



**bhs**  
**bh** **BIRCHES HEAD**  
HIGH SCHOOL

prospectus

# Welcome to Birches Head High School

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Our aim is to provide the best possible education for each and every student. We want to create successful confident individuals who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve, lead safe and healthy lives and become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Our values of:

**Respect**  
**Inspire**  
**Challenge**  
**Honesty**

underpin our work. It is our belief that all our students have the potential for excellence.

Our vision is that together

**“We are a community of successful and diverse learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens. Ever learning; ever growing; “Brighter Futures” for all”**

This requires high quality teaching, high levels of student engagement and high levels of parental support. It also requires there to be a businesslike and purposeful learning atmosphere in the school where good behaviour allows teachers to teach and students to learn. This is fundamental if student progress is to be outstanding.

For us, Birches Head High School is a very special place. We are committed to ensuring we meet the needs of all our students in order to prepare them for life in the 21st century. We have already achieved considerable academic success and we now aim to build further on this. Every student has within themselves the capacity to learn and the ability to achieve. At Birches Head High School we see our role as unlocking their potential and enabling our learners to find and enhance their talents & future lives. There is no ceiling to learning.



# Curriculum

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"A broad based education is a preparation for modern life".

We ensure students' education is broad, balanced, personalised and relevant. We are preparing students for lifelong learning with many exciting opportunities in an ever changing world.

Our curriculum is designed with this in mind. We deliver the full National Curriculum whilst preparing our students for their lives in the future.

In Key Stage 3 we aim to teach our students how to be successful learners through developing the skills needed to learn both independently and in collaboration.

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum provides a variety of pathways for students, enabling them to make choices both from a subject perspective and style of learning. All students take English, Maths, Science, ICT, Physical Education, Religious Education, Personal Development and Functional Skills in English, Maths & ICT.

Through our work with partners we are able to offer our students a wide variety of choice within GCSEs, Diplomas, BTEC and NVQs. Throughout our curriculum all our students develop Personal Learning & Thinking Skills, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and Functional Skills.

To support their learning we have a 'Personal Skills Tracker'; a web based e-portfolio and assessment tool, where you can follow their progress online.

## Personal Development & Well Being

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We have a strong Personal Development curriculum which teaches skills of personal excellence to help students achieve their targets and personal goals. Sex and Relations Education is provided for all students in accordance with statutory guidelines. It is taught as part of the PSHE Programme where students learn about relationships, moral attitudes, marriage and the family. Parents may view the teaching materials used on application to the Assistant Headteacher: Personal Development and Well Being.

Our Religious Education syllabus follows the Local Authority agreed syllabus.



# Supporting Learning

## Learning Support

The School has a Learning Support Team to support students with special educational needs. The Team has its own suite of specialist rooms and calls on the services of local special schools and local authority experts to aid its work. Learning Support at Birches Head High School is guided by the following principles:

- All students, irrespective of ability or disability, have an equal right to a broad and balanced curriculum which supports their needs. Students with special needs are fully integrated into the educational and social life of the school.
- The school provides varying levels of additional support in order that every student has access to the opportunities offered by the school.
- The responsibility for meeting the Special Educational Needs of students is shared by all members of staff and the school works collaboratively with the young person, parents and the support services in setting targets and monitoring progress.

## Participation Team:

The Participation Team support all other students in ensuring they develop the learning skills needed to overcome barriers to progress. The school is proud of the work done by the Participation Team in working with learners to improve progress in Maths and English as well as their option courses at KS4.

Students with English as a second language are supported by a senior member of staff and full time assistant to ensure that students are able to access the curriculum.

## Gifted & Talented

We have a commitment to work in partnership with our Gifted and Talented students to ensure that they are involved in making decisions about their learning experience. We annually interview each student with their parents to build this partnership and ensure our Gifted and Talented Student Learning Detectives are fully involved in improving learning.

## Student Services

Student Services is available to all students and their families to support pastoral care. The student services team is committed to supporting students to ensure they can access learning and make progress. Dedicated Learning Managers lead each year team and are available to work with parents, students and staff providing support or helping to access other services as appropriate.

## MACs Place

Macs Place is based in our student reception and is a multi agency service for our students. Over 30 services have worked with us to provide support for our students and their families. These range from counselling services, working with the local police on improving opportunities for young people in the community to involvement with Youth and Play who have provided support and access to activities.



# New Technologies at Birches Head High School

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Birches Head High School has extensive ICT facilities offering state-of-the-art new technologies within digital media and wireless access. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and students and staff have access to ICT portable devices.

Through the Birches Head Gateway – a virtual learning environment - students and parents can access learning and information anytime, anyplace, anywhere with an internet connection. The Gateway provides parents with remote access to their child's attendance, progress and other information.

Birches Head High School is leading the way in moving towards being a fully online school, which will enable our staff, students and parents to work in partnership to support learning more easily.

## Student Leadership

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Our students are at the heart of what we do; we believe they are a crucial partner in improving all aspects of school and community life and we are extremely proud of their achievements to date. Our students formulate action teams who are focused around improving the quality of experience for all. These teams include: The Learning Detectives, the Learning Action Team, MACs Place Steering Group, the Environment Group and our Curriculum Ambassadors, to name but a few. Student Action Teams support the school and community by bringing together partnerships for improvement and by ensuring we are all working together.

## Extended Services

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We are a full, extended services school working in partnership with the City's Cluster 2, which is a collaboration of 34 partners in the East and West of the City. We offer extensive out of hours learning and are particularly proud of the activities in the fields of the sport, the arts & media. Our students have access to a wide variety of holiday activities through our partnership work with the Cluster.

Through extended services, enhanced learning opportunities with partners have been integral to the learning experience. Through partners we can offer experiences in; driving courses, camping, horse riding, experiences with the armed forces, theatre, trips abroad to name but a few. If our students are willing to help us make it happen then we can normally arrange it.



# Community

The school is proud to be a part of the local community which it serves. It is important that the school is seen and valued as belonging to the community and 'your school' continues to support our community aspirations.

We have beautiful resources and buildings that can provide an enjoyable environment for many opportunities. Currently we are working in partnership to offer a wide range of community based activities including supporting adults in improving their own learning and qualifications as well as offering opportunities for sports, arts, aromatherapy to name but a few.

We believe we are a member of our community and are working to develop stronger links with partners in our community to ensure we are all improving the lives of our young people.





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HIGH SCHOOL

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