

The Birches Specialist Support School

SEN Information Report



Date Reviewed: June 2024

Reviewed by: R. O'Hara Headteacher

Signed:

On behalf of the Governors

Signed:

Head teacher

Date of next review: June 2025

SEN information report

1 The kinds of SEN that are provided for

The Birches is a maintained primary Special school, with provision for pupils with a wide range of complex needs, including:

- **Communication and interaction**, for example, autistic spectrum condition, speech and language difficulties associated with other learning difficulties
- **Cognition and learning**, for example, Severe or profound & multiple learning difficulties
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy etc.
- **Social & Emotional needs**, for example highly complex behaviours associated with their processing difficulties, attachment issues etc.

2 Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

All pupils attending The Birches will have an Education Health & care Plan (EHCP) that clearly identifies their needs. Occasionally we will have a pupil attending school who is on the process of obtaining an EHCP (i.e. an International New Arrival who would clearly meet the need for an EHCP).
Further information can be found in our Admissions Arrangements.

3 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

At The Birches close working relationships with Parents and Carers are seen as fundamental to the successful education of our pupils. These important stakeholders are fully included in the education of their children via a wide variety of means, for example:

- Initial visits in to school / school tours
- Pre-admission home visits (which may also include current educational settings)
- New Parents morning
- New parents Transition events - classroom visits / coffee mornings etc
- Daily posts on Class Dojo for communication of key information from class teams
- Termly reports in various formats (including annual review of Pupil Personal Plan – PPPs)
- Annual Review of EHCP
- Parental consultation on Behavior Support Plans (as required)

- Regular whole school posts on Class Dojo (from Leadership team , Parent Support Advisor, School Office etc.)
- Updates on the school website (inc. Class Specific “ We are Learning to..” Pages)
- Annual Parent/Carer Evenings
- Parent Carer Drop Ins / Support Group / Coffee Mornings
- Parent Workshops and Training Sessions
- Parent Governors
- Opportunities for face-to-face meetings with SLT / Class Staff
- General communication throughout the year through a range of formal and in-formal media

We will also seek to involve the pupils in all the above processes wherever possible, as Pupil Voice is highly valued at The Birches. All pupils are treated with utmost dignity and respect and for some pupils this will involve staff acting as advocates for their views. Whilst at the same time we value direct pupil voice i.e. via the elected representatives on our School Council and work closely with Speech and Language to ensure that we empower our pupils to make and express their own choices in a wide variety of means. Where ever possible we aim to include the views of pupils in our annual review of EHCPs, either with pupils attending or through their “All About Me” sections of the meeting.

4 Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

The class teacher will work with various parties to ensure we have a clear analysis of the pupil's needs and progress towards agreed outcomes. This will draw on:

- The teacher and class staff's assessment and experience of the pupil
- Their previous progress, attainment and behaviour (supported by transition discussions with previous teachers)
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and The Birches Progression Guidance (based on national progression data)
- The views and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external support services i.e. SaLT, OT, Physio, School Nurse etc.
- The school uses *Evidence for Learning* a IT package that will serve to track and document individual progress against learning goals (to aid both formative and summative assessment of progress).

Parents will receive termly reports on progress and an annual review will be undertaken against their EHCP.

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.

5.5 Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

At The Birches we recognise the support that all our pupils need with transition, hence all such moves are well planned and thought out. When pupils move from class to class there is always opportunity given for an effective hand-over between class teams.

In a similar way we try to prepare pupils for their ultimate move on to secondary school in the best way that we can. Once their next school has been formally identified by the Statutory Assessment Team the new school will be invited to the relevant Year 6 Reviews. A number of transition visits are then arranged and often staff from the new school will visit to see the pupils in class. We will share information with the new school or other setting the pupil is moving to.

5.6 Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High-quality teaching will always be our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN. Pupils will be taught in relatively small classes (compared to mainstream) staffed by a Teacher and a number of Teaching Assistants, dependent on the level of support needed. Where they will deliver a program of high-quality teaching which will be differentiated for individual pupil's needs.

At The Birches we have highly trained staff that are expert in assessing the individual needs of all pupils. Once their primary needs have been identified the correct learning environment will be chosen from one of our 3 cohorts – EYFS, Pre-formal or Semi-formal.

Dependent on the individual pupil's learning needs they will then be placed in a class in the appropriate learning pathway in the Multi-sensory, Structured or Guided Learning cohorts.

5.7 Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

The Birches curriculum and learning environments are set up to specifically match the learning styles of individual pupil cohorts. For example:

Multi-sensory Learners – will follow a sensory curriculum in rooms set up with a range of access equipment, physical adaptations, accessible changing facilities and access to specialist equipment designed to cater for their sensory needs.

Structured Learners – will follow a highly structured curriculum usually on Pre-formal or Semi-formal pathway. This will be delivered in rooms set up to provide a highly structured, low-stimulation environment where you would see total communication environments with evidence of visual reinforcement and organized routines (i.e. visual timetables and in-task schedules)

Guided Learners – will follow a more formal curriculum usually on EYFS or Semi-formal pathway. This will be delivered in rooms set up to provide a more vibrant teaching space with visual displays and working walls with more emphasis on developing pupil independence.

We would make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils have access to a curriculum appropriate to their needs.
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, AAC devices etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.

5.8 Additional support for learning

It is hard to quantify any additional support for learning as we see each of our pupils as an individual and try to create the most personalised learning environment that we can.

We have a large number of teaching assistants who are trained to deliver interventions to meet individual need.

Teaching assistants may support pupils on a 1:1 basis when they have been formally identified as needing a bespoke package via the Special School Partnership, or via their EHCP. Equally they may need 1:1 support temporarily in order to facilitate individual activities within classroom structure.

Teaching assistants will support pupils in small groups as part of general classroom practice.

The school works collaboratively in a multi-agency approach, with a range of health professionals in order to meet the needs of the pupils as assessed by the appropriate professionals. We are working closely with our health and social care colleagues to implement the all aspects of the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

5.9 Expertise and training of staff

All staff have clear job descriptions which detail the required qualifications for

each post in school. All staff follow an induction programme on joining the school, as well as weekly training meetings and 5 INSET days per year where both internal and external expertise is shared with staff. Through this staff will receive a mix of both formally accredited training i.e. Team Teach, First Aid etc. and training using in-house expertise i.e. Autism awareness, Communication strategies, Curriculum development etc. All staff have a commitment to ongoing CPD and school development.

5.10 Securing equipment and facilities

All children have a pre-admission meeting where equipment and facilities are discussed and planned for. There are regular reviews with external agencies i.e. OT or Physiotherapy where equipment needs are considered and discussed.

5.11 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for our pupils by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Comparing progress to those expected via The Birches Progression Guidance
- Reviewing the impact of specific interventions on an on-going basis in class teams
- Using pupil questionnaires and surveys
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans

5.12 Enabling all of our pupils to engage in all activities available

As a school we strive to ensure that there are no barriers to any individual pupil enjoying the same activities as other pupils in your school.

All of our extra-curricular activities and educational visits are available to all our pupils and classes.

All pupils are encouraged to take part in whole school assemblies, sports day, special themed workshops etc.

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

As part of our statutory duties with regards to equality, we have an Equality Impact Assessment team who formulate an Accessibility Plan and Equality Objectives. This team met regularly to set and monitor progress against these very important objectives. The School's Accessibility Plan is regularly updated and can be found on the school's website.

Our Accessibility Plan covers:

- Improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services you provide
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils

5.13 Support for improving emotional and social development

We provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development by ensuring that all pupils have a voice (which is advocated for them when required). We foster a school community that values diversity and inclusion, one in which we have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

5.14 Working with other agencies

We have a wide range of staff working together within the school, in very much a multi-agency approach to support the pupils and their families. Some are employed directly by the school, others as below.

Teaching staff are employed directly by the school. This includes Senior Leadership Team, teachers & teaching assistants.

Site staff including admin, cleaners, kitchen and support staff are employed directly by the school.

Other professionals work for a range of agencies – some are based within the school, others work in school as necessary.

School Nurses, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, CAMHS Learning Disabilities Team, Educational Psychologists and Physiotherapists are employees of Central Manchester Foundation Health Trust. All these professionals work within school training staff, advising staff, working with children and young people. The school takes out additional SLAs for additonal SaLT & OT.

The Sensory Service staff – advisory teachers - are employed by Sensory Service not the school. They provide staff training and advice on individual children's needs where necessary.

Transport to school is organised directly by parents with the Local Authority through the Home-School Transport Department and not the school. Transport staff are employed by their individual transport companies commissioned by Home-School Transport.

There are social workers for children/young people with disabilities who are Local Authority Employees and are based within the Children's Specialist Services.

For any queries relating to these external professionals, it is always best to contact the professionals directly. This will ensure that messages / queries / concerns are dealt with in the most efficient way.

5.15 Complaints about SEN provision

When pupils or parents have individual concerns, they should be raised initially with Class Teams, who may then seek further clarification from Cohort Leads.

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the relevant members of staff and then the Headteacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's Complaints Policy. Complaints can be escalated to the Governing Body if they feel that their complaint has not been properly dealt with by the Headteacher.

5.16 The local authority local offer

There is further detail on our website on our own school offer for SEND and this links to the Local Offer on the MCC pages www.manchester.gov.uk