



**It's so much
more than
just a bed!**

Life at Derwen College as a residential student



**Derwen
College**



Home from home

For students who attend residentially, all accommodation at Derwen College is spacious, comfortable and welcoming.

While you live at Derwen College you will learn to take responsibility for your own cleaning, shopping, cooking and general living skills. You'll be living as independently as possible but there will always be experienced and professional staff close at hand to offer advice, encouragement and the appropriate amount of support for your needs.

To begin with, you'll live alongside other students in a staffed residence in the heart of the campus. Many students then progress on to smaller houses with a reduced level of support, reflecting typical post-college supported living, but we always have staff nearby should you need assistance at any time.



The skills you learn at college will help you be as independent as you can be. You will feel prepared for the next stage in your life whatever that may be.

Our aim is for you to reach a stage where you are able to live as independently as possible, whatever that looks like for you.





At Derwen College, we pride ourselves in offering young people with SEND the same types of opportunities that their siblings or other young adults have available to them when they go to university.

We have a spacious, well-appointed and vibrant campus, situated within a rural village community, in picturesque north Shropshire, close to the Welsh border.



Keeping you safe is embedded in all that we do, both onsite and offsite, and when you go online.

You will learn how to keep yourself safe in all of these environments to prepare you for life in the community.





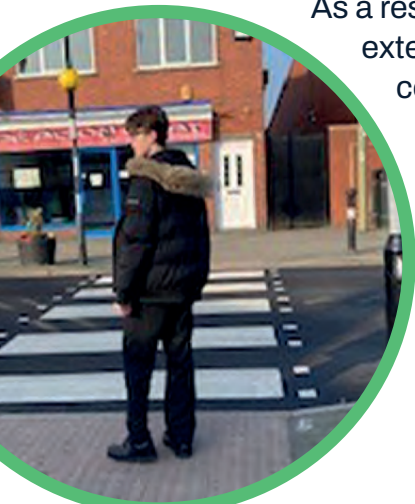
Our Gobowen campus and community

Our residential accommodation is at our main campus on the edge of the village of Gobowen, near the small market town of Oswestry.

This rural location is a real benefit to you as you have the freedom to move around the campus independently, as is appropriate for you as an individual. This supports your growth, and development of skills, knowledge and positive behaviours.

As a residential student, you will benefit from extended access to travel training in the community. This includes walking to the local shops, in the village centre, and using the local bus routes from the bus stops outside the college, to visit the local towns.

You can also use the train station in Gobowen, to further develop your independence skills.



The skills you learn as a residential student will help you be as independent as you can be, and will help you prepare for when you leave college.

Developing your independence skills

Derwen College has a person-centred approach that puts each student at the heart of their own learning and development.

As a residential student, you will transfer and practise the skills you learn in your curriculum programme into your residential life at college, and be encouraged to continue them when you go home.

Our experienced staff support and monitor your progress and will step back as your independence skills grow and develop.

You will learn to take responsibility for your own cleaning, shopping, cooking and general living skills. This accelerates the development of your independence skills.




Our accommodation and types of residence are varied so there is somewhere for everyone. This means we can meet your individual development needs, even if they change during your time here. All our residential students have their own room and all our bathroom facilities are accessible.

Whilst on campus, you will be able to access and use the commercial outlets located here. This means you could have lunch with your friends in the Walled Garden Café; do a bit of shopping in Garden Centre Shop or The Vintage Advantage (charity shop); or have a walk around the Garden Centre.

These outlets will be familiar if you are studying Hospitality & Food, Horticulture or the Retail & Enterprise curriculum pathway.

Our vibrant community works together to create a relaxed and positive environment that helps you prepare for life outside of college.



Our fabulous facilities include: Student Union; a heated indoor swimming pool; sports hall; a gym; sports field; outdoor activity centre, used for outdoor learning, and by students on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.



There are too many available activities to list!

You could join the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme at all levels. You could spend the evening in the Student Union with your friends. That's unless you are out on a trip, for example to the theatre, cinema or bowling.




The choices are wide and varied. And if your interests are not covered, talk to us and we'll see what we can do.

In the future you will be able to live more independently because you developed the skills and knowledge whilst being a residential student.

We support you to achieve what you want to do and challenge you to exceed what you ever thought was possible.



Anna's Story



Anna is a former residential student who studied on the Performing Arts pathway. Throughout her life, Anna has dealt with the consequences of a traumatic birth, including chronic memory loss.

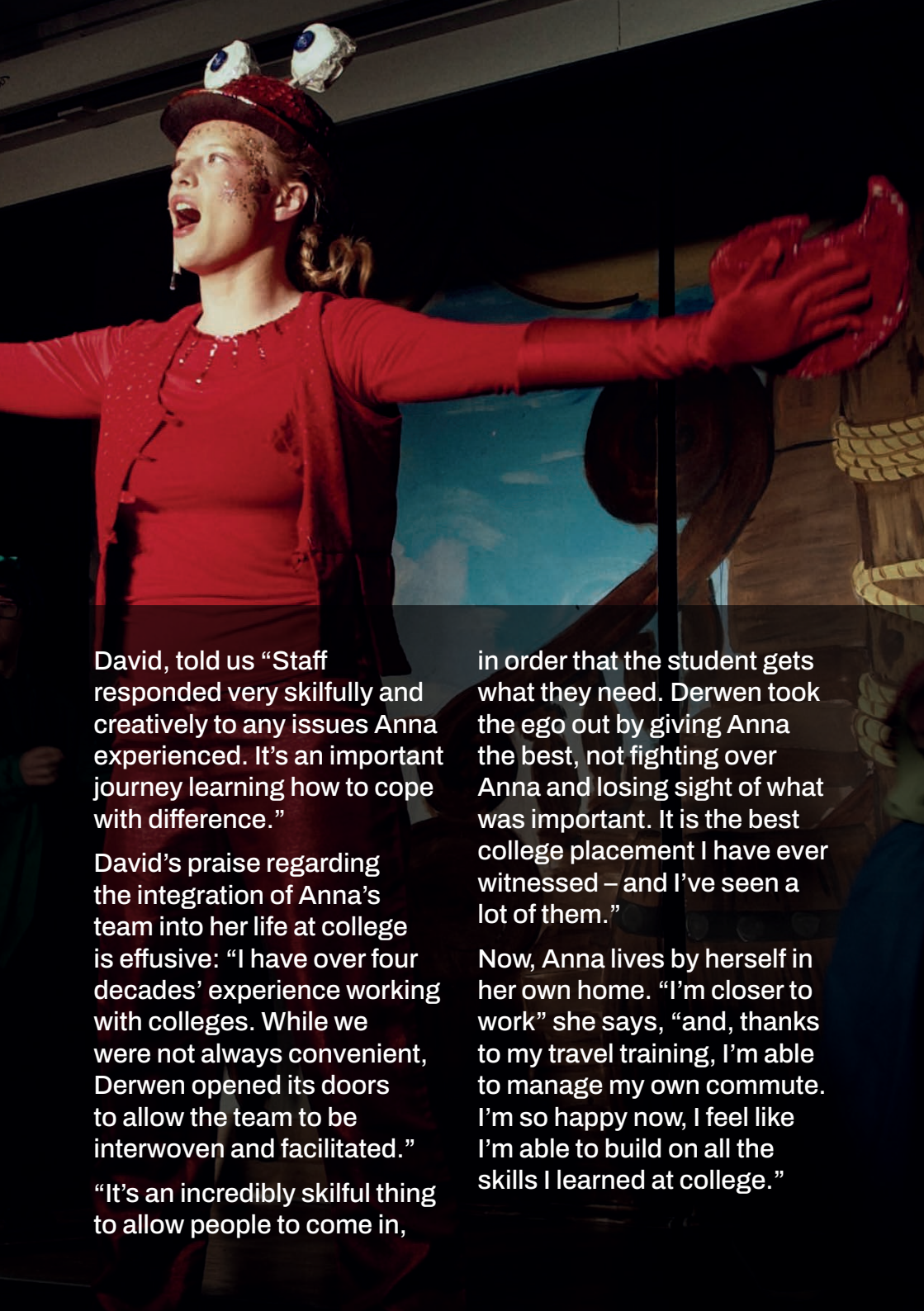
Anna would easily become overwhelmed and she functioned at a social level lower than her chronological age

Derwen College gave Anna the chance to leave home and live in a safe place. Here, she could grow, socialise and be encouraged to flourish at her own pace.

As a residential student, Anna started learning to do things like washing her hair. Whilst this routine element may be considered like a simple everyday task, it was something Anna had struggled with before college.

She also had access to a diverse mix of people and support to help her navigate her relationships. Kathy, Anna's mum, told us, "It was a joy to hear the words, 'I'd love to talk, but I'm hanging out with my friends – who are treating me as their equal.'"

Anna's neuropsychologist,



David, told us “Staff responded very skilfully and creatively to any issues Anna experienced. It’s an important journey learning how to cope with difference.”

David’s praise regarding the integration of Anna’s team into her life at college is effusive: “I have over four decades’ experience working with colleges. While we were not always convenient, Derwen opened its doors to allow the team to be interwoven and facilitated.”

“It’s an incredibly skilful thing to allow people to come in,

in order that the student gets what they need. Derwen took the ego out by giving Anna the best, not fighting over Anna and losing sight of what was important. It is the best college placement I have ever witnessed – and I’ve seen a lot of them.”

Now, Anna lives by herself in her own home. “I’m closer to work” she says, “and, thanks to my travel training, I’m able to manage my own commute. I’m so happy now, I feel like I’m able to build on all the skills I learned at college.”

Tom's Story



Tom was initially a student in the Learning for Life programme who, due to his severe learning disability, had not previously had much access to respite provision away from home. A slow transition was implemented to support Tom adapt to life as a residential student, gradually increasing the number of nights he spent at college each week until he eventually settled full-time.

Tom loved the social aspect of being a residential student, learning to take responsibility for his laundry and tidiness.

Tom and the college's IT team worked together to create custom call bell buttons for Tom to use. This gave Tom control over initiating contact with the Waking Nights team if he needed assistance during the night.

As Tom's self-reliance grew, he decided he wanted to hang up his own clothes. The college's occupational therapy team installed a wheelchair accessible clothes rail in Tom's room, enabling him to be completely

independent in managing his own laundry.

Tom's mum, Elsa, told us, "A worry as a parent can be whether our young people will get the good care they would otherwise get at home. Tom has physical disabilities which means that he perhaps requires more support than other students. Staff and carers at Derwen made sure that absolutely all areas were covered for Tom; his medicine in a safe in his room, an epilepsy monitor attached to the bed, switches in his room to help him ask for help, Makaton trained staff to mention but a few things. The staff and other students were amazing at supporting him and made him feel safe and start to enjoy his time there to the fullest."

Elsa continued, "Tom made lots of friendships, worked hard, and thrived on succeeding in his tasks. The three years at Derwen College, with all its experiences, has set him up for a great adult life, living up to his potential as independently as possible."

Scan the QR code to view our short video about life as a residential student



Scan the QR code to view the virtual tour of our Gobowen campus



Care Quality Commission inspection report, 2022

People were supported to gain their independence with the use of positive risk taking and the provider ensured, where appropriate, relatives were aware of the strategies put in place to keep people safe.

One relative told us, “My [relative] is now leaving the site to go to the supermarket and they are fully aware they must remember to tell the staff when they go. I am not concerned my [relative] may wander off as staff always know where [relative] is.”



“Learners become more independent in their personal lives.

“Through regular tutorials, learners participate in discussions and take more control of their decision making.

“They improve their ability to travel, shop, cook and manage their personal laundry.

“As they acquire these skills, they move successfully into more independent living arrangements.”

~ Ofsted 2021



**Ready for your next adventure?
Join Derwen College as a
residential student!**

Derwen
College

Visit www.derwen.ac.uk to see our virtual tour
and begin your Derwen College journey!

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