



Teaching and Learning Policy

November 2025

Mission Statement

At Birtley House Independent School we care and are concerned for the children in our charge. We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to our pupils' educational development and needs, and to assist in the children's spiritual, social, cultural and moral development as well. We consider the children's attitude to school and work, to those around them, and their attitude to themselves to be most important. We aim to instil in every child a sense of mutual respect, of equality of opportunity and of belonging to a happy and caring school in which all members are respected and valued.

We have high academic and behavioural standards and expectations, and hope that all our pupils will achieve their fullest potential and develop their individual talents and strengths accordingly. We believe that parents share our aims and will support us in all our endeavours.

This policy guides what children do, what all staff members do, how time is managed, how the school is organised, how the classrooms are organised to create an effective learning environment to meet the needs of all children. It will ensure that all children receive a consistent and inclusive entitlement.

Aims

Children will develop a positive, responsible and independent attitude towards work whilst supporting pupils' additional needs. They will achieve their potential in terms of academic achievement, social communication skills, emotional literacy, speech and language development, mindfulness abilities, citizenship skills, moral and spiritual awareness. The pupils will be happy and enjoy their time in school. They will be tolerant and respect the views of others and understand how to be good citizens. They will work within the principles of Restorative Practices.

Children will learn best when:

- They are interested and well-motivated
- They are given tasks that match their ability yet challenge them
- They clearly understand the task and what is expected of them
- They feel valued and secure
- They are praised for achievements
- They are encouraged to raise self-expectations
- Their emotional needs are met
- They have a positive self-image
- They feel safe and secure with clearly understood boundaries regarding behaviour and attitude
- A variety of learning styles is used – auditory, visual and kinaesthetic

The Learning Environment – is organised so that all children have an opportunity to:

- Work individually
- Work in groups
- Work in pairs
- Work as a class
- Work collaboratively and co-operatively in ability and friendship groups

- Solve problems
- Be creative
- Use initiative
- Achieve success at given tasks
- Develop good social skills
- Receive appropriate support

The learning environment should be:

- A calm working atmosphere
- Challenging
- Stimulate questions
- Inclusive, well organised and resourced
- Encouraging
- Provide equal opportunities
- Happy and caring
- Able to meet the sensory needs of pupils

Teaching

All teaching at Birtley House uses multisensory strategies.

A variety of teaching approaches will be used depending on the content of the subject and the skills to be acquired and practised. All successful teaching will incorporate the following:

- A well-paced lesson
- Verbal discussion
- Consideration of technology and online safety in all forms
- A clear understanding of objectives and expectations of success (with shared learning outcome and plenary at end of lesson)
- Pupil contributions are encouraged and developed
- Establishing what pupils know and building on their knowledge
- Differentiation either by task, support or outcome based on professional understanding of each pupil's needs
- Effective classroom management organisation
- An inclusive approach where all children follow a programme of work which meets the requirement of the New National Curriculum 2014
- A variety of learning styles – auditory, visual, kinaesthetic

Building Knowledge Over Time

At Birtley House, we recognise that effective learning requires pupils to remember what they've been taught and build on this knowledge systematically over time.

How We Ensure Learning Builds on Prior Knowledge

Teachers plan lessons that:

- Begin with retrieval practice to activate prior learning
- Make explicit links to previous topics and lessons
- Use knowledge organisers to show how new learning connects to what pupils already know
- Build complexity gradually, ensuring secure foundations before moving on

Retrieval and Retention Strategies

All lessons incorporate strategies to help pupils remember:

Retrieval Practice

- Lessons begin with low-stakes questions recalling prior learning
- "Do Now" activities that revisit content from previous lessons or topics
- Regular mini-quizzes to strengthen memory without pressure

Spaced Repetition

- Key knowledge is revisited at increasing intervals (e.g., same day, next day, next week, next month)
- Important concepts are woven into subsequent topics
- End-of-term reviews consolidate learning from across the term

Interleaving

- Topics are mixed so pupils make connections between different areas of learning
- Skills from one subject are applied in others (e.g., using math's in science)
- Cumulative assessments include content from earlier in the year

Knowledge Organisers

- Each topic has a knowledge organiser showing key facts, vocabulary, and concepts
- These are displayed on desks, in classrooms and sent home to parents
- Pupils use them for self-quizzing and revision
- Teachers refer to them regularly during lessons

Two-Year Rolling Curriculum

Due to our mixed-age classes, we operate a two-year rolling curriculum (Cycle A and Cycle B). This means:

- Topics alternate each year to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum
- 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
- Teachers maintain records showing which pupils have studied which topics to ensure no gaps in learning
- Progression is carefully planned so pupils build on their learning regardless of which cycle they join

Using Questions to Drive Learning

Each topic is framed around an overarching question that guides pupils' learning journey and helps them understand the purpose of their learning.

Teachers maintain detailed records showing which pupils have studied which topics, and planning is differentiated so that pupils revisit topics at greater depth or from a different angle in subsequent cycles.

Overarching Questions and Enquiry-Based Learning

Every topic begins with a big question that:

- Defines the 'why', 'what' and 'how' of the learning
- Ensures coherence and deep understanding
- Makes learning relevant and meaningful for pupils
- Cannot be answered with a simple yes/no response
- Requires pupils to explore, investigate, and think critically

Examples:

- Science: "How do plants survive and grow?"
- History: "How did the Ancient Egyptians build such incredible structures?"
- Geography: "Why do people choose to live in different places?"

Progressive Sub-Questions

Each lesson uses more specific, open-ended questions that:

- Build upon each other throughout the topic
- Encourage deeper thinking and exploration
- Promote critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning
- Generate discussion and collaborative learning
- Help pupils work towards answering the overarching question

In Practice

Teachers will:

- Display the overarching question prominently in the classroom
- Refer to it regularly throughout the topic
- Use sub-questions to structure individual lessons
- Encourage pupils to ask their own questions
- Celebrate when pupils can answer the overarching question using evidence from their learning
- Use the overarching question as the basis for end-of-topic assessment

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

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, investigate)
- Essential for accessing learning in all areas
- Explicitly taught and regularly reinforced across the curriculum

Tier 3: Subject-Specific Vocabulary

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

Teaching Vocabulary Systematically

Before Learning

Pre-teaching:

Key vocabulary is introduced before topics begin, often in small groups for pupils who need additional support.

- Word walls: Subject vocabulary is displayed prominently in classrooms with visual supports
- Knowledge organisers: Key terms are listed with child-friendly definitions and sent home to parents
- Etymology: Where appropriate, we explore word origins and roots to aid understanding and memory

During Learning

- Explicit teaching: New words are defined, explained, and modelled in context
- Multiple exposures: Words are encountered repeatedly in different contexts throughout the topic
- Oral rehearsal: Pupils practice using new vocabulary in sentences before being expected to write with it

Questioning:

Teachers model and expect pupils to use subject vocabulary in their responses

- Visual supports: Images, diagrams, symbols, and actions support understanding, particularly for pupils with communication needs

After Learning

- Retrieval practice: Regular quizzes and activities to recall and use vocabulary
- Application: Pupils use vocabulary in their own work across subjects
- Assessment: Pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary is assessed through questioning, observation, and written work

Strategies We Use

- Rich texts: High-quality books with ambitious vocabulary are 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 and precision
- Context clues: Teaching pupils to work out meanings from context
- Talk partners: Opportunities to use new vocabulary in discussion before writing
- Word games: Making vocabulary learning engaging and memorable
- Vocabulary mats: Topic-specific visual word mats displaying key vocabulary with images

Supporting Pupils with Limited Vocabulary

For pupils with vocabulary gaps or communication needs, we provide:

- Additional pre-teaching: Small group sessions before whole-class teaching
- Visual supports: Picture cards, symbol systems (e.g., Makaton), communication aids
- Simplified language: Breaking down complex vocabulary into accessible terms while maintaining high expectations
- Repetition and over-learning: More opportunities to encounter and use words
- Alternative communication: Use of Makaton, PECS, or communication devices as appropriate
- Speech and language therapy programmes: Following professional programmes delivered by trained staff
- Home-school links: Sharing vocabulary lists and knowledge organisers for parents to reinforce at home
- Precision teaching: For pupils with specific barriers to learning vocabulary

Classroom management

This will be based on:

- Principles of Restorative Practices
- Movement and sensory breaks
- A good balance of individual, group and whole class teaching
- Division of children into ability sets for literacy, phonics, numeracy and some interventions
- Effective management of groups
- Effective management of Teaching Support Assistants
- Well labelled resources using visual symbols when needed
- Encouraging independence to ensure children move onto another activity if they have finished a piece of work

- Children encouraged to be independent in selecting equipment for tasks using visual labels
- Arrangement of areas to enhance learning and taking into account individual ASD/sensory needs
- Structured lessons that include a range of strategies and opportunities for collaborative learning.

The Curriculum must:

- Ensure breadth
- Provide curriculum links
- Be multisensory and engaging
- Emphasise core subjects remembering that all subjects must be well taught
- Acknowledge children's individual strengths and weaknesses
- Provide challenge and support differentiation
- Homework is set to consolidate learning, practice key skills, and involve parents in their child's education. It is differentiated to meet pupils' needs and is always accessible, with support provided where necessary

Planning (see Curriculum policy for more detail)

We use a range of curriculum programmes to help support our curriculum. We adapt and modify these to match the National Curriculum guidelines. For literacy we use Literacy Shed to provide children with a wide range of literature and to ensure all of the national curriculum standards are met.

For Numeracy we use the White Rose programme and support this heavily with SEND friendly resources e.g. Numicon. Phonics is planned using Little Wandle and we follow this systematic approach to Phonics. The foundation subjects are planned and modified from Curriculum Maestro. This supports with an excellent breadth and depth of learning.

We use Curriculum Maestro to create our curriculum ensuring all skills and knowledge is covered within the two-year cycle. We also use Kapow schemes for Computing and Music and Jigsaw for PSHE. We have created our own PE curriculum with the support of Twinkl Mastery and realPE. Curriculum leaders ensure to adapt the learning schemes to meet the needs of all of our pupils and staff regularly monitor the key aspects of the curriculum.

However, all lessons are adapted to incorporate creative visual and multi-sensory teaching strategies. Whole school targets are set yearly for raising the achievement of pupils with progress towards targets monitored and evaluated. Individual PP targets/EHCP targets are set in accordance to children's individual need. Furthermore, individual pupil targets are set in literacy, numeracy and personal areas of development, as well as ability group targets for numeracy and literacy. Planning should be detailed but flexible ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum.

Policy documents are developed by staff and regularly reviewed. Termly and weekly plans will include learning outcomes and evaluation of lessons. Regular meetings are held to discuss aspects of the curriculum.

Record Keeping

All teachers keep records of work and progress of development, as well as ability group ones. All pupils have Additional Educational Needs and they have either detailed Pupil Passports or Education Health Care Plans which are evaluated and revised at least twice per year.

Assessment – See Assessment Policy

Teachers use Assessment for Learning strategies, including sharing success criteria with pupils, using questioning to check understanding, and providing feedback that helps pupils improve.

The progress of all children is monitored and assessed. Teacher assessment uses BSquared Connecting Steps online as ongoing assessment with Rising Stars PIRA and PUMA tests 3 times per year as well as individual assessments by external professionals in, line with pupils' individual needs (eg. EP assessments, SALT and OT). Reading tests, using Toe by Toe, are done twice per year. Summative assessments for science are completed at the end of each science topic. Writing is assessed three times each year.

All pupils are assessed on entry and throughout the year. See assessment schedule:

- Help teacher plan effectively
- Provide essential feedback to the children
- Provide evidence of Additional Educational Needs
- Aid discussion between teacher and parents

Information to parents

Parents are informed of their child's progress through three yearly meetings, open afternoons, Annual Review of EHCP meetings, in year EHCP Reviews, PPs and PP Reviews, Annual Reports, and daily link. An online communication system (engage portal) is used to share learning and communicate achievements to parents.

Achievement

Should be celebrated as an ongoing process by:

- Praise from a member of staff
- Reward Assembly with Worker of the Week prizes, lunchtime award, Headteacher's Award
- Harry Potter House Points system
- Awards of merit marks, stickers, certificates, attendance awards etc
- Encouragement of self-esteem
- Opportunities to perform and share within school and after school and within the wider community
- Time allocation for discussion with child on targets and encouragement of some self- appraisal
- Displays of work

Displays should:

- Be attractive, stimulating and interactive, using both 2D and 3D
- Be inclusive
- Include lots of photos so that children can relate to the subject matter and recall points of learning
- Reflect differing aptitudes and talents
- Reflect different areas of the curriculum
- We use working walls, so displays are utilized by children and add another dimension to their learning.
- Include key vocabulary which matches the word mats used on tables.
- Is SEND friendly to ensure children can read and understand the displays e.g. Widget is often used

Behaviour Management

Uses the principles of Restorative Practices (see Behaviour policy for more detail).

Rules should be:

- Clearly understood by children
- Fair and consistently enforced
- Realistic
- Positive e.g. walk – don't run, rather than a list of don'ts
- Negotiated and agreed with input from the children
- Set within framework of the Behaviour Policy
- Pupils will write their own class rules and take responsibility for them

Safeguarding Through Teaching and Learning

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Our teaching and learning approaches play a vital role in keeping children safe.

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Our teaching creates a safe environment by:

Building Trust

- Pupils know staff care about them and will listen
- Consistent, caring relationships with all adults
- A culture of respect and mutual support
- Clear boundaries and expectations

Promoting Openness

- Pupils feel confident to report concerns
- "It's okay to tell" is reinforced regularly
- Multiple trusted adults pupils can talk to
- Safe spaces for pupils to share worries

Teaching Protective Vocabulary

- Pupils learn words to describe their feelings and concerns
- Age-appropriate language about bodies, relationships, and safety
- Vocabulary to recognise and report uncomfortable situations
- Communication aids and symbols for pupils with communication needs

Normalising Help-Seeking

- Pupils understand asking for help is a strength
- Regular discussions about who can help with different problems
- Celebration of pupils who seek support
- Clear procedures pupils know and understand

Safeguarding Within the Curriculum

Through our teaching, pupils learn to keep themselves safe:

RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education)

- Recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Understanding consent and boundaries
- Knowing who to talk to if worried
- Understanding their rights

Online Safety

- Safe internet use across all subjects using technology
- Recognising online risks including grooming and exploitation
- Understanding how to report concerns online
- Critical evaluation of online information
- Privacy and personal information protection

PSHE and Citizenship

- Understanding British Values
- Recognising discrimination and prejudice
- Building resilience and emotional wellbeing
- Understanding mental health

Across All Subjects

- Age-appropriate discussions about keeping safe
- Critical thinking to recognise manipulation
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Building confidence and self-esteem

Recognising Concerns Through Teaching

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 or behaviour
- Neglect: Poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, persistent hunger, poor attendance
- Child-on-child abuse: Bullying, inappropriate behaviour towards peers

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect
- Report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record concerns factually and in detail
- Not investigate themselves
- Maintain confidentiality
- Continue to monitor the child

Links to Policies

This approach to safeguarding works alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy (including anti-bullying)
- Online Safety Policy
- RSHE Policy

All staff receive safeguarding training at induction and regular updates at annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The curriculum is monitored and evaluated throughout the year by the Curriculum co-ordinator in order to:

- Raise achievement of pupils
- Ensure pupils do not repeat topics (2 year rolling programme)
- Evaluate teaching and learning
- Provide critical reflection on policies and practices

Staff Development

Children learn best when staff have opportunities to develop personally and professionally by:

- Visiting other schools (including special units and mainstream schools)
- Having access to well-planned INSET
- Leading INSET / Feeding back from courses to other staff
- Knowledge of relevant research material
- Peer Observations and Monitoring to support professional development

The Performance Management programme will also facilitate staff development.

Enhanced SEND Adaptations in Teaching

Teaching Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All pupils at Birtley House have additional educational needs. Our teaching is adapted to remove barriers to learning while maintaining high expectations for all.

The Four Areas of Need

We adapt our teaching based on pupils' primary areas of need:

1. Communication and Interaction

Teaching adaptations include:

- Visual supports: Visual timetables, now/next boards, task boards showing steps
- Simplified language: Breaking down instructions into smaller chunks, using concrete language
- Pre-teaching vocabulary: Introducing key words before lessons with visual supports
- Alternative communication: Use of Makaton signs, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), communication aids
- Processing time: Allowing extra time for pupils to process information and formulate responses
- Structured social opportunities: Planned partner work, small group activities with clear roles
- Small group or 1:1 teaching: For introducing new or complex concepts
- Repetition and modelling: Demonstrating tasks multiple times, using think-aloud strategies
- Visual instructions: Task cards, symbol-supported worksheets, photo sequences

2. Cognition and Learning

Teaching adaptations include:

- Breaking learning into smaller steps: Chunking information and tasks into manageable parts
- Concrete resources: Using manipulatives, real objects, and hands-on materials before moving to abstract concepts
- Multi-sensory approaches: Engaging visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learning styles
- Additional repetition and over-learning: Revisiting concepts multiple times in different contexts
- Simplified texts: Adapted reading materials maintaining content but reducing language complexity
- Differentiated resources: Providing scaffolded worksheets, writing frames, sentence stems
- Use of ICT: Technology to support access (e.g., word processors, speech-to-text, educational apps)
- Pre-teaching and post-teaching: Small group sessions before/after whole-class teaching
- Reduced cognitive load: Limiting the amount of new information introduced at once
- Memory aids: Visual prompts, checklists, knowledge organisers, working memory strategies
- Precision teaching: Targeted intervention for specific skill gaps

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Teaching adaptations include:

- Predictable routines: Consistent daily structures, advance warning of changes
- Clear expectations: Visual rules, behaviour charts, explicit teaching of expectations
- Safe spaces: Access to calm areas, sensory rooms, nurture provision
- Sensory and movement breaks: Planned opportunities to regulate emotions and energy
- Emotion regulation strategies: Teaching and practicing techniques (e.g., breathing exercises, zones of regulation)
- Positive behaviour support plans: Individual strategies based on understanding triggers and needs
- Restorative approaches: Repairing relationships, understanding impact of behaviour
- Celebration of small successes: Frequent, specific praise and rewards
- Reduced pressure: Low-stakes tasks, opportunities to succeed, no-fail activities
- Therapeutic interventions: ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), play therapy, counselling
- Flexible seating: Allowing movement, wobble cushions, standing desks
- Choice and control: Offering appropriate choices to build autonomy and reduce anxiety
- Trusted adult: Key person for check-ins and support

4. Sensory and/or Physical

Teaching adaptations include:

- Adapted equipment: Pencil grips, sloped boards, specialist scissors, adapted cutlery
- *Environmental adaptations:
 - Lighting: Reducing glare, using natural light, dimming for sensory needs
 - Seating: Appropriate chairs, cushions, positioning for access
 - Noise levels: Ear defenders, quiet work areas, sound-absorbing materials
 - Visual environment: Reducing clutter, using neutral colours, clear labelling
- Sensory breaks: Scheduled movement, proprioceptive activities, sensory circuits
- Occupational therapy programmes: Embedded throughout the day (e.g., handwriting programmes, sensory diets)
- Fine motor development: Daily activities (threading, playdough, tweezers, cutting)
- Gross motor development: Movement breaks, outdoor learning, physical activities
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Alternative recording methods:

- Verbal responses recorded by adults
- Use of ICT (typing, voice recording, tablets)
- Photographs of practical work
- Drawing or diagrams instead of writing
- Accessible resources: Large print, tactile materials, adapted books
- Physical support: Adult assistance with manipulating equipment, positioning
- Reduced writing demands: Cloze procedures, labelling, matching activities

Differentiation Strategies

We differentiate teaching through:

By Task

- Different activities for different groups based on ability and need
- Same learning objective but varied complexity of task
- Simplified or extended versions of activities
- Choice of tasks at different levels

By Support

- Teaching assistant support for individuals or small groups
- Peer support and talk partners
- Adult modelling and guided practice
- Pre-teaching or additional explanation
- Use of visual aids, resources, and equipment

By Outcome

- Same task but different expectations for different pupils
- Varied success criteria based on individual targets
- Acceptance of different forms of recording (written, verbal, practical, visual)
- Differentiated questioning to extend or support

By Resource

- Adapted worksheets (simplified text, visual supports, reduced content)
- Different reading materials at appropriate levels
- Concrete materials for some, pictorial for others, abstract for more able
- Technology to support access

Personalised Learning

Specialist Teaching and Interventions

We deliver specialist support through:

Speech and Language Therapy Programmes

- Delivered by trained staff following professional programmes
- Embedded into daily routines and lessons
- Individual and group sessions
- Use of visual supports, Makaton, communication aids

Occupational Therapy Programmes

- Sensory diets and regulation strategies
- Fine and gross motor development activities
- Handwriting programmes
- Environmental adaptations

Targeted Interventions

- Phonics interventions (Little Wandle)
- Numeracy interventions (addressing specific gaps)
- Handwriting and fine motor programmes
- Social skills groups
- Precision teaching for specific skills
- Working memory interventions

Therapeutic Approaches

- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Play therapy
- Counselling
- Mindfulness and yoga
- Restorative practices

Working with External Specialists

We work collaboratively with external professionals including:

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

Advice from specialists is:

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

Monitoring Progress for SEND Pupils

We track progress through:

Small-Step Assessment

- B Squared: Tracking progress in small increments for pupils working below age expectations
- Celebration of all progress, however small
- Regular review of next steps

EHCP Target Tracking

- Targets reviewed every 10-12 weeks
- Progress reported to parents and Local Authority
- Annual Reviews evaluate overall progress and update outcomes

Subject-Specific Assessment

- Adapted to pupils' access needs
- May use different assessment methods (observation, practical demonstration, verbal response)
- Focus on what pupils can do and next steps

Observation

- Engagement in learning
- Independence and application of skills
- Social interaction and communication
- Emotional regulation and wellbeing

Creating an Inclusive Classroom

All classrooms are organised to support SEND pupils:

Visual Environment

- Clear labelling with symbols and pictures
- Visual timetables at whole-class and individual level
- Working walls showing current learning
- Reduced clutter for pupils with sensory needs
- Displays celebrating all pupils' achievements

Resources

- Well-organised and accessible
- Visual labels using symbols where needed
- Adapted equipment readily available
- Sensory resources (fidgets, timers, ear defenders)
- Communication aids and visual supports

Routines and Structure

- Consistent daily routines
- Clear transitions with warnings
- Visual schedules and now/next boards
- Predictable lesson structures
- Time for processing and regulation

Flexible Groupings

- Ability groups for core subjects
- Mixed groups for social learning
- Friendship groups for collaborative work
- 1:1 support when needed
- Opportunities for independent work

Staff Training and Expertise

All staff receive training in:

- Understanding different types of SEND
- Differentiation and adaptation strategies
- Use of visual supports and communication aids
- Behaviour support and emotional regulation
- Specific interventions and therapy programmes
- Safeguarding SEND pupils

Teaching assistants receive additional training in:

- Delivering specific interventions
- Supporting communication and interaction
- Implementing therapy programmes
- Positive behaviour support
- Meeting physical and personal care needs

Partnership with Parents

We work closely with parents of SEND pupils through:

- Daily communication (home-school books, ISAMs portal)
- Regular meetings to review progress
- Sharing strategies that work at school
- Providing resources and activities for home
- Involving parents in target setting
- Celebrating successes together
- Supporting parents to understand their child's needs

Preparing for 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 schools
- Gradual introduction to new routines and environments
- Continued support in early weeks of transition
- Follow-up meetings to check settling in
- Preparation for both mainstream and specialist secondary settings

Celebrating Achievement

We celebrate SEND pupils' achievements through:

- Recognition of effort and progress, not just attainment
- Personalised reward systems
- Sharing successes with parents daily
- Worker of the Week awards
- Display of work
- Opportunities to share learning with others
- Building confidence and self-esteem

Enhanced Impact and Success Criteria

Impact: How We Know Our Teaching is Effective

We systematically evaluate the impact of our teaching to ensure all pupils are learning and making progress.

Evidence of Effective Teaching and Learning

We know our teaching is effective when we see:

Knowledge Retention

- Pupils can recall and apply knowledge from previous lessons and topics
- Retrieval practice shows pupils remember key facts and concepts over time
- Pupils make connections between different areas of learning
- End-of-topic assessments demonstrate secure understanding

Pupil Engagement and Motivation

- Pupils are actively involved in lessons and eager to learn
- Pupils ask questions and show curiosity about topics
- Pupils persevere when learning is challenging
- Pupils take pride in their work and celebrate their achievements
- Attendance and behaviour for learning are positive

Quality of Work

- Work in books shows depth of learning, not just completion of tasks
- Presentation is improving over time
- Pupils can explain their learning and reasoning
- Work demonstrates progress from starting points
- Pupils apply skills independently

Progress Over Time

- Assessment data shows pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points
- Pupils meet or exceed their EHCP targets
- Progress is evident across all subjects, not just core areas
- Pupils working below age-related expectations make small-step progress tracked through B Squared
- Pupils achieve age-expected standards in Rising Stars assessments where appropriate

Application of Learning

- Pupils transfer skills and knowledge from one subject to another
- Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary accurately in their work
- Pupils can apply learning to real-life contexts
- Pupils demonstrate independence in selecting and using appropriate strategies

Personal Development

- Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem
- Pupils show resilience when facing challenges
- Pupils work collaboratively and support each other's learning
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning
- Pupils are prepared for their next steps (transition to secondary settings)

How We Measure Impact

Formative Assessment (Ongoing)

- Teacher questioning during lessons
- Observation of pupil engagement and understanding
- Review of work in books
- Pupil self-assessment and reflection
- Discussion with pupils about their learning

Summative Assessment (Termly)

- B Squared tracking showing small-step progress
- Rising Stars PIRA, PUMA, and GAPS tests
- Little Wandle phonics assessments (6-weekly)
- End-of-topic assessments in foundation subjects
- EHCP target reviews (every 10-12 weeks)
- Writing assessments (3 times per year)
- Reading tests using Toe by Toe (twice per year)

Monitoring Activities

- Work scrutiny (once per half-term, rotating subjects)
- Learning walks (fortnightly)
- Lesson observations (2-3 per teacher per year)
- Pupil voice surveys and interviews
- Planning reviews
- Assessment moderation

Using Impact Data to Improve

When impact evidence shows pupils aren't learning as intended, we:

- Adapt teaching approaches immediately
- Provide additional pre-teaching or intervention
- Re-teach concepts using different strategies
- Adjust curriculum sequencing or pacing
- Provide targeted CPD for staff
- Review and update resources
- Consult with external specialists where appropriate

Success Criteria

We will have succeeded if we have:

- Created a stimulating but calm effective learning environment
- Delivered an enriching curriculum with many opportunities for learning in context via trips and visitors
- Developed each child's potential, especially in their areas of individual need
- Developed each child's self-esteem, confidence, positive outlook, and resilience
- Prepared each child for their appropriate secondary setting (mainstream or special)
- Ensured pupils retain and can apply knowledge over time
- Fostered a love of learning and curiosity

Measured By:

- Pupils making appropriate and expected progress through Key Stages, taking into account their additional needs
- Achieving as well as or better than similar schools
- Meeting or exceeding EHCP targets
- Positive parental feedback and involvement
- Successful transitions to secondary settings, including mainstream placements where appropriate
- Developing a happy school community where staff and children enjoy working
- Pupils demonstrating knowledge retention in retrieval practice and assessments
- High levels of pupil engagement and positive attitudes to learning

