



Curriculum Policy

September 2026

Curriculum Intentions

The school's curriculum is the body of knowledge pupils earn while at Birtley House School.

1. **Intent:** What should the children know by the time they leave Birtley House?
2. **Implementation:** How do we teach our curriculum?
3. **Impact:** How do we know how well pupils have learnt the curriculum?

You can read a more in-depth description about our curriculum intentions within the Birtley House School Statement of Intent.

Intent, aims and objectives

The breadth of our curriculum is designed with two goals:

- ✓ To provide a coherent, structured, accessible and academic curriculum that leads to knowledge and skill learnt.
- ✓ To give all pupils a wide range of experiences to develop as a confident, resilient, respectful and motivated individuals prepared to be global citizens of the future.

The aims of our school curriculum are to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and the future
- Enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability and be able to apply these in relevant situations;
- Offer specialist support to every pupil in their primary areas of need;
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including Britain's cultural heritage; core British Values, respect and tolerance of all people of different faiths and beliefs;
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active;
- Teach children the basic skills of Literacy, numeracy and computing;
- Enable children to be creative and develop their own thinking;
- Teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- Help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- Enable children to live and work co-operatively with others;
- Prepare children for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in society.

At all key stages, the intent of the curriculum is to provide a motivating and engaging context in which pupils can achieve and make progress based on their assessed levels and next steps. For each pupil, the curriculum will be delivered in a personalised way which supports their holistic needs.

For all pupils, a successful transition is a priority into, within and out of the setting. Our overall aim is that pupils engage, achieve, and make the most personal progress over time to enable them to have the most fulfilling, enjoyable, and independent life possible.

Implementation

The school adopts a creative approach to learning through the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfE, 2021) and National Curriculum (DfE, 2014). National Curriculum subjects are approached in a flexible way throughout the school, and are planned sequentially to ensure that new knowledge and skills build on prior learning. Our curriculum also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010).

The school allows teachers the flexibility to plan for their individual class and group needs and learning styles. Teachers will make judgements about how to target children to achieve their best learning outcomes for all. Each subject topics will have an overarching question which the children are working towards answering throughout the lessons. This question serves as a guiding principle to define the 'why', 'what' and 'how', aiming to ensure coherence, deep understanding and relevance for learners. These questions encourage pupils to explore concepts, make connections, and think critically about the content, rather than just recalling facts. To support the children in answering the overarching question, each lesson begins with a series of more specific, open-ended questions that build upon each other, encouraging deeper thinking and exploration. These sub-questions do not have simple yes/no answers, but instead promote critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and discussion.

We implement a wider curriculum outside of the National Curriculum such as teaching yoga, Mindfulness, Fine and Gross motor skills, speaking and listening skills, social interaction skills and support for working memory, all of which run throughout all aspects of the taught curriculum. We recognise pupils as individuals with different needs and offer a multi-sensory creative curriculum. Our curriculum runs as a rolling curriculum to accommodate our mixed aged classes and levels of our children. We also have a personal development curriculum which supports children's learning outside of the National Curriculum. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of learning; all further learning is shared in the Personal Development Curriculum.

IMPACT SECTION

Impact: How We Know Our Curriculum is Working

At Birtley House School, we systematically evaluate the impact of our curriculum to ensure all pupils are learning and remembering what we intend them to learn. We measure impact through multiple sources of evidence:

Knowledge and Skills Acquisition

We assess whether pupils have learned the curriculum by:

- **Regular knowledge checks:** Teachers use low-stakes quizzes, questioning, and retrieval practice to check what pupils remember from previous learning
- **End of unit assessments:** Each topic concludes with an assessment that checks pupils can apply what they've learned *SCIENCE – From 2026*
- **Work scrutiny:** Regular reviews of pupils' books show the quality and depth of learning across subjects
- **Pupil interviews:** We talk to pupils about what they've learned, asking them to explain concepts and make connections between topics – From 2026

Progress and Attainment Data

We track pupil outcomes through:

- **B Squared assessments:** Termly tracking shows small-step progress for pupils working below age-related expectations
- **Rising Stars PIRA, PUMA and GAPS:** Termly standardised assessments in reading, writing and maths provide age-standardised scores and show progress against national norms
- **Little Wandle Assessments:** 6 weekly Little Wandle assessments to test phonics learning and determine if extra phonics interventions are needed.
- **EHCP target tracking:** Targets are reviewed every 10-12 weeks, with progress reported to parents and the Local Authority
- **Subject-specific assessments:** Teachers use assessment frameworks for foundation subjects to track curriculum coverage and depth of learning

What Our Pupils Know and Can Do

By the time pupils leave Birtley House School, they can:

- **Read fluently and with comprehension:** Pupils decode accurately, read with expression, and understand increasingly complex texts
- **Communicate effectively:** Pupils express themselves clearly in speech and writing, using subject-specific vocabulary. Sentence stems, support from adults and verbal prompts are used for those who need it.
- **Apply mathematical knowledge:** Pupils use number facts fluently and apply mathematical reasoning to solve problems
- **Demonstrate scientific understanding:** Pupils can explain scientific concepts, conduct investigations, and make predictions
- **Show historical and geographical knowledge:** Pupils understand chronology, can compare different periods and places, and make connections between past and present
- **Create and appreciate art and music:** Pupils develop their creativity and understand techniques used by artists and musicians
- **Maintain physical health:** Pupils participate in PE, understand healthy lifestyles, and develop coordination and teamwork skills
- **Use technology safely and effectively:** Pupils can use computing skills across the curriculum and understand online safety
- **PSHE/RE:** Children are taught about kindness, resilience, communication and other personal, social skills through the Jigsaw scheme. These skills are also embedded in the school values and classroom charters. At Birtley House, children are encouraged to take risks with their learning and mistakes are seen as an opportunity for learning.
- **Social skills:** All children participate in a directed social skills intervention that takes place with the whole-school and follows key skills such as communication, interaction and personal space.
- **Learn key life skills:** Pupils learn skills to help them in their future. We encourage independence and teach skills that they will need for their adult lives and to look after themselves e.g. teeth brushing, using cutlery, dressing etc.
- **Integrate socially:** Pupils have social skills lessons while at Birtley House which teach them skills to make friends and develop relationships. Pupils learn to become more confident and improve their communication.

Evidence of Curriculum Effectiveness

We know our curriculum is effective because:

- **Pupils make strong progress from their starting points:** Our assessment data shows pupils typically make better than expected progress, with many exceeding their EHCP targets
- **Pupils retain knowledge over time:** When we revisit topics, pupils can recall and build on prior learning
- **Pupils are engaged and motivated:** Pupil voice surveys and observations show high levels of involvement and enjoyment
- **Work quality is improving:** Book scrutinies show pupils produce work they're proud of, with improving presentation and depth
- **Pupils transfer learning:** We see evidence of pupils applying knowledge from one subject in another (e.g., using maths in science, literacy skills across all subjects)
- **Transition outcomes are positive:** Pupils transition successfully to their next settings, with receiving schools reporting pupils are well-prepared

How We Use Impact Data to Improve

We continuously refine our curriculum based on impact evidence:

- **Termly curriculum reviews:** The curriculum leader analyses assessment data, work samples, and monitoring findings to identify strengths and areas for development
- **Subject action plans:** Each subject has an action plan that responds to evaluation findings
- **Staff CPD:** Professional development is targeted at areas where impact data shows pupils need stronger teaching
- **Curriculum adjustments:** We adapt curriculum sequencing, resources, or teaching approaches when impact evidence shows pupils aren't learning as intended

Examples of curriculum improvements made:

- **Following staff feedback we noticed that the phonics programme needed to improve. We started the new phonics programme 'Little Wandle' and introduced it across the school. There is now engaging and purposeful phonics lessons that demonstrate the children are learning effectively.**
- **Pupil feedback showed low engagement and sometimes refusal to attend PE lessons. The PE curriculum was adapted to promote pupil engagement by focussing on a holistic, skills-based approach. Children now feel excited about PE and are more engaged.**
- Key skills being shared with the children so that they know why they are learning something in each subject.
- *[Add specific examples relevant to your school, such as: "Following work scrutiny showing limited depth in history, we introduced knowledge organisers and increased the frequency of retrieval practice. Subsequent assessments showed improved retention of historical facts and chronology"]*
- *[Another example: "Pupil voice indicated low confidence in maths problem-solving. We introduced daily reasoning challenges and saw a 30% increase in pupils meeting their maths targets"]*

Reporting Impact

We share curriculum impact with stakeholders through:

- **Termly reports to governors:** Including assessment data analysis, curriculum monitoring findings, and action plans
- **Annual reports to parents:** Detailed subject-by-subject reports showing what pupils know and can do
- **Annual Reviews:** EHCP progress is reported to parents and Local Authorities
- **School self-evaluation:** Our SEF includes detailed curriculum impact analysis
- **Website:** Curriculum maps and impact statements are published for parents

READING AND PHONICS CURRICULUM

Please see phonics policy

CURRICULUM SEQUENCING AND PROGRESSION

Curriculum Sequencing and Progression

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure pupils build knowledge systematically over time. We have identified the essential knowledge pupils need in each subject and planned how this knowledge builds year-on-year.

How We Plan Curriculum Sequencing

For each subject, we have:

1. **Identified core knowledge:** The key facts, concepts, and skills pupils must learn
2. **Mapped progression:** How knowledge becomes more complex from EYFS through to Year 6
3. **Planned for retention:** Regular opportunities to revisit and build on prior learning
4. **Created knowledge organisers:** Documents showing the key knowledge for each topic
5. **Established assessment points:** To check pupils have learned before moving on

Our Rolling Curriculum

Due to our mixed-age classes, we operate a two-year rolling curriculum. This means:

- **Cycle A and Cycle B:** Topics alternate each year to ensure full coverage
- **Differentiated outcomes:** Within each topic, learning is differentiated so younger/less experienced pupils access age-appropriate content while older/more experienced pupils study the same theme at greater depth
- **Progression within topics:** Each topic is designed with multiple entry points and increasing complexity
- **Coverage tracking:** We maintain records showing which pupils have studied which topics to ensure no gaps

Example of rolling curriculum in practice:

History - Year A: Ancient Civilizations (EYFS: Simple past/present, KS1: Significant people, KS2: Ancient Egypt in depth) History - Year B: Local History (EYFS: Our school's past, KS1: Changes in living memory, KS2: Local area through time)

Building Knowledge Over Time

We ensure pupils remember what they've learned through:

- **Retrieval practice:** Lessons begin with questions recalling prior learning
- **Spaced repetition:** Key knowledge is revisited at increasing intervals
- **Interleaving:** Mixing topics so pupils make connections between different areas of learning
- **Low-stakes quizzes:** Regular, informal testing to strengthen memory
- **Knowledge organisers:** Sent home so pupils can review key facts
- **Cumulative assessments:** Tests that include content from earlier in the year

Example: Knowledge Progression in Science

To illustrate how knowledge builds, here's an example from our science curriculum:

Topic: Plants

- **Year 1/2:** Identify common plants, describe plant structure (roots, stem, leaves, flowers), understand growth requirements (water, light, temperature)
- **Year 3/4:** Understand functions of plant parts (roots absorb water, leaves make food), explore how water is transported, investigate what plants need for healthy growth
- **Year 5/6:** Understand photosynthesis process, explain how plants reproduce, investigate factors affecting plant growth scientifically

Each stage builds on prior knowledge, with increasing complexity and scientific vocabulary.

Vocabulary Progression

We systematically develop vocabulary across the curriculum:

- **Tier 2 vocabulary:** Academic words used across subjects (e.g., analyse, compare, evaluate) are explicitly taught and displayed
- **Tier 3 vocabulary:** Subject-specific terms (e.g., photosynthesis, chronology, algorithm) are pre-taught before topics
- **Word walls:** Key vocabulary is displayed and referred to regularly
- **Vocabulary mats:** Pupils have topic specific visual word mats, displaying key vocabulary
- **Oral rehearsal:** Pupils practice using new vocabulary in sentences before writing
- **Assessment of vocabulary:** We check pupils can use and explain key terms
- **Precision teaching:** Pupils that have a barrier to learning vocabulary are supported by precision teaching.

Curriculum planning and organisation

Children are consulted in the development of their curriculum and pupil voice is used as a vital tool in the continuous evaluation of enjoyment, engagement and challenge, which helps us with the continual development of our curriculum practice.

As a school, we have defined the culture that underpins the process of planning for learning. The culture is built around these key points:

- ✓ Good planning is about being prepared to teach.
- ✓ Planning is about the learning journey you build and not what you write down.
- ✓ We do not do things for 'the sake of it'. If we record something, it is because it has a purpose.
- ✓ Planning must be flexible, in order to enable the learning to move with the children and in response to assessment for learning.
- ✓ We use our PPA efficiently, discussing and enriching learning. Communication within class teacher and support assistants is an essential part of the planning process.
- ✓ Planning effectively ensures all learners are catered for, challenged and lessons are differentiated.
- ✓ Recorded plans are for the teachers and TA and anyone who may need to cover.
- ✓ We ensure coverage of NC objectives and progression of knowledge and skills.
- ✓ It is essential that we use what we know of the children in order to match learning experiences to that needs and abilities of learners.

The curriculum leader has designed subject progression documents that ensure the National Curriculum is adequately covered and that learning is built upon year-on-year. These documents have been used to develop a school curriculum for each class.

Where appropriate, subjects are coordinated as part of topic based approach, we have a driver project for each term (Autumn, Spring, and Summer). However, this is not always appropriate and some subjects are taught discretely for part or of the whole year. Individual lessons may be blocked together to form a focused project or taught as discrete lessons, which are revisited throughout their time at the school.

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which class. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis. With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives, activities and outcomes expected for each unit of work. Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. Within this teachers will plan differentiation appropriate for the children in the task set in a lesson. Weekly plans are in place for English and Maths- these plans are flexible and adapted based on daily formative assessments.

Subject specific guidance can be found within the curriculum ambitions and progression of skills documents. These documents include detailed content, structure and progression of each subject including different resources and schemes we use.

All planning and curriculum files are kept in the SENCO's office. Copies of the curriculum maps and lesson plans are also on the school intranet in 'Staff Shared'. Class teachers have copies of the relevant planning file in their classroom. Curriculum maps are shared with parents to help support learning at home.

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE)

See RSE policy

MONITORING AND EVALUATION SCHEDULE

We have a rigorous monitoring cycle to ensure curriculum quality:

Annual Monitoring Activities

Activity	When	Who	Purpose	Outcomes
Curriculum review	End of Summer term	SLT	Review curriculum intent, implementation and impact across all subjects	Updated curriculum maps and action plans for next year
Assessment data analysis	End of each term	SLT	Analyse B Squared, PUMA, PIRA. GAPS data to identify trends and gaps	Intervention plans and curriculum adjustments
Policy review	September	Headteacher and SLT	Ensure policy remains current and compliant	Updated policy approved by governors
Pupil progress meetings	Termly	SLT	Discuss individual pupil progress and barriers to learning	Personalised support plans and curriculum adaptations

Termly Monitoring Activities

Activity	When	Who	Purpose	Outcomes
Work scrutiny	Once per half term (rotating subjects)	SLT	Check quality of work, curriculum coverage, progression	Subject-specific action points
Learning walks	Fortnightly	SLT	Observe learning environment, pupil engagement, teaching quality	Feedback to staff and CPD needs identified
Pupil voice	Once per half term	SLT	Gather pupils' views on their learning and curriculum	Curriculum improvements based on feedback

Activity	When	Who	Purpose	Outcomes
Governor monitoring	Once per term	Link Governor and SLT	Report on curriculum effectiveness to governing body	Governor reports and strategic decisions

Half-termly Monitoring Activities

Activity	When	Who	Purpose	Outcomes
Planning reviews	Every half-term	Curriculum Leader	Check curriculum coverage and quality of planning	Feedback to teachers and planning improvements
Assessment moderation	Every term	All teaching staff	Ensure consistency in assessment judgements	Agreed standards and accurate data
Reading assessments	Every half-term	Class Teachers	Track reading progress and phonics knowledge	Intervention groups updated
Peer observations	Half termly	Teachers	Practice sharing and evaluation	Sharing of best practice and peer support

Ongoing Monitoring Activities

Activity	Frequency	Who	Purpose	Outcomes
Lesson observations	2-3 per teacher per year	SLT	Monitor teaching quality and curriculum delivery	Individual teacher feedback and CPD
Drop-in observations	Weekly	SLT	Check day-to-day teaching and learning	Immediate feedback and support
Formative assessment	Daily	Class Teachers	Check pupils are learning the curriculum	Immediate adjustments to teaching

How We Use Monitoring Findings

Monitoring findings inform:

- **Individual teacher support:** Targeted CPD, mentoring, and resources
- **Whole-school CPD:** Training based on identified needs across the school
- **Curriculum adjustments:** Changes to sequencing, resources, or teaching approaches
- **Resource allocation:** Purchasing decisions based on curriculum needs
- **Strategic planning:** School development priorities
- **Governor decision-making:** Evidence-based governance

Reporting

Monitoring findings are reported through:

- **Weekly staff briefings:** Key messages and immediate actions
- **Termly reports to governors:** Including data analysis, monitoring summaries, and action plans
- **Annual reports to parents:** Individual pupil progress and curriculum coverage
- **School self-evaluation:** Ongoing evaluation of curriculum effectiveness
- **Annual curriculum review document:** Comprehensive analysis of curriculum impact

SAFEGUARDING WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and all staff have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Keeping Children Safe in Education Our curriculum plays a vital role in keeping children safe.

How Our Curriculum Supports Safeguarding

Our curriculum teaches pupils to keep themselves safe through:

1. RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education)

- Recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Understanding consent and boundaries
- Knowing who to talk to if they're worried
- Understanding their rights and how to get help

2. Online Safety

- Safe internet use across all subjects that use technology
- Recognising online risks including grooming, radicalisation, and exploitation
- Understanding how to report concerns online
- Critical evaluation of online information
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, with regular updates at least annually. Keeping Children Safe in Education

3. PSHE and Citizenship

- Understanding British Values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance)
- Recognising discrimination and prejudice
- Building resilience and emotional wellbeing
- Understanding mental health

4. Computing

- E-safety lessons teaching safe online behaviour
- Understanding privacy settings and personal information
- Recognising cyberbullying and how to respond

5. Across All Subjects

- Age-appropriate discussions about keeping safe

- Creating a culture where pupils feel able to speak out
- Teaching critical thinking to recognise manipulation or coercion

Recognising Abuse Through the Curriculum

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral. *Keeping Children Safe in Education*

Through curriculum delivery, staff may identify concerns about:

- **Physical abuse:** Unexplained injuries, reluctance to participate in PE
- **Emotional abuse:** Low self-esteem, difficulty forming relationships, anxiety about work
- **Sexual abuse:** Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, inappropriate behaviour
- **Neglect:** Poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, persistent hunger, poor attendance
- **Child-on-child abuse:** All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). *Keeping Children Safe in Education*

Curriculum Content That Raises Safeguarding Awareness

Specific curriculum topics that support safeguarding include:

- **EYFS:** Recognising emotions, understanding 'safe' and 'unsafe', knowing trusted adults
- **KS1:** Understanding privacy, recognising uncomfortable feelings, knowing how to get help
- **KS2:** Understanding different types of abuse, recognising grooming behaviours, online safety, peer pressure, healthy relationships

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Our curriculum creates a safe environment by:

- **Building trust:** Pupils know staff care about them and will listen
- **Promoting respect:** Zero tolerance of bullying, discrimination, or abuse
- **Encouraging openness:** Pupils feel confident to report concerns
- **Teaching vocabulary:** Pupils have words to describe concerns or abuse
- **Normalising help-seeking:** Pupils understand asking for help is a strength

Links to Other Policies

This curriculum policy works alongside:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy:** Our overarching safeguarding framework
- **Behaviour Policy:** Including anti-bullying and child-on-child abuse procedures
- **Online Safety Policy:** Detailed guidance on keeping children safe online
- **RSHE Policy:** Detailed content of relationships and health education

Staff Training

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated, and all staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually. *Keeping Children Safe in Education*

Staff training includes:

- Recognising signs of abuse and neglect
- How to respond to disclosures
- Understanding safeguarding procedures
- Online safety and current risks
- Child-on-child abuse
- Specific safeguarding issues (e.g., FGM, radicalisation, CSE)

Responding to Concerns

Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in the school's safeguarding procedures, and staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral. *Keeping Children Safe in Education*

If curriculum delivery raises safeguarding concerns, staff must:

1. Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy
2. Record concerns factually and in detail
3. Not investigate themselves
4. Maintain confidentiality

5. Continue to monitor the child

PUPILS WITH SEND

Curriculum for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans. *Curriculum-Policy-September-2025*

Our Approach to SEND

We believe all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, should have access to a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum. We adapt our curriculum to remove barriers to learning, not lower expectations.

The Four Areas of Need

We plan curriculum adaptations based on pupils' primary areas of need:

1. Communication and Interaction

- Visual timetables and now/next boards
- Simplified language and key vocabulary pre-taught
- Alternative communication methods (Makaton, PECS, communication aids)
- Structured opportunities for social interaction
- Small group or 1:1 teaching for new concepts
- Processing time built into lessons

2. Cognition and Learning

- Breaking learning into smaller steps
- Concrete resources and multi-sensory approaches
- Additional repetition and over-learning
- Simplified texts and differentiated resources
- Use of ICT to support access
- Pre-teaching and post-teaching interventions

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health

- Predictable routines and clear expectations
- Safe spaces and sensory breaks
- Emotion regulation strategies taught explicitly
- Positive behaviour support plans
- Nurture provision and therapeutic interventions
- Celebration of small successes

4. Sensory and/or Physical

- Adapted equipment and resources
- Environmental adaptations (lighting, seating, noise levels)
- Sensory breaks and movement opportunities
- Occupational therapy programmes embedded in the day
- Fine and gross motor skills development
- Alternative recording methods

Curriculum Adaptations

We adapt our curriculum through:

Differentiation

- Same learning objective, different levels of support or challenge
- Varied resources (concrete, pictorial, abstract)
- Adjusted outcomes (verbal, written, practical)
- Flexible groupings based on need

Personalisation

- Individual timetables for pupils with complex needs
- Bespoke learning programmes addressing EHCP outcomes
- Alternative curriculum pathways where appropriate

- Intensive interaction or sensory curriculum for pupils with profound needs

Specialist Teaching

- Speech and language therapy programmes delivered by trained staff
- Occupational therapy programmes embedded in lessons
- Specialist interventions (e.g., phonics, numeracy, handwriting)
- Therapeutic approaches (e.g., ELSA, play therapy, counselling)

EHCP Targets and Pupil Passports

Children at the school will be closely monitored and supported through Pupil Passports and EHCP short term targets with challenging but achievable targets which will be reviewed every 10-12 weeks.

EHCP Targets

- Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound
- Linked to curriculum objectives where possible
- Reviewed every 10-12 weeks with parents
- Annual Reviews evaluate progress and update outcomes

Pupil Passports

- One-page profiles showing strengths, needs, and strategies
- Created with pupil and parent input
- Shared with all staff working with the pupil
- Updated termly or when needs change

Assessment for Pupils with SEND

We assess SEND pupils' progress through:

- **B Squared:** Small-step tracking for pupils working below age expectations
- **EHCP target tracking:** Progress towards individual outcomes
- **Subject-specific assessments:** Adapted to pupils' access needs
- **Observation:** Engagement, independence, and application of skills

Working with External Specialists

We follow Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy programmes provided by external professionals when relevant. Curriculum-Policy-September-2025

We work with:

- Educational psychologists
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Physiotherapists
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Autism advisory teachers
- Sensory support services (hearing/visual impairment)
- Social care
- Health professionals

Advice from specialists is:

- Incorporated into Pupil Passports and EHCP targets
- Embedded into daily teaching and routines
- Reviewed regularly to check effectiveness
- Shared with all staff working with the pupil

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Developing Vocabulary Across the Curriculum

We recognise that vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to accessing the curriculum and achieving well.

We systematically teach and develop pupils' vocabulary across all subjects.

Three Tiers of Vocabulary

We teach vocabulary across three tiers:

Tier 1: Everyday vocabulary

- Common words used in daily conversation
- Developed through rich talk, stories, and experiences
- Foundation for all learning

Tier 2: Academic vocabulary

- Words used across multiple subjects (e.g., analyse, compare, explain, describe, evaluate)
- Essential for accessing learning in all areas
- Explicitly taught and regularly reinforced

Tier 3: Subject-specific vocabulary

- Technical terms specific to subjects (e.g., photosynthesis, chronology, algorithm, fraction)
- Pre-taught before topics
- Revisited and reinforced throughout teaching

How We Teach Vocabulary

Before Learning

- **Pre-teaching:** Key vocabulary introduced before topics begin
- **Word walls:** Subject vocabulary displayed prominently in classrooms
- **Knowledge organisers:** Key terms listed with definitions, sent home to parents
- **Etymology:** Exploring word origins and roots to aid understanding and memory

During Learning

- **Explicit teaching:** New words defined, explained, and modelled in context
- **Multiple exposures:** Words encountered repeatedly in different contexts
- **Oral rehearsal:** Pupils practice using new vocabulary in sentences before writing
- **Questioning:** Teachers use and expect pupils to use subject vocabulary
- **Modelling:** Teachers model correct use of vocabulary in their explanations

After Learning

- **Retrieval practice:** Regular quizzes and activities to recall vocabulary
- **Application:** Pupils use vocabulary in their own work across subjects
- **Vocabulary books:** KS2 pupils keep personal vocabulary journals
- **Assessment:** Pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary is assessed

Strategies for Developing Vocabulary

- **Rich texts:** High-quality books with ambitious vocabulary read daily
- **Word of the day/week:** Whole-school focus on specific vocabulary
- **Semantic mapping:** Creating word webs showing connections between words
- **Synonyms and antonyms:** Expanding pupils' word choices
- **Context clues:** Teaching pupils to work out meanings from context
- **Visual representations:** Images, diagrams, and actions to support understanding
- **Talk partners:** Opportunities to use new vocabulary in discussion
- **Word games:** Making vocabulary learning engaging and memorable

Supporting Pupils with Limited Vocabulary

For pupils with vocabulary gaps, we provide:

- **Additional pre-teaching:** Small group sessions before whole-class teaching
- **Visual supports:** Picture cards, symbol systems, communication aids
- **Simplified language:** Breaking down complex vocabulary into accessible terms
- **Repetition and over-learning:** More opportunities to encounter and use words

- **Speech and language therapy:** Following professional programmes
- **Home-school links:** Sharing vocabulary for parents to reinforce at home

Monitoring Vocabulary Development

We check pupils' vocabulary knowledge through:

- **Formative assessment:** Questioning and observation during lessons
- **Vocabulary quizzes:** Low-stakes testing of key terms
- **Work scrutiny:** Checking pupils use subject vocabulary in their writing
- **Reading assessments:** Vocabulary questions in comprehension tests
- **Pupil interviews:** Asking pupils to explain key terms

ONLINE SAFETY WITHIN THE CURRICULUM see policy

Wider curriculum opportunities and enrichment experiences:

Teaching staff are encouraged to broaden the experience of topics for children through: **trips, visitors into school and shared experiences of the wider community.**

- Learning different musical instruments such as boom whackers and ukuleles.
- Outdoor learning experiences.
- School council
- Residential trip
- Assemblies and performances to celebrate achievements inside and outside of school life.
- School newsletters.
- Charity events led by pupils.
- Competing in sport.
- Extra-curricular clubs.
- Promoting Spiritual, Moral, social and cultural development.

Parental Partnership

Parent friendly termly curriculum maps are sent home every term so that parents can be involved in supporting curriculum work. Curriculum-Policy-September-2025

We work closely with parents of SEND pupils through:

- Regular communication (daily where needed)
- Termly review meetings
- Annual Reviews for pupils with EHCPs
- Parent workshops on supporting learning at home
- Sharing strategies that work in school
- Celebrating successes together

Transition

We ensure successful transitions for SEND pupils through:

Enhanced transition arrangements (additional visits, photo books, social stories)

Detailed information sharing with receiving settings

Transition reviews with parents and receiving setting

Gradual introduction to new routines and environments

Continued support in the early weeks of transition

Follow-up meetings to check settling in

Parental involvement

We involve the parents fully in their child's learning. The school's curriculum is published to the school website in accordance with DfE guidelines. To aid transition, parents are given the opportunity to meet the new teacher at the beginning of the year and throughout the year when children join us. Curriculum maps are shared at the beginning of each term to the parents by the class teacher. We have weekly communication with parents for Literacy and numeracy indicating the theme and Ls for the week. We send out detailed end of year reports with broken down subject themes.

Assessment, feedback and record keeping

Our school considers accurate and focused assessment as the cornerstone of high quality teaching, as it allows learning to be planned and taught accurately as well as meeting the different needs of all our learners. The intention of our curriculum is not to create unnecessary work load for our teachers. This includes planning and assessment.

The culture at Birtley House is one of continually using what we know in order to move on children's learning. This formative assessment happens all the time. Skilled teachers and teaching assistants will use information and identify misconceptions and gaps in the lessons taught and provide support and additional challenge as required and appropriate. This is most effective when done immediately and at the point of learning.

The schools marking and feedback policy sets out further guidance on assessment.

The ingredients for successful teaching, learning and assessment:

- ✓ **The teacher's standards** are being met.
- ✓ Teachers are using their planning time effectively to ensure learning opportunities are **progressive, purposeful, engaging and enjoyable**.
- ✓ Work is planned around learning and not activities.
- ✓ Teachers and other staff have a **secure knowledge** of the age group, year group and needs of the children in their groups and classes.
- ✓ Work is **adapted**.
- ✓ The contribution of **teaching assistants** has a significant positive impact on the children's progress.
- ✓ Teachers enable students to **display positive learning behaviours**.
- ✓ **Well-being** and involvement in learning are high.
- ✓ **Good quality of work and presentation in books** helping children to present their ideas and take pride in what they have produced.

Children's work is assessed regularly and thoroughly using B squared online (teacher assessment) to monitor small steps of progress. Termly progress tests using the Rising Stars PIRA, PUMA and GAPS assessment programme. Pupils' performance is evaluated by reference to national norms through age expected levels as recorded in the B Squared and Rising Stars programmes. Pupils' individual EHCP targets are monitored and evaluated through the in-year and Annual Review process and reported to parents and the Local Authority.

Specialist Support

The children at the school will be closely monitored and supported through Pupil Passports (for those without EHCPs) and EHCP short term targets with challenging but achievable targets which will be reviewed every 10-12 weeks. We follow Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy programmes provided by external professionals when relevant.

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans. The curriculum will be adapted to meet the needs of individual children as required.

Parent friendly termly curriculum maps are sent home every term so that parents can be involved in supporting curriculum work.

Impact of the whole school curriculum

Is innovative and challenging

Promotes and celebrates diversity and tolerance of others.

Is inclusive, accessible and equitable for all.

Build resilience and promotes their social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing.

A child at Birtley House school experiences a curriculum that...

Is relevant to our children in the context of their lives.

Creates happy and confident individuals.

Helps our children contribute positively to their local community.

Enables application of core skills across all subjects.

Build on prior learning through fun, engaging and enriching experiences.

Allows children to progress at their own pace and levels.

Key roles and responsibilities

The Curriculum Leader and the Senior Leadership Team strategically lead and create the curriculum. The curriculum areas are inspired by the EYFS Early Learning Goals and allow meaningful links to be made across and within subjects.

Key person.	Key roles and responsibilities.
Class Teachers	• To use their year group (taught one not class age) subject knowledge and skills progression materials to plan and implement exciting and engaging lessons. • To ensure that all lessons planned build on prior learning. • To ensure that the quality of teaching and learning within all subjects is high. • To use a wide range of resources and assessment strategies. • Make the best use of resources to meet the needs of all learners. • To work with the curriculum leader to continually develop and improve practice.
The Curriculum Leader	• To develop and maintain each subject curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is in line with school values. • To develop and maintain progression documents for each subject. • To ensure learning resources are up to date, progressive and enhance learning. • To maintain a cycle of monitoring to ensure standards of teaching and learning are high in all subjects. • To track and monitor the progress and attainment of children in all subjects. • To ensure the curriculum is accessible for all learners. • To ensure teachers are supported and aware of the lesson intentions and objectives.
The Head Teacher	• All required elements of the curriculum have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met • The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed • Requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects are managed appropriately • The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements • Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs • To monitor and evaluate the impact of the school curriculum ○ and the roles of the curriculum leader in driving this.
The Governing Body	• To monitor and evaluate the impact of the school curriculum and the roles of the curriculum leader in driving this.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Further information can be found in our SEN policy.

Review

This policy is monitored through:

- ✓ Regular check of children's work
- ✓ Regular monitoring and evaluation of planning
- ✓ Evaluation and analysis of assessment data
- ✓ Lesson observation to monitor the quality of teaching and implementation of planning
- ✓ Pupil interviews and questionnaires

