

SEND INFORMATION REPORT

What types of SEND does the school provide for?

Birkenhead Park School is an inclusive mainstream secondary school with approximately **730** students on roll. Our objective is to meet the diverse SEND needs of our students and their families through a whole-school strategy which combines high quality teaching and learning, regular assessments of progress through responsive teaching, pastoral care, SEND support and multi-agency interventions.

The four broad areas of need and support identified within the SEN Code of Practice 2015 (p97) are **'Communication and Interaction', 'Cognition and Learning', Social, Mental and Emotional Health'** and **'Sensory and/or Physical Needs'** and the school works within these definitions. These areas exemplify the range of need for which the school is able to identify and provide support within the school's provision.

What are our processes for the identification and assessment of SEND?

The school recognises the definition of SEND as stated in the SEN Code of Practice 2015 (p94):

'A student has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age'.

The identification of SEND is built into the whole school approach to monitoring the progress and development of all students. Low attainment and relatively slow progress may not be indicators of SEND but related to other areas of vulnerability such as FSM, EAL, attendance or a LAC status.

The SEN Code of Practice 2015 (p79) states that the benefits of the early identification of SEND are widely recognised and, when combined with effective provision, lead to improved outcomes for young people. The school uses a variety of whole school screening on entry to accurately assess students' skills and attainments. This includes CATs tests and GL assessment NGRT, which are reviewed alongside KS2 SATs scores and primary school information. The SEND team meet with the primary SENCOs to share information on transition.

Subject teachers assess student progress regularly using responsive teaching strategies in lessons to collect data, identify misconceptions and scaffold learning. Responsive teaching is used to target support to those students who have not learnt the key knowledge or skills within a lesson. This ongoing assessment allows teachers to be knowledgeable and well informed about supporting student needs, and plan to remove barriers to student progress. Any concerns about progress are addressed by targeted teaching focussed on the areas of

weakness by the subject teacher. Where progress continues to be less than expected, this may trigger a referral to the SENCO for further assessment.

The purpose of identification is to inform the action that the school needs to take, rather than to categorise the student. For some young people, SEND difficulties may only become evident as they develop and the school aims to be alert to emerging difficulties. School staff will always listen and respond when parents express their concerns around their child's development or learning needs. Likewise, concerns expressed by students themselves are noted and acted upon.

How are transition arrangements between school phases supported?

For transition between KS2-3, students with SEND are identified through the whole school induction process which starts in the summer term. Any student who may be vulnerable around transition is then offered an enhanced transition which may involve additional visits to the school and individual meetings with key staff. The SEND team attend transition meetings and meet with the primary SENCOs to exchange information.

Annual reviews for Years 9 and Year 11 are focused on transition planning and are integrated into an appropriate time in the school calendar.

Year 11 students are supported with their post-16 planning and transition to further education, apprenticeships or training providers. Careers Connect Advisors offer enhanced information and guidance to students with SEND and support is available at lunchtimes to complete application forms. There is an emphasis on high aspirations and preparing for adult life. Visits to post-16 placements to meet key staff are available and key information is shared with SEND teams.

How are parents/carers and students involved in planning support?

The school recognises that parental engagement is essential in achieving good outcomes for young people with SEND. Parents are a key resource for planning support and the SEND team build on parental knowledge of their child and also focus on wider outcomes and planning for adult life.

Students and their parents are encouraged to participate in decision making around their educational and wider needs. Parents are informed annually if their child is placed at SEND Support and an individual plan is shared. Parents and students are given the opportunity to discuss the individual plan with the SENCO through regular termly reviews.

Both students and parents contribute to annual reviews for EHC plans and agree on their key priorities.

How are adaptations made to the curriculum and learning environment for students with SEND?

The rationale for SEND provision at the school follows the principles outlined in the SEN Code of Practice 2015 (p25 para 1.24) which states that, **'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching'**.

SEND provision is structured around the 'assess, plan, do, review' model and graduated approach suggested in the SEN Code of Practice (p89-90) and this process is fully integrated into the whole school teaching and learning

policy. All faculties follow highly structured Learning Programmes which focus explicitly on the required skills, knowledge and understanding that students need to acquire in order to make progress.

All students, including those with SEND, have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum which follows the principles of the National Curriculum. Teaching staff use SEND plans for each student to support them in adapting and weaving specific approaches into everyday whole class teaching to meet individual needs and adapt the curriculum. This is delivered within the 'BPS Way'. Teachers are provided with detailed information to ensure that they are knowledgeable and well informed about supporting individual needs, i.e. they can identify barriers to learning, identify levels of prior knowledge, identify strengths and abilities, match need to appropriate support and effectively monitor and review progress for students with SEND. Teachers are expected to take responsibility for and have high expectations for SEND students in terms of progress, achievements and outcomes.

Students who have an EHCP or top-up funding may have allocated TA support in lessons. This support follows the principle of 'least help first' as outlined in the EEF 'Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants' Guidance in order to promote independence and self-scaffolding.

Foundational knowledge, reading, vocabulary and oracy are a key focus of the curriculum as core skills and a route to unlocking academic potential. Reading is included in all subject areas and teachers are trained to use a variety of approaches such as teacher-led modeling during whole class teaching, guided student reading, paired reading, repeated reading and choral reading. In addition, the curriculum is planned to target keywords within each subject area to ensure that students expand their vocabulary and become 'word rich'. There is an emphasis on disciplinary literacy so that students can speak like a mathematician, a scientist, or a historian. An evidence-based intervention programme focuses on key barriers to learning such as phonics, handwriting, spelling and emotional regulation skills. A small group of year 7 students follow an adapted curriculum model called 'Curriculum 8', which is delivered within a small teaching group with a high adult to student ratio.

What is our approach to teaching students with SEND?

The school aims to ensure that students with SEND access high quality teaching which removes barriers to learning and participation and promotes high standards for all. Teaching staff use a considered repertoire of teaching strategies that can be used flexibly in response to individual needs, and that have relatively strong evidence for their effectiveness in supporting students with SEND. Rather than a focus on differentiation, teachers are encouraged to prioritise adaptive teaching so that they can respond to students who are struggling based on their observations and evidence gathering during each lesson. The house style of teaching is called the BPS Way.

This approach to teaching is supported by the recent EEF research, 'It is tempting to talk about the challenge of SEND as a specific and distinct issue. Yet, far from creating new programmes, the evidence tells us that teachers should instead prioritise familiar but powerful strategies, like scaffolding and explicit instruction, to support their students with SEND', Professor Becky Francis. Teachers are encouraged to be ambitious for all students, and 'teach to the top and support at the bottom' to allow all students to do something that they find really hard (David Didau). Scaffolding should allow someone to do something beyond their current capabilities, and the scaffolding should be removed as quickly as possible to avoid reliance on it.

All teachers access a detailed seating plan for each class which highlights students with SEND and literacy needs. This is used as a planning tool to enable them to target their support and ensure that students with SEND are fully included in their lesson. Teachers will also review the individual plan for each student with SEND to assist them in their planning of curriculum adaptations. Planning for SEND is included in the whole school training programme around teaching and learning and pedagogy within the 'BPS Way'.

How do we assess and review the progress of students with SEND?

The progress of all students is continually monitored by subject staff so that they can adapt their teaching and planning. Heads of Subject analyse progress data and monitor the performance of individuals and groups, reporting back to SLT on their findings. This quality assurance process leads to changes and adaptations to the curriculum, and opportunities to revisit key teaching areas in Super Teaching Week. This is scheduled at the end of each Learning Programme as an opportunity for review and consolidation.

Assessment data is shared with parents and carers on a termly agreed basis so that they know the progress that their child is making and their expected outcomes. All assessments generate written teacher feedback which students are expected to respond to so that they know the 'next steps' in their learning. Annual parents' evenings allow subject teachers and parents to have detailed discussions about student progress. For students with an EHCP, an annual review is held each academic year as a formal review. There is a process in place to review individual SEND plans on a termly basis.

Do staff have the expertise and training to support students with SEND?

The SEND Strategic Lead at Birkenhead Park School is Ms Weekes and she can be contacted by email at wek@birkenheadparkschool.com or by telephone on 0151-652-1574. Ms Weekes is a qualified teacher with a PGCE in Geography and SEN and she has attained the National SENCO Award and the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). She is a Deputy Headteacher and part of the Senior Leadership Team. The SENCO is Mrs Canham and she can be contacted by email at mcm@birkenheadparkschool.com or by telephone on 0151-652-1574. She is also a qualified teacher and has the National SENCO Award.

The SEND team supports whole school training on SEND and incorporates specialist expertise where necessary.

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of the provision made for students with SEND?

SEND provision is regularly and systematically monitored and evaluated as part of the whole school process. It is a key focus of the strategic objectives of the school, and the implementation is monitored by SLT and the LGB. Other methods of monitoring include learning walks, book reviews, data analysis, curriculum reviews and student voice.

How do we ensure that there is engagement between students with SEND and those who do not have SEND?

Students with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life across the curriculum, extracurricular activities and school trips. Around a third of the school have an identified SEND so the school structure is organised to be fully inclusive with no barriers between groups of students.

What support does the school provide for improving emotional and social development?

The school considers the need of the whole child and may focus assessments on areas other than academic attainment, for example, social needs or behavioural issues. The SEN Code of Practice 2015 (p 96) states that 'persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a young person has SEN'. The school staged behaviour systems and processes are fully integrated into SEND provision and concerns will be referred to the SENCO by pastoral staff. This may result in additional assessments to determine any causal factors, such as undiagnosed learning difficulties or mental health needs. In the case of family or environmental circumstances which may be contributing to the presenting behaviours a referral may be made to Early Help or Social Care to access additional services.

Students are supported to develop their emotional and social skills through an emphasis on the school values of Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness. Relationships and wellbeing are explored in the PSHE curriculum and through the wider school offer of lunchtime and extracurricular clubs. Students with SEND will often be supported to access these activities as a targeted strategy to develop their social and personal skills, self-esteem or enjoyment of school life. Students who are anxious or have sensory issues have access to a quiet space provision in the library at break and lunchtime. The school works with a range of agencies and organisations that support social, emotional and mental health, including our PMHT link worker at CAMHs, HSiS, the school counsellor through Brook, kooth.com, Kilgarth Outreach and Open Door. Each year group is led by a non-teaching Year Leader who knows the students well and is available throughout the school day to offer pastoral support.

Families may also be signposted to local voluntary organisations and support groups which are highlighted through the Local Offer website. When a family identifies that they need more help around a particular issue, then an Early Help or Social Care referral may be made to trigger multi-agency support and access additional services.

Staff are aware that students with SEND may be vulnerable to bullying or exploitation by their peers, and this is referenced in the school anti-bullying policy.

How does the school access specialist support services?

For students with higher levels of need, or those who are not making progress with school resources and interventions, the SENCO will consider referrals to external agencies for specialist assessments. This is agreed in partnership with parents and they are part of the decision-making process. Referrals may be made to the Speech and Language service, CAMHs, Community Paediatricians, Occupational Therapy, Sensory Service, Educational Psychologist, Neurodivergence in Education Support, Team, or SENATT. The outcomes of any specialist assessments are incorporated into the individual support plan for the student and are shared with staff.

Where can parents access the Local Offer?

The Wirral Local Offer is available at www.wirrallocaloffer.org. This website 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 as well as information about local support services.

Parents can also access support from the Wirral SEND Partnership which is an impartial, independent and confidential service which gives free information, advice and support about matters related to SEND for parents and carers of children aged 0-25. The service gives practical, factual and impartial support to enable parents and carers to participate fully in decisions around education, health and social care. Their website is www.wired.me.uk.

Is there a clear process to handle complaints?

The school has a complaints policy which is available on the website. In the first instance, parents should contact Mrs Canham, SENCO to resolve their concerns at an informal level. We would encourage parents and carers to form an active partnership with us so that any concerns can be dealt with swiftly before they escalate.

Ms Weekes, Deputy Headteacher

Ms Canham, SENCO

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