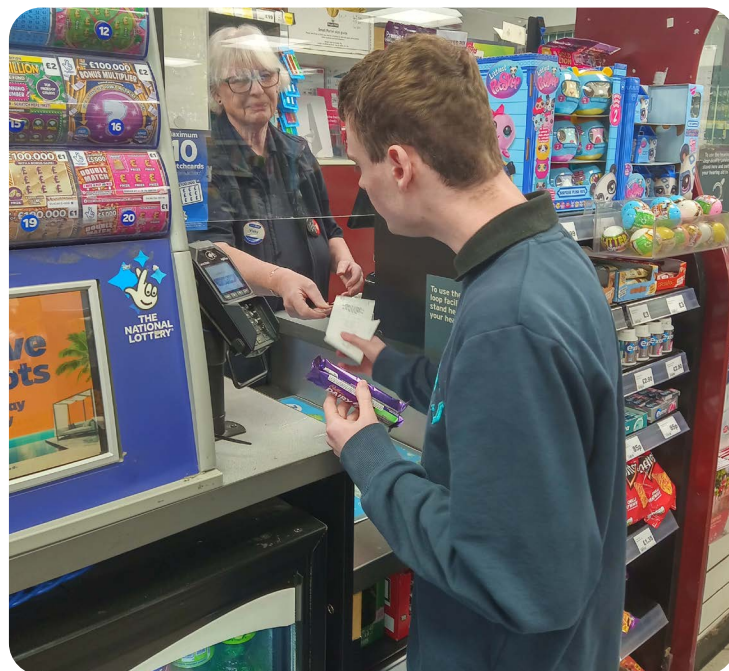
For students, the café is much more than a classroom activity; it's a safe and supportive environment where they can build confidence, independence, and a sense of responsibility. They learn teamwork, time management and social skills, while also experiencing the pride of contributing to something that others can enjoy. The café helps prepare students for adulthood by giving them valuable skills for employment, independence, and community inclusion, all while celebrating their creativity and achievements.



COMMUNITY

“Connecting with My Community” is an important part of the Gillingham curriculum and supports students to feel confident and included in the world around them. This focus gives every young person the chance to take part in community projects and experiences, from supported visits and social activities to shared initiatives like the Pop-up Café. These opportunities encourage students to practise communication, independence and social skills in real-life settings, helping them understand and enjoy their place within the wider community.

Through connecting with their community, students develop a strong sense of belonging and purpose. They learn how to navigate public spaces, interact with different people, and take part in meaningful activities that prepare them for adulthood. Whether it's building friendships, managing responsibilities, or contributing to group projects, these experiences help young people grow in confidence and independence while celebrating their role as valued members of the community. Our students also visit local care homes and social care provisions, take part in charity fundraising projects, and are involved with Shaftesbury's entry into Britain in Bloom, helping to plant and supply vibrant planters to an award-winning local effort. Craft markets, charity fundraising, and open days are also part of the calendar, all providing opportunities for our learners not only to feel connected to the community, but also to give back and showcase their skills and enthusiasm.



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 is committed to embedding the eight Gatsby Benchmarks 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, identifies 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.



STUDENT SUCCESS



Saffron

Saffron graduates from our Gillingham campus in July 2026 after three years developing her skills and independence. She has shown a keen enthusiasm for hospitality, helping to run our pop-up cafés and completing work experience at a local care home, where she is also volunteering during the holidays.

Saffron continues to show determination and will be beginning a supported internship with Dorset County Hospital in September!

This is a huge step forward for Saffron as she looks to become work-ready and take everything she's learned at EMA so far and apply it in a busy focal point of the Dorset community.

Lillie

Lillie graduates from EMA in 2026, having made a positive and lasting contribution throughout her time at college. She has consistently gone above and beyond, supporting pop-up cafés and serving as an encouraging and motivating presence for her fellow students.

This year, Lillie has worked hard to build on her existing knowledge and skills, demonstrating excellent progress, particularly in digital skills and using technology with confidence and independence. Her commitment, determination and willingness to support others have made her a valued member of the EMA community.

Lillie is now progressing to the Progression Pathway at Yeovil College, where we are confident she will continue to thrive as she works towards achieving her goals and building a rewarding future career.



SUPPORTING STUDENTS' 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 career 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 achieve their career goals and that any changes in the student's needs or interests are added to the plan.

All About Me

These are timetabled sessions where students get the chance to meet with their tutor and go through the work they are doing towards their EHCP Outcomes and targets. Tutors will meet with students 1:1 and go through the evidence that has been captured from their lessons and recorded on Evidence for Learning and how it links to their outcomes. They will also go through their wellbeing and check in with them and their experiences at EMA. They will learn and explore tasks and topics that link to PSHE, Enrichment as well as EHCP categories.

Listening to our Students

We are committed to placing student voice at the very heart of everything we do at EMA. The speech and language therapy team works to ensure that all students are able to express their feelings and opinions in whatever way works for them. We have an active Student Council that meets every half term and has a representative from each tutor group. The Chair of the Student Council is a member of the EMA Trustee Board. 'You Said, We Did' 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, which give them varied opportunities to try something new or develop an interest alongside their main studies. Our student council takes an active role in shaping and planning our extra-curricular enrichment offer so that it best meets the interests of our current students.

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 receives 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.

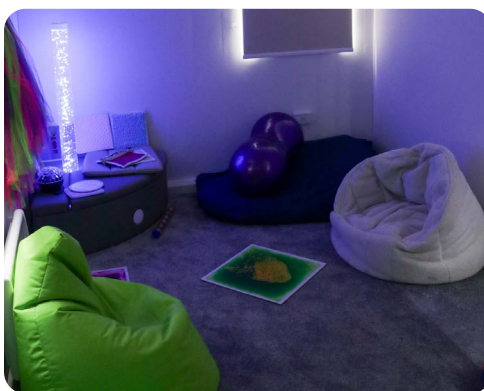
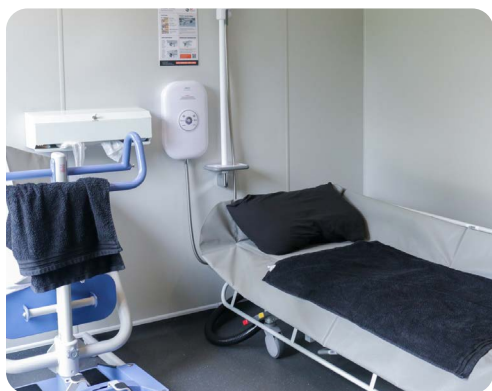


Some of the aspects of communication we support our students with include:

- 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 adulthood.

Physiotherapy and Sensory

At EMA we have introduced dedicated spaces designed for physiotherapy, hygiene, and sensory support. These carefully tailored spaces provide a calm and focused environment where students can receive individualised support that meets their specific needs. By having access to these areas alongside their classroom learning, students are able to regulate, build independence in personal care, and develop physical and sensory skills in a safe and supportive setting. The classrooms themselves also have dedicated 'sensory corners'. This not only promotes comfort and wellbeing but also helps young people engage more fully in the wider curriculum and make progress towards their preparation for adulthood.



STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

EMA receives a small budget from the government for financial bursaries each academic year. These bursaries can help towards the cost of travelling to and from EMA, course equipment and college activities. This financial support helps students to complete 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/studentfinancialsupport**

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



SAFEGUARDING

EMA is 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.



Pop-Up Cafés for students, staff, and visitors



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. 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 or email you a referral form to complete, or you can 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

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

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.

Pathway you would like to do:	Yes / No
Preparation for Adulthood and Functional Skills (Pre-Entry-Entry 2)	
Discovery/Horizons Pathway	

Continue form on reverse of page

	Name	Email	Contact Number
Social Worker			
SEN Worker			
Other			

Referrer			
Contact Number			
Contact Email			
Relationship to Student		Date	

Additional comments:

.....

.....

.....

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

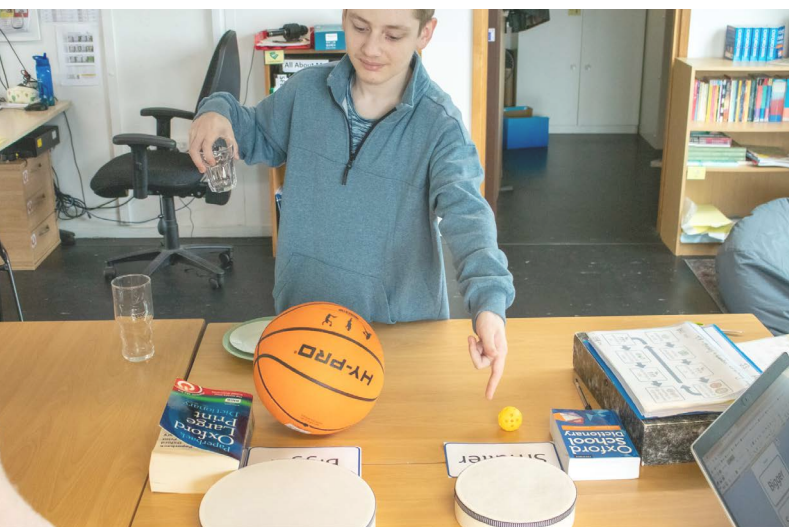
Yes / No

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 Garden, Moreton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8RG

Email: referrals@employmyability.org.uk Tel: 01929 405 685



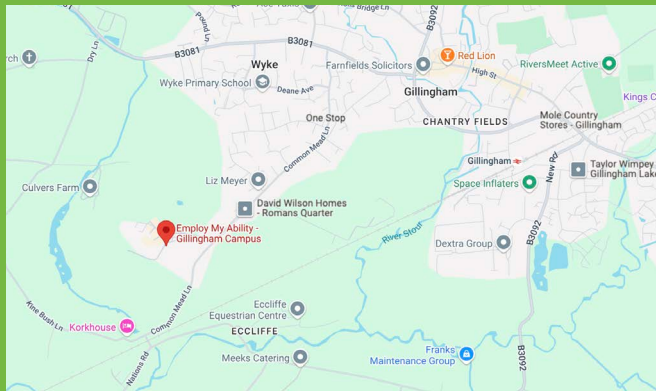
Find your future...



EMA

Find your future...

Follow our story



Gillingham Campus

Gillingham, Dorset. SP8 4RE

Telephone: 01929 405685

employmyability.org.uk

Telephone: 01929 405685

Email: office@employmyability.org.uk

Employ My Ability (EMA) Limited. The Walled Garden, Moreton, Dorchester, DT2 8RG.
Registered in England and Wales. Company Registration No. 09183380.