



Academy
Living

Orbis
education & care




HELLO

and a warm welcome
from Academy Living by
Orbis Education and Care.



Orbis
education & care



Academy Living is a unique and progressive initiative designed to support young people and adults with autism to achieve progression in all aspects of their personal and working lives.

Academy Living offers a blend of continuous learning, hands-on, real-world, life and work skills, leisure activities and optional accreditations. It is based both in the home and in the community. It offers work placements through local community partnerships or can be based at one of our high street branches of The Orb, which offer environments in which to learn and work, including a shop, café, kitchen, laundry and an office.

Our two branches of The Orb, in Porth and Swansea, are welcoming, autism-friendly spaces where shoppers can browse second-hand clothes or purchase gifts that have been made by the individuals who work there, and where customers can enjoy a drink or a snack over a friendly chat.



'In 2020 Academy Living worked with Steve Knapik MBE of Blue Balloon to raise funds for the charity'

WHAT IS ACADEMY LIVING

Academy Living is proof that, when offered the right kind of support and the right opportunities, individuals with autism not only progress but achieve and thrive in the real world.

When we meet an individual through Orbis' Academy Living initiative, we work closely with them to identify their inherent strengths and interests: their aspirations and goals. This forms the starting point for a rich and diverse personal development pathway of learning and practice.

Together, we explore those strengths and interests as fully as possible. An interest in swimming may lead towards gaining swimming awards, a health and safety course, a side-step into surfing or work experience at a leisure centre. An interest in gardening may result in work at our Aurora Project allotments, attendance at agricultural events, enterprise, selling produce at a farmers' market and further still into work experience at a local garden centre. Local partnerships help us to form the stepping-stones along the path towards independence and the world of work.

Where there are skills or knowledge gaps, we focus on those areas to help the individual take their next step. Individuals are supported to practice their skills at home, in the community or at one of our branches of The Orb, before moving on with new skills and more confidence.

Academy Living is therefore a super-focused, super-engaging approach to boosting skills and giving individuals the tools with which to identify and make the most of personal development opportunities.



Ring & say hello

T: 029 2002 9922

E: referrals@orbis-group.co.uk

orbis-group.co.uk



ON THE HIGH STREET AND IN THE COMMUNITY!

Academy Living thrives on being part of the community in more ways than one.

Our two branches of the Orb sit shoulder-to-shoulder with shops, cafés, hairdressers and other outlets as they are integral parts of the high street communities of Porth and Morriston. In the branches, you will find welcoming autism-friendly spaces where families and friends can come for a chat over a drink or a snack. Shoppers can pop in and browse the shelves of second-hand clothes and books, or purchase gifts that have been made, priced and displayed by the individuals we support.

The high street branches are only part of Academy Living.

We blend working at the Orb with wider community links to ensure that individuals' pathways have a range and variety of stepping-stones. The Aurora Project is our very productive allotment, while further afield we partner with local businesses to identify where working links can be made that will benefit both the individual and the business. Academy Living also takes place as much in the individual's home as it does the community.



D expressed interests in gardening, being outdoors and socialising. To help develop these interests Academy Living sourced a local allotment which we named The Aurora Project. Immediately, D flourished. So much so that he enrolled onto an ASDAN Horticulture accreditation.

Academy Living continued to work closely with D with a focus on the world of work. A pathway was set with D focussing on such things as interview skills. His hard work paid off when he attended an interview for a placement at Caerphilly Garden Centre and was offered the job! Now, D is an integral member of the team, working in an area he is passionate about.

'We are delighted to be working with D from Orbis' Academy Living initiative. It is tremendous to see the enjoyment he derives from his placement. D enjoys completing an array of tasks and he is always ready with a cheerful greeting for both employees and customers. He has become a welcome part of our community.'

Caerphilly Garden Centre



'I've fallen in love with this place! Staff are super-friendly and polite. I received a lovely warm welcome! When I came in today I was having a bad day. After an hour sat in the café drinking the best coffee I am leaving in a much better mood. I can't thank you all for that.' Customer.

The orb rb

The hub of the Academy Living programme is **The Orb**. Both branches of The Orb provide a working shop, café, office and laundry, whilst the site in Porth also provides a kitchen. When the first branch was opened in 2015 it was featured on ITV Wales News and seen by 1.2 million viewers!

The Orb consists of two sites, both located on busy high streets. They are welcoming, autism-friendly places where people meet and enjoy a drink and a snack in our cafes or relax and re-charge away from the busy bustle. Shoppers can browse the shelves for second-hand clothes or books and buy gifts handcrafted by the individuals we support.

The sites offer working environments such as a café, shop, laundry, office and kitchen, where the individuals we support experience real-world experience in a range of settings. Individuals are taught how to be professional and welcoming; how to serve customers and manage money; how to launder, price and display items. They show great pride in their work and gain vital skills along the way.

The Orbs are just part of the Academy Living portfolio as individuals are given a wide range and variety of stepping-stones. Work experience at The Orb is reinforced with projects to be completed at home or in the community, at our allotment or indeed in any one of our formal work-experience links. Experience and enthusiasm can be further channelled into ASDAN or other accreditations specific to the individual's interests.

Pop into either branch and you will receive a warm welcome!





ACADEMY LIVING FAQs?



Who can access Academy Living?

Academy Living is available to young people and adults who already attend an Orbis school and/or reside in an Orbis home.

How are individuals supported in Academy Living?

Young people and adults are supported by their keyworkers and day-to-day support team. This ensures that support is consistent and familiar.

How much support do they receive?

As much support as required. Complex needs are not a barrier to accessing Academy Living or indeed the community or the world of work. Academy Living has proven time and time again, that when given the right kind of support, individuals not only learn and progress, but thrive in the community.

Are Academy Living pathways entirely based at The Orb?

Academy Living draws on a range of resources in order to offer young people and adults opportunities to learn and develop their interests. The branches of the Orb are just two from a variety of locations, including the home, the community and the workplace. By combining a variety of environments, individuals gain a wide range of experiences which keeps things interesting, engaging and stimulating.

Is the Orb open to the public?

Yes! The branches in Porth and Morriston are autism- and family-friendly spaces which include a café and a shop. We have a growing and loyal customer base, and all are welcome.

I am an employer and would like to get involved.

How can we link up to offer work placements?

Get in touch using the details below and someone from the Academy Living team will come back to you. All work-related learning is valuable to us, whether it is a one-off tour of a business premises or a regular part-time work experience placement.

What else does Orbis Education and Care do?

As well as Academy Living and the branches of The Orb, Orbis offers specialist schools and homes for children up to age nineteen, with complex needs associated with autism and a learning disability, and community homes for adults from the age of eighteen.

If you have any further questions then please send us an email: referrals@orbis-group.co.uk
You can also read more about Academy Living at orbis-group.co.uk

Contact us

T: 029 2002 9922

E: referrals@orbis-group.co.uk

orbis-group.co.uk

Orbis locations

Cardiff | Brecon | Newport | Swansea | Presteigne | Pembrokeshire | Port Talbot | Porth