

A young man with glasses and large headphones is the central focus, looking slightly to the right with a neutral expression. He is wearing a light-colored zip-up hoodie over a white collared shirt and a dark tie. The background is dark, filled with many hands holding up glowing blue, textured spheres, creating a bokeh effect. The overall lighting is dim, with the primary light source being the blue spheres.

peer
productions

PEER EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY

FOR YOUNG ACTORS WITH
LEARNING DISABILITIES

PEER PRODUCTIONS

Peer Productions is a unique youth arts charity dedicated to transforming young people's lives through theatre.

Our Peer Employment Pathway programme is for young adults with SEND who share our passion for and interest in performing arts.

The programme uses drama, theatre and creativity to empower participants to develop their confidence, communication skills and abilities to work with others - building transferable skills for employment or higher education, both within and outside of the performing arts industry.

We will support you to take the next steps in your creative career.

Photo of PEP actor devising solo performances.



PEER EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY (PEP)

This programme is for young people aged 18 - 24 years with SEND.

- With a keen interest in drama and performing arts.
- With an EHCP detailing a significant additional need.
- Suited to an alternative approach to conventional education.
- With the potential to become 'work ready' by end of programme.





Photo of PEP actors 2022/23

INCLUSIVE DAILY PRACTICE

Each morning begins with 'practice', a time for Peer actors with and without disabilities to integrate and warm-up for the day ahead.

PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Participants learn how to use their voices and bodies to express themselves, how to work collaboratively as part of an ensemble and how to give and receive feedback.

INDUSTRY AWARENESS

Participants develop the skills they need to better understand the performing arts sector, identify appropriate opportunities and stay safe when attending auditions and interviews.

PROJECT WORK

Participants have the opportunity to take part in projects creating work to be shared with the wider community building a range of wider skills including communication, team work, planning and time management.

Photo of PEP actors in workshop for Arts Council Funded 'Story of Us' project



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Using drama as a tool for education, participants learn how to manage stress in the workplace, how to communicate their needs and reasonable adjustments as well as how to stay safe online, in their personal relationships and in the workplace.

LIFE SKILLS

Participants develop skills in budgeting and using money, practicing skills in the kitchen (using the kettle and microwave) and travel skills.

WORK EXPERIENCE

As a working theatre company, Peer Productions is able to offer a range of 'in house' opportunities appropriate to the individual learner. These might include working as peer educators on our outreach Generation programmes, working as a director's assistant by keeping notes in rehearsals, or supporting our marketing team with graphic design jobs or filming social media content.

Photo of PEP learners filming a live performance.



APPLICATION PROCESS

We are open to enquiries from applicants and their families all year round. We hold regular interview workshops throughout the year. Most learners start at the beginning of the academic year but we are occasionally able to accommodate new learners at different points in the year.

GET IN TOUCH

There is a form on our website or you can call or email us. Sometimes local authorities consult with us directly. We consider all expressions of interest on a first come first served basis.

EHCP

If we think we might be able to meet need, we will ask for a copy of the learner's EHCP.

INTERVIEW & WORKSHOP

If, based on their EHCP, we think we can meet need, we will invite the learner and their family or supporter to visit us.

When you visit us there will be:

- A tour of Peer Place.
- A short presentation about the course.
- A drama workshop.
(families/supporters can wait on site).
- An interview (families and supporters usually attend with the learner).

Following your interview we will let you know if we can offer a place in principle.

LOCAL AUTHORITY CONSULTATION

Places are normally funded by the local authority with Peer named as education provider in the annual review of the EHCP and approved via local authority funding panel.

Places are formally agreed when funding has been secured.

FAQs



WHAT ARE THE HOURS?

Participants are usually at Peer Place 3.5 days per week. Days start at 10am and usually finish at 4pm.

WHERE ARE YOU BASED?

We're in Woking, Surrey: 25 mins from Waterloo.

WHAT KINDS OF DISABILITIES DO YOU CATER FOR?

Everyone is an individual and applications are treated on their own merit. However, we specifically cater for young people with moderate learning disabilities. This has included Autistic young people as well as those with Down Syndrome, Williams Syndrome and a range of other genetic and acquired disabilities.

DO YOU PROVIDE ONE TO ONE SUPPORT?

We do not currently offer one to one support. Our ratios are normally one to four.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO YOU OFFER?

We are an alternative provision offering a bespoke programme. This programme does not include any formal qualifications.

DOES PEER HAVE ANY ACCOMMODATION?

No. Some of our learners have been able to live in the same supported living in the local area.

I LIVE OUTSIDE OF SURREY. CAN I STILL APPLY?

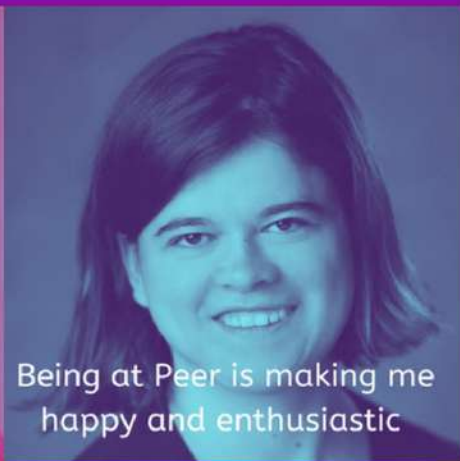
Yes, Learners come from a range of areas with some relocating to take part.

I DON'T HAVE MUCH ACTING EXPERIENCE. CAN I STILL APPLY?

Of course. We are looking for people with an interest in performing arts. Previous experience is useful but not essential and we acknowledge that many young learning disabled people may not have had the opportunity to perform much before.

TESTIMONIES

As part of their work experience as social media assistants we asked PEP artists to use graphic design software and choose a filter for their headshot and add a quote summing up their experience of PEP.



“My child feels supported, safe, secure, respected and listened to. She is excited to start the day. She now sees new possibilities for her future. Until the PEP programme started, there was no local educational setting to offer a performing arts programme suitable for her to access. Peer Productions has a 'can do' attitude which is a refreshing change.

“I really cannot express how happy my daughter is at Peer, she sincerely adores every single minute and is so full of enthusiasm on her daily return home to tell me about her day. I know that her choice to attend Peer was absolutely the right decision and I am thankful that you gave her the opportunity to do so, as it is a rare and very special place for young disabled students with a passion for performing arts to continue their dream.”

“Since they started they are more chatty, more likely to engage and their sense of humour has returned. We hadn't seen them smile for many months and even that's back. The staff have been absolutely brilliant. What the team are providing, and so obviously delivering, is life changing to not only the young people, but also to their families.”

A photograph of several young people in school uniforms (white shirts and dark ties) holding glowing blue spheres. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the spheres themselves, which have a textured, crystalline surface. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Peer Productions is a registered charity.

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Photo from 2023 tour of 'Masking'.