



Birchensale Middle School

SEN Information Report September 2019

Introduction

Birchensale is a mainstream Middle School for pupils from Y5 to Y8. Pupils join the school in Year 5 from up to 15 different First Schools. We are a fully inclusive school and offer a wide range of support and provision in order to meet the many individual needs of our pupils.

Assessing pupil needs

Following a comprehensive transition programme with our feeder schools, during which our Head of Year 5, Learning Mentor and SENCO visit the schools to discuss pupil needs, all pupils with SEN are placed on our school SEN profile. The SEN profile is produced twice a year and contains information on all pupils across the school that have additional needs. It states their area of need, relevant support strategies and other pertinent information. Where any pupils have received intervention from an outside agency/specialist service the recommendations will be implemented as set out by plans or reports passed on from feeder schools. These will then be monitored following the school's procedures.

Subject teachers carry out ongoing monitoring through formative assessment and complete a summative assessment at the end of each term (core subjects) or topic/unit of work (foundation subjects). It is through this monitoring and assessment that pupil progress is tracked - where pupils are failing to make expected progress further support and intervention will be implemented in order to help them meet specific targets. This may involve further assessment to identify specific areas of need to target and may require the input from specialist services such as Learning Support, Education Psychology, Speech & Language and the visual or hearing impairment teams.

If an outside agency is involved, parents are consulted and given an opportunity to share their views and opinions. Parents will also receive copies of any reports produced by outside agencies and may be included in the recommendations or suggested strategies to support pupils needs. Reports produced by outside agencies are shared with all relevant staff and intervention is implemented where appropriate. Pupils who have been assessed by an outside agency will be monitored closely and reviewed after a suitable period of time.

SEN provision

How does the school evaluate the effectiveness of its provision for SEN pupils?

SEN provision at Birchensale is monitored and evaluated in a number of ways. Firstly, staff are asked to review pupils placed on the SEN register and make recommendations for the provision they receive. Where it is not effective, alternative arrangements are made – this information is given to all staff working with the pupils. Secondly, all intervention strategies that are implemented are scrutinised through measurable outcomes – where an intervention is proved to have little value in improving pupil outcomes, it will either be altered, or replaced. Thirdly, the schools robust monitoring and assessment systems enables teachers and subject leaders to identify whether or not the provision in place for pupils with SEN is having the desired effect on pupil progress. The school's



Governing body receives a termly report on the progress made by pupils on the SEN register and has information on the different provision that has been implemented to support individual needs.

What arrangements does the school have in place for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with SEN?

Termly assessments are completed in all subject areas, results for which are submitted onto a central data base. This data is then analysed by the Deputy Headteacher who has responsibility for assessment – from this information and the ongoing tracking it is evident whether pupils are making progress in line with expectations. Information for SEN pupils is passed onto the SENCO and heads of department. Parents are kept informed of pupil progress through parents' evenings and additional meetings with the SENCO/HLTA. The short term targets that have been set for them are monitored and reviewed every term. Parents will be given an opportunity to comment on or discuss their child's progress towards these targets. In addition to the termly opportunities to discuss pupil progress, some parents may also be provided with a home/school link book which allows more regular communication with regard to progress towards targets and also allows the opportunity for more short term targets to be set.

What is the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs?

Having been supplied with information about pupils with SEN, all teachers are expected to make provision for additional needs by following the advice and recommendations given. This may involve differentiating tasks in a range of different ways – through outcome, time allowed or individual learning preferences and support requirements. Staff will be aware of pupils who have targets as part of their individual provision map and will ensure, where relevant, they provide opportunities for pupils to work towards them.

Through teaching pupils in ability groups in Maths, English and Science allows the curriculum to be planned to match the needs of individuals more effectively – pupils with SEN will be in groups where there will be a greater emphasis on consolidating basic skills. In addition to this we have an experienced team of Teaching Assistants who are deployed to work with SEN pupils. This may involve supporting them within a class group or providing 1:1 or small group intervention outside the class. Teaching Assistants will also be deployed to implement the specific provision required to enable some individuals to meet their specific targets.

How does the school adapt the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs?

As stated in the Equality Policy:

- The students' needs are considered carefully and adaptations are always informed by the views of students and parents.
- Information will be passed to staff about the language and dialects spoken by students, and their cultural background and experiences will be used when appropriate.
- Student's cultural and religious backgrounds, experiences and needs are taken into account when planning extra-curricular activities. The school is particularly mindful of engaging those students who experience cultural or social isolation and those for whom the home environment would hinder learning.
- The curriculum is appropriately resourced and adapted for all students, taking into account any impairments or learning difficulties they may have, including a commitment to modifying tasks and/or providing aids or alternative equipment. Resources show sensitivity to different groups or cultures and do not reinforce stereotypes.



- The composition of groups, sets or streams and disapplications from the national curriculum are monitored and unjust differences removed e.g. the student's ability in one subject does not restrict access to the full curriculum available to their peers.
- The school will ensure that staff and students are aware of cultural differences in non-verbal communication e.g. it is disrespectful in some cultures for a young person to make eye contact with an adult.
- Tensions in the classroom and whole school environment are noticed quickly and positive action taken to ensure mutual respect and trust between pupils from different groups.
- School will ensure that curriculum planning takes account of the needs of all

What additional support for learning is available for pupils with SEN?

a) Class teacher input, via excellent targeted classroom teaching (Quality First Teaching).

For your child this would mean:

- That the teacher has the highest possible expectations for your child and all pupils in their class.
- That all teaching is built on what your child already knows, can do and can understand.
- That different ways of teaching are in place, so that your child is fully involved in learning in class. This may involve things like using more practical learning.
- That specific strategies (which may be suggested by the SENCO) are in place to support your child to learn.
- Your child's teacher will have carefully checked on your child's progress and will have decided that your child has a gap or gaps in their understanding/learning and needs some extra support to help them make the best possible progress

b) Specialist support provided by outside agencies, e.g. Speech and Language therapy

This means a pupil has had a range of different intervention/support strategies from within school resources but has not made expected progress and has therefore been identified by the SENCO/subject teacher as needing some extra specialist support from a professional outside the school. This may be from:

- Local Authority services, such as the ASD Outreach Team, Behaviour Support Team or Sensory Service (for students with a hearing or visual need).
- Outside agencies such as the Education Psychology.
- Bought in services such as Learning Support Team.

c) Specified Individual support

This type of support is available for children whose learning needs are severe, complex and lifelong.

This is usually provided via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This means your child will have been identified by professionals as needing a particularly high level of individual or small-group teaching.



This type of support is available for children with specific barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through Quality First Teaching and intervention groups ("Including All Children" documentation from LA).

Children with an EHCP will often need specialist support in school from professionals based outside the school. This may be from:

Local Authority central services such as the ASD Outreach Team, Behaviour Support or Sensory Service (for students with a hearing or visual need).

Outside agencies such as the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service.

How to gain an EHCP:

The school (or you) can request that Local Authority Services carry out a statutory assessment of your child's needs. This is a legal process which sets out the amount of support that will be provided for your child.

After the request has been made to the 'Panel of Professionals' (with a lot of information about your child, including some from you), they will decide whether they think your child's needs (as described in the paperwork provided), seem complex enough to need a statutory assessment. If this is the case, they will ask you and all professionals involved with your child to write a report outlining your child's needs. If they do not think your child needs this, they will ask the school to continue with the current support.

After the reports have all been sent in, the Panel of Professionals will decide if your child's needs are severe, complex and lifelong. If this is the case, they will write an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). If this is not the case, they will ask the school to continue with the current level of support and also set up a meeting in school to ensure a plan is in place to ensure your child makes as much progress as possible.

The EHC Plan will outline the provision your child should receive and what strategies must be put in place. These may include education, health or care providers to meet your child's individual needs. It will also have long- and short-term outcomes for your child.

An additional adult may be allocated to support your child with whole class learning, run individual programs or run small groups including your child.

How will my child be included in activities outside the school classroom including school trips?

The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are open to all pupils irrespective of their ability – no pupil will be denied the opportunity to participate in an activity where it is possible to safely adapt or differentiate it in order for them to be included. Activities may be adapted by using alternative equipment or resources; by having additional support from an adult or trusted peer; by following advice from a specialist service/outside agency; by using specialist equipment or by offering alternative roles. Parents will always be consulted about their child's needs and the support required enabling them to participate in the activities and trips on offer. Parents will ultimately have the choice as to whether their children should participate or not.

During lunch and break times there are a range of different opportunities to support all pupil needs, as not all pupils benefit from or manage the playground situation. Pupils have a choice of spending breaktimes in the Learning Support room; the *Bungalow* or the library. Some pupils will also have the opportunity to attend gardening club. For some pupils we may also put together an individual



lunch time support programme where they will spend time doing different activities with the support of a Teaching Assistant. Other pupils may also be given the opportunity to spend time in their form room with their form tutor or a trusted peer.

What support is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs?

The school offers a high level of pastoral support – this begins at the transition stage into Year 5, where every effort is made to ensure that all pupils and particularly those with Special Educational Needs are supported to enable them to transfer confidently into Middle School. This transition programme involves - visits to First School by the Head of Year 5, Learning Mentor and SENCO; extra visits to Birchensale Middle School; home visits during the Summer break by our Learning Mentor and the provision of a Passport containing relevant information about their new school. Once in the school we provide continued pastoral support for those who need it – this may include 1:1 or group sessions with our Learning Mentor or THRIVE Practitioner; regular meetings/liason with parents; support/advice from our SENCO; 1:1 sessions with a mentor/peer mentor and intervention from our Family Support Worker or School Nurse. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities are supported socially and emotionally – in addition to the provision stated, staff also maintain high levels of communication to enable all staff to be mindful of pupil needs and how they are best met.

Where pupils continue to have social and emotional difficulties, despite a range of support from within school it may be necessary, with parental consent, to refer to external agencies such as the EP or CAMHs.

Staff Training

Staff have received training on a range of aspects of SEN – some training is delivered to all staff and some is carried out by individuals then fed back to other key staff. Staff have received training and support to enable them to meet the main areas of need within the school – these include ASD, ADHD, dyslexia and Speech and Language. Other members of staff have completed training to meet more specific needs.

An audit of needs is carried out on a regular basis to identify areas of SEN support in which staff are lacking in confidence. Training is organised according to staff need or as a result of a new pupil with an unfamiliar area of need joining the school.

Certain staff have built up an expertise in a particular area such as teaching phonics, supporting Autistic children, behaviour management, SEN Reform. These members of staff will be expected to deliver in-house training to the rest of the staff.

All staff have completed Safeguarding training, Prevent training, Team Teach training, Epi pen training and Defibrillator training.

Accessibility

Birchensale's main building is organised with areas on different levels and two floors – there are steps leading to different parts of the ground floor and steps leading up to the two first floor areas. Throughout their time at Birchensale, pupils will be required to access all parts of the school. Unfortunately, we do not have lift access or ramp access and therefore we are unable to



accommodate pupils/staff with a wheelchair at the current time. We also have a separate building – *The Bungalow*, which is used by our Learning Mentor to support vulnerable children and families and remove barriers to learning. This is accessible via steps from the main building and via a pathway from the road.

However, a number of other measures are in place to ensure the school environment is accessible to pupils with individual needs. The school has been audited by the Visual Impairment Team and suitable adjustments have been made to enable our visually impaired pupils to access all areas of the school safely. We also work closely with the Hearing Impairment advisory teacher who has made recommendations to allow our hearing-impaired pupils to have full access to the curriculum. All staff have been given recommendations on how to make their classrooms dyslexia friendly and use a range of resources to ensure the pupils can access the curriculum fully. The Complex Communication Difficulty team have provided strategies including those relating to the school environment to support those with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other sensory needs.

The school liaises closely with parents and outside agencies when new pupils join the school for whom access may be an issue. We make plans and adaptations where necessary and also purchase any specialist equipment that is required in order to meet individual needs and allow full access.

The school has disabled parking bays and also an accessible toilet and changing facilities.

Parental/Carer Involvement

At Birchensale we recognise that pupils make the best progress and achieve most success where there is a good working relationship between school, parents/carers and pupils. It is through working together and supporting each other that we enable pupils to overcome any barriers and reach their full potential.

Parents/Carers have an opportunity to meet tutors in the Autumn Term and subject teachers in the Spring Term. At these parents' evenings there is also an opportunity for parents to speak with the SENCO or Learning Mentor if they have specific concerns about pupils needs. Throughout the year we maintain regular contact with parents through pupil diaries and also provide an additional home-school liaison book for those with more complex needs.

Parents of pupils with an EHCP will be invited into the school termly – once for the annual review of their EHC Plan and on two other occasions to review targets set. Where pupils have been issued with an Individual Provision Map, parents will also be given an opportunity to attend a termly meeting in order to review and set targets.

Parents will have opportunities to meet with outside agencies, where relevant reports will always be shared. Should parents have any concerns regarding progress, intervention or provision for their child, they can always contact the school and make an appointment to see the SENCO.

Pupil contributions

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities will have regular opportunities to discuss their feelings, views and wishes. They will be involved in setting and reviewing targets on a termly basis and will also have an opportunity to discuss the effectiveness and suitability of any provision they receive.



Pupils complete the PASS (Pupil Attitude to Self and School) survey each year, which allows them to express their views and feelings about different aspects of school life and how they feel about themselves. The results of this survey are analysed, and pupils maybe highlighted for extra support around self-esteem, confidence or attitude towards school and learning.

The school's pastoral support system also provides opportunities for pupils to share their feelings and opinions. They are encouraged to speak to their form tutor in the first instance but can also speak to the Learning Mentor or any member of the Learning Support Team.

Governing body

The link SEN governor visits the school at least once annually to review the provision for SEN pupils and meet with the SENCO. The SENCO presents a report outlining provision that has been implemented; progress made by pupils on the SEND register; future plans and any issues or concerns. The SEN report is then presented to the governing body.

The governing body also check and ratify the SEND policy which is reviewed annually by the SENCO.

The named SEN governor is **Sue Amor**.

Support services

Below are the details of useful contacts should you have any concerns about your child:

Birchensale SENCO – Rachel Batchelor	01527 68430
Birchensale Learning Mentor – Sarah Pugh	01527 68430
Birchensale Family Support worker – Justine Fitzer	01527 68430 07809 330825
Birchensale THRIVE Practitioner – Jo Alexander	01527 68430
EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) – Julie Davies	01527 585859 07789483077
SEN Services	01905 766329
SENDIAS (formerly Parent Partnership)	01905 768153

Transition arrangements

We recognize that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEN, and we take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

When your child is transferring from First School to Middle School:

- the Head of Year 5/Learning Mentor/SENCO will visit the school to meet with the children and their teachers/teaching assistants
- pupils will visit Birchensale and take part in a treasure hunt and other fun activities to help familiarize them with the school
- pupils will attend Birchensale for two transition days along with all their peers



- If your child would be helped by a book/passport to support them in becoming familiar with their new school, then one will be made for them.
- Additional visits can be arranged following the transition days should your child be feeling anxious
- The learning mentor will make home visits during the Summer Holiday for pupils who continue to feel anxious.

When your child is transferring from Middle School to High School:

- The High School SENCO/Head of Year 9 will meet with SENCO/staff at Birchensale to discuss pupils' needs and share information.
- Pupils will have an opportunity to visit their High School prior to the two main transfer days
- Pupils will attend the two transition days at their High School
- Further visits to high school can be arranged should pupils continue to feel anxious.

If your child is joining us from another school:

- The SENCO/Learning Mentor/Head of Year may visit the school or have a telephone conversation to discuss your child's needs and how they can best be supported when they join the school.
- If your child would be helped by a book/passport to support them in becoming familiar with their new school, then one will be made for them.
- Your child will be able to visit our school and stay for a taster session, if this is appropriate.

If your child is moving to another school:

- We will contact the school SENCO and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child. Where possible, a planning meeting will take place with the SENCO from the new school.
- We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.
- If your child would be helped by a book/passport to support them in moving on, then one will be made for them.

When moving classes in school:

- Information will be passed on to the new class teacher in advance and in most cases a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher. IPMs will be shared with the new teacher.
- If your child would be helped by a book/passport to support them in understand moving on, and then one will be made for them.

Worcestershire Local Offer

The local offer provides information on what services children, young people and their families can expect from a range of local agencies, including education, health and social care. Knowing what is out there gives you more choice and therefore more control over what support is right for your child.

The local offer provides information on a number of things, including:



- special educational provision;
- health provision;
- social care provision;
- other educational provision;
- training provision;
- travel arrangements for children and young people to schools, colleges and early years education; and
- preparing for adulthood, including housing, employment and leisure opportunities

Worcestershire Local Offer is available via the following link:

<http://worcestershirelocaloffer.org.uk/>