



# Birchwood

## SEN & Disability Policy/SEN Information Report

Issued September 2021

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:-

Children and Families Act 2014

SEN Code of Practice 2015

SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Part 3 Duties on Schools – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

Schedule 1 regulation 51– Information to be included in the SEN information report

Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer

Equality Act 2010

Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012

SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies

Behaviour Policy, Equalities Policy, Child Protection Policy and the Complaints Policy.

This policy was developed with a variety of stakeholders including parents and carers, students and the staff body and will be reviewed annually.

### **Definition of SEN**

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. *SEN Code of Practice (2015, p 15)*

### **Definition of disability**

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is'...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' *SEN Code of Practice (2015, p16)*

## Birchwood – Context Statement

Birchwood is an alternative education that covers the Folkestone and Hythe District (South Kent) and it is located in Folkestone. Birchwood accepts pupils from Year 7 to Year 11. Placements are made via the home school and pupils are dual rolled. All pupils placed at Birchwood remain the responsibility of their home school and Birchwood works closely with the home school to ensure continuity of education.

In some rare cases the pupil is on a single roll and this placement has been made by the Local Authority.

Placement can be short term, ranging from 2-12 weeks or it can be a full time, permanent placement leading to GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.

The Management Committee is made up of the Head Teachers of the local schools.

### 1 The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at the school

At Birchwood we can make provision for every kind of frequently occurring special educational need without a statement of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plan, for instance dyslexia, dyspraxia, speech and language needs, autism, asperger's syndrome, learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. There are other kinds of special educational need which do not occur as frequently and with which the school is less familiar, but we can access training and advice so that these kinds of needs can be met.

The school also currently meets the needs of pupils with a statement of special educational need / Education, Health and Care plan. This is usually for a short period of time only while alternative appropriate provision is found. Decisions on the admission of pupils with a statement of special educational need / Education, Health and Care plan are made by the Local Authority and/or the home school for the student.

### 2 Information about the policy for identification and assessment of pupils with SEN

At Birchwood we monitor the progress of all pupils three times a year to review their academic progress. We also use a range of assessments with the pupils at various points including CATs, reading and spelling tests, SEBD, Boxall profiles and dyslexia screening.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if special educational need has not been identified, we put in place extra support to enable the pupil to catch up. Examples of extra support are literacy catch up, numeracy catch up, personalised catch up intervention for NCFE qualifications and social and emotional support via the pastoral system.

Some pupils may continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, we will use a range of assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty. At Birchwood we are experienced in using a variety of assessment tools. We also have access to external advisors from

the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service who are able to support the school during the assessment process.

The purpose of this more detailed assessment is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to enable the pupil to make better progress. These will be shared with parents, put into a SEN support plan and reviewed regularly, and refined / revised if necessary. At this point we will have identified that the pupil has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the pupil which is additional and different to what is normally available.

If the pupil is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the pupil as having a special educational need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources he or she will not be identified with special educational needs. When any change in identification of SEN is changed parents will be notified.

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used.

### 3 Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have EHC Plans, including

#### 3a How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils

Each review of the SEN support plan will be informed by the views of the pupil, parents and class/subject teachers and the assessment information from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The *SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17)* describes inadequate progress thus:

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

For pupils with or without a statement of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plan there will be an annual review of the provision made for the child, which will enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of the special provision. The collation of all annual review evaluations of effectiveness will be reported to the governing body.

#### 3b the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked three times per year. In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments of reading age, spelling age etc. The assessments we use at Birchwood include CATs, reading and spelling tests, SEBD, Boxall profiles and dyslexia screening.

Using these it will be possible to see if pupils are increasing their level of skills in key areas.

If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made the SEN support plan will be reviewed and adjusted.

*3c the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs*

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered *SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.37)*

In Birchwood the quality of teaching was judged to be good in our last Ofsted inspection (February 18) and the school is working closely with the Local Authority to work towards outstanding.

We follow the Mainstream Core Standards advice developed by Kent County Council to ensure that our teaching conforms to best practice.

In meeting the Mainstream Core Standards the school employs some additional teaching approaches, as advised by internal and external assessments e.g. one to one tutoring, mentoring, small group teaching, use of ICT software learning packages. These are delivered by additional staff employed through the school funding.

*3d how the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs*

At Birchwood we follow the advice in the Mainstream Core Standards on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in statements of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plans.

*3e additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs*

As part of our budget we allocate funding to be used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and different teaching for pupils requiring SEN support. The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6000 per year of resource for pupils with high needs, and above that amount the Home school will apply for Higher Needs Funding.

*3f how the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs*

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at Birchwood are available to pupils with special educational needs either with or without a statement of special educational needs / Education,

Health and Care Plan. Where it is necessary, the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity

*3g support that is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs*

At Birchwood we understand that an important feature of the school is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching for instance during PSHE and mentoring time and indirectly with every conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.

For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we also can provide the following: access to counsellor, mentor time with member of senior leadership team and pastoral staff, external referral to CAHMs, time-out space for pupil to use when upset or agitated, referral to Positive Choices, Addaction, Early Help, Police, and other relevant organisations who can support SEMH issues.

Pupils in the early stages of emotional and social development because of their special educational needs will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately. This will usually require additional and different resources, beyond that required by pupils who do not need this support.

*4 The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator*

The SENCO at Birchwood is Jane Waters, who is a qualified teacher and has been accredited by the National Award for SEN Co-ordination and also holds the following qualifications: MA, Inclusion.

Jane Waters is available on 03000 658450 or jane.waters@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk.

*5 Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured*

All teachers and teaching assistants participate in a continuous professional development programme of SEN awareness training.

Where a training need is identified beyond this we will find a provider who is able to deliver it. Training providers we can approach are, special schools, Educational Psychologist, Speech and language therapist, occupational therapists, physio therapist, dyslexia specialists, Specialist Teaching and Learning Service etc. The cost of training is covered by the school budget.

*6 Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured*

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the school budget, or seek it by loan. For highly specialist communication equipment the school will seek the advice of the KCC Communication and Assistive Technology team.

### 7 The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

All parents of pupils at Birchwood are invited to discuss the progress of their children on three occasions a year and receive a written report three times per year. In addition we are happy to arrange meetings outside these times. As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a special educational need. All such provision will be recorded, tracked and evaluated on a Provision Map which will be shared with parents three times per year.

If following this normal provision improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having special educational needs because special educational provision is being made and the parent will be invited to all planning and reviews of this provision. Parents will be actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review.

In addition to this, parents of pupils with a statement of SEN / Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

### 8 The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning. Parents are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

### 9 The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school

The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at Birchwood are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with Jane Waters (Headteacher and SENCo) to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the Management Committee.

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the Management Committee, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have a Statement of SEN where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

10 How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The governing body have engaged with the following bodies:-

- Free membership of LIFT for access to specialist teaching and learning service
- Access to local authority's service level agreement with Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy Services for pupil with requirement for direct therapy or advice
- Ability to make ad hoc requests for advice from Communication and Assistive Technology Team, etc
- Membership of professional networks for SENCO

11 The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and children and young people with SEND up to age 25 (Code of Practice 2015, 6.39)

Information Advice and Support Kent (IASK) provides a free and confidential, information, advice and support service, for parents of a disabled child or child with special educational needs and to children and young people up to age 25 who have a special educational need or disability. Trained staff can provide impartial legally based information and support on educational matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities, including health and social care. The aim is to empower parents, children and young people to fully participate in discussions and make informed choices and decisions. Also to feel confident to express their views and wishes about education and future aspirations.

They can be contacted on

**HELPLINE:** 03000 41 3000

**Office:** 03000 412412

**E-mail:-**[iask@kent.gov.uk](mailto:iask@kent.gov.uk)

[www.kent.gov.uk/iask](http://www.kent.gov.uk/iask)

12 The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At Birchwood we work closely with the educational settings used by the pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as seamless as possible. There are regular on-going meetings with the Home school for each pupil.

We also contribute information to a pupils' onward destination by providing information to the next setting. Where necessary the SENCo will attend the initial meeting for the next destination with the pupil and their family.

13 Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs> and parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCO for support to gain the information they require.

Approved by the Management Committee on: September 2021

Next review on September 2022