



SEN Information Report 2026–27

Birch Copse Primary School

Birch Copse is a two-form entry primary school in Tilehurst with 426 children on roll. Around half of the pupils live within the school's immediate catchment area. The majority of pupils are White British, with smaller groups from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The school community also includes pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL).

As at September 2026, 17.1% of pupils at Birch Copse are identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This includes 14.5% receiving SEND support and 2.6% with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). This is slightly below the latest published national average for primary schools, although the proportion of pupils identified with SEND at Birch Copse has increased over recent years.

The largest primary area of need within the school is cognition and learning, followed by communication and interaction. The school also supports a significant number of pupils whose primary need relates to social, emotional and mental health, while a smaller number have physical and/or sensory needs. Some pupils have needs across more than one area.

The school supports pupils with a wide range of needs, including autism, attention and regulation needs, speech, language and communication needs, hearing impairment, physical needs and specific or general learning difficulties.

The school works closely with parents and carers and values their knowledge of their children. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to decisions about their child's needs, outcomes and provision.

Our mission statement is: "Together we plant the seeds for success."

1. Identification of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

How does the school identify children/young people with special educational needs and disabilities?

Birch Copse uses a continuous, structured and holistic approach to identifying SEND as early, accurately and sensitively as possible. Class teachers monitor pupils' attainment, progress, engagement, communication, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and sensory presentation. This information is considered alongside the pupil's previous progress, age-related expectations and any relevant information from parents, carers, previous settings or external professionals.

High-quality, adaptive teaching is the first response when a pupil is experiencing difficulties. The class teacher reviews the teaching, strategies, adaptations and reasonable adjustments already in place and considers whether these are being implemented consistently. Further evidence may be gathered through observation, assessment, work scrutiny, pupil voice and discussions with parents, the SENCo and other staff.

Where concerns continue, the school follows the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review process. This may include a period of monitoring, a Strategy Support Plan (SSP), targeted assessment, time-limited intervention or advice from an external professional. A pupil is identified as having SEND when they require educational provision that is additional to or different from the provision ordinarily available to pupils of the same age.

Identification is based on the pupil's needs rather than on a diagnosis alone. The school recognises that pupils may have needs across more than one of the four broad areas of SEND and takes care to ensure that needs are not overlooked or misattributed.

What should I do if I think my child has SEND?

Your child's class teacher is normally the first point of contact. You can contact the teacher through Class Dojo, by phoning the school office or by sending a note. The teacher will listen to your concerns, discuss what has been observed in school and review the teaching, support, strategies and reasonable adjustments already in place.

The teacher may consult the SENCo and agree a period of assessment, monitoring or additional support through the Assess–Plan–Do–Review process. An SSP may be introduced where a pupil needs consistent strategies, approaches or environmental adjustments. Pupils with an SSP may be on the SEND register when they require provision that is additional to or different from that ordinarily available. An SSP may also be used while emerging needs are being monitored.

Where a pupil requires specific, measurable outcomes, targeted interventions or coordinated support from several adults or professionals, a Support and Achievement Plan (SAP) may be more appropriate.

A meeting with the SENCo can be arranged when concerns are ongoing or more complex. Parents' and carers' knowledge of their child is valued and they are involved from the earliest stage of identification and planning. The child's views will also be gathered in a way that is appropriate and accessible to them.

2. Support for Children with Special Educational Needs

If my child is identified as having SEND, who will oversee and plan their education programme?

The class teacher remains responsible and accountable for the progress, development and day-to-day teaching of every pupil in their class, including pupils who receive support from a Teaching Assistant (TA) or Learning Support Assistant (LSA). The class teacher leads the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle and ensures that agreed strategies, adaptations and interventions are used consistently.

Depending on the pupil's needs, support may be recorded through a Strategy Support Plan (SSP), a Support and Achievement Plan (SAP) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). A pupil may be on the SEND register and have an SSP where they need consistent strategies, adult approaches or environmental adjustments rather than specific measurable outcomes. A SAP is used where a pupil requires targeted, measurable outcomes, structured interventions or coordinated support from several adults or professionals.

The class teacher plans and reviews provision with the SENCo, relevant support staff, parents and the pupil. TAs and LSAs deliver agreed interventions and classroom support, promote independence and provide feedback to the class teacher and SENCo. Where external professionals are involved, their recommendations are incorporated into the pupil's plan and everyday classroom practice.

The SENCo oversees SEND provision across the school, supports teachers with assessment and planning, maintains the SEND register and monitors the impact of provision. For pupils with an EHCP, the school implements the provision specified in Section F of the plan. Progress towards the outcomes in Section E is monitored throughout the year and formally considered through the statutory annual review process.

How will I be informed/consulted about the ways in which my child is being supported?

Parents and carers are involved in identifying their child's needs and planning, reviewing and evaluating the support they receive. The way this is recorded and reviewed will depend on the level and type of support required.

An SSP records the pupil's strengths and interests, the difficulties or patterns that have been observed and the strategies, adult approaches and environmental adjustments that staff should use consistently. An SSP is usually reviewed after approximately three months and again at six months. It may continue, be stepped down or lead to a SAP if targeted outcomes become necessary.

A SAP is used where a pupil requires specific, measurable outcomes and provision that is additional to or different from that ordinarily available. It records the pupil's strengths, interests and views; their identified needs; agreed outcomes; interventions, strategies and adaptations; the adults responsible for delivering the provision; and the timescale for review. SAPs are developed and reviewed with parents and carers three times each year.

Parents are invited to contribute their knowledge, observations and priorities to these reviews. The pupil's views are also gathered in an age-appropriate and accessible way. This may be through conversation, observation, pictures, symbols, choices, rating scales, photographs, work samples or an 'All About Me' or 'This Is Me' profile.

Parents also receive information through parent-teacher discussions and may request a meeting with the class teacher or SENCo if they have concerns or feel that their child's needs have changed. Parents of pupils with EHCPs are fully involved in the annual review process and in discussions about any proposed assessment, specialist involvement or change to provision.

How will the school balance my child's need for support with developing their independence?

Support is planned to provide the least intrusive level of help that enables the pupil to participate, learn and experience success. Adults may model, prompt, scaffold, use visual supports, simplify or break down instructions, provide practical resources or support a pupil to access a safe or quieter space. Adults are expected to reduce or step back from their support when the pupil is able to continue independently.

Support may be provided individually, with a partner, in a small group or through adaptations within the classroom, depending on the pupil's needs and the activity. Where a pupil receives individual adult support, this is carefully planned so that the pupil can remain included with peers, develop relationships and avoid becoming unnecessarily dependent on one adult.

Independence outcomes may include: communicating needs, making choices, beginning and completing tasks, selecting and organising resources, using assistive technology, moving safely around school, managing personal care, participating in transitions and independently using emotional-regulation or sensory strategies.

The level of support is reviewed through the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle and adjusted as the pupil's skills, confidence and independence develop. For pupils with EHCPs, the school also works towards the long-term outcomes in the plan, with a focus on independence, wellbeing, belonging and participation in school life.

How will the school match/differentiate the curriculum for my child's needs?

High-quality, adaptive teaching is the first response to a pupil's needs. Teachers use assessment information to identify barriers to learning and adapt their teaching so that pupils can work towards the same broad curriculum goals as their peers wherever possible.

Adaptations may include: explicit modelling, scaffolded or chunked tasks, simplified instructions, pre-teaching, additional processing time, visual supports, practical equipment, carefully selected texts, repetition and overlearning. Pupils may also use alternative recording methods, assistive technology, adapted resources, movement or sensory breaks and targeted adult support.

Some pupils may need personalised learning objectives, teaching at an earlier stage of the curriculum or an individual programme linked to their developmental needs. Adaptations and provision are recorded through the year group provision map and, where appropriate, the pupil's SSP, SAP or EHCP. Teachers incorporate recommendations from the SENCo and relevant external professionals into classroom planning and practice.

Provision is reviewed through the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle. Teachers consider the pupil's progress, engagement, independence and wellbeing when deciding whether adaptations should continue, be changed or be reduced.

What teaching strategies does the school use for children with learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech and language difficulties?

Teaching strategies are matched to each pupil's individual strengths and needs rather than being selected solely because of a diagnosis. As pupils may have needs across more than one area, staff consider the whole child when planning support.

Strategies may include:

- visual timetables, now-and-next boards, task planners, photographs, symbols and social stories;
- predictable routines and preparation for changes and transitions;
- simplified and chunked language, reduced language load and additional processing time;
- pre-teaching, repetition and overlearning of vocabulary and key concepts;
- structured phonics, precision teaching and targeted reading, writing or mathematics support;
- concrete, practical and visual resources, including Numicon and other mathematics equipment;
- adapted seating, classroom positioning, lighting, print size and presentation of resources;
- reduced-distraction workspaces and access to quieter or agreed safe spaces;
- sensory resources, Sensory Circuits, movement breaks, ear defenders and regulation tools;
- communication supports, including approaches recommended by Speech and Language Therapy;
- typing, assistive technology and alternative ways of recording learning;
- explicit teaching of communication, social interaction, emotional regulation and independence.

Staff implement relevant programmes and recommendations from professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists, the Specialist Teacher of the Deaf, visual-impairment services and autism advisory services. Recommended strategies are incorporated into SSPs, SAPs, EHCP provision and everyday classroom practice and are reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate.

What additional staffing does the school provide from its own budget for children with SEND?

The school deploys TAs and LSAs across classes and provides additional individual, paired and small-group support according to pupils' assessed needs. Birch Copse also has an Emotional Support

Assistant, who provides targeted emotional-literacy, wellbeing, anxiety and regulation support and a SEND LSA, who supports the delivery and coordination of interventions for children with SEND.

Support may include: literacy and numeracy interventions, speech and language programmes, occupational-therapy programmes, social-communication work, emotional support, Sensory Circuits and work to develop regulation and independence.

Some pupils with more complex needs receive higher levels of individual support during learning, transitions, breaktimes, lunchtimes, personal care or when accessing an identified safe or sensory space. Adult support is planned carefully to promote participation and independence and to avoid unnecessary reliance on a particular adult.

Staffing arrangements are reviewed in response to pupils' needs, progress, independence, safety and the provision specified in SSPs, SAPs and EHCPs. The school uses its delegated SEND budget and external funding. Additional adult support does not remove the class teacher's responsibility for the pupil's teaching, progress and inclusion.

What specific intervention programmes does the school offer to children with SEND and are these delivered on a one to one basis or in small groups?

Interventions are selected in response to assessed need and are provided alongside, rather than instead of, high-quality adaptive classroom teaching. They are evidence-informed, delivered by staff who have received appropriate training or guidance and monitored for both the quality of delivery and their impact on the pupil.

Depending on the intervention and the pupil's needs, provision may be delivered individually, with a partner, in a small group or through supported independent practice. Some strategies and programmes are also embedded throughout the school day so that pupils can apply their skills within the classroom and other areas of school life.

Current interventions include: targeted literacy and numeracy programmes, speech and language programmes, occupational-therapy and fine-motor programmes, social-communication work, emotional-literacy and therapeutic support and sensory and regulation programmes. Pupils may also use assistive technology or alternative recording methods where appropriate.

The precise intervention, frequency, duration, responsible adult and method of delivery are recorded on the pupil's SAP or EHCP, individual programme or the relevant provision map. Some interventions used are listed below.

Intervention	Delivery
Individual reading	1:1
ABC to Read	1:1
Reading fluency and comprehension	Small group
Toe by Toe (Literacy)	1:1
Precision Teaching (reading, spelling, number facts)	1:1 or very small group
Structured phonics and targeted reading	1:1 or small group
Targeted writing, handwriting and maths	1:1 or small group
Individualised spelling programmes	1:1 or small group

Intervention	Delivery
Scissor skills and letter-formation programmes	1:1 or small group
Colourful Semantics	1:1
Numbots or Times Table Rockstars	Supported individual practice
Lexia	Supported individual practice
Speech and Language Therapy programmes	1:1 or small group, as directed
Touch typing and alternative recording	Supported individual practice
Emotional literacy support	1:1 or small group
Attention and listening	Small group
Attention Autism	Small group
Social skills and communication groups	Small group
Circle of Friends	Individual pupil with peer group
LEGO Therapy	Small group
Sensory circuits / planned movement programmes	Individual or small group
Emotional regulation and anxiety support	1:1 or small group
Life skills and independence	Usually 1:1

What resources and equipment does the school provide for children with SEND?

Resources and equipment are selected according to each pupil's assessed needs and normal way of working. These may include: concrete and visual mathematics equipment such as Numicon; visual timetables, now-and-next boards and task planners; social stories; photographs, symbols and communication supports; adapted reading and writing materials; pencil grips, sloping boards and adapted scissors; timers, calm boxes and organisational aids; and laptops, touch-typing programmes or alternative recording methods.

Pupils may also have access to sensory and regulation resources, including wobble cushions, fidget resources, weighted lap cushions, ear defenders and movement equipment. The school has a dedicated Sensory Room, as well as other identified quieter or safe spaces that pupils may use as part of an agreed regulation plan.

Assistive technology and specialist equipment may be purchased, borrowed or provided following assessment or advice from relevant external professionals. This may include: equipment recommended by Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, the Specialist Teacher of the Deaf or visual-impairment services. Staff receive guidance or training so that equipment is used safely, appropriately and consistently.

What special arrangements can be made for my child when taking examinations?

Access arrangements for statutory assessments are based on the pupil's current needs and their normal way of working in the classroom. They must also comply with the statutory guidance and eligibility requirements for each particular assessment.

Where permitted and appropriate, arrangements may include: additional time, supervised rest or movement breaks, a reader, a scribe, a prompt, adapted or modified papers, the use of appropriate technology, or completing the assessment in a smaller or quieter room. The precise arrangements available will depend on the purpose and rules of the assessment; for example, some forms of support are not permitted when they would affect the skill being assessed.

The school identifies and considers possible access arrangements in advance, keeps the necessary evidence and records and discusses significant arrangements with pupils and parents where appropriate. Any arrangements are intended to remove barriers and allow the pupil to demonstrate what they know and can do without changing what the assessment is designed to measure.

3. My Child's Progress

How will the school monitor my child's progress and how will I be involved in this?

Class teachers continually monitor pupils' progress through day-to-day assessment, observations, work completed in class, curriculum assessments, discussions with the pupil and feedback from staff delivering additional support. Progress is considered broadly and may include attainment, engagement, communication, interaction, independence, emotional regulation, wellbeing and participation in school life.

The class teacher leads the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle for pupils in their class. This involves identifying the pupil's needs, agreeing the support to be provided, implementing that support consistently and evaluating its impact. The school considers both whether an intervention has been delivered as intended and whether it has helped the pupil make progress and use their skills within the classroom and daily life.

SSPs are normally reviewed after approximately three months and again at six months. The review considers whether the strategies and adjustments remain appropriate and whether the SSP should continue, be stepped down or lead to a SAP. SAPs are reviewed with parents and carers three times each year. Progress for pupils with EHCPs is monitored throughout the year and formally considered at least annually through the statutory annual review process.

Parents' observations, concerns and priorities form an important part of each review. The pupil's views are also gathered in an age-appropriate and accessible way. The SENCo, Headteacher and SEND Governor monitor the progress and wellbeing of pupils with SEND and the effectiveness of the school's wider SEND provision.

When my child's progress is being reviewed, how will new targets be set and how will I be involved?

The class teacher, parents, pupil and, where appropriate, the SENCo, support staff and external professionals review the evidence together. They consider what the pupil can now do, the progress made towards existing outcomes, which strategies or interventions have been effective and any barriers that remain.

For pupils with a SAP, outcomes are specific, measurable, ambitious and meaningful to the individual pupil. They may relate to development and learning, communication, behaviour and emotions, health, everyday life, or family and community. Achieved outcomes are replaced with appropriate next steps. Outcomes that remain relevant may be continued, refined or broken into smaller steps.

The revised plan clearly records the agreed outcomes, strategies, interventions and adaptations; who is responsible for providing them; how often they will take place; and how progress will be measured. Parents and carers contribute their knowledge and priorities and the pupil is supported to express what is important to them and what helps them learn and feel safe.

For pupils with an EHCP, progress towards the outcomes in Section E and the delivery of the provision in Section F are considered through ongoing school reviews and the statutory annual review. Where changes are required, recommendations are submitted to the local authority.

In addition to the school's normal reporting arrangements, what opportunities will there be for me to discuss my child's progress with school staff?

Parents and carers can request an additional meeting with the class teacher or SENCo by contacting the teacher or the school office. Meetings may also be arranged when a concern arises, a pupil's needs change, an intervention or strategy requires review, new specialist advice is received or additional assessment or provision is being considered.

SSP and SAP reviews provide structured opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress, strengths, needs and provision. Parents of pupils with EHCPs are also invited to contribute fully to the statutory annual review process. Relevant TAs, LSAs, the Emotional Support Assistant, the SEND LSA and external professionals may contribute to discussions where this would be helpful and appropriate.

The school aims to maintain open and respectful communication so that concerns can be discussed promptly and successes can also be recognised and shared.

What arrangements does the school have for regular home to school contact?

The school agrees a proportionate method and frequency of communication with families according to the pupil's individual needs. Day-to-day or urgent information can be passed to the school office or discussed with an appropriate member of staff. Class Dojo, email and telephone may be used for information that requires a fuller response or greater privacy.

Where a pupil has significant communication, medical, regulation, personal-care or transition needs, a home-school diary, checklist or another agreed form of more frequent communication may be used. The purpose, frequency and responsible adults will be agreed with the family and reviewed to ensure that the arrangement remains useful and manageable.

Communication is handled sensitively and confidentially. Staff aim to keep parents appropriately informed while also protecting pupils' dignity and ensuring that teaching staff can focus on their classroom responsibilities.

How can I help support my child's learning?

Parents and carers can support their child by maintaining regular attendance and consistent routines, reading together and helping their child practise agreed learning at home. Encouraging the child's interests, communication, confidence and independence is also valuable.

Where possible, families can use the approaches recommended by school or external professionals so that the child experiences consistent support at home and at school. Any home activities should remain manageable, positive and appropriate to the child's needs. Parents are not expected to recreate school-based interventions or specialist teaching at home.

Parents are encouraged to tell school staff about successes, changes, worries or strategies that have been effective at home. This information helps staff understand the whole child and may inform the pupil's SSP, SAP, EHCP or classroom provision. The most important contribution is a supportive home environment and open, respectful communication between home and school.

Does the school offer any help for parents/carers to enable them to support their child's learning, e.g. training or learning events?

The school website provides information about the curriculum, including Knowledge Organisers for subjects and year groups. It also includes parent workshop videos, which explain aspects of teaching and learning and offer practical guidance that parents can use to support learning at home. Parents may also be invited to attend workshops or opportunities to see learning taking place in school.

Teachers, the SENCo and relevant support staff may share personalised strategies, visual resources, activities or professional recommendations that families can use at home. Where a child is receiving support from an external professional, such as a Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist, parents may also be given advice or activities to support the child's development consistently across home and school.

The SENCo and Family Liaison Officer can help parents understand SEND processes and signpost families to relevant courses, workshops, voluntary organisations, local services and specialist support. Information may be shared through SEND newsletters, the weekly school bulletin, the school website, meetings or direct communication with families.

How will my child's views be sought about the help they are getting and the progress they are making?

Pupil voice is gathered in a way that is accessible, meaningful and appropriate to the child's age, development and communication needs. This may include conversation, observation, pictures, photographs, symbols, choices, rating scales, work samples, an 'All About Me' or 'This Is Me' profile, or support from a trusted adult.

Pupils contribute to their SSPs, SAPs and EHCP reviews and may attend all or part of a review meeting where this is appropriate and helpful. A pupil does not need to communicate verbally or attend a formal meeting for their views to be included. Staff may use observations, familiar communication systems and their knowledge of the pupil to understand what the child enjoys, finds difficult, wants to change and hopes to achieve.

Pupils' views about what helps them learn, participate, communicate and feel safe are used when agreeing outcomes, strategies, adaptations and provision. Staff also check whether pupils feel that the support they receive is helpful and whether it promotes their independence and sense of belonging.

How does the school assess the overall effectiveness of its SEND provision and how can parents/carers and young people take part in this evaluation?

The SENCo, Headteacher and SEND Governor monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision across the school. This includes reviewing:

- the progress, attainment, attendance and wellbeing of pupils with SEND;
- the implementation and impact of SSPs, SAPs and EHCPs;
- the quality of high-quality, adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments;
- the delivery, fidelity and effectiveness of interventions;
- pupils' engagement, communication, independence and participation;
- staff knowledge, training and confidence;
- feedback from pupils, parents, teachers, TAs, LSAs and external professionals.

The school considers whether agreed provision has been delivered consistently, whether pupils are making progress towards their outcomes and whether skills developed through interventions are being used within the classroom and everyday school life.

Parents and pupils contribute through SSP, SAP and EHCP reviews, questionnaires, pupil-voice activities, meetings, informal feedback and direct conversations with staff. Their views are used to evaluate individual support and identify wider strengths and areas for development within the school's SEND provision.

The SENCo reports regularly to the Headteacher and SEND Governor. Findings from monitoring inform strategic planning, the School Development Plan, staff training, deployment of support staff and decisions about resources and future provision.

4. Support for My Child's Overall Wellbeing

What support is available to promote the emotional and social development of children with SEND?

Birch Copse takes an inclusive approach that prioritises positive relationships, belonging and participation in school life. Support is matched to the individual pupil and may be provided through classroom strategies, an SSP, a SAP, EHCP provision or a targeted intervention.

The school has an Emotional Support Assistant who provides individual and small-group support for pupils experiencing difficulties with emotional literacy, self-esteem, friendships, anxiety, transitions or emotional regulation. Other provision may include: social-skills and communication groups, LEGO Therapy, Circle of Friends, social stories, emotion coaching and personalised regulation plans.

Staff help pupils recognise and communicate their emotions and needs, identify triggers and use strategies before they become overwhelmed. Pupils may use calm boxes, visual supports, sensory or movement breaks, regulation resources, the Sensory Room or another identified quieter or safe space.

Support is planned and reviewed with the pupil and their family. Where appropriate, the school seeks advice or support from external services.

What support does the school put in place for children who find it difficult to conform to normal behavioural expectations and how do you support children to avoid exclusion?

Birch Copse seeks to understand behaviour as communication. Staff consider what the behaviour may be communicating about the pupil's needs, emotions, communication, sensory experiences or environment. They identify triggers, unmet needs and skills that need to be taught, rather than relying solely on consequences.

Reasonable adjustments may include predictable routines, visual supports, simplified language, additional processing time, planned movement or sensory breaks, access to a quieter or safe space, adult co-regulation, emotion coaching, personalised motivation or rewards, preparation for change, supported lunchtimes and carefully planned transitions.

Where needed, support may be recorded in an SSP, SAP, individual risk assessment, Therapeutic Plan or personalised behaviour guidance. These are developed and reviewed with parents and carers, the pupil and relevant professionals. Staff review incidents and patterns of behaviour to identify what may need to change within the pupil's environment, teaching or provision.

The aim is to maintain safety, teach communication and regulation skills, strengthen the pupil's sense of belonging and enable them to remain included in learning and wider school life. Suspension or permanent exclusion is considered only where necessary and in accordance with statutory guidance, the school's Behaviour Policy and its legal duties towards pupils with SEND and disabilities.

What medical support is available in the school for children with SEND?

Medical needs and SEND are considered together where one affects the other. Pupils with medical conditions are supported through an Individual Healthcare Plan where one is required. Plans are developed with parents and carers and informed by advice from relevant healthcare professionals.

At Birch Copse, Individual Healthcare Plans are used for pupils with severe allergies requiring an adrenaline auto-injector, pupils with complex allergies that do not require an auto-injector, pupils with asthma and pupils with other significant medical conditions where an individual plan is necessary.

Healthcare plans explain the pupil's condition, symptoms, medication, daily management and the action staff must take in an emergency. They also identify any adjustments required for lessons, PE, breaktimes, lunchtimes, educational visits and off-site activities. Plans are shared with relevant staff and reviewed with parents and healthcare professionals when required.

Staff receive appropriate condition-specific and emergency training. The school works with parents, school nursing services and other healthcare professionals to ensure that pupils can participate safely and as fully as possible in school life.

How does the school manage the administration of medicines?

Medication is managed in accordance with the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, where applicable. Parents and carers must provide prescribed or otherwise authorised medication in its original container, with the required consent, dosage and administration information.

Medication is stored securely while remaining readily accessible when it may be needed in an emergency. Emergency medication, including inhalers and adrenaline auto-injectors, is not stored in a way that causes unnecessary delay. Trained or authorised staff administer medication and maintain appropriate records.

The school's spare adrenaline auto-injector may be administered to any pupil who is reasonably suspected of experiencing anaphylaxis, in accordance with emergency procedures. The school's spare salbutamol inhaler may only be administered to a pupil who has been prescribed their own reliever inhaler and for whom parental consent to use the spare inhaler has been obtained.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that medication supplied to school is in date and for informing the school of changes to their child's condition, medication or treatment. The school reviews its arrangements regularly and ensures that relevant staff know how to respond promptly in an emergency.

How does the school provide help with personal care where this is needed, e.g. help with toileting, eating etc?

Personal and intimate care is planned sensitively with parents and carers and, where relevant, health professionals. An individual Intimate Care Plan or care plan sets out the pupil's needs, the assistance required, communication preferences, safeguarding arrangements and how dignity, privacy and independence will be protected.

Trained or appropriately briefed staff may support pupils with toileting, changing, cleaning following an accident, eating, drinking, mobility or medical routines. Pupils are encouraged to do as much as they can independently, while receiving the help necessary to keep them safe, comfortable and included.

Personal-care arrangements are considered when planning lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, trips and other activities. Plans are reviewed when the pupil's needs change and information is shared only with staff who need it to provide safe and consistent support.

5. Specialist Services Available/Accessed by the School

What SEND support services does the school use?

Birch Copse works with a range of education, health and social-care services according to pupils' individual needs, each service's referral criteria and local availability. These include:

- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language Therapy, including NHS and independent therapists where appropriate
- Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy
- The Specialist Teacher of the Deaf, audiology and visual-impairment services
- Autism advisory services
- The Promoting Inclusive Practice Team
- The Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- The School Nursing Team
- Paediatric and other relevant healthcare services
- The Early Development and Inclusion Team
- The local authority SEND and EHC Needs Assessment Teams
- The Education Welfare Team
- The Exclusion and Reintegration Team
- Reading Inclusion Support Team
- Early Help and Children's Social Care

The SENCo may also seek advice from specialist settings, independent professionals, voluntary organisations and condition-specific services where appropriate.

Not every service will be appropriate for or involved with every pupil. Some services require evidence that the school has followed the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review process before accepting a referral. Where specialist advice is received, it is incorporated into classroom practice and, where appropriate, the pupil's SSP, SAP or EHCP provision. Parents and carers are involved and consent is obtained where required.

What should I do if I think my child needs support from one of these services?

Parents and carers should initially discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher, who may involve the SENCo. The school will gather information about the pupil's strengths and needs and review the teaching, adaptations, strategies and interventions already in place.

The SENCo will consider whether specialist advice or assessment is required and whether the pupil meets the relevant service's referral criteria. Some services require evidence that the school has followed the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review process before accepting a referral.

Where a referral is appropriate, it will normally be completed in partnership with parents and with their consent. Some referrals can be made by the school, while others must be made by a GP, paediatrician or another healthcare professional. Some services also accept referrals directly from parents. The school will explain the most appropriate pathway.

Acceptance of a referral and waiting times are determined by the external service. While awaiting specialist involvement, the school will continue to use its best endeavours to identify and support the pupil's needs.

How are Speech and Language therapy, Occupational therapy and Physiotherapy services provided?

Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists assess pupils who meet their service criteria. Depending on the pupil's clinical needs, they may provide direct therapy, assessment, advice, equipment, staff or parent training, or a programme to be delivered regularly in school and, where appropriate, at home.

Class teachers incorporate recommended strategies into everyday teaching and classroom routines. Appropriately trained or briefed TAs, LSAs or the SEND LSA may deliver delegated programmes under the direction of the relevant therapist. These may be provided individually or in a small group, depending on the pupil's needs and the professional's recommendations.

The frequency and type of professional involvement vary according to clinical need, the service's delivery model and any provision specified in an EHCP. School staff record the delivery and progress of delegated programmes, provide feedback to the therapist and seek further advice when a programme needs to be reviewed or updated.

What should I do if I think my child needs to be seen by a Speech and Language therapist, Occupational therapist or Physiotherapist?

Parents and carers should raise their concerns with their child's class teacher and SENCo. School staff will gather information about the pupil's development and the impact of any difficulties on their learning, communication, independence, physical access or participation. They will also review the strategies and support already in place.

The school can make or contribute to some referrals with parental consent. Other referrals may need to be made by a GP, paediatrician or another healthcare professional and some services may allow parents to refer directly. Referral routes and eligibility criteria vary between services.

The school will explain the most appropriate local pathway and can provide supporting evidence, including observations, assessment information and details of strategies or interventions already tried. Urgent medical or health concerns should always be raised directly with an appropriate healthcare professional.

What arrangements does the school have for liaison with Children's Social Care services?

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy safeguarding leads, SENCo and Family Liaison Officer liaise with Children's Social Care and Early Help where required. Relevant school staff may attend and contribute to multi-agency meetings, provide reports, share appropriate information and implement agreed actions.

Where a family would benefit from coordinated support beyond education, the school may work with parents and other agencies through Early Help or wider multi-agency planning. Parents and carers are involved and consent is sought where appropriate.

Information is shared lawfully, securely and proportionately in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy and statutory safeguarding requirements. Where there is a concern that a child may be at risk of harm, the school may need to share information or make a referral without parental consent. In these circumstances, the child's safety and welfare take priority and the school acts without delay.

6. Training of School Staff in SEND

What SEND training is provided for teachers in your school?

Training is planned in response to the needs of current pupils, whole-school priorities, developments in inclusive practice and the school's statutory responsibilities. The SENCo has completed the National Professional Qualification for SENCOs (NPQ for SENCOs) and provides teachers with ongoing advice, training, coaching and support.

Recent and ongoing areas of professional development include:

- autism- and ADHD-inclusive practice;
- high-quality adaptive teaching;
- sensory processing and emotional regulation;
- speech, language and communication strategies;
- emotion coaching and relational and therapeutic approaches;
- supporting pupils with cognition and learning needs, including dyscalculia;
- implementation of SSPs, SAPs and the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle;
- implementing provision and professional recommendations within EHCPs;
- medical and allergy safety, including asthma and anaphylaxis;
- child-specific training linked to individual pupils' needs.

Teachers also receive guidance and training from external education and health professionals where appropriate. SEND practice is developed through staff meetings, coaching, planning discussions, collaborative problem-solving and the school's work with the West Berkshire Ordinarily Available Provision guidance and the Ofsted Inclusion Toolkit.

Training is followed by opportunities to reflect on practice, review its impact and identify any further support or development required.

What SEND training is provided for Teaching Assistants and other staff in your school?

TAs, LSAs and other relevant staff receive training matched to the pupils, interventions and programmes they support. This may include:

- autism, ADHD and communication needs;
- sensory processing, Sensory Circuits and emotional regulation;
- emotional literacy, emotion coaching and anxiety support;
- Precision Teaching;
- structured phonics and other literacy and numeracy interventions;
- LEGO Therapy, Circle of Friends and social-communication groups;
- Speech and Language Therapy programmes;
- Occupational Therapy, fine-motor and movement programmes;
- relational and therapeutic approaches to behaviour;

- moving and handling, personal care or use of specialist equipment;
- condition-specific medical training, including asthma, allergy and anaphylaxis procedures.

Staff delivering delegated programmes receive guidance and modelling from the class teacher, SENCo, SEND LSA or relevant visiting professional. They are expected to deliver interventions as planned, promote independence and provide feedback about pupils' engagement and progress. The quality and impact of provision are monitored and further training or support is arranged where needed.

Do Teaching Assistants have any specific qualifications in SEND?

Yes. The staff team includes individuals with relevant qualifications, accredited training or specialist expertise in areas such as emotional-literacy support, Protective Behaviours, SNAP Maths, Precision Teaching and LEGO Therapy.

The Emotional Support Assistant has training and experience in supporting pupils' emotional literacy, wellbeing, anxiety, relationships and regulation. The SEND LSA supports the delivery and coordination of interventions for pupils with SEND.

Individual members of staff also receive child-specific training and guidance from health and education professionals, including Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and sensory specialists. This may include training in communication programmes, specialist equipment, moving and handling, personal care and medical needs.

Qualifications and expertise vary across the staff team. Staff are therefore deployed according to pupils' needs and the programmes they are trained to deliver, with ongoing guidance, monitoring, professional development and supervision.

7. Activities Outside the Classroom Including School Trips

How do you ensure children with SEND can be included in out-of-school activities and trips?

Educational visits, residential and other activities are planned on the presumption that pupils with SEND will participate alongside their peers. A pupil will not be excluded from an activity simply because they have SEND or require additional support.

Staff consider each pupil's communication, learning, sensory, physical, emotional, behavioural, medical and personal-care needs. They consult relevant SSPs, SAPs, EHCPs, Individual Healthcare Plans, Intimate Care Plans and professional advice. Whole-activity and, where necessary, individual risk assessments are completed before the visit.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- additional staffing or support from a familiar adult;
- advance visits, photographs, visual timetables or social stories;
- accessible transport, routes, toilets and venues;
- adapted activities, equipment or ways of recording;
- changes to timings, groupings or the order of activities;
- sensory or movement breaks and access to a quieter space;
- support with communication, mobility, eating or personal care;
- medication, emergency procedures and appropriately trained staff.

Staff are briefed on the pupil's needs, successful strategies and emergency arrangements. Risk assessments and support plans are updated if circumstances change. Where a potential barrier remains, the school works with the pupil, family, venue and relevant professionals to identify a safe, reasonable and meaningful way for the pupil to participate.

How do you involve parents/carers in planning the support required for their child to access activities and trips?

Parents and carers are consulted in advance where their child has needs that may affect their access, safety, wellbeing or participation. Staff value families' knowledge of the pupil's communication, mobility, medical and personal-care needs, anxiety, sensory profile, likely triggers and successful strategies.

For residential visits, unfamiliar environments or more complex trips, the school may arrange a planning meeting with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil and relevant professionals. This may result in an individual risk assessment, updated healthcare or personal-care arrangements, additional preparation or agreed reasonable adjustments.

Parents are informed about the support and emergency arrangements that will be in place and are asked to provide any necessary medication, equipment or updated information by the agreed deadline. The pupil's views are also gathered in an accessible way so that staff understand what may help them feel safe and included.

Planning is undertaken collaboratively, while the school retains responsibility for making final decisions about safeguarding, risk management and the safe inclusion of all pupils.

8. Accessibility of the School Environment

How accessible is the building for children with mobility difficulties/wheelchair users?

The school is largely accessible to pupils with mobility difficulties and external ramps are available where there are steps. However, the building is spread across a large site and some facilities are a considerable distance from particular classrooms. Accessibility is therefore assessed and planned individually rather than assumed.

Planning may include the pupil's classroom location, accessible routes, additional movement time, seating and equipment, emergency evacuation arrangements, personal care and access to the hall, playground, toilets and specialist spaces. The school works with the pupil, parents and relevant professionals, including Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, to identify and make reasonable adjustments.

Accessibility arrangements are reviewed when a pupil's needs change or when access to a different part of the school is required. The school's Accessibility Plan sets out how access to the curriculum, physical environment, communication and information will continue to be developed.

Have adaptations/improvements been made to the auditory and visual environment?

Yes. Adaptations are made in response to pupils' individual hearing, visual, communication and sensory needs. These may include:

- high-visibility yellow edging on steps;
- adapted seating and classroom positioning;
- enlarged, simplified or appropriately presented resources;
- reduced visual clutter and clearly organised learning spaces;

- visual timetables, symbols, photographs and signage;
- adjustments to lighting, glare and background noise;
- ear defenders and access to quieter or reduced-distraction workspaces;
- use of specialist hearing or visual equipment where required.

The school follows advice from the Specialist Teacher of the Deaf, audiology, visual-impairment services and other relevant professionals. Staff working with the pupil are shown how to use and manage any specialist equipment safely and consistently.

Are there accessible changing and toilet facilities?

The school has an accessible toilet that can be used for changing and personal care. However, it is located at one end of the school site, so individual planning may be required to ensure timely access, particularly for younger pupils and those with mobility, continence, communication or supervision needs.

Reception toilets are not designed as specialist changing facilities. Where a pupil requires support with toileting, changing or personal care, the school works with parents and relevant professionals to agree an Intimate Care Plan or individual care plan. This identifies the facilities to be used, the support required and how the pupil's dignity, privacy, safeguarding and independence will be protected.

How do you ensure that all the school's facilities can be accessed by children with SEND?

Access is considered individually across all aspects of school life, including classrooms, playtimes, lunchtimes, the hall, playground, PE, clubs, performances, trips and special events. Staff consider relevant SSPs, SAPs, EHCPs, healthcare and personal-care plans when planning activities and access.

Reasonable adjustments may include additional adult support, adapted equipment, alternative recording methods, accessible routes, additional movement time, sensory preparation, visual supports, quieter spaces or changes to the environment, timetable or organisation of an activity.

Risk assessments are completed where required and advice is sought from pupils, parents and relevant external professionals. Arrangements are reviewed when the pupil's needs, the activity or the environment changes. The aim is for pupils with SEND to participate safely and meaningfully alongside their peers wherever possible.

How does the school communicate with parents/carers who have a disability?

Parents and carers are encouraged to tell the school about any communication, physical-access or other reasonable-adjustment needs and their preferred method of contact.

Adjustments may include an accessible meeting location, telephone or online meetings, electronic or enlarged documents, additional time to process or respond to information, or support from a professional interpreter or advocate. The school will seek specialist advice where this is required.

Confidential information is shared securely and in an accessible format agreed with the parent or carer. Communication arrangements are reviewed if needs or circumstances change.

How does the school communicate with parents/carers whose first language is not English?

The school uses clear, accessible language, avoids unnecessary jargon and checks that information has been understood. Where needed, translated information, a professional interpreter or another appropriate communication method can be arranged.

Family members, particularly children, are not relied upon to interpret sensitive, confidential or complex information where a professional interpreter is required. The school aims to ensure that parents and carers can understand information, contribute their views and participate fully in decisions about their child.

9. Preparing My Child to Join a New School/Next Stage of Education

What preparation will there be for both the school and my child before he or she joins the school?

The SENCo liaises with parents and carers, the child's previous setting and any involved professionals before admission. The school gathers information about the child's strengths, interests, communication, learning, sensory and physical needs, emotional regulation, medical or personal-care needs and successful strategies.

Relevant reports and plans are reviewed so that reasonable adjustments, staffing, training, equipment and resources can be arranged. Where required, the school works with the family and professionals to prepare an SSP, healthcare plan, Intimate Care Plan, risk assessment or individual transition plan.

Additional preparation may include:

- extra visits to the school, including visits at quieter times;
- visits to both empty and occupied classrooms;
- opportunities to meet key adults and other pupils;
- photographs of staff, entrances, classrooms, toilets and important spaces;
- a personalised transition booklet or social story;
- practising arrival, collection, lunchtime or toileting routines;
- visual timetables and now-and-next supports;
- transferring or obtaining familiar communication, sensory or regulation resources.

For pupils with more complex needs, the school may arrange a highly personalised transition with the family, previous setting, local authority and relevant professionals. Any phased transition would be agreed carefully, kept under review and planned around the pupil's best interests and entitlement to education.

How will my child be prepared to move on to the next stage within school, e.g. class or key stage?

Transition within school is personalised according to the pupil's needs. In addition to the transition arrangements offered to all pupils, a child with SEND may have repeated visits to the new classroom, including opportunities to see it when it is empty and when other pupils are present.

Preparation may include: meeting the new teachers and support staff, choosing or becoming familiar with a seat or workspace, practising new routes and toilets, moving or labelling regulation resources, looking at photographs of key adults and receiving a visual timetable, social story or transition booklet for the summer.

The pupil is supported to express what they are looking forward to, what they are worried about and what helps them feel safe. Current and receiving staff share the pupil's strengths, needs, communication, successful strategies, provision, likely triggers and level of independence. Relevant SSPs, SAPs, EHCP provision, healthcare plans and risk assessments are reviewed and shared with staff who need the information.

Parents and carers are invited to share concerns, changes or information that may help the transition and return to school proceed smoothly.

How will my child be prepared to move on to his or her next school?

Birch Copse works with the receiving school to provide enhanced transition where a pupil requires support beyond the arrangements offered to all pupils. Transition planning begins early and is tailored to the child's communication, learning, sensory, emotional, physical, medical and independence needs.

Support may include:

- additional or repeated visits;
- visits at quieter times;
- individual or small-group transition sessions;
- travel, route and site familiarisation;
- photographs, maps, visual timetables and social stories;
- meetings with key staff at the receiving school;
- opportunities to practise using new facilities and routines;
- support to communicate hopes, questions and worries;
- involvement from parents and relevant professionals.

For pupils with EHCPs, placement and transition are considered through the annual review process, with planning beginning in Year 5 where appropriate and continuing through Year 6. The local authority and prospective receiving settings are involved as required.

How will you support a new school to prepare for my child?

The SENCo and current staff provide the receiving school with a clear and balanced picture of the pupil's strengths, interests, needs, communication, learning, successful strategies, provision, independence, regulation, medical or personal-care needs and any relevant safety considerations.

Meetings, visits, observations and conversations between staff may be arranged where helpful. Receiving staff may speak with the teachers, TAs or LSAs who know the pupil well. Where appropriate, external professionals may contribute advice.

Birch Copse supports the receiving school to plan in advance for staffing, training, equipment, accessibility, reasonable adjustments and delivery of any EHCP provision. The pupil and parents are included in planning so that their knowledge, priorities and concerns inform the transition.

What information will be provided to my child's new school?

SEND records are transferred securely and in accordance with data-protection and safeguarding requirements. Information may include:

- SSPs and SAPs;
- the EHCP and annual review paperwork;
- professional assessments, reports and recommendations;
- attainment and other relevant assessment information;

- provision maps and intervention records;
- communication profiles and successful classroom strategies;
- pupil and parent views;
- transition plans and resources;
- Individual Healthcare Plans and Intimate Care Plans;
- relevant risk assessments and safety arrangements;
- information about equipment, assistive technology and reasonable adjustments.

Only information that is relevant to supporting the pupil is shared with appropriate staff. Safeguarding records are transferred separately through the school's safeguarding procedures. The school aims to transfer information early enough for the receiving setting to prepare suitable support before the pupil starts.

10. Who Can I Contact to Discuss My Child?

Who would be my first point of contact if I want to discuss something about my child or if I am worried?

Your child's class teacher is normally the first point of contact. The teacher has day-to-day responsibility for your child's teaching, progress and provision and can discuss any concerns, strategies or support already in place. Parents can contact the teacher through Class Dojo or via the school office.

For concerns specifically related to SEND, ongoing or complex needs, external referrals, an EHCP or another statutory process, parents can also contact the SENCo through the school office or by emailing senco@birchcopse.co.uk.

Urgent safeguarding concerns should be shared promptly with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, a deputy safeguarding lead or another member of staff. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, the appropriate emergency or safeguarding service should be contacted without delay.

Does the school offer any specific support for parents/carers and families, such as Family Support Workers?

Yes. The Family Liaison Officer can provide practical and emotional support, advice, signposting and information about relevant courses, workshops and local services. The school's Emotional Support Assistant may also work with pupils where emotional wellbeing, anxiety, relationships or regulation are affecting their school experience.

The SENCo supports families to understand the identification process, the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review approach, SSPs, SAPs, referrals, EHC needs assessments and EHCP processes. The SENCo can also help parents understand professional reports and identify the appropriate service or referral pathway.

Where a family's needs extend beyond education, the school may work with the family and other professionals through Early Help or wider multi-agency planning. Parents and carers are involved in this process and consent is obtained where appropriate.

What arrangements does the school have for signposting parents/carers to external agencies which can offer support, such as voluntary agencies?

Information is shared through SEND newsletters, the weekly school bulletin, the school website, parent workshops, meetings and direct communication from the SENCo or Family Liaison Officer.

Depending on the family's needs, parents may be signposted to:

- West Berkshire or Reading's Local Offer;
- SENDIASS;
- health, therapy and mental-health services;
- Early Help and parenting support;
- local courses, workshops and support groups;
- voluntary organisations and condition-specific charities;
- services offering advice about disability, benefits, family support or education.

Where appropriate and with parental consent, the school may help families complete a referral or provide observations, assessment information, reports and other supporting evidence. Some services accept self-referrals, while others require a referral from the school, GP or another professional.

What arrangements does the school have for feedback from parents, including compliments and complaints?

Parents and carers can provide feedback directly to the class teacher, SENCo, Family Liaison Officer or a senior leader. Feedback can also be shared through SSP, SAP and EHCP reviews, meetings, questionnaires, parent consultations or the school office.

Concerns should usually be raised first with the class teacher so that they can be understood and addressed promptly. If the concern relates specifically to SEND, remains unresolved or is more complex, it can be raised with the SENCo and then with a senior leader or the Headteacher as appropriate.

Formal complaints are considered through the school's published Complaints Policy and procedure. Parents can ask the school office for a copy or access it through the school website.

Feedback, including compliments, concerns and suggestions, is used to review individual provision and inform the school's wider monitoring and development of SEND practice. The SENCo, Headteacher and SEND Governor consider parent and pupil feedback when evaluating the effectiveness of provision.