



MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST



BIRCH HILL

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Learn, believe, achieve together

Birch Hill Primary School and Nursery Curriculum Statement

September 2026_27

Contents

<u>Our Intent</u>	3
<u>Implementation</u>	3
<u>Pedagogical Principles</u>	3
<u>Phonics, Reading and Maths Schemes</u>	4
<u>Questioning, Assessment and Feedback</u>	4
<u>Impact</u>	5
<u>Implementation methods</u>	6
<u>Our Expectations</u>	6
<u>The five areas of Effective Teaching</u>	7
<u>Adaptive Teaching</u>	8
<u>Effective Learning</u>	10
<u>The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education</u>	11
<u>Assessment Principles</u>	11
<u>Curriculum Enrichments</u>	13

Our Intent

Curriculum Overview

All children will make strong progress in all subjects.

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- **Reading at the Core:** All children will learn to read fluently and confidently, enabling full access to the curriculum and fostering a love of reading for both information and enjoyment.
- **Ambitious and Inclusive:** The curriculum is broad, balanced, and ambitious, designed to equip all children—especially the most disadvantaged—with the knowledge, skills, and cultural capital needed for future success.
- **Progressive and Responsive:** A well-planned, sequenced curriculum builds on prior learning, supports age-related expectations, and is adapted to close learning gaps swiftly where needed.
- **Values-Driven:** Rooted in our motto *Learn, Believe, Achieve Together*, the curriculum promotes equity and high expectations for all, regardless of barriers to learning.
- **Language and Oracy Focus:** Oracy is central to classroom practice, developing confident communicators with rich vocabularies through purposeful dialogue.
- **Enriched Learning:** Children will experience learning beyond the classroom through visits and real-world experiences that deepen understanding.
- **Exemplary Teaching:** High-quality, responsive teaching and assessment underpin all learning, ensuring every child is prepared for the next stage of their education.

Implementation

Pedagogical Principles

- Children's use of academic vocabulary and subject-specific vocabulary is developed.
- Effective structures exist so that teaching is rigorous and engaging, positively impacting children's learning in the context of a rich, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.
- All lessons have clear Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, effective modelling and questioning, targeted support with appropriate resources, and a sustained pace of learning with appropriate challenge throughout.

- Behaviour is positively managed and eliminates any disruption.
- Evidence of SMSC in the learning environment and lesson.
- Classrooms are well-organised with high-quality displays and working walls.
- A rigorous approach in lessons is used to ascertain if all children have achieved specific criteria to demonstrate acquisition of knowledge, both currently and over time, by achieving mastery of the curriculum offered.
- Feedback, questioning and discussion is structured around the intended learning and whether children know more and remember more.
- Shared reading and oracy practice are drivers for developing independent writing.
- Children are given opportunities to read extended texts with a view to develop decoding, inference and vocabulary acquisition.
- Key concepts and knowledge are built upon and revised so that knowledge is embedded in the long-term memory.
- Children are taught to select and use resources independently.
- Exercise books are used as key resources showing progress across a subject, and empowering children to talk about their learning.
- Home learning opportunities are used to consolidate and extend knowledge and skills.
- Teachers will use their subject knowledge to ensure that children deeply understand their learning and how it fits within the broader context of the subject and wider curriculum.

Phonics, Reading and Maths Schemes

- Birch Hill Primary School follows the Read, Write Inc (RWI) Phonics Scheme.
- Mathematics Provision is developed from NCETM Mobius Maths Hub and uses White Rose Maths Hub scheme.

Questioning, Assessment and Feedback

- 'Cold Calling' - Hands down questioning and effective questioning cycles allow for targeted questions.
- Disadvantaged children have priority questions.
- Teachers and children use a variety of questions when teaching which develops thinking at different levels (Blooms Taxonomy).

- Clear Age Related (ARE) and Greater Depth (GD) expectations are in place for each year group, allowing children to demonstrate mastery of each subject – knowledge, skills and understanding.
- PixL assessment materials are used from Y1-Y6 and the timing of their use is planned for key points in the academic year.
- Teacher assessments are moderated by subject leaders through our professional enquiry process.
- Outcomes achieved in summative assessments are shared with children and parents as appropriate, allowing children and parents to develop a shared understanding of their attainment in relation to year group expectations.
- Feedback in books is focused on addressing misconceptions or deepening their understanding by outlining next steps or posing a question for children to respond to.
- Both formative and summative assessments allow teachers to observe whether learning is embedded through carefully chosen questioning which in turn informs future planning.
- Fortnightly Raising Standards Meetings are held with all year groups, and termly Pupil Progress Meetings (PPMs) allow further discussions on individual children's progress between leaders and teachers.
- Through careful data analysis, misconceptions are addressed at either an individual, class or cohort level adjusting teaching as necessary.
- Regular Quality Assurance (QA), including book scrutinies, lesson observations/learning walks and discussions with children about their learning enables leaders to hold focused improvement conversations with staff, leading to a clear understanding of how effective teaching and learning is executed.
- Adults in lessons provide children with verbal feedback linked to achieving the learning objective.
- Termly Parents Evenings and annual written report outcomes do not come as a surprise to children and parents

Impact

Outcomes (Measurable and Visible)

- Teaching results in positive progress for all children, evidenced by children's books, interviews and data.
- All children learn to read a range of quality texts confidently with accuracy and fluency for information and enjoyment so that they can access the curriculum and develop their knowledge of the world.
- All children develop the confidence to access the next stage in their education and be positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.
- Children enjoy learning and are confident communicators who develop a wide vocabulary.
- Reading and oracy strategies support the school's wider strategies.
- Children have a range of enrichment opportunities which deepens their understanding of a subject.
- Quality First Teaching (QfT) and Assessment for Learning (AfL) is strong.
- Children learn about significant people and understand the impact they have had.
- Children are motivated by questioning to extend thinking with a balance of talk & listening and doing & watching.
- Children are able to articulate the intended learning and say what they need to do to achieve it, demonstrating excellent attitudes to learning and self-discipline.
- Children demonstrate by the outcomes produced, positive progress towards the Learning Intention (LI) and achievement of the Success Criteria (SC).
- Children evaluate their own progress towards the intended learning and identify next steps.
- Children access the intended learning, maintaining active engagement and motivation throughout.

Implementation methods

Our Expectations

- Staff have high expectations of themselves and all children.
- Teachers are expected to impart knowledge accurately and with enthusiasm which generates high levels of commitment from children.
- We expect children to make rapid and sustained progress in lessons.
- We expect teachers to support children in developing independence.

- We expect teachers to systematically check understanding, intervening in a timely manner when needed.
- We expect children to be challenged.
- We expect teachers to regularly provide high quality marking and constructive feedback to children.

The five areas of Effective Teaching at Birch Hill are:

1. Quality first Teaching (QfT)

- Highly focused lesson design with clear Learning Intention and Success Criteria.
- High demands of child engagement with their learning.
- High levels of interaction for all children.
- Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining.
- Emphasis on learning through Oracy.
- An expectation that children will develop resilience and accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently.
- Regular use of encouragement and praise to motivate children.

2. Focused assessment

- Rigorous assessment and tracking of children's performance takes place to inform classroom practice allowing children to make good progress and close attainment gaps.
- Day to day, Periodic and Transitional assessments used effectively.
- Responsive Teaching (AfL) evident across the school – learning objectives, learning outcomes, success criteria, self-evaluation.

3. Intervention through targeted support

- Individuals and groups who are not making sufficient progress are identified.
- Provision for intervention is mapped according to needs analysis (PiXL) Key marginals.
- Diagnosis of gaps in learning are completed and actions taken to fill gaps in learning whilst maintaining progress in current learning.
- Support is evaluated and relevant adjustments are made.

- Leaders and staff regularly meet to discuss current and future support actions engaging in dialogue around the impact of interventions, potential barriers and further actions required.

4. Learning environment

- Organisation of the classroom/learning environment adapted to the children's learning needs.
- The use of learning resources and IT developed to allow children to work independently and successfully.
- Displays to be a mixture of celebration of children's work, supportive resources and information.

5. Supporting children's wider needs

- We maintain close communication with parents and carers.
- We develop and maintain multi-agency links to support vulnerable children.
- Birch Hill employs a Family Support Advisor (FSA).
- Emotional Literacy Support, Canine Therapy, SEN TA Team support our families.

Adaptive Teaching – How We Make Learning Accessible for All Children at Birch Hill

Our high expectations of progress apply equally to children working above, at, or below age-related expectations, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs.

At Birch Hill, we believe that every child deserves the chance to succeed, no matter their starting point. That's why our teachers use *adaptive teaching*—an approach that tailors lessons to meet the needs of all our learners. This doesn't mean creating separate lessons for each child, but rather adjusting how teaching happens so that everyone can engage, understand, and achieve.

Our choice of teaching strategies is grounded in educational research and shaped by what we see working in our classrooms. Through regular learning walks, where we observe teaching and learning across the school, we've identified the approaches that have the most positive impact on our children's understanding and progress. These strategies are used consistently across all year groups and subjects, forming the foundation of our teaching approach at Birch Hill.

While these are not the only techniques we use, they represent the core principles that guide our teaching. They help us ensure that every child, regardless of their background or learning style, can access the curriculum and thrive.

Here's a look at some of the key strategies you'll see in our classrooms:

1. Clear Learning Goals

We start each lesson by sharing what the children will be learning, often after an engaging introduction. Teachers refer back to this goal throughout the lesson to keep children on track.

2. Nest (Think), Pair, Share

To help children develop their ideas, teachers often ask a question and give everyone time to think. Children then discuss their thoughts with a partner or small group before sharing with the class. This approach builds confidence and encourages teamwork.

3. No Hands Up (Cold Calling)

To keep everyone engaged, teachers may call on children to share their ideas without asking for raised hands. This means everyone stays involved and ready to contribute.

4. Teacher Modelling

When teaching a new skill, teachers show how to do it step by step, thinking out loud as they go. They often use the 'My turn, Our turn, Your turn' approach, where children first watch, then join in, and finally try the task independently.

5. Adapting the Pace

Teachers adjust the speed of lessons based on how well children are understanding the content. They might spend more time reviewing key points or move ahead if the class is ready.

6. Rehearsing Key Vocabulary (Oracy & Voice21)

Learning new words is easier when they're spoken aloud. Teachers model the correct pronunciation and ask children to repeat words in fun ways—like using a whisper, a loud voice, or even a silly voice!

7. Full-Sentence Answers (Say it Again Better)

To help children remember facts, teachers encourage children to answer in full sentences. For example, instead of saying "Tokyo," children might say, "The capital city of Japan is Tokyo."

8. Focused Questioning

Teachers avoid asking children to guess answers they haven't learned yet, as this can lead to confusion. Instead, they ask questions based on what has already been taught.

By adapting their teaching, Birch Hill teachers ensure that every child can engage with and succeed in their learning. If you'd like to know more, please speak with your child's teacher.

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in different ways, and we recognise the need to develop pedagogies which enable all children to learn in ways which suit them.

We offer different ways for children to learn including:

- investigation and problem solving
- open ended tasks
- reasoning
- research and exploration, with independent access to a range of resources
- group work, paired work and independent work
- effective questioning
- presentations and drama
- use of IT
- visitors and educational visits
- creative activities, designing and production
- use of multimedia, visual or aural stimulus
- participation in physical or athletic activity
- homework
- extra-curricular clubs and activities
- collaboration with local libraries
- subjects/themes that cross subjects/curriculum

The Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education:

Religion and belief have become more visible in public life in recent years, making it important that all children should have an opportunity to engage in Religious Education. However, the parent of a child at a community, foundation or voluntary school (or children themselves if they are aged 18 or over) may request that they be excused from all or part of the Religious Education (RE) provided.

Parents who wish to withdraw their children from Religious Education should be aware of its aims and what is covered in the Religious Education curriculum and that

they are given the opportunity to discuss this if they wish. It should be made clear whether the withdrawal is from the whole RE curriculum or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given

Important - limitations to withdraw

- If children are withdrawn from Religious Education, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching. A child may be required to work in another area of the school, such as library or break out area.
- Whilst parents or carers have a right to withdraw children from Religious Education, they should note that children may also encounter religions and beliefs and wider aspects of faith in other areas of the curriculum from which there is no right of withdrawal.
- On occasion, spontaneous questions about religious matters are raised by children or issues related to religion arise in other curriculum subjects such as history or citizenship (PSHE). For example, schools promote community cohesion and help children to understand ideas about identity and diversity, feelings and emotions within both religious and non-religious contexts.

Managing the Right of Withdrawal from RE

If children are withdrawn from Religious Education, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Children will usually remain on school premises where it is feasible and appropriate.

Where a request for withdrawal is made, the school must comply and excuse the child until the request is rescinded. Though not legally required, it is good practice for the school to invite parents to discuss their written request.

Requests should be marked for the attention of the Headteacher and sent via the school office. (Section 71(3), School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

Assessment Principle

Birch Hill Primary School's Assessment Principles

Our assessment procedures are an essential part of how we help children achieve high standards. We regularly evaluate children's knowledge, skills and understanding through daily formative assessments and termly summative assessments. These assessments help establish children's abilities and current strengths, as well as their next learning steps.

Teachers use assessment information to inform their planning, ensuring lessons continually build on children's strengths and address areas for development improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Children are actively involved in our assessments, as they become better learners when they are given time to reflect on their success in lessons and are aware of their own learning goals.

Qualitative and quantitative assessment information is shared regularly with parents throughout the year so that teachers and parents can work together to help children succeed.

We are committed to:

Continually providing clear, comprehensible, feedback, verbally and in writing, which supports children's learning.

- Feedback is a vital element of assessment. Effective feedback is positive, constructive and ensures children understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
- We recognise that the most effective feedback is immediate.

Ensuring children engage in their feedback, through discussion or in writing, to show that they understand how to improve further.

- Children are frequently given opportunities to respond to teachers' next steps, which consists of them improving past work and further developing particular skills that were identified in teachers' marking.

Using assessment strategies within lessons to systematically check children's understanding so we can intervene with noticeable impact on children's achievement.

- By using targeted questioning techniques, teachers are able to understand how best to support or challenge particular children.
- Creating clear learning intentions and appropriate success criteria for all children, so they understand the aim of the lesson, how to achieve it and can access and are challenged by their learning.

Encouraging children to take the lead in their own assessment.

- This is facilitated through self-assessment and peer-assessment activities, children creating their own success criteria. These enable children to reflect on the standard of their work over a longer period of time.

Using summative termly judgements as a mechanism for tracking children's progress over the course of the year.

- We use summative judgements to help monitor whole-school standards; analyse the performance of key groups; ensure all children can access and are challenged by their learning; provide additional support for those who are finding learning more difficult and provide additional challenge for those who are ready for it; and to ensure that every child is supported to meet their full potential.
- We prioritise the moderation of summative judgements to help refine the accuracy of these assessments.

Ensuring assessments provide information that is of value and justifies the time teachers spend on them.

- We continually reflect on our assessment procedures to ensure they are valid and reliable, giving us the information needed.
- We reflect on the time teachers spend on tracking, delivering and marking assessments to ensure it justifies the outcomes.

Giving reliable, meaningful and regular information to parents about how their child, and the school, is performing.

- This information will be clear, transparent and communicated in a format that parents can understand and also use to assist their child's future learning.

Making sure the school is keeping up with external practice and innovation.

- We continually reflect on our assessment policy and practice. We do this by ensuring we are aware of high quality work locally, nationally and internationally.

Curriculum Enrichments

We have an excellent range of enrichment activities to help support the children's learning. These include visitors or drama workshops coming into school, and trips to local facilities, or further afield to museums or even the odd castle!

In addition, children will have the opportunities to perform in a range of productions while at Birch Hill, including Christmas Nativity and Harvest Assembly for in Early Year and KS1, Year 3 & 4 children will perform a play at Easter and Year 6 children participate in a National Shakespeare Festival.



Year 6
Performance



Year 4 Easter
Performance



Year 6 Summer
Performance



Year 2 Harvest
Assembly



Year 3 trip to Henley
Museum

Year 4 children
visiting
Swinley Forest and
meeting the
Rangers



Year 2 trip to Natural History Museum



Local PC visiting children in Reception as part of their topic 'Who Helps Us'



Year 6 taking part in a Victorian themed Day at school as part of their topic Victorians



Year 1 visit
Marwell Zoo as part
of their topic on
Animals and
Adaption



Art Week
(Take One Picture)



Year 6 trip to Rhos Y
Gwaliau Outdoor
Education Centre in
Wales



Year 4 visit Oxford Castle as part of their topic on Crime & Punishment



Badgers Retreat & our Edible Playground is concerned with process rather than an end product. Edible Playground is a programme from UK charity **Trees for Cities**. Badgers Retreat has been transformed into a vibrant outdoor teaching gardens that enables children to have hands-on learning and for them to get excited about growing and eating healthy food. In addition, this gives the children important time to develop social skills and respect for their natural surroundings. Food grown in the Edible Playground is then cooked in the school kitchen.