

# Local Offer Submission for 2020-21

## Birch Copse Primary School

Birch Copse is a two form entry primary school located in Tilehurst. There are 425 children attending the school, about half of whom come from the immediate local catchment area. The great majority of pupils are White British. Other groups include Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean and Asian. There is one pupil in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals has doubled in recent years but is still much lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average. This group includes a number of children on the Autism Spectrum and with Physical Disabilities such as Hearing Impairment. The school works closely with parents and we are fortunate to have parents who value education and are keen to support their children with their learning. Our mission statement is 'Together we plant the seeds for success'.

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

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

There are a number of ways in which a child might be identified as having SEND such as by the class teacher or parents raising concerns regarding progress, behaviour or attitude to learning. Tracking data identifies children who are not making expected progress which can alert staff to the fact that they may have SEND.

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

Your initial point of contact would be your child's class teacher. You can arrange to speak to them after school by telephoning the school office or by sending a note with your child. Once you have met with the class teacher they may then speak to the SENCo in order to discuss any additional support your child may require. It may also be appropriate for you to meet with the SENCo to further discuss your concerns.

### 2. Support for children with special educational needs

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

Your child's class teacher is responsible for planning and monitoring the education programmes of all children in their class. If a child needs support in addition to that which is already planned for the class your child's teacher will also be responsible for planning that. This may be done in consultation with the SENCo and where appropriate will follow guidance given by other agencies.

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

Once your child has been identified as having SEND a Success and Achievement Plan (SAP) will be written. This document outlines your child's strengths and areas of difficulty and sets outcomes for the coming term and will be written in consultation with you. The outcomes are reviewed termly with you, taking into account both yours and your child's views. In addition, Parent/Teacher discussions take place termly.

If your child is to take part in an intervention group you will be notified.

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

The Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who work with individual children are aware that part of their role is to encourage the child to be an active member of the class and to be able to work independently in a range of environments. The LSAs are skilled at recognising when it is appropriate to work on a one to one basis with a child and when the child can be supported at a distance. The class teacher will also direct the LSA to work in a certain way with a child.

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

Through whole school tracking procedures we follow the progress that all the children are making. From this information we are able to target the areas of the curriculum where a child would need support. The curriculum can be differentiated in a range of ways, for example through additional adult support, simplified activities, use of visual prompts or use of concrete apparatus.

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

A key objective for the children at school with SEND is that they are fully included in all aspects of school life. We would initially look at a child's individual needs and plan provision accordingly, such as providing a range of visual prompts, seating arrangements, reducing the amount of complex language used, minimising instructions, enlarging printed resources, pre-teaching key vocabulary or concepts and giving a child time to consolidate their learning with an adult after the lesson.

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

We have LSAs who are trained to offer specific support such as for children requiring Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy input. We have one Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) who works with individuals and runs social skills and other groups as the need arises. We also have an HLTA who runs social skills groups and offers 1:1 support where appropriate.

We have a Family School Support Worker (FSW) who works with both the children in school and families outside school.

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

**Type/Title of Intervention Delivery Method**

Catch Up Literacy One to one

SNAP maths - One to one

Toe by Toe - Literacy One to one

Precision teaching – One to one

Emotional Literacy Support - One to one

School Inclusion - Emotional Literacy Small group

Social skills - Small group

Circle of Friends – Small group

LEGO Therapy – Pairs

Sensory Circuits – Small group

Life skills – One to one

Targeted group work for phonics, handwriting, reading, maths etc - Small group

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

We are able to respond to the personal needs of your child and can either borrow or purchase specialist equipment following advice from outside agencies. Within school we have a range of resources such as Numicon to support number work and the expertise to write social stories to help children understand potentially anxiety provoking situations. We also have practical resources such as wobble cushions, fiddle toys and weighted lap cushions to support children's sensory needs. We have recently installed a Sensory Room which is a quiet safe space which children can go to if they are feeling overwhelmed, anxious or upset. **(Due to the Covid situation the Sensory room is currently not in use)** We are also able to call on external expertise such as the Educational Psychologist or the Specialist Inclusion Support Service to advise on appropriate resources.

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

If appropriate the school can apply for extra time for children sitting Key Stage 2 national tests. Modified tests can be ordered for children with a visual impairment, some children may also have access to a reader or a scribe or may carry out the tests in a smaller room to optimise concentration.

### **3. My child's progress**

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

It is the standard practice of school to offer Parent/Teacher discussions three times a year. In addition to these discussions, in accordance with DfE access arrangements you will be invited to meet to discuss the outcomes set in your child's Success and Achievement Plan. During these meetings you will be given information on the level that your child is working at and have the chance to celebrate successes. You will also be given information on additional support your child is receiving.

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

A meeting takes place three times a year to review and set Success and Achievement Plan outcomes. This is a fully collaborative process between parents/carers and school. Progress towards the outcomes is looked at and if achieved a new outcome will be set. If it has not been achieved, it will either be modified to make it more achievable or repeated in order to give your child more time to reach the target.

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

If you would like to meet with staff in addition to the meeting times referred to, you can ring the school office to make an appointment after school.

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

We have an open door policy and quick handover information can be given by parents or school at the beginning and end of the school day. *(Due to current Covid restrictions we are encouraging parents to pass on information either by phone or email)* Often a child's LSA will accompany the child out at the end of the school day to pass on any key information. Not every child requires a home/school diary but we can set one up if it is felt useful for both sides.

**How can I help support my child's learning?**

Keeping in regular contact with key members of staff and passing on important information which could affect your child's day is useful. Encouraging your child to complete homework and ensuring that they regularly attend school will support your child with their learning. In addition, encouraging their interest in topics covered at school can increase your child's confidence.

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

The school runs evening meetings to explain ways that maths is taught and how you can support your child in learning to read. We also run information evenings on the teaching of phonics.

Foundation Stage offer Stay and Play sessions for parents to familiarise themselves with the classroom and structure and to have a chance to interact with their children at school. A monthly group for parents of children on the Autism Spectrum takes place when outside speakers visit to offer advice and training if required. *(The monthly group is on hold at the moment due to the restrictions on people coming in to school. I am, however, in regular contact with the group by email.)* In addition, we have run Positive Parenting evenings as the need has arisen and through our Parent Liaison Officer and Family Schools Support Worker other parenting courses, such as Living with under 12s, are offered. In the past we have offered information sessions on topics such as Managing Anxiety and Sleep problems.

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

At Annual Reviews children write an All About Me booklet which gives them the opportunity to reflect on what they do well and what they need further support with. It also enables them to choose pieces of work to share that they feel proud of. Children are also invited to attend the Annual Review meeting to share their All About Me information if they would like to. Part of the initial assessment of certain interventions, such as Catch Up, comprise of a reading interview which allows the child to share their views.

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

As part of the whole school data collection the progress of children with SEND is carefully monitored by the SENCo and Senior Management. The progress is shared with parents at termly Parent/Teacher discussions and as the children progress through school they know what level they are working at in English and Maths and are given the opportunity to challenge themselves.

A yearly parent/carer questionnaire is distributed and parents/carers are able to express their views on the effectiveness of SEN provision through this. In addition, parents/carers are welcome to share their views with the class teacher or SENCo throughout the year.

## **4. Support for my child's overall well being**

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

We have an experienced Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) who works with children on a 1:1 basis covering a wide range of needs from developing children's self-esteem to working on strategies for anger management. We also run a School Inclusion programme in Key Stage 2 for 8 weeks twice a year to offer support to potentially vulnerable children. We have an HLTA who is trained to run Social Skills groups to support children in areas such as developing friendships, managing conflict and promoting self-esteem. She is also able to work on a 1:1 basis if a child needs further support with emotional needs. As a school we have a staff who are committed to supporting children emotionally and socially as well as academically and this is a core element of our ethos. In addition, we have facilitated a SIBs group run by the Young Carers group to support siblings of children in school with SEND.

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

We have a clear behaviour system that all children are aware of. If a child continues to find it difficult to conform to the expected behaviour, we can write a SAP focusing on behaviour targets in collaboration with parents and class teacher. This is shared with the child and reviewed at least termly. We can also seek advice from the Therapeutic Thinking Support Team (previously known as Behaviour Intervention Team) who work within the Educational Psychology team

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

In the past we have given specific medical support to children with diabetes and epilepsy. Named staff were trained in the administration of medication and the protocols to follow by specialist nurses. We have a register of medical needs which is regularly updated and circulated by one of our LSAs. If a child has a condition which requires a specific protocol to follow we would write a care plan. We currently have a child with an epilepsy care plan in place.

**How does the school manage the administration of medicines?**

Both the office and classroom hold medication such as inhalers in a locked cupboard. Parents are required to fill out a form detailing dosage and storage instructions for medication. All medication is administered by an adult.

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

We would create a plan according to an individual's need. We have an accessible toilet and the flexibility to make different arrangements for eating times or location if required. We are also able to provide specific support staff during lunch times if required.

## **5. Specialist services available / accessed by the school**

**What SEN support services does the school use, eg. specialist support teachers, educational psychologists, teachers for hearing impairment and visual impairment, ASD advisory teachers, behaviour support teachers etc?**

Each service has their own criteria to access support which we refer to when considering whether a child needs specialist support. Currently we have input from most of the above services and additionally have children on the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Specialist Inclusion Support Service (SISS) caseloads. We can apply for support for children and families through the Emotional Health Academy. We access specialist teachers for children with hearing impairment.

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

In the first instance discuss it with your child's class teacher who may then refer you to the SENCo. The SENCo can make the appropriate referral if it is considered suitable.

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

Once a child has seen a specific therapist they will be given a therapy plan detailing outcomes. We have LSAs who are experienced in delivering such plans. The relevant therapist will often make follow up visits to the child in order to review the plan and discuss progress with the staff and parents. If it is felt appropriate Speech and Language therapists can set up group interventions which are run by LSAs and monitored by the Speech and Language Therapist.

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

In the first instance, discuss it with your child's class teacher who will refer you to the SENCo. Speech and Language referrals can be made directly to the school's link therapist by the SENCo. If your child has a Statement or EHC plan the SENCo can make referrals for Occupational Therapy through the CYPIT hub, however if your child does not have a Statement or EHC plan your GP will make the referral.

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

The named staff with responsibility for reporting child protection concerns and the Pupil Premium champion liaise with Children's Social Care Services on a case by case basis.

## **6. Training of school staff in SEND**

**What SEND training is provided for teachers in your school?**

If a teacher has a child with a particular need in the class, for example ASD or sensory processing

difficulties, it may be possible for them to attend training run by an outside agency. The Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist have delivered training to staff to support specific aspects of a child's therapy plan such the Looking and Listening language group, Lego Therapy and the Alert Programme. The SENCo keeps up to date with current legislation and strategies for specific needs through conferences and training.

**What SEND training is provided for teaching assistants and other staff in your school?**

Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants are given appropriate training for the support they are expected to deliver and the needs of the children that they are working with. We are able to access a wide range of training offered by the Local Authority, from training in delivering specific interventions such as Catch Up reading or Precision Teaching, to courses which increase staff's understanding of a particular need such as Autism awareness courses. The Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist have delivered training to support staff to support specific aspects of a child's therapy plan such the Looking and Listening language group, Lego Therapy and the Alert Programme.

**Do teaching assistants have any specific qualifications in SEND?**

We have Learning Support and Teaching Assistants who are trained as ELSAs and in Catch Up Literacy, SNAP Maths, Precision Teaching and LEGO therapy.

## **7. Activities outside the classroom including school trips**

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

A full risk assessment is undertaken for each off site activity and any adjustments are made accordingly

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

Where necessary, such as for residential visits, planning meetings take place with the leader of the activity and the child's parents or carers. As a result all children with SEND have been able to attend off-site activities, including residential visits.

## **8. Accessibility of the school environment**

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

It is possible to move around the whole school building in a wheel chair. There is one large flight of steps from the Upper Juniors but this area can be accessed by ramps externally. There is also a small flight of steps to some of the Lower Junior classrooms but it is also possible for this area to be accessed by ramps externally.

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

The edges of steps are painted yellow. In the past we have ensured that class members of children with a visual impairment are made aware of the need to keep chairs in and to give a clear space for moving around.

**Are there accessible changing and toilet facilities?**

Yes

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

We consider each case on an individual basis and can put in place additional support in order to improve access.

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

We would ask the parents if there is any particular support that they require when communicating with school and seek advice from the appropriate agency if necessary.

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

We would ask the parents what support they might require and ask the advice of the EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service) team if appropriate. In the past we have arranged for interpreters to accompany parents to meetings, these have been from outside charitable agencies, have been family members or more recently have been from EMTAS.

## **9. Preparing my child to join a new school / next stage of education**

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

The SENCo will gather information from parents and the previous setting. This information will be shared with all staff who will be working with your child. Your child will be able to visit the school, more than once if required. It is possible for the visits to be arranged at different times so that your child can

see the school when it is busy and quiet. We produce transition booklets which have pictures of the key places and people that your child will encounter when they start school which your child can read at home as often as they require.

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

Your child will be able to visit their new classroom at various times during the day to look at key areas. They will be given the opportunity to go onto the playground if required. Your child will be able to meet their new teacher and any support staff in the new classroom before the beginning of the academic year. They will also receive a transition booklet.

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

Preparing for Secondary School courses take place throughout Year 6 for children who are identified as potentially being vulnerable on transition. These are run by our Family Support Worker and take place on both an individual and group basis. Extra visits to the receiving Secondary schools can be requested and a member of staff from Birch Copse can accompany your child if required. A transition book is available in the Year 6 classrooms. If your child has particular concerns about transition the ELSA will be available for them to talk to.

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

We will pass on all the information that we have including successful strategies. If required a hand over can take place between support staff. We can also meet with the secondary school and discuss any adaptations that we may have made and pass on any useful contacts. Meetings take place between the Year 6 teachers and the head of Year 7 to discuss all children

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

The full file of information kept by the SENCo is passed on to the next school.

## **10. Who can I contact to discuss my child?**

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

Your child's class teacher.

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

We use the services of a Family Support Worker who is able to offer work with a child in school and with parents/carers in the home. We have a Parent Liaison Officer whose role is to offer advice and support to parents/carers and families on any matter which may concern them. She also runs parent workshops and courses such as Living with Under 12s. We run a monthly coffee morning for parents of children on the Autism Spectrum at school. (*This is currently on hold due to Covid restrictions*)

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

We have leaflets outside the office offering information on support agencies. The SENCo has a range of specific leaflets and she emails anything of interest to parents. If a parent is after particular advice she will endeavour to answer queries and direct parents towards support. The Parent Liaison Officer can also help to direct parents/carers to specific groups who can help. From time to time the weekly school bulletin also includes information on external workshops, support groups etc.

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

A parent questionnaire is sent out yearly. Regular feedback can be received at Parent/Teacher discussion meetings. We have an open door policy and all teaching staff are available to speak to parents at the end of a school day.