

Birchwood High School

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Report

November 2024 2025

Birchwood High School is a larger than average secondary school with over 1400 pupils on roll. There are currently 1454 students on roll and 12.9% of these students have Special educational Needs and/or Disabilities. As a school, we are proud of our inclusive approach and the provisions we have for pupils with SEND and we aim to provide all students with strategies for dealing with their needs in a supportive environment and to give them access to the National Curriculum.

Aims and Objectives

Our Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Annual Report aims to;

- Demonstrate how Birchwood implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood covers the 4 'Areas of Need'.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood support pupils with SEND at the school and outline the key individuals who provide the support.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood provide information and guidance to parents who think their child may have a SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood identify students with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood measure the progress made by a pupil with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood involve parents in making decisions about the pupils future.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood involve the pupils in making decisions about their own education.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood adapt its teaching for pupils with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood evaluate if the support in place for pupils with SEND is effective.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood will secure resources for pupils with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood will make sure pupils with SEND are included in activities alongside pupils without SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood make sure the admissions process is fair for pupils with SEND. #
- Demonstrate how Birchwood support students with disabilities.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood support mental health and emotional and social development for pupils with SEND.
- Demonstrate how Birchwood provides for pupils with SEND in transition between classes, settings and preparing for adulthood.

- Demonstrate how Birchwood support both looked-after and previously looked after pupils with SEND.
- Demonstrate what parents should do if they have a complaint about their child's SEND support.
- Demonstrate what support is available for families.

Vision and Values

- At Birchwood we aim to provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the support they need and the chance to thrive and meet their full potential.
- We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of all pupils.

We are dedicated to SEND students' safety and wellbeing. Our Child Protection Policy highlights the need to protect, and safeguard SEND students who are, statistically, more vulnerable than their non-SEND peers.

We aim to achieve every pupil making at least expected progress in learning.

We are committed to ensuring that all students with SEND have their needs identified to support academic progression and continued well-being.

We focus on pupils with SEND being able to fully access the curriculum by providing extra support or additional resources when required with lessons adapted and personalised to their needs.

We are devoted to ensuring that all pupils with SEND are supported during their transition to secondary school and are well informed regarding the next stage of their education. In addition we ensure children are fully supported if they move to Birchwood during the year.

Legislation and guidance

This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND and disabilities
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND coordinator's (SENCOs) and the SEND information report
 1. The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
 2. The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
 3. The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out trustees responsibilities for pupils with SEND
 4. The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

Key Definitions

Special Educational Needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

- **Disability**

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

1. *What types of SEN does the school provide for?*

The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions and adaptations will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example, challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

Levels of support

SEND Support

Those children who need educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools thus those students who have – or who may need – targeted support to ensure they are making expected progress.

Pupils receiving SEN Support provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupils' needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget and HNF can be applied for through County procedures.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

EHCP - Those students with an Education, Health and Care Plan who require additional support - which is continuous throughout schooling – in order to make expected progress.

- Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN Support provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.
- The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).
- On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

The number of students at Birchwood High School with special educational needs is

broadly in line with national average.

Year Group	Amount of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's)	SEN Support %	SEN Monitoring %	% of year group with SEND
7	10	18%	5%	27%
8	12	13%	7%	25%
9	7	12%	12%	27%
10	9	7%	12%	22%
11	4	9%	12%	22.5%
12	6	8%	1%	13%
13	0	2%	9%	11%

% indicates the percentage of the Year Group.

2. Which Staff will support my Child and what training have they had?

The SENCO

The SENCO is Lori Jackson and she has completed the NASENDCO qualification.

ljackson@birchwoodhigh.org.uk / 01279 655936.

SENCO role and responsibilities:

- Work with the Assistant Principal and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- Work with the Assistant Principal, Senior Leadership Team and SEND Trustee to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate.
- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the Assistant Principal and the Finance director on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development

- Regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

The Deputy SENCO, Assistant SENCO and SEND administrator.

- These roles support the SENCO in fulfilling their duties.
- The Deputy SENCO is undergoing training for the SENCO qualification. They help to run the department and assist with running meetings with families where the student has an EHCP.
- The Assistant SENCO runs the Personalised Learning Centre and takes responsibility with those students on the SEND Support register.
- The administrator is directed by the SENCO to support the team with all the specialist SEND admin roles including taking minutes of EHCP reviews and completing referrals to external agencies.

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach.
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them.
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes.
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil.

Learning Support Assistants

- We have a large team of teaching assistants who support students with an EHCP on a 1 to 1 basis in lessons. Additionally, our LSA team support pupils in small groups when required.

The SEND link Trustee

The SEND Trustees are Catherine Gater and Jason Boyce and they will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school



The Assistant Principal / Principal

The Assistant Principal will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEND Trustee to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school.
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- Work with the SENCO and school Trustees to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

Training

- The SENCO is qualified with the National award for SEND coordination and the Deputy SENCO is undergoing the training for the award this year.
- LSA's participate in training opportunities offered through Herts County Council SEND team and Specialist advisory teachers. Additionally, LSA's have access to training that is specific to the needs of the students they support. We have one member of staff who is a qualified ELSA emotional literacy support assistant.
- The SENCO also leads training with the LSA's throughout the year.
- Training will be provided to teaching and support staff. The Assistant Principal and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

External agencies and experts

As a school we work closely with outside agencies to meet individual needs and address training needs.

- Specialist SEND counsellor from Safe Space
- Speech and language therapists
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists

- GPs or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services and other local authority (LA)-provided support services
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Academy 21
- Acorn Digital
- Enemy of Boredom
- Brightview Farm
- Circles Farm
- Education Access CSS
- Nessie
- Rivers ESC
- Home-school Tutoring Hertfordshire & Cambridgeshire
- Amwell View – Outreach for Autism.
- Preparing for Adulthood.
- YC Herts - Careers.
- Specialist teachers in Autism.
- Specialist teacher in Hearing.
- Specialist teacher in Sight.
- Herts for Learning – training opportunities.

3. What should I do if I think my child has SEN?

Parents or carers

Birchwood High School is committed to working in partnership with students and parents. We believe in a Pupil Centered Approach and are committed to ensuring the needs of the student is at the heart of what we do.

We will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty.
- We take into account the parents' concerns.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEND support.

The school welcomes feedback from parents all year round and parents can make an appointment to speak to any member of staff including the SENCO throughout the year for any reason.

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given reports on the pupil's progress

Parents will be informed of their child's progress through the following means:

- Annual Review meetings for identified students (Education, Health and Care Plans).
- Team around the Family style meetings with identified students.
- One to one discussions with SENCO, classroom teachers, form tutors and Learning Support Assistants.
- Telephone and email consultations.
- Formal Interim Reports.

Student Passports.

Every student with a more complex profile of need has a individual 'Student Passport' document. This is a snap shot of a students strengths and needs and communicates recommendations for support from adults working with them.

The Pupil

Pupil voice is extremely important to us at Birchwood.

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support although the level of involvement will depend on your child's age and level of competence. We recognise that no 2 children are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input.

This might involve:

- Attending meetings to discuss their progress and outcomes.
- Prepare a presentation, written statement, video, drawing, etc.
- Discuss their views with a member of staff who can act as a representative during the meeting.
- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

4. How will the school know if my Child needs SEN support?

The SENCO and Personalised Learning Team make good use of baseline data to inform planning for all students including those with SEND.

A variety of factors are considered when identifying and assessing students with Special Educational Needs. The following forms of identification may be considered

- Close liaison with primary school staff and parents on transition to Birchwood High School
- Effective use of primary school progress data
- Reading tests of all students at the start of Year 7
- Liaison with subject staff, tutors and Heads of Year
- Liaison with outside agencies
- Year 9 and Year 10 screening tests for Access Arrangements.

As students' progress through school, good use is made of the Interim reporting system to monitor students at all levels. Progress meetings with key school personnel after each interim are used to identify areas of need. Appropriate interventions are then implemented.

We will also consider any evidence that a pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

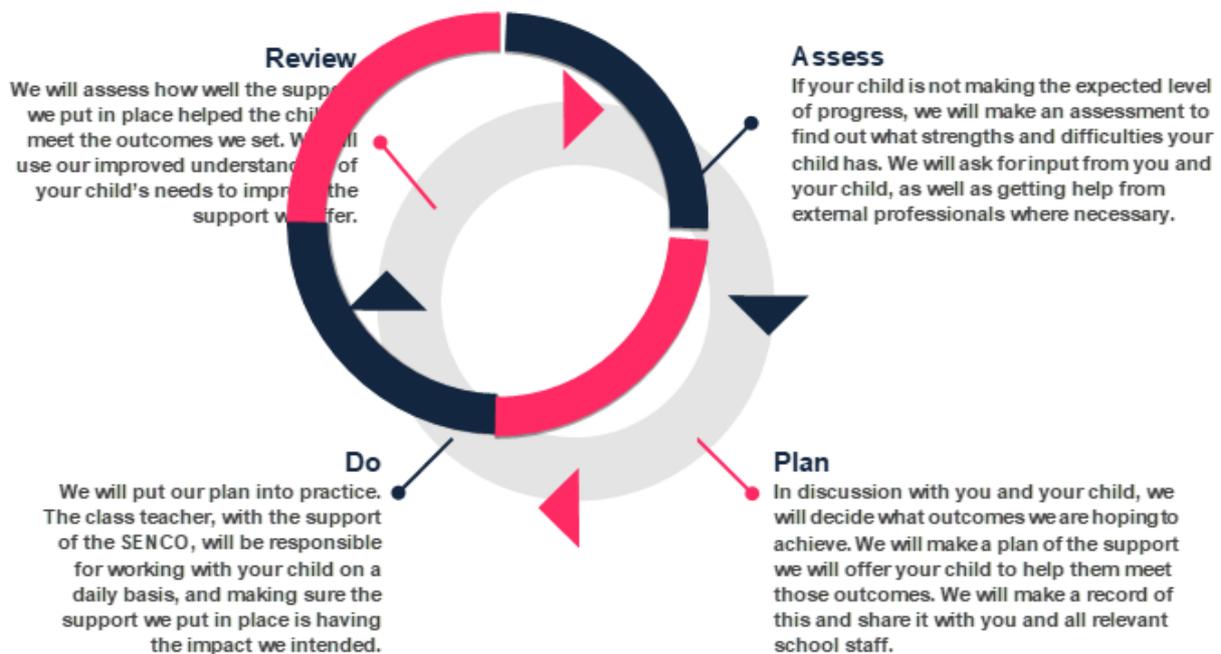
- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

Then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

We run coordinated internal triage meetings every Monday and these include focus weeks on students with SEND. A triage forum is then held once a term with professionals from across the school community. The focus is on Tier 4 students.

5. How will the school measure my Child's progress?

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.



As a part of the planning stage of the graduated approach, we will set outcomes that we want to see your child achieve.

Whenever we run an intervention with your child, we will assess them before the intervention begins. This is known as a 'baseline assessment'. We do this so we can see how much impact the intervention has on your child's progress.

We will track your child's progress towards the outcomes we set over time and improve our offer as we learn what your child responds to best.

This process will be continual. If the review shows a pupil has made progress, they may no longer need the additional provision made through SEN support. For others, the cycle will continue and the school's targets, strategies and provisions will be revisited and refined.

6. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child?

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs. We will make sure that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum in every year they are at our school.

We adapt how we teach to suit the way the pupil works best. There is no '1 size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child.

These adaptations may include:

- Adapting our curriculum to make sure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1-to-1 work, adapting the teaching style or content of the lesson, etc.
- Adapting our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, reader pens etc.
- Some students will be provided with a Teaching assistant who will support pupils on a 1-to-1 basis.
- Teaching assistants will support pupils in small groups when on occasion in PLC.
- Some students will receive 1-to-1 tutoring with a Maths, English or Science tutor.

Continual Professional Development is provided to ensure that teachers are kept abreast of key strategies for support. This is monitored in lesson observations and reflected in Performance Management.

In addition to the above, the following provision is offered where appropriate:

- In class Learning Support Assistant support for identified students with high needs funding.
- Programmes of study from specialist outside agencies
- Alternative methods of recording
- Break and lunchtime support for vulnerable students.
- Nurture Groups
- SEND Counsellor
- Youth Support Workers
- Family Support Workers
- Educational Psychologist consultation
- Paired reading
- Touch typing.
- Programmes of study to assist with organization and executive function skills
- Examination Access Arrangements
- Intervention for identified students.
- First Aid Room Assistant (Qualified Nurse)
- Peer mentoring

- Safeguarding and student Welfare lead
- Social Skills intervention
- 1 to 1 and small group tutoring in English, Math and Science.
- Handwriting workshops
- AQA Unit Award – Coursework based qualification

The above list is not exhaustive and may not be offered to all students with special educational needs. Provision is offered as a result of identification and monitoring.

7. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their targets after each interim / data drop.
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Lesson Observations / Learning Walks
- Using provision maps to track pupil progress.
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents
- Every year group have a program of 3 data drop / interim publications a year. These document student progress against personal target and 'Attitude to Learning'. EHCP students and SEND Support students have termly reviews of provision following the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review'.

Additionally, the SENCO aims to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessments.
- Their previous progress and attainment or behaviour.
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.
- The views and experience of parents.
- The pupil's own views.
- Advice from external support services, if relevant.
- All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

Examination Access Arrangements (for students in key Stage Four only)

As students move into their GCSE years, there may be a need for consultation to ascertain whether additional arrangements in assessments and examinations are necessary. Referrals may come from a variety of means, including concerns from students, parents, teachers and support staff.

If appropriate, students will be put forward to be assessed by the Specialist Assessor who works alongside the SENCO and the Personalised Learning Team. The findings from these assessments will be used to make a formal application to the Joint Committee for

Qualifications. It is assumed that all applications will be made and formalised by the beginning of Year 11. This is to ensure that appropriate arrangements may be made in all formal assessments and examinations, including mock examinations.

Parents and students will be informed of the process and the findings.

8. How will the school resources be secured for my child?

Securing equipment and facilities

At Birchwood we are well resourced and have a dedicated safe space, known as PLC (Personalised Learning Centre) for our students with SEND.

This is equipped with resources such as...

- Student laptops
- Social area during break and lunch time
- Sensory area for emotional regulation
- Books
- Games
- Lego
- Student working area
- Lockers

It may be that your child's needs mean we need to secure:

- Extra equipment or facilities
- More teaching assistant hours
- Further training for our staff
- External specialist expertise

If that's the case, we will consult with external agencies to get recommendations on what will best help your child access their learning.

9. How will the school make sure my child is included in activities alongside pupils who don't have SEN?

At Birchwood we create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

Additionally, all of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before and after-school clubs.

All pupils are encouraged to go on our school trips, including our residential trips.

All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day/school plays/enrichment week.

No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability and we will make whatever reasonable adjustments are needed to make sure they can be included.

A link to the Accessibility policy is as follow; [Accessibility Plan 2022-25](#)

10. How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for pupils with SEN or a disability?

- The admission arrangements of all students – including students with SEND - are in accordance with national legislation. A copy of our admission arrangements may be found on the school website.
- If a prospective pupils has a disability or SEN, all the necessary arrangements are made.
- All prospective pupils whose EHC plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

11. How does the school support pupils with disabilities?

The following steps have been taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favorably than other pupils:

All our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before-and after-school clubs.

No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability.

We have ramp access alongside steps and the school has 3 functioning lifts in the A, B and D blocks. C block is on one level.

The Birchwood accessibility plan can be found on the school website. It covers how Birchwood:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Provides availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

A link to the Accessibility policy is as follow; [Accessibility Plan 2022-25](#)

12. How will the school support my child's mental health, and emotional and social development?

We provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Our Mental health lead is Joe Harlow
- All students including those with SEND have access to a Form Tutor, Head of Year, SENCO, LSA Team in PLC, Assistant SENCO, Deputy SENCO, Assistant Principal, Safeguarding / Student Welfare lead, classroom teachers and support staff.
- Pupils with SEND have the opportunity to apply for all leadership roles for example: the School Council, The Birchwood Leadership academy, Fusion, House roles, Environmental club.
- Birchwood invest in the following outside agencies to come in to school such as a specialist SEND Safe Space Counselling, School counsellor, Art therapist, Social skills coordinator, Stort Valley mentors and Rivers Outreach. We also run a Peer Mentoring scheme every Friday with the Sixth Form working with students of all ages and abilities.
- Pupils with SEN are encouraged to be part of the school council.
- Pupils with SEN are also encouraged to be part of extra-curricular clubs to promote teamwork/building friendships.

- We run nurture groups in PLC.
- We address bullying as soon as it is identified for further detail see our Anti Bullying policy.

13. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings, or in preparing for adulthood?

At Birchwood we will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this.

We work with both Essex and Herts County council that provide regular meetings for students around future plans, next steps, and careers. EHCP students all get at least one meeting per year with an invitation for parents to attend and a report of outcomes. This process starts in Year 7. Careers advice is provided to all via Karen Charles from Herts County Council.

All students at school will access work on careers and future plans in our PSHCE lessons that run fortnightly. Additionally, every student is logged into the Unifrog website that is a platform for accessing information about further education, apprenticeships, and future careers.

To ensure that students get off to a good start at Birchwood the following arrangements take place:

All students are visited at their primary school base by a team consisting of our Assistant Principal, Head of Year 7, Safeguarding lead, and the SENCO. This is to ensure that the students feel comfortable with the rigors of secondary school life and familiarise themselves with key personnel.

We also ensure the Birchwood SENCO meets at a separate time with each primary school SENCO regarding all EHCP students.

Meetings are held with the class teacher and primary school SENCO to ascertain progress and level need as well as discussing Behaviour, Attendance, Vulnerability, Resilience, Engagement, Organisation and so on.

Extended transition is offered to those students who would benefit from more extensive arrangements. As well as a Summer School and two in depth induction days. This is to ensure that students are less anxious when they begin in September.

All appropriate secondary school staff are fully informed of the new intake in preparation for September.

For those students with an Education, Health and Care Plans the SENCO will aim to attend the final Annual Review.

In the event of a mid-year admission, and where appropriate, the SENCO will seek advice and guidance as to potential barriers to learning or additional needs. The SENCO will ensure that the full information has been gathered from the previous school, that information has been communicated to teachers and that support is put into place from the outset.

14. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEN?

Chris Ruggins rugginasc@birchwoodhigh.org.uk is the designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children at Birchwood.

Children who are looked-after or previously looked-after will be supported in the same way as any other child who has SEN. However, looked-after pupils will also have a personal



education plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEN support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

15. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?

Complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the SENCO in the first instance. Following this any further correspondence can then be directed to the Assistant Principal and the Principal. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEND Code of Practice](#).

If you feel that our school has discriminated against your child because of their SEN, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disability-discrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal.

Contact details for raising concerns

Lori Jackson – SENCO – ljackson@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

Rob Herbert – Assistant Principal – rherbert@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

Sam Griffin – Principal sgriffin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk

Birchwood High School 01279 655936

16. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEN, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at the Local Offer. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Annual Report works in conjunction with the Local Offer from Hertfordshire Local Authority. The Local Offer may be found on the Herts direct website:



(<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/localoffer.page>)

Our local special educational needs and disabilities information, advice and support (SENDIAS) services are:

Hertfordshire SENDIASS, provides information advice and support which is accurate and confidential in ways that is accessible for young people and parents. They aim to promote independence and self-advocacy to enable parents to participate in making informed decisions

SENDIASS email: info@hertssendiass.org.uk or you can call:

Telephone: 01992 555847 Monday to Thursday 9.30am – 3pm - Friday 9.30am – 2.00pm

Outside of these hours please leave an answerphone message for the team and they will respond within 3 working days. Or you can write to them at:

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DQ

National charities that offer information and support to families of children with SEN are:

- [IPSEA](#)
- [SEND family support](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [Family Action](#)
- [Special Needs Jungle](#)

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to our policies on to the following documents

This policy links

The local offer
Accessibility plan
Behaviour policy
Equality information and objectives
Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Attendance policy
Safeguarding / child protection policy
Complaints policy

Glossary

- **Access arrangements** – special arrangements to allow pupils with SEN to access assessments or exams
- **Annual review** – an annual meeting to review the provision in a pupil's EHC plan
- **Area of need** – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a pupil with SEN can have. The 4 areas are communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs
- **CAMHS** – child and adolescent mental health services
- **Differentiation** – when teachers adapt how they teach in response to a pupil's

needs

- **EHC needs assessment** – the needs assessment is the first step on the way to securing an EHC plan. The local authority will do an assessment to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan
- **EHC plan** – an education, health and care (EHC) plan is a legally-binding document that sets out a child's needs and the provision that will be put in place to meet their needs
- **First-tier tribunal / SEND tribunal** – a court where you can appeal against the local authority's decisions about EHC needs assessments or plans and against discrimination by a school or local authority due to SEN
- **Graduated approach** – an approach to providing SEN support in which the school provides support in successive cycles of assessing the pupil's needs, planning the provision, implementing the plan, and reviewing the impact of the action on the pupil
- **Intervention** – a short-term, targeted approach to teaching a pupil with a specific outcome in mind
- **Local offer** – information provided by the local authority that explains what services and support are on offer for pupils with SEN in the local area
- **Outcome** – target for improvement for pupils with SEN. These targets don't necessarily have to be related to academic attainment
- **Reasonable adjustments** – changes that the school must make to remove or reduce any disadvantages caused by a child's disability
- **SENCO** – the special educational needs co-ordinator
- **SEN** – special educational needs
- **SEND** – special educational needs and disabilities
- **SEND Code of Practice** – the statutory guidance that schools must follow to support children with SEND
- **SEN information report** – a report that schools must publish on their website, that explains how the school supports pupils with SEN
- **SEN support** – special educational provision that meets the needs of pupils with SEN
- **Transition** – when a pupil moves between years, phases, schools or institutions or life stages

Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy



We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term.
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND.
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND.
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community.
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by Assistant Principal, Rob Herbert, **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.