



Impact Report 2023-24

The Orpheus Centre Trust

Charity No: 1105213

Companies House No: 05089501

North Park Lane
Godstone
Surrey
RH9 8ND



INTRODUCTION



MEET SIR RICHARD STILGOE

At Orpheus, we believe in possibility. Every young person who walks through our doors brings unique talents, ambitions, and potential; and our role is to help them develop the skills and confidence to shape their own future.

This year has been a remarkable one. Ofsted has recognised what we have always known: Orpheus is outstanding in every way. But the true measure of our success is found in our students: in their achievements, their independence, and the joy they bring to the world.

In this report, you'll see the incredible impact of our work; how we are exceeding national outcomes in employment and independent living, how

we are expanding to welcome even more students, and how we continue to deliver a curriculum that transforms lives.

I invite you to read and celebrate these successes with us. Thank you for your support; it is because of you that Orpheus continues to thrive.



Richard Stilgoe

Sir Richard Stilgoe
Founder and President

THE CHAIR AND CEO

We are proud to present our impact report for 2023/2024. In it, we share our story of growth and progress during the year. We're delighted to showcase our successes, especially our 'outstanding' judgement from Ofsted, and to show how we've supported our young people to gain confidence and independence, and to live the lives they want and deserve.

Orpheus is all about breaking down barriers which should never have been there in the first place, and building opportunities for young disabled adults to live their best lives. We have grown considerably, adapting our work as the needs of our students have changed. We now have more students with more complex needs. We have made good progress against the stated aims of our strategy, constantly testing that they remain valid.

The numbers of disabled young people who can benefit from specialist education, supported housing and employment continue to grow, while society has made only slow and limited progress in improving their path to fulfilling, productive and independent adult life. With your support, we see a future where every individual is able to reach their full potential. We need to grow more, and faster, as our Founder and President, Sir Richard Stilgoe, explains above. We're so grateful to everyone who joins us in this essential work.



Howard Webber
Chair

This has been an exceptional year for the Orpheus Centre. Ofsted has now recognised us as outstanding in every dimension they inspect, not only supporting young disabled adults while they are with us, but also seeing our students successfully transition into paid employment or further education. We have launched our arts centre model with a pioneering curriculum, fostering independence, resilience and ambition whilst also equipping the students for work, further education and life. Our company and enterprise days go from strength to strength, and we have exciting plans for this and future years.

Throughout this report, you will see how we are transforming the lives of young disabled adults. But we can't and won't stand still. The demand for Orpheus continues to exceed our capacity. This narrative needs to change, so we will embark on a model of growth to ensure we meet the demand – to spread the Orpheus magic, and the Orpheus method – locally and nationally. Thank you to everyone who continues to support and be a champion of the Orpheus Centre.



Andrew Willetts
CEO



OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES



VISION

Our vision is of an inclusive world where disabled young people, with a passion for the arts and desire to live and work independently, can achieve their aspirations.

MISSION

We're focused on inspiring and empowering young disabled students to live fulfilling, independent lives.





VALUES

We work to demonstrate our values every day and we focus on these in everything we do.

JOYFUL

- We celebrate achievements - small and big - celebrating together regularly and frequently.
- We seek opportunities for joy, welcoming and modelling a positive attitude.

BOLD

- We campaign together on agreed themes, being brave and enabling.
- We set each other stretching and achievable targets.

INCLUSIVE

- We are ambitious for young disabled people.
- We work hard to make all our spaces accessible for all.
- We respect differences.

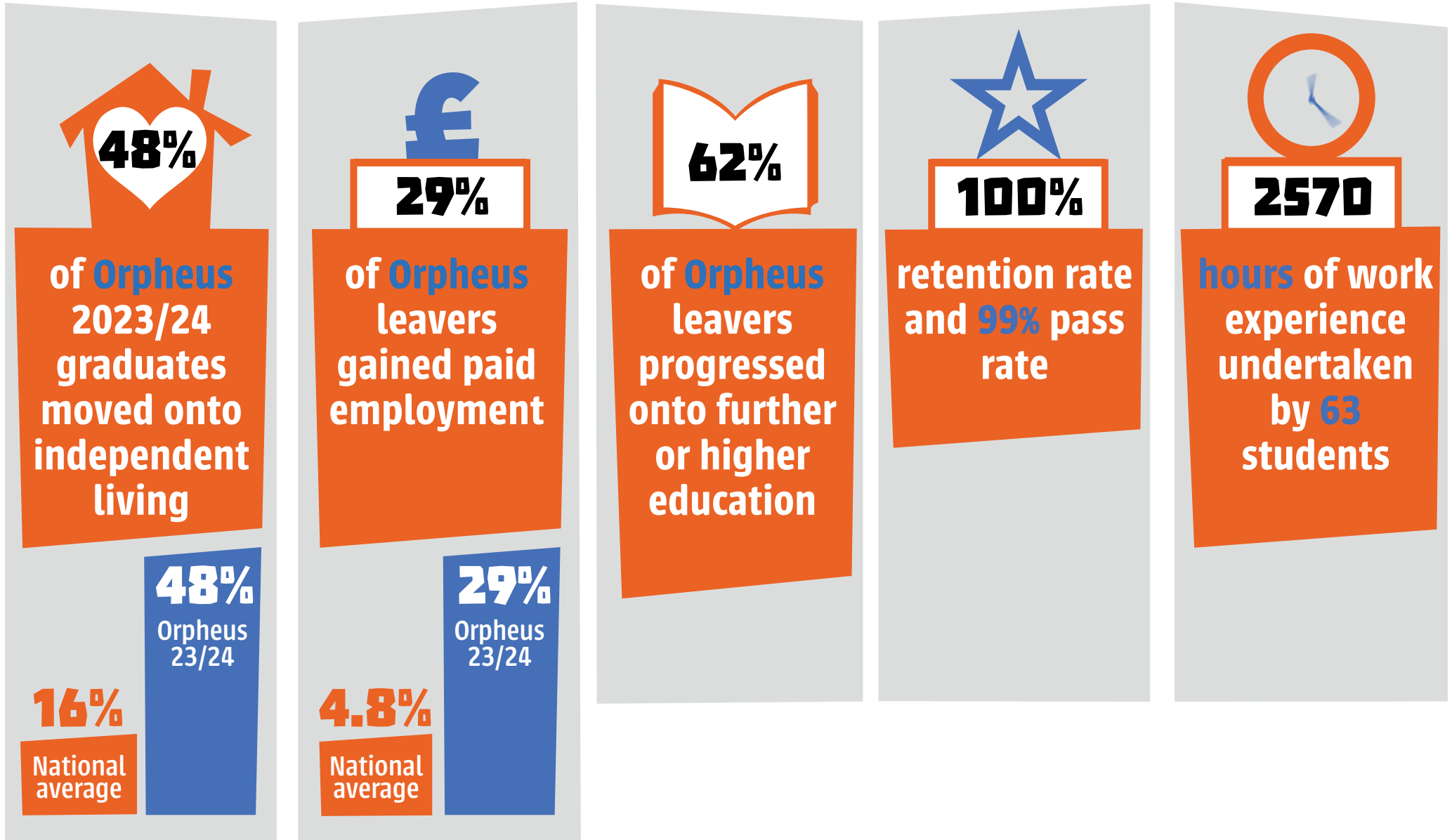
RESILIENT

- When a challenge occurs, we face it together and work out as a team how to overcome it.
- When life is difficult, we don't give up, but we seek support and look for ways to learn from the experience.

DETERMINED

- We know there will be challenges, but we seek support to overcome them.
- We recognise that challenges build our experience and enable us to learn and develop.
- We are professional

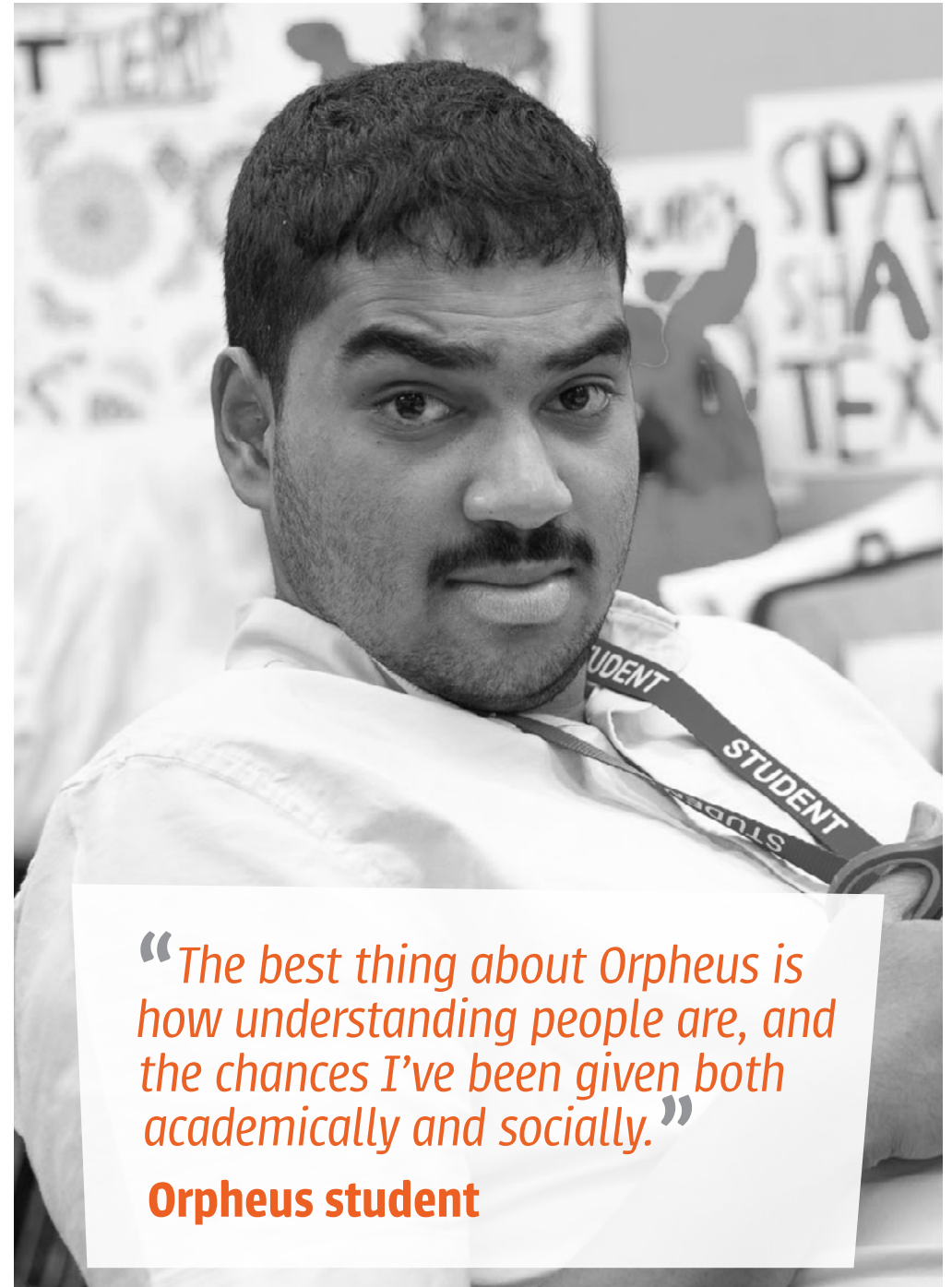
MEASUREABLE IMPACT





“I love Orpheus. It makes me happy and makes me calm. Sometimes Orpheus is my family to me.”

Orpheus student



“The best thing about Orpheus is how understanding people are, and the chances I’ve been given both academically and socially.”

Orpheus student

WELLBEING & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



95%

of students
felt wellbeing
strategies
supported
their health

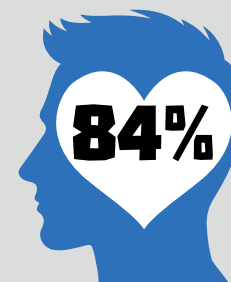


of students
reported
therapies
enhanced
their learning



100%

participated in
wellbeing
activities



felt supported
in mental
health by
staff and
student reps



“I can be more independent and do things in my flat without any support.”

Orpheus student



“I’ve really enjoyed doing drama, learning to be more independent and I’ve also written a script! I would like to complete my Silver Arts Award.”

Orpheus student

STAFF EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Orpheus is an accredited Disability Confident Leader, meaning we have created a workplace where every individual's talent is recognised, valued and empowered, where we have broken down barriers, fostered inclusivity and championed equal opportunities across our own organisation, our industry and communities.



33%

of **Orpheus**
work force has
a disability or
long term
health
condition



Strong staff
retention with
continuous
professional
development



of tutors feel
Orpheus is
innovative
and
supportive



40

volunteers this year
have donated



4,812 hours

based on minimum living
wage, saving **Orpheus**
around

£60,000



“Supporting students in any way I can gives me a real sense of purpose. I go to work each day knowing I’m making a difference in their lives.”

Dee, Staff member



“I find immense joy in empowering students through music and watching their confidence grow as they master new skills.”

Tommy, Staff member

CASE STUDY



MEET MEGAN

THROUGHOUT HER TIME AT ORPHEUS, MEGAN MADE HUGE GAINS IN HER CONFIDENCE, HAVING PREVIOUSLY STRUGGLED TO COMMUNICATE.

“I used to feel self-conscious about how I talked. Sometimes I felt as though I wouldn’t even bother to try. It’s really frustrating as I have a lot to say and I want to say it. So it’s annoying when people finish my sentences for me, or don’t give me the time I need to find my words.”

At Orpheus, Megan learnt a range of different ways to be understood. Through sessions with a speech and language therapist and the professional skills of the tutors, Megan began to use Makaton signing, special symbol technology as well as images, to help express herself.

“Being at Orpheus I feel listened to. Less frustrated. I feel less anxious talking in front of people, as I know they all support me. They won’t laugh, or talk over me, so I can express myself more. I can join in conversations without feeling worried and use the things Orpheus has taught me to get across what I mean. Orpheus makes me feel included, so I can laugh and joke more with my friends.”

“I can join in conversations without feeling worried.”

Megan’s mum Ruth says

“The difference I see in Megan is wonderful. She can talk more and also uses the tools she has learnt at OC to communicate in different ways too. It’s so lovely to be able to know what she thinks and feels more, without the frustration that used to get in the way.”

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT



Following its March 2024 inspection, Ofsted rated **The Orpheus Centre OUTSTANDING** across all categories, affirming our excellence in education, personal development, leadership, and high-needs provision.

CURRICULUM DESIGNED FOR SUCCESS



The Orpheus Centre in the top 10% of specialist colleges in the country!*

Our pioneering curriculum fosters independence, resilience, and ambition, equipping students with skills for life, work, and further learning.

Focus areas include:



* Source data: [click here](#) - Further education and skills inspections and outcomes 2024

CASE STUDY



MEET SAM

SAM IS INCREDIBLY HARD WORKING AND PASSIONATE ABOUT DANCE. HE ATTENDED DANCE CLASSES AFTER COLLEGE AND COMPLETED ONLINE COURSES WITH PROFESSIONAL DANCE COMPANIES LIKE CANDOCO.

Sam's aspiration, when he attended Orpheus, was to become a dance tutor and run his own dance workshops for children. At Orpheus, he learned and improved his skills, gaining the knowledge and confidence he needed to succeed in the dance industry.

“Every time I did something it improved my skills. I would say being at Orpheus and the help with my career was fabulous!”

Sam was accepted on the Unexpected Leaders programme run by the performance company Diverse City, something he was incredibly proud of.

During the programme, Sam had the opportunity to develop his own work. He created his own dance workshop and led a dance session for his peers, co-teaching alongside his mentor.

“the help with my career was fabulous!”

Sam then went on to secure a placement to shadow workshops led by professional tutors from Synergy Dance. This gave him the opportunity to experience three different workshops for young children with and without disabilities aged from 5 to 18.

Now, Sam has gained paid employment as a dance teacher with Synergy Dance Outreach and was recently in the news for his work, inspiring everyone he meets with his story and attitude to life.

One of our tenants, before he moved, had a phone call with me... he said:

“To most people we’re just problems on a piece of paper.” How sad is that? But that’s the reality many young disabled people face - seen as a challenge rather than a person. But here, he is not a problem on a piece of paper. He is a singer, a learner, a leader - sometimes he has to be supported through challenges, yes, but that’s not all he is to us. That’s the difference we make. I know that at Orpheus we see students as individuals with potential rather than cases to be managed and that is so precious.”

Moir, COO



Students attend for three years, developing the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed for independence and success.

Our curriculum is continuously reviewed and adapted to provide the right level of challenge and ambition for each individual. By integrating real-world learning, creative expression, and essential life skills, we ensure that every student is prepared to move forward with confidence, equipped with the resilience, self-awareness, and practical tools needed to thrive.

“All staff make Orpheus a very special place and it is so lovely to turn up every day and be met by such kind and understanding people.”

Parent feedback

ENTERPRISE, WORK & INTERNSHIPS

Enterprise Curriculum:

Students gain real-world business skills through in-house enterprises, customer interactions, and activity and event delivery.

Company & Enterprise Days:

Practical training in performance, production, marketing, hospitality, childcare, and activism art.



REMARKABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Kingston
University
London

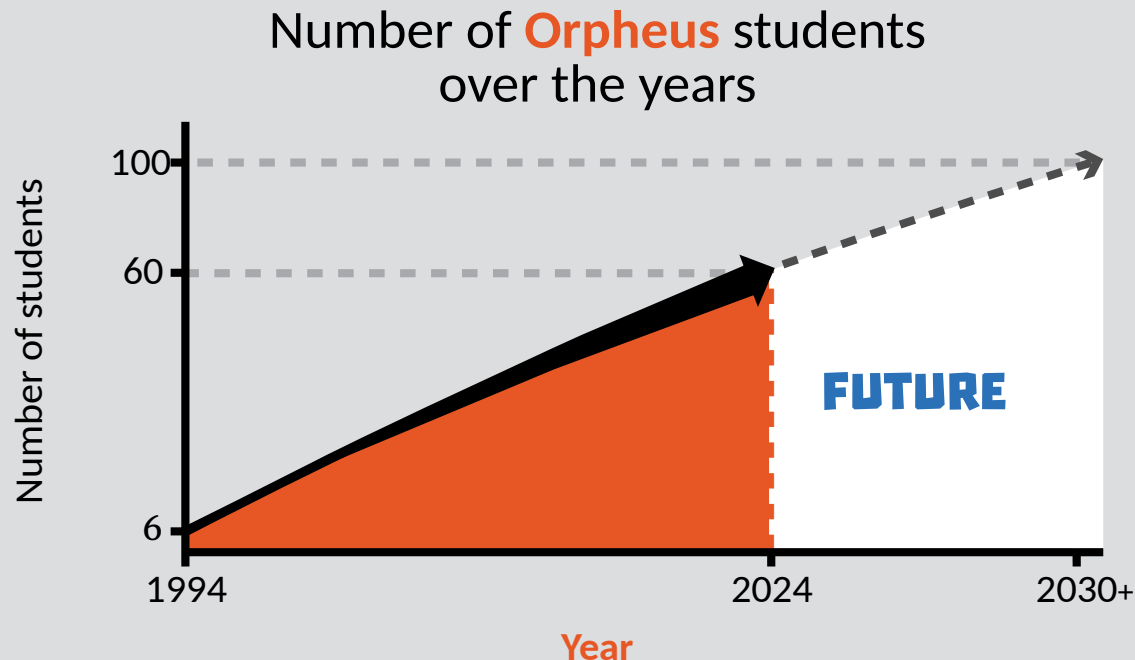


2 alumni completed research training at Kingston University



OLIVER'S
CAMPAIGN

10 alumni enrolled in Oliver McGowan training with 2 securing paid roles



EXPANDING TO MEET GROWING DEMAND

The number of **student places** has risen by **73%** since **2019**. With **72 applications** received for just **25 places**, demand for Orpheus continues to exceed capacity. While we were able to offer places to 53% of applicants, we had to decline 47% as we were unable to fully meet their needs.

To address this, we plan to **expand the Orpheus Centre**, increasing student capacity from **64 to 100**, ensuring we can support more young adults with a wider range of complex disabilities. This development includes a fully accessible, multi-use theatre and conference space seating 250, enhancing opportunities for performance, learning, and community engagement. We are also investing in specialist equipment and improved learning spaces to continue delivering our **Ofsted OUTSTANDING**, pioneering curriculum, empowering even more students to achieve their **full potential**.

CONCLUSION

Orpheus Centre continues to transform lives, exceeding national outcomes in independent living, employment, and education.

With an **OUTSTANDING** rating, a robust curriculum, and a commitment to wellbeing and enterprise, we empower students to step confidently into their future.



HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

At **Orpheus Centre**, we empower young disabled people to live independent lives. Your support is crucial. Here's how you can help:



Attend an Event Join our vibrant events like student performances or fundraisers. There's nothing quite like experiencing the creativity and energy of the Orpheus Centre in person, and your ticket helps support our work.

Donate Every gift supports things like essential skills training, student showcasing opportunities, therapies and specialist care. Regular donations by direct debit help us to plan for the future.

Leave a Legacy A gift in your will creates lasting change for future generations.

Corporate Involvement Partner with us to meet your CSR goals through sponsorship, payroll giving, or volunteering. We have so much to offer you in return.

Take on a Challenge Push yourself with activities like marathons or skydives to raise vital funds. Every action you take helps young disabled people thrive.

Ready to get involved?

Visit orpheus.org.uk/get-involved or contact us at fundraising@orpheus.org.uk





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FIND OUT MORE

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