

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

WELCOME TO BIRCH COPSE'S FIRST TERMLY LETTER FOCUSED ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES.



Introducing the team

Miss Katie Ellis



**Special Educational Needs and
Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo)**

My role is to make sure that children with additional needs get the right support to help them learn, feel included, and reach their full potential.

I work closely with teachers, support staff, families, and outside professionals to identify any extra help a child might need. I help put support plans in place, review them regularly, and suggest strategies and resources which can be used in the classroom.

I'm also here to support you as parents and carers. If you have concerns or questions about your child's learning or development, I'm always happy to talk and work with you to find the best way forward together.

Mrs Tracey McCrossan



**Family Liaison Officer and Emotional
Support Assistant**

In her position as Family Liaison Officer and Emotional Support Assistant, Mrs McCrossan supports both children and their families, helping to strengthen the connection between home and school.

She offers a listening ear, practical advice, and emotional support when it's needed. Mrs McCrossan works with children who may be experiencing worries, anxiety, or challenges with friendships or emotions, helping them to build confidence, resilience, and positive relationships. She also supports parents and carers with any concerns they may have—whether it's about their child's wellbeing, behaviour, or challenges at home. Her aim is to ensure every family feels supported and every child feels safe, happy, and ready to thrive at school.

Mrs Sue Rose



SEN Teaching Assistant

Mrs Rose works as a SEN Teaching Assistant, providing targeted support to children with additional needs. She works closely with pupils to help them feel confident, included, and ready to learn.

Mrs Rose leads small group sessions focused on developing social skills, improving listening and attention, and building positive relationships. She also offers emotional support, helping children understand and manage their feelings, and works with them on practical strategies they can use both in and out of the classroom. In addition, she carries out speech and language activities. Her goal is to ensure every child she supports feels valued, understood, and able to reach their full potential.

Learning Support Assistants

We are very fortunate to have a team of knowledgeable and experienced Learning Support Assistants who support children with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Thinking about possible ADHD or Autism?

If you believe your child may be showing signs of possible ADHD or Autism, here is what you could do next.

1. Visit <https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/adhd-and-autism-neurodiversity/> for information on what ADHD or Autism may look like, strategies to support your child and details of support available. Trial the strategies suggested at home and see what works for your child.

2. Speak to your child's teacher. Class teachers can advise how your child presents at school and offer ideas to help address any difficulties.

3. If, after support, you are still worried, please get in contact. Together, we can decide if it is the right time to refer your child for an autism or ADHD assessment. The referral process involves you and school working together to provide information about your child.

Please Note: The current NHS waiting list is in excess of 2 years for assessment. Children can be assessed for Autism at any age but can only be referred for an ADHD assessment after they have turned 6 years old.

Already on the waiting list for an ADHD or Autism Assessment?

If your child is waiting for an ADHD or Autism assessment through the NHS, you may be feeling concerned about long waiting times. That's where something called the NHS Right to Choose can help.

The NHS Right to Choose gives you, as a parent or carer, the legal right to choose which provider carries out your child's assessment—as long as the provider is approved by NHS England and offers the service in England. This includes private organisations that work with the NHS at no cost to you.

Using Right to Choose can often lead to a quicker assessment for your child, as some alternative NHS-approved providers may have shorter waiting lists than your local NHS service.

If you're interested, you can:

- Speak to your GP and let them know you'd like to use your Right to Choose for an ADHD or Autism assessment.
- Do a little research or ask for help finding NHS-approved providers who accept Right to Choose referrals - <https://adhduk.co.uk/right-to-choose/> is a helpful website.
- Ask your GP to refer your child to the provider you choose.

If you'd like support with this or help finding suitable providers, please feel free to get in touch—I'm happy to help guide you through the process.

Please Note: Choosing a provider through Right to Choose does not mean going private—you will not be charged for the assessment.

Upcoming Events in Our Area – Please click on the links for more details and eligibility criteria

[Parent Carer Well-Being Conference](#)

Monday 9th June, 9.30 am – 2.30 pm

Join other parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs for a day of information and a bit of pampering! Select Car Leasing Stadium, Reading, RG2 OFL

[Dads and Male Carers Support Group June 2025](#)

Starts on Tuesday 10th June

A monthly support group, held in Reading, from 7.30–9.30pm. Available to Berkshire and non-Berkshire dads and male carers.

[Mosaic Minds Group Juniors \(June–July 2025\)](#)

Starts on Wednesday 11th June

A closed fortnightly social group for Berkshire autistic/ADHD children, age 8–12, who attend a mainstream school, held in Reading from 4.30–6.30pm.

[Ethnically Diverse Communities Coffee Morning June 2025](#)

Starts on Wednesday 11th June

A coffee morning to support families of children with additional needs from diverse ethnic communities. Held in Reading from 10am–12pm. This month's topic is: 'Understanding behaviour that challenges'.

[Community Parent/Carer Support Group: Reading](#)

Starts on Friday 13th June

A face-to-face monthly support group held at South Reading Community Hub, 9.15–11.15am.

[ADHD Course: Berkshire West](#)

Starts on Thursday 19th June

Three linked sessions for parents/carers registered with a Berkshire West NHS area GP surgery. Held online via Zoom from 7–9pm.

[Sleep – Autism and ADHD: Berkshire West](#)

Starts on Tuesday 24th June

A workshop for parents/carers registered with a Berkshire West NHS area GP surgery. Held online via Zoom from 7–9pm.

[Wellbeing Hub Parent-Carer Meet Up \(June 2025\): Neurodivergent Parenting](#)

Thu, 26 Jun 2025 19:00 – 21:00

Hosted by the Centre for Autism Wellbeing Hub at the University of Reading in partnership with Reading-based charity Parenting Special Children, these relaxed monthly meet-ups offer parents and carers of autistic children a welcoming space to connect, share experiences, and gain valuable insights.

[Online workshop: Teenagers & Social Situations](#)

Thursday, 26th June, 2025, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

This workshop focuses on the social situations autistic teenagers face at school, at home and online. It discusses how to support them to develop an understanding of other people, how to find and make friends, and the part that social media plays in their lives. It is provided by the Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service for the parents and carers of autistic children and young people aged 11 to 18.

[Online Workshop: Supporting Behaviour Part 1](#)

Wednesday, 9th July 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

This free autism advice workshop looks at distressed behaviour and meltdowns in children with autism, how to respond, and how to help children understand and communicate their feelings.

Eligibility: Parents/carers registered with a GP surgery in the Berkshire West NHS area (Reading, Wokingham, West Berkshire).

Katie Ellis, SENCo

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