



**Birchwood High School**

*your dreams, your future, our challenge*

# The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy 2026

Committee	Curriculum & Outcomes
SLT Link	Mrs L Jackson
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## Ethos

At Birchwood High School, we believe that all students can achieve and make excellent progress, regardless of barriers to learning or special educational needs. Lessons are inclusive, and students are taught in mainstream classes and withdrawn only for specialist intervention when necessary. We maintain high expectations of all staff and students and ensure that those students who need additional support are appropriately provided for. Support is reviewed regularly and adjusted to ensure maximum impact. Consistent communication ensures successful working partnerships between staff, students, and parents. Furthermore, we take particular care to ensure that SEND students' safety and wellbeing are catered for, acknowledging the fact that, statistically, students with specific learning needs or physical disabilities are more vulnerable in terms of safeguarding (Reference KCSIE 2025).

## Special Educational Needs – a definition

At Birchwood High School, we consider students with special educational needs to be a student who:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of the facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools (Code of Practice 2015)

We consider that students with special education needs may have a number of different barriers to learning which will sit within the following broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and / or physical needs

(The four areas of need, Code of Practice 2015)

English as an Additional Language is not considered to be a special educational need unless there are specific barriers to learning which are not related to the acquisition of the English language.

However, specialist provision for English as an Additional Language (EAL) is provided through the EAL Co-ordinator.



Behaviour that challenges may not be characteristic of a special educational need. However, some behaviour characteristics may be linked to specific barriers for learning and should be treated as such.

## Objectives and Principles

The objective of the Special Educational Needs Policy at Birchwood High School is to provide a full and comprehensive education to all students, including those with special educational needs. We will adapt teaching where necessary, enabling students to make progress.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work within and according to national legislation
- Ensure that SEND students feel safe in school and that any safeguarding concerns are prioritized through the school's Child Protection systems.
- Any member of staff with a safeguarding concern should immediately report this to the appropriate DSL (Georgia Willsmore, Years 7-11 and Sally Feather Levy – Years 12-13) or Deputy DSLs Heads of Year (Emma Hinski - Year 7, Ross Edwards - Year 8, Mathew Loney - Year 9, Ross Noblett - Year 10, Alexandra Collyer and Spencer Hill - Year 11, Jamie Clift – Year 12, Ian Torrance – Year 13)
- Provide a broad and flexible curriculum which meets the needs of all students appropriate to Birchwood, including those students with special educational needs
- Promote a positive learning culture for all students, including those with special educational needs
- Ensure students with special educational needs are appropriately integrated into mainstream education, both academically and socially
- Ensure teaching staff and support staff provide personalised support where necessary
- Ensure teaching staff and support staff are well informed and that information regarding students with special educational needs is updated regularly
- Provide intervention to ensure progress.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and progress
- Work in partnership with parents, encouraging a shared approach
- Work in partnership with outside agencies, seeking advice and guidance where necessary
- Maintain a flexible and positive approach
- Prioritise the well-being and safety of all students.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will ensure the consistent application of the Special Educational Needs Policy.

- They will also ensure that the Special Educational Needs Policy and SEND Information Report is regularly reviewed and updated in light of new information and legislation.



- The named member of the Governing Body will meet regularly with the SENCo and members of the Senior Leadership Team to review progress of students and evaluate provision within school.
- The Principal will maintain overall responsibility for ensuring that the objectives and principles of the Special Educational Needs Policy are consistently met.
- The Principal will work alongside the SENCo to ensure that provision removes barriers to learning effectively.
- The SENCo will maintain overall responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the Special Educational Needs Policy and SEND Information Report.
- The SENCo will ensure that teaching staff and support staff are well informed, and that appropriate training and support is offered.
- The SENCo will work alongside students, parents, and outside agencies to ensure that information and guidance is regularly reviewed and disseminated.
- The SENCo will review support and intervention regularly to ensure maximum input and value for money.
- The SENCo will work closely with Heads of Year and the pastoral team to support students who are on Heads of Year reports and Pastoral Support Plans, where specific special educational needs are evident.
- Teaching staff will ensure they are aware of the varying needs of the students in their class. They will adapt the learning in the classroom accordingly. They will use the information on Arbor to plan strategically for students with special educational needs.
- Teaching staff will ensure that support staff are well informed of classroom expectations, lesson objectives and expected outcomes to ensure that they can offer targeted intervention in the classroom
- Support staff will ensure that they are well informed of possible barriers to learning, lesson objectives and expected outcomes, to ensure that they can intervene effectively in the classroom. They will be flexible in their approach, encouraging students to be independent in their learning.

## Admissions Arrangements for students with special educational needs

Admission arrangements for students with special educational needs are in line with the school admission arrangements. The Birchwood High School Admissions Policy (Yr 7-11) may be found on the school's website.

Admittance to Birchwood High School of students with an Education, Health and Care Plan is agreed providing that a) it is not unsuitable for the age, ability if aptitude or SEN of the child or young person and b) it is not incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources. The SENCo will endeavour to meet all parents – during the EHCP consultation process - who name Birchwood High School as their preference, to identify provision and communicate what Birchwood High School can offer. Parents of children with special educational



needs are encouraged to liaise with the SENCo or a member of the Personalised Learning Team prior to admission. Parents should expect to be well informed of provision at Birchwood High School, aiding them in making the right decision for their child.

## Students with special needs - statistics

The number of students at Birchwood High School with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.

The number of students designated with special educational needs at Birchwood High School is indicated below:

Year Group	The amount of Education Health and Care Plans	SEN Support %
Year 7	10	15%
Year 8	13	17%
Year 9	12	14%
Year 10	7	11%
Year 11	8	11%
Year 12	0	7%
Year 13	6	7%

## Our Approach

To ensure that all students – including those with SEND - receive the appropriate provision, Birchwood High School employs a differentiated approach. This is to support those who require additional intervention of any kind. This intervention may be for a range of different reasons, including academic intervention, behavioural support, or student well-being. Students are categorised into three different waves.

A description of each stage is as follows:

- EHCP - Those students with an Education, Health, and Care Plan.
- SEND Support - Those students who have – or who may need – short term, targeted support to ensure they are making expected progress.

Identification and Monitoring of Students with Special Educational Needs



The SENCO and Personalised Learning Team make good use of baseline data to inform planning for all students including those with special educational needs. Teacher assessment and national assessment results are used to establish areas of need and intervention.

As students progress through the 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 where appropriate interventions are implemented.

A variety of factors are considered when identifying and assessing students with Special Educational Needs. In addition to the above, the following forms of identification may be taken into account:

- Close liaison with 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, group tutors and Heads of Year
- Liaison with outside agencies
- Screening tests for Exam Access Arrangements.

## Provision for students with Special Educational Needs

As mentioned previously, the first form of support for all students – including those students with special educational needs – is high quality teaching. Continuing 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
- Counselling
- Youth Support Workers
- Family Support Workers
- Educational Psychologist consultation
- Paired reading
- Touch typing programmes
- Programmes of study to assist with organisation
- Examination Access Arrangements
- Student Welfare Officer intervention for identified students
- Social Skills programmes
- 1 to 1 and small group tutoring in English, Maths, and Science.



- Handwriting programmes
- 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.

## 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.

## Working in Partnership

Birchwood High School is committed to working in partnership with students and parents. We believe in a Pupil Centred Approach and are committed to ensuring the needs of the students are at the heart of what we do. 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 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
- Inter-relationship with other school information

*The SEND Information Report should be viewed alongside the SEND Policy. A copy of this can be found on the school website.*



## Contacts and further information

❖ Mrs Lori Jackson – SENCo

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❖ Ms Kayleigh Bracaliello – Deputy SENCo

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❖ Mrs Sam Waller – Personalised Learning Centre Administrator

Email: [swaller@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:swaller@birchwoodhigh.org.uk)

Telephone: 01279 655936

❖ Mrs Catherine Gater and Mr Jason Boyce – Nominated SEN Governors

Email: [admin@birchwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@birchwood.herts.sch.uk) (main school email address)

Telephone: 01279 655396 (main school telephone number)

3 points  
3 points  
5 points or specialist skill led competitions focused on teamwork, creativity, or academic skill and HOH Responsibilities  
stop form group for each will receive 5 reward points per student