



Birchwood Curriculum

Introduction

Birchwood provides a curriculum which is enriched by a range of planned activities and experiences to enhance learning and personal development to equip all students with the tools to become:

- Successful learners, who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.
- Confident individuals who are able to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life.
- Active and responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to the well-being of present and future generations.

Birchwood's curriculum will promote values

Education is an important and on-going process, which enriches the lives of all members of the community and through this, the society in which they live and to which they contribute. Education is a route to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and mental development and thus the well-being of the individual. Education should also reaffirm our commitment to the virtues of truth, justice, honesty, tolerance, trust, respect and a reflection of British values.

The curriculum therefore flexible, inclusive and offers continuity, coherence and progression. It motivates and provides challenge for all students whatever their ability, promoting achievement for all and students ready for post 16 education and working life, or for their next steps as appropriate.

KS 3 Curriculum Intent

The curriculum will have a significant focus on age and academic level appropriate literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is intended to support students to make rapid progress in their literacy and numeracy skills so that they are able to access the wider mainstream curriculum successfully. The intent is that students who are not reading at their chronological age will be reading at a minimum of 10 years at the end of their KS3 placement. A number of reading schemes and interventions are in place to achieve this including Toe by Toe, pre/post teaching of vocabulary, comprehension work, 1:1 reading and IDL.

The curriculum will also incorporate aspects of ICT, finance, equality and diversity, cookery, ethics, health and nutrition, employability skills, science, PSHE and RSHE as appropriate to the cohort. All of these subjects are unit based, students will complete the assessments and the results will be banked. Certification will take place if the student remains at Birchwood long enough to bank the required number of units.

The curriculum will support the positive emotional, social and cognitive development of young people in a developmentally appropriate way using delivery of RSHE and PSHE. Sessions to develop communication and mental health skills will be delivered in house and by external specialists such as SALUS and Strengthening Minds.



The students will follow the NCFE Level 1 Award in RSHE. If students remain at Birchwood, they will complete the full Level 2 qualification in KS4. Developing emotional literacy will give students the skills to access mainstream education more successfully on return to their home schools. The intent is for students to be measured via Boxall Profiles as more resilient, more self-confident, have better developed language skills so they can express their feelings, wants and needs effectively and be able to approach transitions and change more positively.

There will also be opportunities to enrich the cultural capital for the students. The intent is that students will be familiar with a range of historical, musical, art and theatre experiences with visits, talks and other means of exposing the students to new concepts. Students will be taught about and will have opportunities to discuss and explore British values.

Admission to the school in KS3 is intended to be a short term programme with transition back to a mainstream secondary school once a period of 6 weeks positive behaviour has been achieved. This is measured using the reward system in Classcharts and 85% green (positive) points need to be achieved over a 6 week period. There are some students who will need a longer period of time in the KS3 class and some of those students will stay until they transition into KS4 at Birchwood

Implementation of KS3 Curriculum

The KS3 curriculum will be delivered by qualified teachers. Students will follow a published timetable and will have 4 English and 4 maths lessons per week with the wider curriculum of vocational and other national curriculum subjects including science, religious studies, and PSHE. In addition to a focus on National Curriculum core subjects, the KS3 curriculum also includes lessons that focus on personal development needs including anger management, social skills, self-esteem, self-motivation, communication skills and being able to build, repair, maintain and repair positive peer and adults relationships. These subjects were chosen to ensure that gaps in the core subjects were focused on to support an effective transition back to mainstream school as well as enable students to have the personal skills to manage difficult situations effectively. Personalised SEN interventions to develop academic, communication and social, emotional and mental health skills will be delivered to individuals and small groups alongside the timetable. These interventions will be planned by the SENCo and delivered by the Intervention TA or other staff as appropriate.

Impact of KS3 Curriculum

A variety of testing including baseline testing, reading age, spelling age and Boxall profiling will be carried out as appropriate on arrival at Birchwood. Students will be tested and progress tracked throughout the intervention programmes. Testing and tracking methods will be specific to the intervention.

Student behaviour will be measured using Classcharts. A minimum expectation is 85% green behaviour. Students who are not achieving this will have additional intervention and parent/carer meetings/multi-agency meetings as necessary. Students who achieve 85% green behaviour



consistently over a six week period will begin a transition back to their home school or other mainstream school.

Return to Mainstream School for KS3 Students

Students will return to mainstream schools with the following support:

- Training will be offered to mainstream pastoral and teaching staff from the SENCo to guide them on how to meet the needs of their returning students based on their individual progress and continuing needs.

KS4 Curriculum Intent

Birchwood delivers a curriculum that responds to the needs of our students, including learning gaps, with the aim to provide opportunities for all young people to learn, achieve and be successful in their academic development through a balanced, accessible and relevant range of learning experiences. The curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as providing cultural capital to prepare Birchwood students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life to become global citizens. Birchwood enables a smooth transition into students' next steps. These steps may be a reintegration to mainstream, a place in a more specialised provision or to get them to access and engage in learning at Birchwood. All Birchwood students will be prepared appropriately for their chosen post 16 pathways so that they are confident and able to secure and sustain positive, meaningful and relevant post 16 destinations.

Birchwood will provide students with the most up to date information, advice and guidance on opportunities that are appropriate for them as individuals.

Birchwood provides a balanced, accessible and relevant range of learning experiences that enables teachers to know the students - their strengths, interests and needs – and use this knowledge to make the best possible personalised offer for them. With students being admitted at varying times throughout KS4, and often having had gaps in their mainstream education for various reasons, Birchwood will develop skills in numeracy and literacy at the joining point in KS4 with intended progression onto GCSE exams at the end of KS4. Reading skills will be developed during the full Key Stage with various personalised interventions offered and whole class opportunities to develop both an interest in reading and increased reading skills. It is expected that all students will reach a minimum reading age of 10.0 to ensure that they can access examination papers successfully.

For students in Year 10 and 11, there is a curriculum offer of

- Functional Skills Maths and AQA GCSE Maths
- Functional Skills English and AQA GCSE English
- NCFE Level 2 RHSE,
- NCFE Level 2 Equality and Diversity,
- NCFE Level 1/2 Health and Fitness,
- NCFE Level 1 Finance,
- AQA ELC Science



- AQA Religious Studies
- NCFE Employability skills
- NCFE ICT
- NCFE Employability Skills

Some students will access an NCFE Hairdressing and/or Caring for Children qualification

If students remain at Birchwood for the full KS4 programme they can achieve all of the above qualifications. If they don't complete the full KS4 programme then a personalized range of qualifications will be studied for including English and maths

Implementation of KS4 Curriculum

Birchwood designs their curriculum to offer support of the wider areas:

- The skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Creative approaches to motivate pupils to learn and develop in a range of subject areas.
- A comprehensive RSHE programme, including social and emotional wellbeing and resilience.
- Skills to enable pupils to develop a love of learning encouraging global citizenship.

With most students presenting differing barriers to their learning the SENCo will provide individual plans to inform staff of the learning ability of students and enable appropriate planning to take place. These objectives and information are then transferred to all staff through a regular teaching and learning CPD programme along with the information received from the home schools.

Birchwood has a set of classrooms that are not specialised; the curriculum has been designed to fit within these constraints.

To enhance the curriculum impact, modular and on-demand courses, along with NCFE technical qualifications, are taught to provide the best opportunity for student success and is not dependent on students completing a full 2 year KS4. TA small group intervention sessions will run to help students who have arrived mid-year along with access to a learning platform to provide additional support.

Impact of KS4 Curriculum

In order to meet the needs of every student within the school the point at which they join is pivotal to the curriculum decisions made for the student. This may result in them not being offered the full curriculum as entry dates for exams may have passed. Students that join late in KS4 may have individual arrangements supported by us to ensure they gain as many qualifications as possible.

Many students arrive with low self-esteem towards their education due to external factors and a lack of school attendance in their home school. Social, emotional and mental health interventions are offered to these students to support them to be successful academically.

For some students, tutoring or external providers may be sought to enable access to further subjects such as GCSEs in alternative languages.

Three data collection points a year provide student progress information. This is used to inform small
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group intervention planning and whole class scheme of work and lesson planning.

Whilst students attending Birchwood are not considered less academically able, it is recognised that their learning, prior to the point of them being referred, is likely to have been significantly disrupted. Therefore, Birchwood's curriculum focuses on the following measures:

- Percentage of students staying in education or employment after KS4 (destination)
- Progress from baseline assessments to current position.
- Progress, from KS2, across 6 qualifications.
- Progress, from KS2, towards their identified destination pathway (see table below)

Students attending at Birchwood are given high quality CEIAG to inform their destination route. The table below identifies the minimum required qualifications required for each route:

	Post 16 Destination Pathway	Minimum qualifications required for post 16 progression	Suggested 14 – 16 curriculum model
3A	Level 3 Academic	5 x 9-5 GCSEs or equivalent, including English and maths	GCSE provision enhanced by self-learning and independent study, supported by the sending school
3T*	Level 3 Technical/ Advanced Apprenticeship	5 x 9-5 GCSEs or equivalent, including English and maths	GCSE provision enhanced by self-learning and independent study, supported by the sending school. Work placement in technical field to support skills development.
2A	Level 2 Academic	4 x GCSE or equivalent 9 - 4, including either English or maths	GCSE provision, additional support for English and Maths.
2T	Level 2 Technical / Intermediate Apprenticeship	4 x GCSE or equivalent 9 - 4, including either 1 English or maths	GCSE provision, Level 2 technical qualifications. Work placement in technical field to support skills development.
1T	Level 1 Technical / Apprenticeship	4 x GCSE or equivalent grades 9-2, including either 1 English or maths	Combination of appropriate level 1 and 2 qualifications. Work placement in technical field to support skills development. Work ready training. Could include functional English and Maths
1E	Level 1 Entry /Transition	functional English and maths	Functional English and Maths. Some appropriate work ready/ level 1 qualifications. Work placement in technical field to support skills development.

When identifying the progression route, Birchwood will consider both prior attainment and access to education in the year subsequent to the referral. For example, a student may have the academic ability to complete A Levels, as identified by prior attainment in KS2, but due to personal circumstances is unlikely to have had enough access to education to stay on this pathway. In this instance we would consider progression routes which enable catch up rather than directing to level 1 provision.