



**Red Balloon**  
**LEARNER CENTRES**  
For the recovery of bullied children

Red Balloon Learner Centres

For the recovery of severely  
bullied and traumatised children

# Red Balloon Learner Centres

## Welcome

I set up the first Red Balloon Learner Centre in 1996, to provide a specialist, intensive care unit for children who were so affected by severe bullying that they could not go to school. Our provision has now extended to take traumatised children, including those with agoraphobia, chronic separation anxiety or PTSD, or those who have been physically or sexually assaulted, none of whom can deal with mainstream classrooms and are out of school.

Red Balloon gets these young people back on track by raising their self-esteem, building their confidence, encouraging them to value themselves and take control of their lives.

We have four Centres, in Cambridge, Norwich, NW London and Reading, and a virtual Centre, Red Balloon of the Air. Each Red Balloon provides individual and small-group teaching of the secondary curriculum, personal and social development programmes, and therapy.

Red Balloon helps children emerge from under their duvet and face the world again.



*Dr Carrie Herbert MBE  
Founder and President*



## Who are we?

Red Balloon is the only charity in the UK that provides a short-term educational and therapeutic programme to help young people re-engage with mainstream education.

## What do we do?

We help local authorities meet their statutory responsibility to make full-time, appropriate provision for vulnerable students, deemed medically unfit to attend school.

We work in partnership with local schools to improve student attendance and academic progress. Our aim is to identify the next stage of a student's educational career and to prepare for that. If the intention is return to mainstream education, we work to enable that to happen, and can contribute positive attendance figures during placement. Equally we will focus upon any learning gaps and work to remedy those. If students complete KS4, we will seek to support them to attain good GCSE grades and those can be included in the school's statistics.

## Why are we needed?

We are needed because there are over 16,000 children in England between the ages of 11 and 15 who are not at school and who are not getting an appropriate education because of bullying (NatCen, 2011). No one else does what we do.



Through individual academic and therapeutic programmes we support and encourage the return of children to mainstream school, or their move to further education.

# Red Balloon Learner Centres

## Our vision

*Quintus Travis, Chief Executive Officer*

Red Balloon is a well-established charity with an outstanding record of reconnecting displaced young people with the joy of learning and society. The guiding principle, or true north of the charity, has always been to put the children's recovery first. With this in mind, Red Balloon, like other successful organisations, has evolved to accommodate change.

Given the recent change in educational funding, our short term focus needs to be on how we adapt so that we continue to offer young people the support they need and cannot secure elsewhere. Like any other responsibly run operation, examining how to raise revenues and where we might economise form one part of this exercise. In the longer term, we aim to grow Red Balloon so that we reach more of the children who find themselves isolated and out of education due to severe bullying and trauma.

As we go into yet another funding era new constraints will apply – but we are ready and poised to deal with any contingencies. Whatever the situation Red Balloon's belief that all young people should have the opportunity for a fulfilling and productive life makes a useful reference point.

## Bespoke provision

*Dr Bob Sproson, Director of Education*

Red Balloon Learner Centres and Red Balloon of the Air are the only providers in the UK delivering wellbeing provision together with a strong academic curriculum. Given the high staff:student ratios, Red Balloon is able to provide bespoke provision for all students.

The core strengths of the wellbeing curriculum are that students have the opportunity to develop skill sets that enable them to engage effectively with learning and with their peers, and that they belong to an inclusive community: engagement with that community is both supportive and demanding.

Centres are able to offer a broad range of academic subjects and skills. Students who have missed education are able to get back on track, thus gaining the confidence to tackle challenging new learning. Students with strong academic aspirations are able to study the full National Curriculum; older students access a range of GCSEs. The academic provision is interwoven with a comprehensive personal and social educational programme and a range of therapies.



We help local authorities meet their statutory responsibility to provide a full-time education.

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Red Balloon has three main aims:

Raise students' self-esteem **1**

Get students back on an academic track **2**

Support students' return to mainstream school, or their entry to sixth-form, further education or employment **3**

# Did you know...?

There are Red Balloons in *Norwich, Cambridge, Harrow (NW London)* and *Reading* and an online provision, *Red Balloon of the Air*, already helping children who need our services.

# If you'd like to know more...

Please contact us at:

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Find us on:

   RedBalloonLCCG

 [www.carrieherbert.wordpress.com](http://www.carrieherbert.wordpress.com)

Stay informed



Sign up for the Red Balloon e-newsletter:  
[admin@group.rbkc.org.uk](mailto:admin@group.rbkc.org.uk)

**Ben:** *Before coming to Red Balloon I was very self-conscious. Since I started, I have become a lot more confident, I am happier and have started to make friends. I am getting a really good education and the food here is really tasty. The teachers are understanding and they encourage me to do things I didn't think I could do. I am looking forward to my future.*

**Beth:** *I remember the day I first came to Red Balloon, I was scared that I'd still be 'the girl with scars' or 'the emo kid'. But now I'm here, everyone just understands. I've learnt many things, one that will always stay with me, is that running away isn't forever. I can just simply be myself, like being at home, we're like a family, just better. We can dress the way we want and we don't argue. Being here means so much to me. Although I'm not fully recovered – things are looking up.*

[www.redballoonlearner.org.uk](http://www.redballoonlearner.org.uk)

