

Birch Wood School

Quality of Education Handbook/Teaching and Learning Policy



Birch Wood School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Last Review: March 2023
Next Review: March 2024
Ratified: March 2023

Quality of Education Handbook

The following document outlines our school ethos with regards to teaching and learning. It incorporates guidance on planning for pupil feedback, assessment, recording and reporting at Birch Wood School. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policy documentation.

Rationale & Aims

Birch Wood School aims to encourage all our pupils to achieve their potential through a culture of high expectations for everyone. Learning is at the centre of all that we do and we aim to encourage a commitment to learning that is not based solely on the acquisition of knowledge but on the development of the skills, attributes and values needed to encourage life-long learning and employment. We recognise and value even the smallest steps of progress and know that for some of our learner's progress will need to be identified using different types of assessment. At the heart of our teaching and learning ethos is the creation of an environment which builds young people's self-belief and confidence through systems of praise for effort. Offering praise for pupils' work and efforts can build a mindset that allows pupils to begin to view their own intelligence as something that can be developed. This mindset of developing intelligence will increase pupils' ability to "bounce back" in the face of academic setbacks and other difficulties. This approach supports our vision that pupils should develop a love for learning.

The aims of this document are to set out a clear set of high expectations and a common approach to teaching and learning at Birch Wood School so that teachers, parents/carers and pupils are all aware of and can work towards the highest possible standards of education. It is designed in such a way that whilst teaching staff are encouraged to adopt a style of their own and are not expected to teach in any specific way; regular monitoring of teaching and learning takes place to ensure that high standards are always met and therefore, the best outcomes for the pupils.

At Birch Wood we believe assessment for learning is central to effective teaching and learning. Feedback and marking will provide constructive feedback to every pupil by focusing on success and improvement needs against clear learning intentions. This will enable pupils to become reflective learners and help them to 'diminish differences' between current and targeted performance. Assessment is also a valuable tool in helping 'personalise' learning to ensure that instruction is matched more appropriately to individual pupil needs. In essence high quality assessment for learning is lesson planning, which is why different assessment approaches are used as appropriate for pupils SEND, with a clear focus on what is outlined in their EHCP.

This protocol document is structured into three sections that reflect how we approach our curriculum design, delivery and evaluation:

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Intent

Curriculum : *Top Level View*

The school's vision and values are central to all decisions made around curriculum design. Our ENABLES ethos helps us to focus on what we want our curriculum to achieve for all pupils. Our staff mission statement means our curriculum is dynamic – we are constantly reflecting and refining our curriculum offer.



STAFF MISSION STATEMENT

'We have an unwavering passion and determination to continuously improve our school to provide the best outcomes for every pupil; not because we aren't good enough, but because we can always be better.'

Curriculum Pathways: *Ambition Without Limits*

The three curriculum pathways at Birch Wood are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of learners with an EHCP and ensures we have 'ambition without limits'. We provide a bespoke approach to our pupils' very individual needs and so movement between pathways is fluid. Pupils in EYFS are not placed on a pathway, this is so we are able to implement an EYFS specific curriculum and enables us to assess which pathway would be most appropriate moving forward.







Curriculum		Engagement	Independence	Aspire
		An education at Birch Wood ENABLES Empowered for Independent Lives – Nurturing – Aspiring – Belonging – Love of Learning – Enables – Safe & Happy		
The 3 curriculum pathways at Birch Wood are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of learners with an EHCP. We provide a bespoke approach to our pupils' very individual needs and so movement between pathways is fluid. Aspects such as Mental Health and Wellbeing, Community Inclusion and Communication & Interaction are woven into the fabric of each pathway.	Inte nt	Empowering pupils, enriching lives and giving opportunities to make progress towards fulfilment and independence. Providing methods of communication and a desire to engage. Ensuring pupils with complex health needs maintain their progress.	Maximise opportunities to build independent lives; including developing advocacy, personal safety and supported employment opportunities. Core literacy/communication and numeracy. Link in to colleges, which build on interests and life skills Post 19.	Reach full academic potential whilst developing life skills to be safe, independent and fulfilled. Progression through school develops a positive work ethic & key skills for employment. By the end of KS4/5 young people are ready to build on qualifications at college (L1 or 2) or employment pathway to build towards future aspirations. Be responsible citizens. Developing self-regulation, positive relationship supporting mental health and wellbeing
	Impl eme ntati on	A stimulating sensory curriculum of different therapies, based around the five key areas. Evidence collated on Kinteract.	A semi-formal and highly personalised curriculum. Closely tracked towards EHCP outcomes.	Adapted national curriculum and statutory assessment at primary age where appropriate. Accreditation includes GCSE & BTEC. Mastery assessment. Broad, balanced, exciting with focus on core subjects, PSHE, safety and employability.
	Imp act	Happy, secure and empowered young people with increased physical mobility, communication skills and independence.	Independent, happy and safe young people who have fulfilled their potential.	Independent, happy, aspirational young people who have secured a college place or have gained employment.
Assessment		MAPP2	MAPP2 or Bridge or Mastery	Mastery + Autism Progression Framework
Wider Context		Engagement Model	Pre-Key Stage Standards	National Curriculum

Curriculum Design: *Golden Threads*

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils and so will look different across the pathways. The following golden threads outline commonality in curriculum design and help frame discussions, decisions and quality assurance.

Golden Threads...

	Why this? Why now?	What has informed your decisions around what to teach and when? Was this informed by research? Focus on sequences of learning
	Rooted in the school's intention for the curricula at Birch Wood	Engagement, Independence and Aspire Pathways An education at Birch Wood Enables
	Plan for reading and communication	Embedding reading into the curriculum Links to Teaching WalkThrus
	Breadth, balance, enrichment and challenge	How do these elements enhance the school and subject intent? What does this mean for individuals?

Long Term Curriculum Maps

Our long-term curriculum maps are documents that map out subjects, topics, areas and themes across the academic year. They are sequenced building blocks and provide structure from which medium-term plans are created. For classes who span more than one year, where pupils are taught by Key Stage, the long term curriculum maps are planned in cycles.

These plans are constantly in review by the class teacher but re-visited annually in readiness for the following academic year. This is to ensure the curriculum remains relevant and appropriate for the cohort and context.

Long term curriculum maps can be found on the school website. An example of a long-term curriculum map can be found below.

Cycle 1

Curriculum	Subject	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Theme	What Makes Me, Me	Dragons, Castles and Knights	The Rainforest	The Weather Machine	Care for the World	Festivals
Reading, Communication and English	Communication	Creating an environment which is language rich. Students will have opportunities within their daily timetable to develop their communication skills. Students will use topic vocabulary, signs and symbols, communication books, word mats and language apps throughout their weekly curriculum.					
	English	Writing Non – Fiction Autobiographies	Writing Fiction Creative writing – Dragons	Understanding Fiction Reading and understanding the story "The Great Kapok Tree"	Writing Non- Fiction Weather reporters	Understanding Fiction Reading and understanding the story "This is Our World: A Story about Taking Care of the Earth"	Poetry Festivals
	Phonics and Calligraphy	Students will develop their understanding of the set 1-3 sounds and develop their letter formation of both lower and upper-case letters.					
	Reading	To Develop a Love of Reading Marvelous Me	To Develop a Love of Reading The Dragon Machine The Dragon Sitter	To Develop a Love of Reading The Great Kapok Tree	To Develop a Love of Reading Numenia and the Hurricane Captain Toby	To Develop a Love of Reading This is Our World: A Story about Taking Care of the Earth (Little Green Books)	To Develop a Love of Reading Poems about festivals
	Communication Games	Students will develop their understanding of the rules of friendship and different tools of communication through different songs and games. This session will focus on skills such as: friendship, turn taking, following different rules, different ways to communicate, leadership and winning and losing, throughout the year.					
STEM	Science	The Human Body	Everyday Materials	Classifying Animals	Seasonal Changes	Plants	Properties of Materials
	Mathematics	Number Place Value Addition and Subtraction	Geometry Shape Number Place Value	Number Place Value Addition and Subtraction	Measurement Length and height Weight and Volume	Number Multiplication and Division Fractions Geometry Position and Direction	Number Place value (within 100) Measurement Money Time
	Computing	Online Safety	Computer Skills	Word Processing	Programing Toys	Programming using Scratch	
Creative Arts	Art and design	Arts and Crafts		Sculptures		Painting	
	Design and technology		Constructions		Textiles		Puppets
	Music			Exploring Instruments	Performing and Composing		Famous Musicians
Independence, Health and emotional wellbeing	Drama	Drama Games	Christmas Production			Drama Around the World	
	Physical Education	OAA/Team building Communication Kinball Confidence; Competence	Invasion Games Communication; Challenge; Competence Gymnastics (floor) Communication; creativity; competence	Health Related Fitness Challenge Gymnastics (vaulting)/ Parkour Communication; creativity; competence	Net Games Communication; Challenge; Competence Invasion Games Confidence; Competence; Challenge	Tennis Competence; Confidence Striking and Fielding Creativity; communication; challenge; competence	Athletics/ HRF Challenge Striking and Fielding Creativity; communication; challenge; competence
	Outdoor Education	Natural Craft	Orienteering	Den Building	Camping	Orienteering in the Community	
	PSHCE/Sensory Regulation	Zones of Regulation Introducing zones	Zones of Regulation My Emotions	Zones of Regulation Different Perspectives	Zones of Regulation Expected and unexpected behaviour	Zones of Regulation Exploring sensory tools	Zones of Regulation My tool box
	RSE	Ourselves		Our Community		Caring for our Environment	
	Cooking	My Favourite Foods	Mediaeval Dishes	Developing independent cooking skills - Making Breakfast		Vegetarian Dishes	Festival Foods
	Community Visit	Developing learning rules and conventions for community skills visits through the immersion room and school site safety walks and road safety.		Exploring our Community - Melton		Caring for our local area – Melton	
Humanities	Geography/History/RE	History Past, present and future	History Castles and knights	Geography The Rainforest	Geography Weather and seasons	RE Different Religions	RE Festivals and Celebrations

Medium Term Plans and Schemes of Learning

Medium Term Plans – The top sheet for a sequence of learning that outlines success criteria for different groups of pupils as well as details on the topic, key vocabulary and cross curricular links. Example below.

Scheme of Learning – A lesson by lesson breakdown outlining the learning intention and suggested activities/teaching notes. Example below.

Rationale:

- To support all teachers in meeting the following teacher standards:
 - Teacher Standard 1: Set High Expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
 - Teacher Standard 3: Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
 - Teacher Standard 4: Plan and teach well-structured lessons
- To ensure all pupils have access to high quality learning through a considered curriculum.
- To support teacher workload over the long term.
- To provide consistency to pupils during staff absence
- To provide new teachers with a structured and well-planned curriculum
- To support transition between years

Medium Term Plans

Medium Term plans help teachers to differentiate topics from the long term curriculum map and plan specific success criteria based on the needs of the pupils in their class.

Medium term plans look different across the pathways but provide a summary for a sequence of learning – this is typically by half term but may be longer or shorter depending on the context. Medium terms are saved centrally to help support workload.

Medium Term Plan

Subject:	Group:	Term:	Duration: weeks
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Differentiated Groups (Provide details)	Notes on Assessment		
Low prior knowledge			
Medium prior knowledge			
High prior knowledge			

Units/topics to be covered			
Success Criteria			
How will this learning be assessed			
A focussed list of key vocabulary, phrases			
A focussed list of key vocabulary, phrases and writing stems			
Cross curricular links and Opportunities for Enrichment including: PSHE, skills builder, preparing for adulthood, Numeracy and Literacy, Trips/visits etc.			
Resources and links			

Schemes of Learning Guidance

Learning intention: The ultimate purpose of your lesson; what you want all students to learn

- Formulate the learning intention(s) by considering the ultimate goal of the lesson – what do you want all pupils to leave with? Each intention should build on prior knowledge (this is typically the previous lesson but could be from a previous sequence of learning where appropriate)

- Consider the mastery statements when planning the learning intention of each lesson

Suggested Activities, Teaching Notes and Resources

- This should not be a full lesson plan, just suggested activities which will enable students to meet the objective. Consider literacy/mathematical thinking/essential skills foci here and how they could be incorporated. **Individual teachers are responsible for planning their own lessons.**
- Consider what information somebody might need if they were to successfully teach this session at short notice
- You could signpost resources on the curriculum resource library or elsewhere.
- Make it useful to you.

Work produced to show progress

- What outcomes do you need the pupils to have produced for you to assess whether they have been successful?
- This will not always involve written work.

Scheme of Learning

Lesson	Learning Intention(s)	Suggested Activities, Teaching Notes and Resources	Work produced to show progress
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Individual Lesson Plans




At Birch Wood, we do not require individual lesson plans nor do we expect them in a particular format. This is to allow teachers to develop their own styles and to give them the freedom to be creative in their planning. We do, however, acknowledge there are situations when individual lesson plans are useful and important. Examples may include an ECT who needs to consider elements of a lesson in more detail, a teacher who would like to share the narrative of the class with an observer or an experienced teacher who wishes to trial something new.

Curriculum Newsletters

Curriculum newsletters provide a chance for us to share with parents/carers the topics, themes and learning for the coming term. They are created and shared 3 times a year and can be found on the school website.

An extract from a curriculum newsletter can be found below:

Birch Wood Area Special school
Class – The Burrow
Spring 2022
Curriculum Newsletter

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome to the Spring Term Newsletter for The Burrow.

On returning to school after the Christmas break I have heard such wonderful stories of your family time and wish you all the very best for the coming year.

As we begin a new year and new term, we welcome Mark to our class team having already welcomed Rebecca in October. We know that both staff members will strengthen the provision even further and provide an increasing range of support for your wonderful children.

As usual, the newsletter provides a short summary of the topics and focus areas for your child's learning.

Alongside this, we continue to work hard to make sure that the student's mental, social and emotional health is at the forefront of all our teaching.

Our class are following the Aspire Pathway. This means they are learning subject specific content which is personalised to their strengths and needs. The table below gives an outline of topics, content, knowledge and skills that we will be looking at over the next term. In addition to this, and dependent on individual need, the pupils in our class also have access to swimming and hydrotherapy, rebound therapy, SALT/OT, music therapy, tacpac and Pet therapy with Daisy.

Maths		
Spring Term 1	Calculation and Place Value	Following the progress we made during the last half term, we will further develop our calculation skills in all four functions using a variety of methods. We will also expand our Place Value knowledge up to four digit numbers and beyond.
Spring Term 2	Time	During this half term, we will be learning about Time using analogue and digital readings. We will also be learning to sequence, estimate and measure time using a variety of units.
English		
Spring Term 1	Character description	Using a process of read, write, communicate and speak; students will be learning to develop their own character descriptions through their own observations and interesting adjectives.
Spring Term 2	Comprehension	We will explore non-fiction texts based on our Blue Abyss topic. Student lead research Understanding/explaining a variety of opinions Differing points of view

Subject Intent

Across all areas leaders consider the school's intent for the curriculum at Birch Wood. This is articulated in subjects, lessons and sequences of learning which are rooted in the ENABLES ethos. Below are the subject intentions for 3 of our core subjects.

Maths

We want all students to enjoy Maths and support them so that their self confidence in using numbers grows. The aim of the curriculum is to give them mathematical skills that prepare them for adulthood. These include money, time and simple fractions. At a higher level, this means understanding percentages so that can understand the interest on a loan or whether they are getting a good deal on sales or area so that they calculate the amount of carpet they need to buy. As students get older, we support our students to gain mathematical qualifications that will give them the currency to move forward into college or work.

At Birch Wood you will find several students working at a range of levels within any class due to their SEND needs. A personalised curriculum is found in all lessons at Birch Wood Vale. A spiral curriculum is key, where students working at all levels revisit and extend their learning. Our curriculum is bespoke to Birch Wood and supports all students to make progress and gain skills for independence as well as to meet the needs of qualifications. Hence why time and money are key skills throughout all stages of maths at Birch Wood.

English

We intend for our students to cultivate their sense of self, to develop a unique voice and understand that their voice has value and will be listened to. Equally, we aim for our students to value the voices of others. Students must first learn to communicate their own story in order to interact with the stories of others. We intend for our students to thrive independently in society; to be 'active citizens', to be able to interact with the world which they are a part of and to communicate effectively with those around them.

Through our English curriculum we encourage our students to develop preferences, explore interests and find creative outlets. We intend for our students to use literacy as a means to give life to their own views and ideas, a mode of communication which allows for exploration, artistic expression and freedom of speech.

We aim to aid our students in becoming well-rounded individuals who possess transferable skills, which will help them to realise their aspirations. We place emphasis on developing a growth mindset through resilience, independence, critical thinking, self-reflection, review and collaboration. Through the teaching of these skills, we are also able to help our students address their social, emotional and mental health needs. We hope to foster a lifelong love of learning, which allows students to explore and develop continually and will stand them in good stead throughout and beyond their time at Birch Wood

PSHE

The intent of our PSHE curriculum is to deliver a curriculum which is accessible to all and that will maximise the outcomes for every young person. At Birchwood school PSHE is at the heart of our school curriculum and taught through discreet twice weekly lessons and is integrated into our preparation to adulthood programme and subject curriculums. It underpins all the classroom activities including assemblies, tutor time, educational visits and extra-curricular clubs.

Birch Wood's PSHE and Citizenship scheme of work aims to equip pupils with essential skills for life; it intends to develop the whole person through carefully planned and resourced lessons that develop the knowledge, skills and attributes young people need to protect and enhance their wellbeing. Through these lessons, pupils will learn how to stay safe and healthy, build and maintain successful relationships and become active citizens, responsibly participating in society around them.

The school's resources are fully in line with the learning outcomes and core themes provided by the PSHE Association Programme of Study which is widely used in schools in England and is recommended and referred to by the DfE in all key documentation relating to PSHE provision in schools. The scheme covers all the required objectives and follows the three core areas of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. It fulfills the requirements of the 2020 Statutory Relationships and Health Education, setting these learning intentions in the context of a broad and balanced PSHE curriculum

Reading and Communication: *The Bedrock of the Curriculum at Birch Wood*

We view reading and communication as the foundation of our curriculum from which everything is built upon. We give reading and communication such high status as we believe reading communication does the following:

- **Exposes pupils to new ideas, concepts, information and opinions.**
 - Some pupils at Birch Wood struggle to access wider society independently and so do not always have the chance to discover all that is around them. By ensuring exposure to high quality texts we can open more of the world to our pupils in the hope that it excites, intrigues and motivates our young people to fulfil their potential.
- **Helps pupils to decode the world around them.**
 - Both reading and communication help us to decode the world around us. From the information we find in recipes to the interactions in a local shop. Without these essential tools, life becomes increasingly difficult. As a school, we are committed to preparing all of our young people for adulthood and ensuring they are as independent as possible.
- **Removes barriers to learning and enables pupils independent access to curriculum content.**
 - For a lot of the pupils at Birch Wood, the ability to read can be a barrier to learning. Teachers at Birch Wood are experts at enabling success but it's important we try to remove these barriers as soon as possible. Targeted interventions for those on the Independence and Aspire Pathway supports reading whilst communication tools such as pecs, Makaton and IT equipment enable pupils on the engagement pathway to access curriculum content.
- **Can deepen knowledge and enrich understanding**
 - Through explicit teaching of subject specific vocabulary pupils on the independence and aspire pathway can deepen their subject knowledge as well as expand their academic vocabulary.
- **Can strengthen relationships and help pupils to understand positive and healthy interactions**
 - Social stories are one example of how reading can help develop and strengthen relationships and promote positive interactions. Many of the pupils at Birch Wood have Communication and Interaction needs and so much of what we do centres on developing positive relationships and supporting interactions.

- **Can bring joy and happiness**
 - Birch Wood aims to create a love of learning and it is within this ethos that we aim to nurture a love of reading for all pupils. This could be engaging with a sensory story for pupils on the engagement pathway or enabling our young people on the Aspire pathway to choose books that they enjoy.
- **Can help keep pupils safe**
 - Reading and Communication is an important aspect of keeping our young people safe – inside and outside of school. We aim to provide the tools for all of our pupils to communicate their needs and express any concerns or worries.

Everyone at Birch Wood is a Leader of Reading and Communication...

- We provide young people with the opportunity to read, and learn to read, at every stage of education.
- We role model positive and healthy interactions
- We create a language-rich environment that is sensitive to the needs of the individual
- We plan for the needs of the individual and consider reading and communication in every lesson
- We seek to utilise every opportunity to develop reading and communication

Early Reading

We provide all pupils with the opportunity to read, and learn to read, at every stage of their education here at Birch Wood. We take a balanced approach to the instruction of reading and utilise Read, Write Inc as our phonics scheme. The teaching of early reading, like many aspects of our school curriculum, is personalised to the individual and adapted to their strengths and needs. ***Please read the Reading and Communication Policy.***

Personal Development

School is about far more than learning the curriculum. Personal development is the term used to embrace this broader dimension, which at Birch Wood has a strong emphasis on preparation for adulthood and British values. It ranges from teaching in religious studies and citizenship through to sex and relationship education and a wide range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. Importantly these vital dimensions of life and growth should be present across the entire curriculum.

All lessons and additional learning activities should be designed, wherever possible to:

- promote pupils' self-esteem by valuing and rewarding their efforts and achievements;
- encourage pupils to reflect on their learning and allow them to question and explore;
- provide opportunities in and out of lessons for them to discuss and exchange views;
- be supportive of those who seek faith or wish to strengthen it

When planning teaching and learning activities, staff should always try to promote an environment where there is:

- a willingness to co-operate with other pupils by balancing individual and collective needs;
- a readiness to celebrate others' efforts and achievements;
- a feeling of mutual respect and tolerance.

Cultural development

As well as developing an awareness of their own cultural roots, pupils should also be able to appreciate the diversity and evolution of cultural traditions. In comparison, Birch Wood School has a limited cultural mix of pupils, therefore, it is particularly important that the following should occur as part of their learning journey:

- in lessons, assemblies and tutor time pupils should be helped to understand, respect and appreciate other beliefs, social circumstances and cultures and their impact;
- Further opportunities for the above should take place in extra-curricular activities and school trips.
- Monitoring of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (SMSC) in addition to the above considerations that take place when planning teaching and learning experiences at Birch Wood School. Some aspects of the SMSC agenda are explicitly taught in lessons.

Curriculum Leads




Area of Curriculum Responsibility 22-23		
Subject Area	Staff Team	SLT Lead
English, Literacy, Reading and Communication	Catherine Mitchell, Emily Saxby, Poppy Marriott and Sarah Wilson (Communication Lead)	Tom Bradley-Hewell (GD), Hannah O'Mara (Communication) & Michelle Walker (BWV)
Maths	David Hardwidge & Michelle Walker	Michelle Walker
Science	Kim Jackson	Michelle Walker
Drama	Dan Hudson	Phil Leaney
DT inc Construction, Art & Food	Phil Worth, Jeanette Boyd- Art, Di Alexander- Food	Tom Smith
Music	Kate Hallam Jones	Tom Bradley Hewell
Humanities inc RE	Deena Patel & Becky Curran	Michelle Walker
PE & Duke of Edinburgh	Alison Nix	Tom Smith, Joe Knowles
PSHCE including RSE	Julie Peattie, Charlotte Adu	Hannah O'Mara
ICT/Computing	Deena Patel	Michelle Walker
BTEC/Vocational	Phil Worth	Claire Wood

AIM Awards	Charlotte Adu (GD)	Tom Bradley Hewell
ASD Provision	Amy Dunstan, Joe Knowles, Poppy Marriot	Amy Dunstan
EYFS	Becky Spence & Natalie Stathakis	Tom Bradley-Hewell
PMLD	Hannah O'Mara	Tom Bradley-Hewell
Specialist Education Professionals (SALT, EP, OT, AT, MT, Counsellor)	Neil Eaves	Amy Dunstan
Pathway Curriculum Leads	Hannah O'Mara- Engagement and Independence & Michelle Walker- Aspire	Phil Leaney
P16 Curriculum including PFA & Work Experience	Charlotte Adu (GD) Julie Peattie- Birch Wood College, Phil Worth- BWV	Tom Smith

Implementation

Lessons at Birch Wood




The pedagogical choices teachers make are rooted in which pathway they're teaching and the individual needs of the pupils. The document below outlines the minimum expectations for teaching on each of the three pathways including EYFS

		
Engagement	Independence	Aspire
A 'total communication environment' enabling all pupils to engage with the curriculum.		
Opportunities to read, learn to read and engage in a variety of stories/texts where appropriate.		
As a result of positive behaviour and relationships, pupils feel they belong and feel safe. The environment allows all pupils to thrive as individuals and as learners.		
The lesson supports the planned sequence of learning with any deviation enhancing the curriculum intent of the school/subject.		
Students' EHCP, and prior assessments, are used to inform lesson plans, provide appropriately pitched challenge and promote independence		
Considered use of technology, resources, tools and strategies maximises student independence		
Pupils are given consistent cues and routines to help them distinguish activities so eventually they can begin to anticipate what is going to happen.	There are clear routines at the start, end and during the lesson that provide predictability and structure to enable smooth transitions.	The lesson starts with a review of previous learning.
All adults working with pupils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are responsive to any communication, however subtle. Use appropriate modes of communication to motivate and engage 	The amount of material pupils receive at one time is limited to prevent cognitive overload.	New material is presented in small steps.
Sensory stimulation is purposeful and rooted in the learning intention(s) of the individual pupil.	The teacher provides sufficient models in the form of worked examples and exemplars, providing a strong basis from which to learn.	The teacher provides sufficient models providing a strong basis from which to learn as well as linking new knowledge to what pupils already know.
Teachers have accurately identified the specific needs, interests and motivators of each pupil which results in carefully planned tasks/activities which motivate and engage.	Teachers and other adults in the room use appropriate modes of communication to indicate how well pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve.	The teacher checks for understanding and provides systematic feedback and corrections, addressing misconceptions swiftly
Adequate levels of repetition allow pupils to learn skills over time	Carefully planned guided practice leads to pupils obtaining success during independent practice	Students are adequately prepared for independent practice.
Teachers and other adults in the room give pupils time, space and encouragement to respond and engage	Support staff are deployed effectively, and adult interactions promote independence, provide challenge and help to move learning to the next step for each individual	Support staff are deployed effectively, help pupils develop independent learning skills and use questioning to support learning.


EYFS
A 'total communication environment' enabling all pupils to engage with the curriculum.
Opportunities to read, learn to read and engage in stories.
As a result of positive behaviour and relationships, pupils feel they belong and feel safe. The environment allows all pupils to thrive as individuals and as learners.
The lesson supports the planned sequence of learning with any deviation enhancing the curriculum intent of the school/subject.
Students' EHCP, and prior assessments, are used to inform lesson plans, provide appropriately pitched challenge and promote independence
Considered use of technology, resources, tools and strategies maximises student independence
Routines and activities are clearly signposted, allowing children to anticipate what is coming next and to make smooth transitions
Activities and resources build on student's interests and time is given to learn through play, both self-led and guided.
The 'characteristics of effective learning' are promoted and enabled through activity set up, resources and adult interaction
Adults help children to co-regulate throughout the day, leading to skills in self-regulation
Sufficient Time and frequent opportunities are given to allow children to communicate in their preferred way
Adult interactions promote independence, provide challenge and help to move learning to the next step for each individual

Lessons at Birch Wood: *Guidance*


There are some aspects of the above points that have been expanded upon. This is to provide an additional layer of support for teachers.

  	Guidance Notes
All Pathways	
A 'total communication environment' enabling all pupils to engage with the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clutter free classroom environment • Object of reference being used (if appropriate) • Makaton signing is used to support speech. • Body signing (if appropriate) • Visual timetables are displayed with symbols (class or individual) • PECS symbols • Appropriate language levels used by all staff • Resources are accessible and encourage independence • Display boards are inclusive to all e.g. symbols/clear/visual • Communication aids (high and low tech) are encouraged to support students
Opportunities to read, learn to read and engage in stories/texts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading opportunities are available for all learners and are personalised for their need e.g. symbols/ PECS/ literature. Reading books connect closely to the phonics knowledge that young people are taught when they are learning to read and this is monitored.
As a result of positive behaviour and relationships, pupils feel they belong and feel safe. The environment allows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behaviour Support Plans are in place for each student and reflect what is happening within the classroom environment. They are used as working documents to ensure that when needs change,


all pupils to thrive as individuals and as learners.	<p>practice is reflected upon to ensure that the young person feels safe and is ready to learn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The classroom environment is an ASC friendly environment which takes into account the needs of the learners within the classroom. It will be a calm and distraction free environment that enables predictable routines to be in place.
The lesson supports the planned sequence of learning with any deviation enhancing the curriculum intent of the school/subject.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having spent time creating, reviewing and moderating long term plans we are confident that there is a considered approach to learning over the year. For this reason, we would expect lessons to be in line with long term curriculum maps. We know, however, that in teaching we often adapt our planning to meet the needs of the individuals in our classrooms. This often takes place after assessment and feedback. Where there are variations to plans, these changes should be enhancing the intent of the subject and further promote progress. The time spent on a sequence of learning is the most likely form of deviation as we respond to the needs of our learners.
Students' EHCP, and prior assessments, are used to inform lesson plans, provide appropriately pitched challenge and promote independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress passports reflect progress against EHCP outcomes are being monitored over time. Appropriate evidence is collated over time, based on the young people's needs e.g. Kinteract/ folders. These will show opportunities that have been put in place to develop independence and promote social opportunities as the young people prepare for adulthood.
Considered use of technology, resources, tools and strategies maximises student independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are in place that are personalised to the young people and enable them to learn independently, whilst giving them opportunities to challenge themselves. Resources should take into account the SEND of the young person to give them the best opportunities to learn e.g. Visual requirements.

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Guidance Notes</h2>	
	<p>Engagement</p> <p>Pupils are given consistent cues and routines to help them distinguish activities so eventually they can begin to anticipate what is going to happen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some pupils may need sensory cues. Some cues will be particular to individual pupils, for example singing a particular song. Some sensory cues are built into the activity eg. The smell of lunch or the sound of a bus engine. Use natural cues wherever possible, maybe exaggerating them eg. Jangling the bus keys. Something that helps the pupil to associate that cue with what is going to happen next. These cues should be consistently applied where possible. Make sure the cues happen just before the activity begins so there are only a few seconds between the cue and activity.
<p>All adults working with pupils are responsive to any communication, however subtle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsive adults are the most important resource to teach pupils communication skills. All adults working with a pupils must be responsive to any communication from them, however subtle. This communication may well be pre intentional but by responding to the interaction and extending it pupils can learn fundamental skills. 	

Sensory stimulation is purposeful and rooted in the learning intention(s) of the individual pupil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some pupils need wild and exciting stimulation to react but others need a gentle, slow approach. Observe carefully to see which level of stimulation is best for each individual pupil.
Teachers have accurately identified the specific needs, interests and motivators of each pupil which results in carefully planned tasks/activities which motivate and engage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop effective teaching, staff need to accurately identify the specific needs, interests and motivators of each learner with severe and profound learning needs. Tasks must be relevant and purposeful to maximise pupils' motivation and to help them make sense of the world. Staff should consider individual pupils' behaviours that demonstrate their high level of engagement in an activity.
Adequate levels of repetition allow pupils to learn skills over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The more a pupil rehearses, reviews and experiences the stronger the interconnections become. For some of our young people on the Engagement pathway, they will need significant repetition to support their learning.

	Guidance Notes
Independence	
There are clear routines at the start, end and during the lesson that provide predictability and structure to enable smooth transitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils respond to visual, auditory or sensory cues that have been established and are increasingly able to end one activity and transition to another Adults might guide or prompt pupils to end one activity and join another, giving time for pupils to process what is coming next Now and next strips might be used for some individuals
The amount of material pupils receive at one time is limited to prevent cognitive overload.	<p>Presenting too much information at one time swamps our working memory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our working memory, the place where we process information, is small. It can only handle a few bits of information at once – too much information swamps our working memory. Presenting too much material at once may confuse students because their short-term memory will be unable to process it. Present small amounts of information at any time and then assist the pupil as they practise this material. Teachers should invest time analysing their curriculum material to see how it can be broken down - Good subject knowledge enables us to break down a composite task into components edge enables us to break down a composite task into components
The teacher provides sufficient models in the form of worked examples and exemplars, providing a strong basis from which to learn.	<p>Students need cognitive support to help them learn. Modelling and Models can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical representations of completed tasks – exemplars that can be used as scaffolds, such as a model sentence in an English lesson describing a character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Worked examples</i> – completing a question(s) on the board and demonstrating how you want the students to answer including lay-out Explicit narration of our thought processes when thinking through how to solve problems or undertake a creative activity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ By making the implicit explicit, we can support students to form the own mental models, gaining confidence with the decisions they make.
Carefully planned guided practice leads to pupils obtaining success during independent practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing scaffolds is a form of guided practice. ● A scaffold is a temporary support that is used to assist a learner. These scaffolds are gradually withdrawn as learners become more competent, although students may continue to rely on scaffolds when they encounter particularly difficult problems. ● Scaffolds include modelling of the steps by the teacher or thinking aloud by the teacher as he or she solves the problem. Scaffolds may also be tools, such as cue cards or checklists, that complete part of the task for the students, or a model of the completed task against which students can compare their work.
Support staff are deployed effectively, and adult interactions promote independence, provide challenge and help to move learning to the next step for each individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support staff should add value to what teachers do, not replace them ● Support staff should help students develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning ● Support staff should be prepared for their role in the classroom

	Guidance Notes
Aspire	
The lesson starts with a review of previous learning.	<p>Daily review allows students to re-activate recently acquired knowledge, reducing cognitive load at the beginning of a lesson that's designed to build on this knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How and what you want to revisit is a pedagogical choice ● This would typically be no more than approx. 10mins ● Chance to review vocabulary, or formulae, or events or previously learned concepts ● Chance to review knowledge and concepts that will be relevant for the lesson
New material is presented in small steps.	<p>Presenting too much information at one time swamps our working memory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good subject knowledge enables us to break down a composite task into components
The teacher provides sufficient models providing a strong basis from which to learn as well as linking new knowledge to what pupils already know.	<p>Students need cognitive support to help them learn. Modelling and Models can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical representations of completed tasks – exemplars that can be used as scaffolds, such as a model sentence in an English lesson describing a character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Worked examples</i> – completing a question(s) on the board and demonstrating how you want the students to answer including lay-out ● Conceptual models – such as the one we need to form to understand the behaviour of particles in solids, liquids and gases

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Link abstract ideas to concrete examples</i> – Using physical blocks, shapes, items in the teaching of number and fractions is a good example • Explicit narration of our thought processes when thinking through how to solve problems or undertake a creative activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o By making the implicit explicit, we can support students to form the own mental models, gaining confidence with the decisions they make.
The teacher checks for understanding and provides systematic feedback and corrections, addressing misconceptions swiftly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work should be pitched at a level that is appropriate to the individual • There should be a level of challenge that means success is achievable if individual pupils try their best
Support staff are deployed effectively, help pupils develop independent learning skills and use questioning to support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff should add value to what teachers do, not replace them • Support staff should help students develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning • Support staff should be prepared for their role in the classroom

EYFS	Guidance Notes
Routines and activities are clearly signposted, allowing children to anticipate what is coming next and to make smooth transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children respond to visual, auditory or sensory cues that have been established and are increasingly able to end one activity and transition to another • Adults might guide or prompt pupils to end one activity and join another, giving time for pupils to process what is coming next • Now and next strips might be used for some individuals
Activities and resources build on student's interests and time is given to learn through play, both self-led and guided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, resources reflect children's interests and likes. This could be in terms of a character they interact with, a theme running through the materials, or the inclusion of a sensory resource that helps them to stay on task • Different types of play are evident at different times (Sensory, exploratory play with objects, schematic play, symbolic play, pretend play (alone or in groups), co-operative role play, physical play, rough and tumble). • Adults observe or support play to understand the choices children are making and how best to support their thinking • Adult led activities may focus more on teaching a skill, but they should use some features of spontaneous play to engage and motivate children - they can be playful with elements of choice, hands on experience, connections to children's interests
The 'characteristics of effective learning' are promoted and enabled through activity set up, resources and adult interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of effective learning refer to HOW children learn – all practitioners should be aware of how to enable these in the environment; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playing and exploring - Active Learning - Thinking Creatively and Critically
Adults help children to co-regulate throughout the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult work together with children to resolve upsets from stress and return to balance

day, leading to skills in self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation skills are taught and modelled with frequent opportunities to practice • Scaffolding to support children to use self-regulation skills • The environment should make regulation manageable • Warm and responsive relationships should be evident, where children are cared for in times of stress
Sufficient Time and frequent opportunities are given to allow children to communicate in their preferred way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbols should be available for those children who use them • 'Burst-Pause' activities are used during play to encourage children to initiate • Leave spaces in familiar songs, rhymes, stories to let children finish or join in • Makaton is modelled and encouraged • Language is simplified but modelled enthusiastically to build vocabulary and to encourage spontaneous communication from children
Adult interactions promote independence, provide challenge and help to move learning to the next step for each individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults should interact sensitively, being careful not to take over the learning but to provide prompts to move learning forward • Adults should be aware of what the next step is for the child they are working with in a given activity. This might be based on a target (MAPP or Bridge) or it might be based on knowledge of curriculum, child development and/or knowledge of the individual child and what next step would take them forward towards independence.

Research Informed pedagogy

Being research informed is integral to teaching and learning and CPD at Birch Wood School in order to improve practice on a continuing basis. Being research informed enables us to:

- Take risks together that they might not otherwise have taken alone.
- See things that they could not otherwise have seen.
- Capture insights through multiple perspectives.
- Identify and value what does and does not work.
- Develop new practices which take account of this knowledge.
- Share new practices with colleagues.

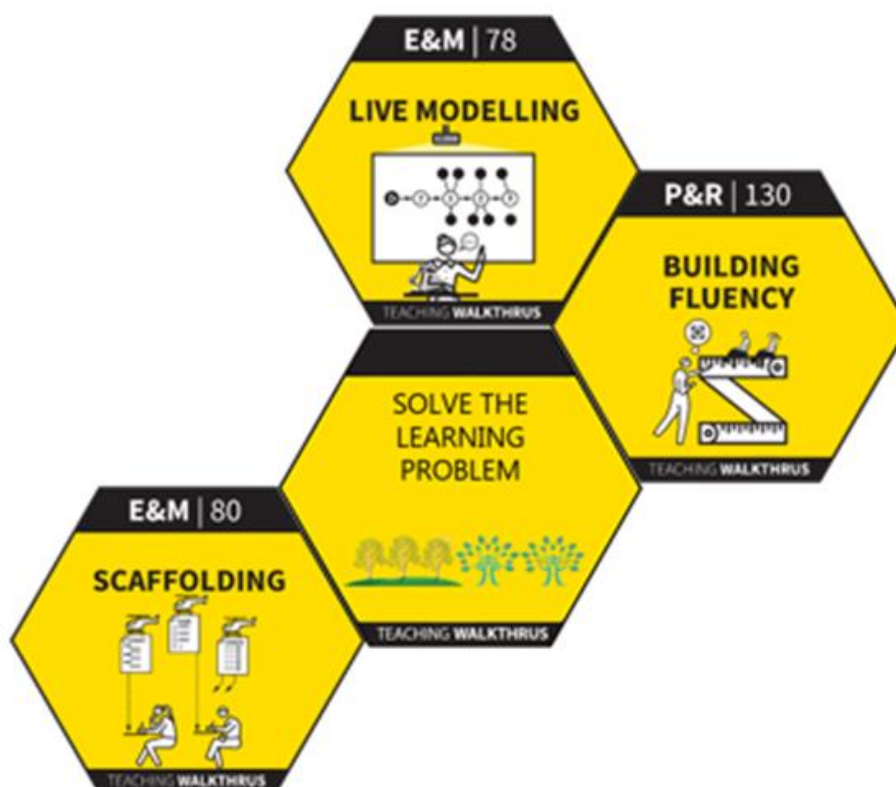
We utilise Teaching Walkthrus as one avenue to translate research into practice.

Teaching and Learning Areas of Focus

Our staff mission statement articulates our desire to continuously improve; not because we aren't good enough, but because we can always be better. Because of this we have identified 4 teaching and learning areas of focus that are bespoke to each of the three pathways. Each priority area has been linked with a WalkThru to help provide a research informed toolkit for teachers to utilise.

Pathway	Area	Walkthru Focus
All Pathways	Students' EHCP, and prior assessments, are used to inform lesson plans, provide appropriately pitched challenge and promote independence	Solve the Learning Problem
Engagement	Adequate levels of repetition allow pupils to learn skills over time.	Building Fluency
Independence	The teacher provides sufficient models in the form of worked examples and exemplars, providing a strong basis from which to learn.	Live Modelling
Aspire	Students are adequately prepared for independent practice with scaffolds provided for difficult tasks.	Scaffolding

Birch Wood's Walkthru Cluster



Communication

We work towards a 'total communication environment' where speech and language, objects of reference, body signs, photographs, Makaton signing, symbols and AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) are used throughout the school day, to assist our students to understand and communicate to the best of their abilities.

At Birch Wood School we have a Communication and Therapy team. The team is made up of communication lead, speech and language therapy team, vision support teacher, hearing impaired teacher, music therapist, AAC teacher, communication mentors, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

Pupil and Parent/Carer Involvement

The views of pupils about lessons will be sought as part of a pupil voice, through 'Student Improvement Teams' Students Council, Pupil Governors and pupil surveys.

Parents have a considerable contribution to make to pupils' success in school. We look to engage with parent's support in the following ways

- Review their pupils' school books/work
- Review pupils progress on Kinteract and add their own evidence and comments where desired
- Support pupils in responding to their teachers' feedback
- Create the right environment and routines at home to enable home learning including revision to be completed.
- Liaison with the school through use of home school diaries
- Parental surveys and responses at parental engagement evenings.

Subject moderation meetings

Subject moderation meetings will be held with all staff teaching English, Maths & Science and between foundation subject teachers to maintain consistency of judgements between staff teaching the same subject. Pupils' assessed work will form the basis of these meetings.

Once a year English, Maths and Science teachers and SLT will moderate assessment and students work across other schools within the Leicestershire Special Leaders Group.

Marking and Feedback Policy

What does the Research suggest?

EEF States 'All school leaders understand the importance of providing meaningful feedback. Done well, it supports pupil progress, building learning, addressing misunderstandings, and thereby closing the gap between where a pupil is and where the teacher wants them to be.'

EEF recommends:

- Feedback should follow high quality instruction and formative assessment.
- Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward
- Teachers should provide opportunities to use feedback.

Principles

Marking and Feedback at Birch Wood adheres to the following principles:

Meaningful: marking and feedback varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

Manageable: marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to the overall workload of teachers.

Motivating: Marking and feedback should help to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their pupils, this can become a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work

What this means in practice at Birch Wood

All of our young people have individual strengths and needs. Our expert teachers know, and are supported to know, what type of feedback is most appropriate for the pupil and subject content.

This document is separated into the following sections:

- Day-to-Day Marking and Feedback
- Annotation of Work
- DIRT
 - DIRT for Subject Specific Learning
 - DIRT for EHCP Targets
- Quality Assurance

Day-to-Day Marking and Feedback

Teachers are trusted to use marking and feedback methods that are best suited for their pupils.

As much as possible, teachers should support pupils, who are engaged in subject specific learning, to be able to answer the following questions:

- What am I doing well in this subject?
- What do I need to do to improve my work in this subject?

Live Feedback

For all pupils at Birch Wood, immediate feedback is often the most effective method to support learning. Pupils should receive feedback either within the lesson itself or in the next appropriate lesson. The 'next step' is usually the next lesson.

For pupils on the Engagement Pathway and/or in EYFS immediate feedback is likely to support with cues, routines, communication and engagement. Repetition of feedback for these pupils is also likely to support learning.

Annotation of Work

Where appropriate, work should be annotated by staff to indicate the level of direction and support given to the pupil.

This annotation could be on the back of a pupil's work or discreetly on the front.

I = Independent. The pupil has completed work with no adult support

S = Some support from an adult

FS = Fully supported. The pupil needed high level of adult support to complete work

DIRT – Directed Improvement and Reflection Time

DIRT provides structured opportunities during a sequence of lessons for pupils to improve their work and deepen their knowledge, as part of an ongoing feedback and improvement cycle.

We utilise DIRT to provide feedback for both subject specific learning and EHCP targets.

The table below outlines which pupils engage in DIRT:

	DIRT for EHCP Targets	DIRT for Subject Specific Learning
Aspire	Yes	Yes
Independence	Yes	Yes
Engagement	MAPP2	No
EYFS	Yes (Unless assessed on MAPP2)	No

- *The curriculum design, and accompanying assessment, for pupils on the Engagement pathway means that 'DIRT for EHCP Targets' is incorporated through MAPP2. Feedback and progress is tracked and acted upon through MAPP2.*
- *Pupils on the Engagement Pathway do not access subject specific learning and so do not utilise 'DIRT for Subject Specific Learning'*

DIRT for Subject Specific Learning

The table below shows the *minimum expectation* for DIRT frequency across the school. Teachers are welcome to utilise DIRT more often if they feel it is appropriate, efficient and promotes pupil progress.

Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House	Teachers with 3 or more lessons a week	Once a half term i.e. 6 times a year	DIRT can be completed at any time during the half term to support workload.
	Teachers with 1-2 lessons a week	Once a term i.e. 3 times a year	
Grange Drive	Aspire Pathway + Independence Pathway	English, Maths and PSHE - each once a term. I.e English 3x a year Maths 3x a year PSHE 3x a year	DIRT should align with the planned sequence of learning to support pupil progress.

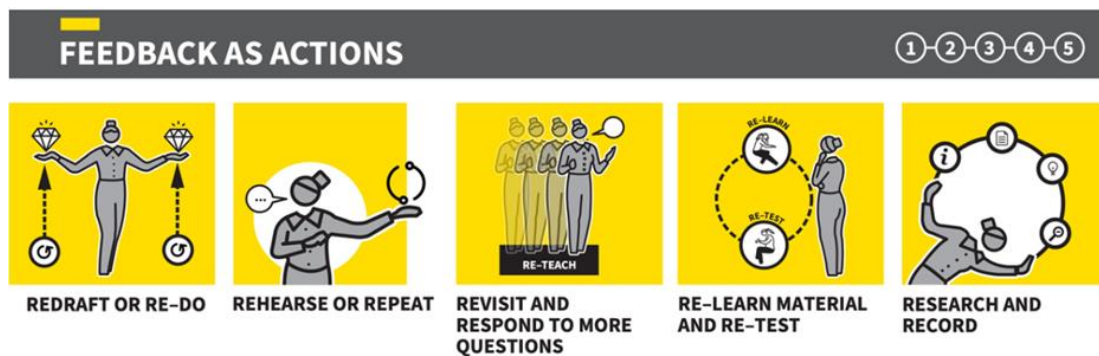
DIRT for subject specific learning will be indicated by the use of a DIRT **Sticker or by utilising the template below**. This is to enable teachers to design DIRT tasks/activities that is best suited to their pupils, the subject content and sequence of learning without being constrained by a prescribed template.

DIRT for Subject Specific Learning will include:

- What went well
- Next Steps
- Improvement question/task/activity
- Indication of pupil effort through the use Bronze/Silver/Gold/Platinum stars

Guidance for planning DIRT for Subject Specific Learning:

- Teachers should plan DIRT into a learning sequence. This may be identified on medium-term plans.
- Teachers will generate feedback – this could be through planning an assessment task that links to the success criteria in medium term plans before giving time in class for DIRT.
- Teachers will dedicate lesson time for pupils to reflect and act on feedback.
- Teachers could use the 'Feedback as Actions' Walkthru to help design improvement question/task/activity



DIRT for EHCP Targets

Teachers, and form tutors, responsible for 'DIRT for EHCP Targets' should provide time for pupils to reflect upon feedback at least **once every half term**.

DIRT for EHCP Targets will include:

- What went well
- Judgement on progress – Beginning/Developing/Secure/Mastered
- Where appropriate, a pupil's comment or feedback on the target
- Date

The DIRT sheet should remain in the pupil's white folder.

Guidance for planning DIRT for EHCP Targets:

- Teachers can complete DIRT for EHCP Targets at any point during the last few weeks of a half term.
- Teachers will generate feedback – this could be through planning an assessment task that links to specific EHCP Targets or reflecting back on observations made on Kinteract
- Teachers will dedicate time for pupils to reflect and, where appropriate, act on feedback.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance of marking and feedback will focus primarily on pupil learning.

Any quality assurance process provides one piece of a jigsaw that helps us to monitor the holistic impact of our curriculum. Through triangulation activities the leadership team will periodically look at books/folders. Quality assurance of marking and feedback will be approached with the following principles:

- Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process; we do not provide additional evidence for external verification.
- Feedback should empower children to take ownership for improving their work
- Children should receive feedback either within the lesson itself or in the next appropriate lesson. The 'next step' is usually the next lesson.
- New knowledge is fragile and usually forgotten unless explicit steps are taken over time to revisit and refresh learning. Teachers should be wary of assuming that children have securely understood material based on evidence drawn close to the point of teaching it. Therefore, teachers will need to get feedback at some distance from the original teaching input when assessing if learning is now secure.

Quality assurance will also look at the frequency, and quality, of DIRT for both subject specific learning and EHCP targets.

Impact

Assessment: *Purpose, Aims and Ethos*

The purpose of assessment is:

- To support learning and continuous progress through high aspirations.
- To support pupils in achieving their EHCP outcomes
- To enable teachers to plan their work and set appropriate individual targets and tasks for pupils
- To provide certification/accreditation for pupils where appropriate.
- To share information with parents and other professionals involved with the pupil, so that all can contribute and support pupil's progress in all areas.
- To provide evidence for accountability and evaluation.
- To assist in diagnosing specific difficulties;

Aims and Ethos of Assessment:

Assessment at Birch Wood prescribes to the following principles:

1. Set the bar of expectation high and expect all pupils to get there.....and beyond!
Every pupil should be able to demonstrate his or her attainment and progress.
2. Parents and carers should receive meaningful information about the achievement and progress their child makes and should be involved appropriately in assessment processes.
3. Where appropriate, encourage independent and reflective learning; so that pupils know what they need to do to progress and take increasing responsibility for assessing their own progress.
4. To provide regular, fair and helpful feedback to support the progress of all pupils and expect pupils to respond to your feedback.
5. Any recommendations for the statutory assessment of our pupils should support Birch Wood in providing the opportunity for pupils to make the best progress possible.
6. Assessment for pupils with SEND should take into account the complexity, nature and combination of SEND.
7. A meaningful and appropriate assessment system should be utilised for all pupils, as such equality is not always about inclusion. Sometimes equality is about altering the approach according to the needs of the pupils.
8. Assessment should cover key milestones in English/literacy and mathematics/ numeracy.
9. Curriculum should drive assessment and not the other way round.
10. The language used to describe the achievements and progress of pupils should always be positive and inclusive, as such pupils are supported in reaching their full potential and are motivated through recognition and credit for their efforts.

Holistic Impact

At Birch Wood we use a 'basket of indicators' to get a holistic understanding of the impact of our curriculum on our pupils.

This is then used to make considered judgements on Pupil Progress and provide insight into next steps and targeted actions.

The table below outlines the range of indicators we use to make a holistic judgement about the impact of our curriculum on individual pupils.

	Formative Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Feedback • Half-Termly DIRT EHCP targets • Kinteract observations • Next steps, targets and learning Intentions • DIRT Marking
	Summative Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly Mastery Assessments (Aspire Pathway) • Termly Bridge Assessments (Independence Pathway) • Termly MAPP2 Assessment (Engagement Pathway) • Annual Review Meeting • Annual review Report • EHCP • Parents Evening x 2 • Annual written report • Statutory Assessments (GCSE's, EL's, SAT's)
	Attendance and Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Behaviour Watch • Positive Behaviour Support Plans
	Pupil Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil feedback • Pupil comments on EHCP target reviews • Pupil comments on Annual written Report • One Page Profile • Student Council
	Parental Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Survey • Family views on Annual Review Report • Annual Review meeting • EHCP • Parents evenings • Parental feedback on Kinteract
	External Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapists • Occupational Therapist • Doctors • Educational Psychologist • CAMHHS • Physiotherapist
	Moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Walks • Lesson Visits • Triangulation with Book Checks • Curriculum Plans • External Moderation

Summative Assessment: *Overview*

Summative assessment enables us to evaluate pupil progress after a sequence of learning. In order to make this meaningful and appropriate we have developed three main internal assessment systems that are linked to the three curriculum pathways:

Pathway	Assessment System	Description
Engagement	MAPP2	Individual learning intentions, which are rooted in pupils' EHCP Outcomes, are evaluated against the four areas of the 'Continuum of Skill Development' (CSD)
Independence	Bridge	Individual targets, combining EHCP outcomes and subject specific learning, are assessed as being beginning, developing, secure or mastered using descriptors to guide professional judgement
Aspire	Mastery	Pupils are assessed against a group of core knowledge and skills (referred to as mastery statements) in a particular subject resulting in a mastery level.

The school acknowledges and implements the wider context and statutory requirements around assessment including the Engagement Model, Pre-Key-stage standards, SATs, GCSEs/BTECs etc.

Key Stage 4 Accreditation

At Birch Wood we have high aspirations for our pupils; through this 'can do' approach all pupils are encouraged to gain external accreditation where they have the ability. In Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils have access to a range of externally accredited courses. Pupil's progress will be mapped towards accreditation based on their levels ability on entry and through gained knowledge of the pupil's individual skills and talents whilst at Birch Wood.

Summative Assessment: *Snapshots*

To support workload and to ensure data from summative assessment remains relevant and useful we schedule no more than 3 snapshots a year for the following assessments:

- MAPP2
- Bridge
- Mastery
- Engagement Model

MAPP2

Birch Wood supports the view that 'high expectations and good progress are entitlements for all learners' and has given careful consideration as to how to measure progress and what counts as good progress for pupils with severe learning difficulties. To achieve this in a meaningful way Birch Wood uses Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress (MAPP2). This is a suite of materials developed by The Dales School, North Yorkshire to facilitate the planning, assessment and recording of progress in relation to personal learning intentions. In particular, it provides a way of recognising lateral progression.

The materials divide into two main sections. The first focuses on setting learning intentions whilst the second focuses on assessment. The **Continuum of Skill Development (CSD)** assesses the development of four aspects of skill (the word 'skill' is used throughout to cover any demonstration of skill, knowledge, understanding or attitude.) on a four-point scale. The four aspects of the CSD are: **prompting, fluency, maintenance and generalisation**. There are four descriptors for each aspect which represent progress from emergent behaviours to competence. A numerical rating scale facilitates analysis, comparisons and graphic representations of summative data. More information can be found about MAPP in the MAPP Guidance.

Bridge

Bridge is the assessment used for pupils who are primarily on the Independence pathway. For pupils who are starting to access subject specific learning but for whom their curriculum is still designed with the content of their EHCP at heart.

Bridge was developed out of MAPP2 but incorporates space for subject specific targets, including mastery statements, instead of learning intentions. It enables young people to demonstrate and celebrate their success on even smaller steps of progress whilst retaining the structure and format of MAPP2.

Mastery

Mastery learning and assessment is used to track and assess pupils who are consistently working at a subject specific level (predominately MLD and high functioning ASD pupils) from KS1 onwards.

- At Birch Wood we utilise mastery learning principles for the appropriate pupils. Mastery is how a child can **apply** much of the curriculum as a whole using more complex and in-depth methods.
- At Birch Wood we will continue to judge how well pupils are **applying** their work so we are not simply assessing how much of the curriculum a child has attained.
- Mastery Stages are a long term measure - teachers will look at the depth of application of a child's learning across all areas of the subject and will make a judgement based on a series of 'I can' descriptors to help determine what stage a pupil is working at.

Mastery Stages

The link to KS4 equivalence in the table below takes a best fit approach.

Mastery Stages Within each stage pupils are broken down into the following steps Beginning, developing, secure, mastered	Equivalent Key Stage 4
Launch 1	Entry Level 1
Launch 2	
Launch 3	
Launch 4	Entry Level 2
Launch 5	
Launch 6	
Prep 1	Entry Level 3
Prep 2	
Prep 3	
Prep 4	Grade 1
Prep 5	
Prep 6	
Breakthrough 1	Grade 2
Breakthrough 2	
Breakthrough 3	
Breakthrough 4	
Intermediate 1	Grade 3
Intermediate 2	
Intermediate 3	
Intermediate 4	

- With firmer foundations pupils can move forward with their learning more securely in their knowledge and ability.
- This opportunity to revisit, apply learning and robustly address misconceptions is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs, where retention of information can be more of a challenge.
- The stages are a long term judgement; some pupils may stay on a stage for a longer period of time. It may not change every term; this is nothing to worry about.

Reporting

- Information to parents is provided through 'Progress & Aspiration Reports' in June. Parents also receive an Annual Review Report of pupil's progress towards their EHCP outcomes, which parents and students are invited to contribute towards.
- Year 11 Birch Wood Vale students receive their Progress & Aspiration Reports in October and have a more detailed report in March to take account of the exam period in May/June and to provide information about their expected KS2-4 progress and achievement.
- These reports are communicated to parents via Parental Engagement Evenings in October & March (Yr11 only).
- Subject Parental Engagement Evenings are held in February for Birch Wood Vale students, whilst Birch Wood parents will meet again with the class teacher.
- Targets should be written in SMART format, i.e. they should be **S**pecific to the individual pupil's needs, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and set against an appropriate **T**imescale.
- Once set all targets are reviewed with the pupil during their Annual Review and in June. Pupils' involvement in this process means that they gain a clearer understanding of their needs and

are given a measure of control within the target setting process.

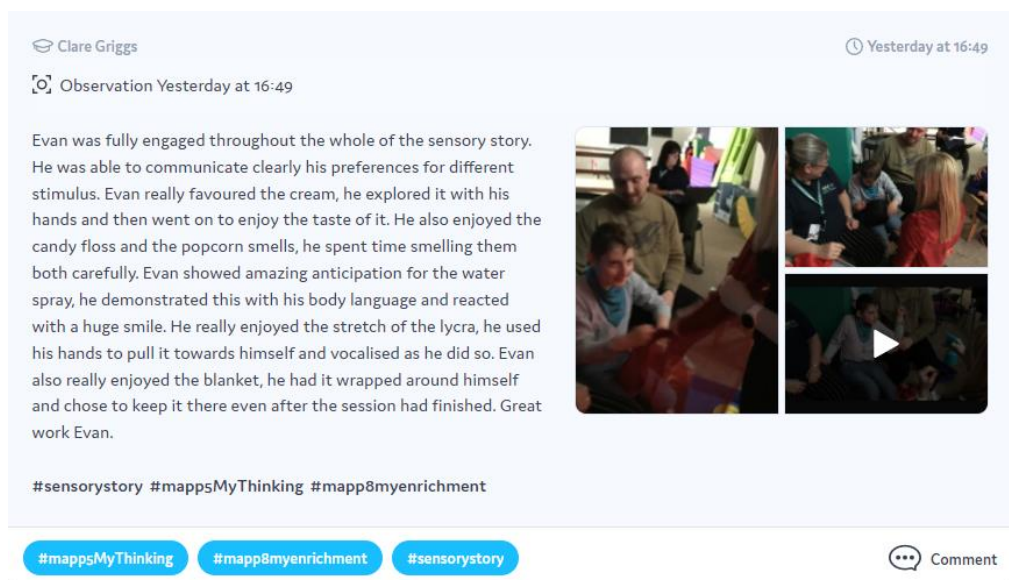
- Reports to parents identify progress and attainment in all subjects of the National Curriculum and RE as is appropriate for the pupil.
- All reports to parents identify progress towards EHCP targets.

Reporting Cycle: *Responsibilities*

- It is the Assistant Headteachers' responsibility to meet with staff to ensure marks have been entered onto Kinteract or into relevant spreadsheets.
- Subject Leaders/Assistant Headteachers can co-ordinate this in a way that is best for them.
- At core subject meetings teachers should provide the Subject Leader with feedback of pupil progress and data analysis for the classes they teach.
- SLT should then use this information to analyse their subject data and provide a report, in the agreed format to relevant member of SLT who is then accountable to the Head Teacher.
- It is the responsibility of the subject lead to liaise with the Learning Mentor or SLT when co-ordinating any additional academic interventions for pupils in their subject area.
- The Assistant Headteacher for the aspire pathway and Deputy Headteacher responsible for Quality of Education will report to the Head Teacher who reports progress data to Governors.

Kinteract

Kinteract is a digital learning platform that helps teachers to track and share a pupil's achievements with parents/carers and colleagues. Kinteract enables achievements, observations, photos and videos to be shared as well as being able to communicate directly with parents/carers. It is also a space for collating, and sharing, summative assessment information.



Kinteract is the primary form of home/school communication. Staff will still be using emails to communicate with home whilst Kinteract develop a chat function.

The table below gives a summary of how often each feature is to be used at Birchwood. It is highly likely that we'll develop our use of Kinteract as we respond to feedback and learn more about this emerging technology.

Updated: January 2022

Observations		
Grange Drive	At least twice a week. Contact home should continue daily. <i>(Until the chat function is on Kinteract this can be via email, Kinteract a phone call or other forms – An observation counts as contact home)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Observations should be personalised to the pupil and must contain at least one hashtag relevant to the curriculum/provision/learning being observedIdeally observations should include pictures and/or videos.
Birch Wood Vale	Once a week by the form tutor summarising the week – Hashtags linked to EHCP.	
Ashton House	At least once a half term by the subject teacher – Hashtags linked to curriculum	
Summative Assessments		
Birch Wood	Summative assessment not currently on Kinteract for MAPP2 and Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hashtags should be the subject being assessed and not include any sub-tags.We will have an additional inset before submitting any summative assessments
Birch Wood Vale	3 times a year	
Ashton House		
Ongoing Assessments		
Birch Wood	Professional Judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use of Hashtags are useful here
Birch Wood Vale		
Ashton House		

Quality Assurance: *Support and Challenge*

Triangulation of information is central to our model of quality assurance of teaching and learning at Birch Wood. This is to acknowledge that learning happens over time and provides a more accurate picture.

Professional development is a central theme to our approach to quality assurance we aim to support staff in providing the best outcomes for all pupils. This looks different depending on the prior knowledge and expertise of the teacher but may include:

- Open door/sharing good practice/Tours of strength (observing good practice from colleagues)
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Observing good practice at partner schools
- Internal professional development including the use of WalkThrus and access to educational literature
- External courses when necessary

The annual model for monitoring of teaching and learning includes many aspects including, but not limited to:

- Lesson observations (3 times a year)
- Pupil progress and achievement evidence including summative assessment
- Quality of feedback on pupils' learning
- Regular formal and informal learning walks – this may include a variety of formats such as 'drops-ins' or tours of the school
- Departmental reviews
- Whole school work scrutiny

There may be instances where additional monitoring is required such as where a teacher is identified as requiring additional support or when a teacher is newly qualified.

Monitoring of teaching and learning is quality assured through a model of paired observations and scrutiny wherever possible.

Quality Assurance: *Lesson Observations*

Research evidence suggests the most important action that schools can take to improve outcomes for students is supporting their teachers to be more effective (Mourshed et al., 2010). The research literature suggests that the most reliable way to achieve this is to develop a professional culture where teachers are continually adapting and refining their skills and methods (Cordingley et al., 2015).

- At Birch Wood we see lesson observations as an opportunity to further develop expert teachers.
- We triangulate lesson visits with other sources of information to help inform teacher development. Triangulation also helps us to recognise learning, which happens over time, instead of simply performance, which is more immediate and easier to observe.

Judgements and BlueSky

- Observers will make judgements on aspects of teaching and learning we feel are important for young people at Birch Wood – see ‘Lessons at Birch Wood’ section
 - o *Lessons will not be graded*
- The school recognises that a lesson observation will only ever be a snapshot and that triangulating information is important to get an overview
- *Observers can make a judgement together with the teacher if there is evidence that comes up in conversation during the feedback.*

Feedback

- Feedback should be given face to face at a time convenient to both parties.
 - o The conversation will always start with a question looking at the sequence of learning.
 - o For example ‘Where does this lesson sit within the sequence of learning?’.
- The conversation should always give the teacher chance to share anything about the lesson that the observer may not have picked up on during the lesson.
 - o For example, ‘Is there anything you want me to know about the class/context/lesson that I may not have picked up on’
- There should be at least 2 strengths highlighted in the summary
- Areas for development highlighted in the summary should be limited in number
 - o This is to ensure teachers can remain focussed on what they need to improve and are able to dedicate their time to the focus areas.
 - o The observer should aim to make suggestions for how these areas may be improved. This could include practical strategies or signposting to where to find supporting. This could also be resources, research or colleagues who have strengths in these areas.

Progress Passports

- Every pupil has a Progress Passport. The School Plan generated from EHCPs are the starting point for this.
- This comprehensive file includes samples of the pupil’s levelled work & intervention information with evidence of impact.
- Progress Passports provide evidence towards social development as well as academic progress including Positive Behaviour Support Plans

They may additionally include:

- Special interests the pupil has and how these have been supported in school.
- Fixtures, events & workshops the pupil has taken part in.
- Photos and evidence from tapestry

Class teachers and Tutors have primary responsibility for keeping Progress Passports up to date