

1. What kinds of special educational needs does the school provide for?

The school accommodates all SEND in line with the Equality Act 2010 and provision is available for all 4 areas of need outlined in the 2014 SEND code of practice.

At Birches Head Academy we endeavour to provide the support necessary for our students and families by engaging with professionals in order to identify and meet the needs of our students.

Communication and Interaction

We work with SEND Services, CAHMS and other health professionals to provide support for pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), including children with complex additional needs such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Asperger's Syndrome.

Cognition and Learning

We recognise that some children may need additional support beyond Quality First Teaching and appropriate differentiation. Experienced support staff provide 1:1 and small group teaching across the curriculum along with additional support in lessons for identified students. Where necessary, professional advice is sought from SEND Services or Educational Psychology to identify need and suitable strategies and interventions.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

We believe that by providing a nurturing environment and positive relationships we can offer all children the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We have a strong Pastoral System so that students have access to Personal Tutors, Head of Year and SEN keyworkers for support. The school has an Anti-bullying strategy and the SEN department runs clubs to support vulnerable students. Students may be referred to the School Nurse or the School Counsellor as well as outside agencies, such as CAMHS, if needed. Breakfast is an important meal and the LRC runs a club where students can get breakfast at school. To support students whose social, emotional and mental health needs mean they find mainstream lessons challenging, the school has a personalised learning opportunities to support their learning.

Sensory and/or Physical

The school works alongside Stoke on Trent's SEND Services or the relevant health care professionals to ensure that the appropriate support, resources and reasonable adjustments are made. Sensory needs provided for include visual impairment (VI) and hearing impairment (HI). The school building is accessible to physically disabled students with access to all areas available by lift or ramp access. Children with medical conditions will have individual healthcare plans which specify the type and level of support required to meet their medical needs.

2. How does the school know if children/ young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?

Early identification of pupils with SEND is a school priority.

At Birches Head Academy children are identified as having SEND through a variety of ways for example:

- As a result of parental concerns
- As a result of concerns raised by Teacher/Teaching Assistant/other school support staff
- As a result of work with outside agencies e.g. Occupational Therapist, SEND Services, Social Care, SALT.
- In response to information shared by previous settings (primary school or previous school)
- As a result of health diagnosis by a paediatrician

- As a result of assessments in literacy and numeracy.

The school will use a range of assessment tools to monitor progress and identify SEND. An external professional will be pursued where more specialist advice is needed e.g. by an Educational Psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist. Parents will be consulted and involved in the referral process.

Parents can contact the SENCO or Assistant SENCO if they believe their child has special educational needs.

3. How will school staff support my child/young person?

We support children with additional educational needs through a variety of ways.

- Quality First Teaching
- Additional in class support from Teaching Assistant (TA) or Class Teacher
- Small group work targeting areas of difficulty
- 1:1 targeted support out of class with TA
- Seek specialist support from external agencies e.g.: SEND Services, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists, CAMHS.
- Support from School Nurse and School Counsellor
- Specialist outreach support from REACH

Children needing SEN Support will have a student passport that will be discussed and reviewed with you and the student on a regular basis. The strategies and information identified on this will inform the provision we provide.

4. How will the curriculum be matched to my child/young person's needs?

In line with the SEN code of Practice and the National Curriculum we aim to provide an inclusive, creative, child led curriculum that will equip children to be successful in life.

All students follow a broad and balanced curriculum. Our staff have high expectations for every pupil. Teachers adapt lessons specifically for SEND pupils using strategies from the student passport and include a range of techniques, tasks and styles to make learning engaging, accessible yet challenging. They use appropriate assessment for learning strategies to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.

SEN Code of Practice underpins our aims:

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- achieve their best
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

5. How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing?

Our school has an open door policy and parents are encouraged to make an appointment to see their child's Tutor or SENCO to discuss any concerns they may have. Staff can communicate with

parents through a variety of means for example: phone calls, planner, meetings at school, report cards, school website and newsletters.

Parents' Evenings are held at which parents are able to meet 1:1 with class teachers to discuss their children's progress. SEN keyworkers are also present to discuss additional support. SEN staff are available once per term to meet with parents and discuss progress, successes and any concerns. For children who are not making expected progress appropriate interventions and support will be identified and put in place.

Children identified as needing SEN support will have a student passport to share information with teaching staff regarding advice and strategies to help meet the needs of the individual student. This will be discussed with you and reviewed with you on a regular basis. Staff will let you know what your child finds difficult, what we are doing at school to support them and how you can help them at home.

For children who have a Statement of Special Needs or EHC Plan formal annual reviews will be held to discuss your child's progress and the provision made for them. External agencies involved and a representative from the Local Authority SEND team will also be invited to this meeting.

In addition to this SEN support staff liaise regularly with class teachers of all SEND students to review their progress towards short-medium term targets following an assess, plan, do and review cycle.

Parents will receive a progress report following each assessment point to share information regarding progress and next steps.

6. What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall wellbeing?

The school's pastoral care ensures that emotional wellbeing is provided for alongside academic progression. Each student has a Personal Tutor and each Year Group has a Head of Year to ensure students' wellbeing within the school. Students can be referred to the School Nurse or School Counsellor for additional support and can also be referred to outside agencies such as CAMHS or for specialist counselling, such as the Dove Service, if needed. Alongside this the school runs an Anti-Bullying scheme and the School Council to ensure students have a say in the running of the school. The SEN department runs a club for vulnerable students at lunchtimes and an after school club to improve confidence and self-esteem.

7. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the setting?

Where it is necessary and following consultation with parents and student, Birches Head Academy will refer a student to an appropriate agency to seek the specific support required to meet the needs of the individual student.

Local Authority Provision delivered in school:

- Autism Outreach Service
- Educational Psychology Service
- Sensory Service for children with visual or hearing needs
- IPSEA
- REACH Behaviour Support
- Children and Young People's Services

Health Provision delivered in school:

- Counsellor

- School Nurse
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- CAMHS
- Youth Offending Team
- T3
- MIND
- Dove

8. What training are the staff supporting children and young people with SEND have had or are having?

The school provides regular training and support to enable all staff to improve the teaching and learning of students, including those with SEND. This includes whole school training on SEN issues, such as: Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Speech and Language Difficulties, Dyslexia and Hearing Impairment.

The SENCO is a qualified teacher and is currently undertaking the National Award for SENCOs .

Learning Support staff have also received training on the use of Assessment Tools; Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs as well as training to support the individual needs of SEND students. SEN support staff also access training from SEND services on the delivery of intervention programmes.

9. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside this classroom including school trips?

We make every effort to ensure the learning environment is inclusive and this is also the case for activities outside the school classroom including educational visits. School staff produce robust risk assessments that highlight any potential issues for pupils with SEND. We make arrangements for individual pupils to prepare them for activities outside the classroom (such as school trips and sports days) to ensure all pupils are included in these activities. Staff (including support staff) are allocated to accompany students on trips in order to address identified barriers. Some specific trips, with extra support, are also offered on occasions for vulnerable students. All students are encouraged to take an active part in the school's extra-curricular life. There is a wealth of opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities. No child is excluded from these activities because they have a special educational need.

10. How accessible is the environment?

The school building has grown over a number of years and has seen various phases of development. Classrooms are over three floors in some areas of the building and there is lift access to all floors. In the event of a fire or other urgent evacuation an evac chair is available. Designated staff have received training in its use and systems are in place to ensure a safe evacuation for all students.

Where necessary, students will have supervised access to lifts to ensure their safety and accessibility to all rooms. In some areas ramps or sloping corridors provide access to classrooms and the main entrance to the school has both step and ramp access routes. All main staircases have hand rails to both left and right sides. Disabled toilet facilities are available across the school.

Where necessary, specialist equipment, such as specific chairs, are provided to meet the needs of the individual.

11. How will the setting prepare and support my child/young person to join the next stage of education and life?

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEN, and we take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

If your child is joining us from another school:

- The SENCO/Assistant SENCO will obtain information from the previous school.
- All students are given the opportunity to visit school and/or have taster sessions, if this is appropriate.

If your child is moving to another school or post 16 provider:

- We will contact the school SENCO or post 16 provider SEN link and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child. Where, possible, a planning meeting will take place with the SENCO/SEN link from the new school.
- We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.
- The School Careers Advisor and 14-19 Pathways Worker will provide support to your child in helping them apply, access Open Days or Taster Days if appropriate, and find a suitable post 16 placement.

12. How are the setting's resource allocated and matched to children's/young people's special educational needs?

The SEND department is made up a SENCO, Assistant SENCO and Learning Support Assistants. Resources are allocated according to need and additional interventions are funded to support individual pupil's progress. Pupils identified as having an SEN are supported in the classroom by the teacher and, where necessary, by an LSA. The school has the capacity to access additional support from the LA advisory teams and the Educational Psychologist Service as necessary. Pupils with Statements or EHC Plans receive support in accordance with their need.

13. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

Assessments of basic skills is carried out by the SEND department. There is an initial discussion between the class teacher and the SENCO on what needs a student may have. Parents are involved at this point, along with the child, to best plan the interventions needed. Advice from outside agencies is sought when necessary. During SEN department meetings, staff discuss pupils' progress against their targets and what support /intervention needs to be put in place or adapted following the Assess, Plan, Do Review cycle. This can be determined by their rate of progress and from prior discussions with classroom teachers, previous schools, if appropriate, and professional input.

14a. How will our child and young person be involved in the decisions about their learning?

Students identified as having a special educational need have a designated keyworker with whom they meet termly or, as and when required. The keyworker is an additional level of support to enable students to discuss provision and progress. Students are involved in regular updating of the information shared with all staff via the student passport. They have an opportunity to discuss with their keyworker strategies which they find successful and information that they would like to share regarding their needs.

Student voice activities are carried out regularly to enable students to express views and opinions and provide valuable information to help further improve teaching and learning.

14b. How will we be involved in the decisions about the learning of our children and young people?

Subject teachers and Keyworkers are available at parents evenings and via telephone to discuss student progress and any concerns that you may have and to share information about what is working well at home and school, so that similar strategies can be used.

The SENCO, Assistant SENCO and Keyworkers are available to discuss concerns regarding SEND and to share information at three drop in opportunities per year. They can also be contacted by telephone and individual meetings can be arranged upon request. Termly reviews of the student passport will provide an opportunity to engage in reviewing progress and planning future provision.

Information from external professionals will be discussed in person or where this is not possible, a report will be issued to parents.

15. How are parents involved in the setting? How can I be involved?

As detailed in Question 3, the school has an Open Door Policy and input from parents and/or carers is an integral element. Parents are involved by receiving progress reports and attending Parents' Evenings as well as SEN drop ins to support the Student passport and Assess Plan Do Review cycle. Parents can contact the Form Tutor, Head of Year, SENCO or Assistant SENCO if they have any concerns.

16. What to do I do if I want to make a complaint?

The school complaint policy is available to view on the school website (Link) . This contains information regarding how to make a complaint.

17. What other support is available to parents and how can I contact them?

Local Offer

Find out more about the local offer of support which is available for disabled children and young people and those who have SEN on the Stoke on Trent website

<http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/kb5/stoke/directory/home.page>

IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice)

www.ipsea.org.uk

Access Independent Supporters

Telephone:01782 236414

E-mail: independent-supporters@stoke.gov.uk

Website: www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk/

CAMHS ASD Team

Telephone:01782 408373 01782 408374

Website: www.combined.nhs.uk/.../CAMHS-ASDService.aspx

Children's Occupational Therapy Service

Telephone:01782 427450

Website: www.staffordshireandstokeontrent.nhs.uk/.../childrens-occupational-therapy.htm

SEND Services

Telephone:01782 232538

E-mail: SEND@stoke.gov.uk

Website: SEND Services - Specialist Support

SENDIASS - SEND Information, Advice & Support Service

Telephone:01782 234701 or 01782 234847

E-mail: iass@stoke.gov.uk

Website: www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk/