

BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL
New Parent
Handbook
2024 / 25

WHERE EVERY CHILD IS A VALUED INDIVIDUAL

Welcome to Bishopswood School.

Bishopswood School is an integral part of Oxfordshire County Council education provision in South Oxfordshire. We also work closely with neighbouring authorities and take pupils regularly from them. **We support a diverse community of pupils with Educational Health, and Care Plans identified as having severe and profound learning difficulties, complex needs, Moderate Learning Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).**



Bishopswood is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, promoting good relationships between different racial, cultural, and religious groups and communities, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Welcome from Priya, Headteacher

Hello, and a warm welcome to Bishopswood School.

I feel very privileged that Bishopswood School will be able to play a part in your child's educational journey, and I firmly believe that we must offer a holistic approach to education so that your child can access and experience success in all areas of schooling.

From their very first days with us, Bishopswood School will take time to get to know your child as an individual and will help nurture and support them on their journey to develop their life skills, personal and emotional development, and academic growth, within a broad, vibrant, and enriched curriculum. We will begin to develop your child's communication and independence with the knowledge and skills to build relationships and access the wider community around them.

In this ever-changing world, this success relies on parents as co-educators. We aim to foster open and honest communication with you in a positive and supportive manner so that we develop a strong and collaborative partnership that enables your child to thrive during their time at our school. My door is always open to you and I will always prioritise time to hear your thoughts and opinions on how we can make our school the best it can be for your child.

I look forward to our school taking this journey with you.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Priya Bhagrath	Headteacher
Lorraine Green	Deputy Headteacher
Fay Bjornstad	Assistant Headteacher

**BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL, PRIMARY DEPARTMENT, GROVE ROAD,
SONNING COMMON, SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE, RG4 9RH.**



Morning session 9.00 a.m. to 11.45 a.m.
Afternoon session 12.45 p.m. to 3.15 p.m.* (Wednesdays finish session 2.45p.m)

Our Primary Department is for pupils aged 5-11 years and is co-located with Sonning Common Primary School. We have our own stand-alone purpose-built facilities, with some scheduled access to the wider grounds and swimming pool. We have four classes, with class sizes up to 10 pupils. There are the equivalent of four full-time teachers and a team of learning support assistants in each class.

The light and airy classrooms are well designed and resourced, with touch-screen PCs, Interactive Whiteboards and 'Eye Gaze' Technology. Each classroom is attached to a shared hygiene area. The grounds are pleasant and safe, including our purpose-built outdoor play area with climbing equipment and sensory garden.

At lunchtime, some pupils integrate into Sonning Common Primary School for lunch, while others join for a shared lunch experience, learning to make choices, try new foods and sit alongside others for extended periods. Some of our pupils may require a quieter space and will eat lunch in their classes.



All pupils will be closely supervised and supported to manage behaviour, establish an understanding, and develop good table manners, where appropriate.

**BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL, SECONDARY DEPARTMENT, CO-LOCATED
AT MAIDEN ERLEGH CHILTERN EDGE, READES LANE, SONNING
COMMON, RG4 9LN**

Morning session 08.50 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.
Afternoon session 1.30 p.m. to 3.05 p.m. (Wednesdays
Early finish 2.35p.m)



Our secondary department is based at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School. We have a suite of rooms adapted to meet the needs of young people with Special Needs and Disabilities, within the Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge main teaching building. We have four classes with five teaching rooms, a hygiene area and toilet facilities to meet the students' personal needs. There is an outdoor Activezone and sensory garden. We have access to Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge's facilities, including the canteen main hall and grounds.



Teaching and Learning in the secondary department help promote social confidence and independence and encourage an enthusiasm for learning new life skills that will help prepare them for the next stage in their life. Students follow an adapted national curriculum to develop communication, literacy, numeracy, computing, and life skills. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties or complex needs follow an individualised, multisensory, and therapeutic curriculum.

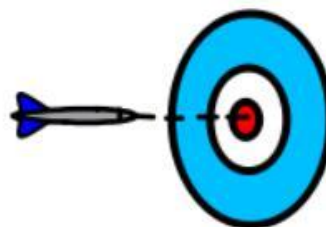
Some pupils from year 9 to year 11 will follow the Countryside Stewardship Curriculum devised by the Earth Trust based at Wittenham. They will participate in various outdoor activities, including site maintenance, planting, harvesting, animal welfare, survival, animals, plants, climate, and weather. Students wear protective clothing and footwear and learn the rules and guidance regarding working in and enjoying the countryside. At the end of KS4, some pupils will have achieved the Countryside Stewardship qualification.

Some KS4 students leave Bishopswood School with at least one other nationally recognised, accredited qualification. Students work towards ASDAN Transition Challenge, Workright and Personal Development qualifications. Some, although rare, may sit GCSEs and Food Hygiene exams.

BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL AIMS AND VALUES:

Bishopswood School Aims:

- To develop and enhance the ability of each pupil to have dignity and personal choice, both at school and in their future lives.
- To offer a safe, stimulating, creative, challenging, and fun environment.
- Through our ability to embrace change, to ensure that we apply approaches to teaching and learning that are proven to be effective.
- To provide pupils with mobility, communication, and self-expression.
- To encourage pupils to develop independent living skills to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need in the future.



Bishopswood School Values:

- Respectful
- Innovative
- Inclusive
- Progressive

Bishopswood believes strongly in equal opportunities, reflected in our curriculum and policies.

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity (race, gender, disability and access for all;
- Promoting good relations between different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities.
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment.

A copy of our Equal Opportunities Policy is available on our website www.bishopswoodschool.co.uk

We are committed to the welfare and safeguarding of pupils and follow related DfE, Propeller Academy Trust and Oxfordshire County Council guidelines and policies.

Admissions

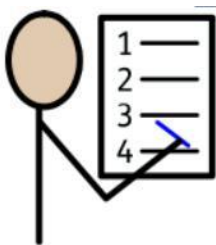
Bishopswood is the Oxfordshire County Council special school provision in South Oxfordshire, and in conjunction with other Local Authorities (LA), pupils are admitted to the school with an Educational, Health and Care Plan. We aim to make the school introduction as smooth as possible for you and your child. Parents considering whether to send their child to Bishopswood are welcome to visit with their child, please telephone the school for more details.

Please click the link to complete your child's school admission form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/82wg78Hnmj>

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION:

ATTENDANCE



Should your child be unable to attend school, parents are asked to phone the school office to give the reason for absence. Unexplained absences will be followed up by a telephone call or a letter. **We discourage parents from taking holidays during term time.** We expect all pupils to attend school regularly so that unnecessary absences do not affect their education. Parents must request permission in writing from the headteacher 14 days in advance if they wish their child to be absent from

school for any reason - other than medical reasons. A request form is available from your child's class teacher or the school office.

We are keen to reduce our absence rate going forward as the link between good attendance and pupil progress is well documented. It is helpful for parents to write in the home-school book so that the class team is aware of likely periods of absence due to appointments, etc.

More information on attendance is provided via the link below; please read, sign and date the form;

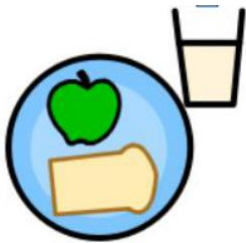
<https://forms.office.com/e/m3yqNR7zYV>

ARBOR



Our school uses ARBOR to hold your child's details, including personal information including medical. Any payment for lunches or trips will also be made using ARBOR. Parents evenings are also booked through ARBOR. Please download the ARBOR app. When your child joins us, you will receive login details for your child's account.

MEAL ARRANGEMENTS



A local private catering company offers nutritious hot meals cooked in the Sonning Common Primary School kitchen at £2.35 per meal. At Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge, meals are provided by MECE canteen at a cost of £3. We use Arbor to invoice for meal costs through the parent portal Arbor. Special diets are prepared for those children needing them, and religious dietary restrictions are respected. Your child may wish to bring a packed lunch.

Many pupils eat in the dining area with their mainstream peers. Mealtimes are an essential part of the day to re-enforce communication and social skills whilst developing healthy attitudes to diet. Some pupils have hot meals provided by Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge but at our accommodation. Some have very specific diets and may bring their own packed lunch or food to be heated.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Our school uniform is available for purchase via My Clothing website. There is a link on our school website below:

[Bishopswood School – My Clothing](#)

Uniform from My Clothing

The Primary students wear a purple sweatshirt with the school logo, and the Secondary students wear a navy sweatshirt with the school logo. There are white polo shirts and navy fleeces available also. Pupils should wear grey trousers, skirts, or pinafores.

Please can you ensure that items of clothing are clearly labelled, as without clear labels we cannot accept responsibility should they be mislaid.

PRIMARY UNIFORM



SECONDARY UNIFORM



WHOLE SCHOOL – FLEECE



MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Staff administer medication on a voluntary basis and receive necessary training from the Special School Nurse. It is school policy that written and signed consent must be obtained from a parent/legal guardian before any medication can be administered. Prescribed medication must be in a clearly labelled container, dispensed and labelled by a pharmacist. Should a parent request an infrequent medication to be given, e.g., antibiotics or paracetamol, consent within the home school



book will be acceptable on the initial occasion providing the following information is given: name of child and medicine, dose, time to be given, a signature of a parent. A consent form will be sent home and should be filled in and returned as soon as possible. Medications are checked on a termly basis (x 3 a year) by the Special School Nurse. **A new consent form is needed when there is any change in the medication or dose.**

MANAGING SICKNESS/ILL HEALTH

If your child is unwell, please do not send them to school, especially if they have infectious symptoms as they will put other pupils and staff at risk. We do not have the facilities or resources for unwell nursing children. If your child becomes unwell during the day, they will be monitored closely for an appropriate length of time, and you will be informed and contacted should they need to be taken home. **You will be expected to come to collect your child if they are unwell.**

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Most cuts and bruises resulting from falls can be dealt with in school. Mid-day or emergency medication can be administered in school if parents supply up-to-date written information on any medication given during school hours and the medication is in the original container. If further medical advice or intervention is required, depending on severity, the school will contact 999, or if not life-threatening, will call you to collect your child so they can access this intervention.

A letter is sent home regularly asking for such information and needs to be returned promptly.

TRANSPORT



Some parents prefer to bring their child to school themselves. However, the relevant Local Authority provides transport if this is required. Parents are sent guidelines when LA-provided transport is arranged. Parents concerned about the service provided should ring the Transport Section and inform the Headteacher. Please note that the county insurance covers the transport of pupils only. School staff supervise the arrival and departure of pupils in conjunction with the taxi escorts.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED FROM SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY/SCHOOL ACTIVITY

If a parent or carer does not collect a child, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or person with designated responsibility for Child Protection. That person will then make every effort to contact the parent or carer or named alternative carer(s) per the child's school records.

If the child has not been collected and no contact has been made with the child's parent(s) or carer(s) by 4.30 pm (or within 30 minutes of the end of the school activity), the headteacher or person with designated responsibility will telephone the police. If the child is known to the assessment team, contact will also be made with the child's allocated social worker or the emergency duty social worker if it is out of regular office hours.



Where arrangements are in place for a child to be escorted home from school, e.g., OCC Home-School Transport and there is no response at the home address, the driver will immediately notify OCC Transport and the school (in the event of no answer from the school, OCC have a mobile phone contact number for the Headteacher). The school/OCC special transport section will note the child's name, time of call and advice provided to the driver. They will attempt to contact the parents or other family contact. If other children must be taken home, the child will remain in the vehicle whilst this is done. The taxi driver will be directed by OCC Transport or the school where to take the child. If the parent or carer continues to be unobtainable, the school will liaise with the police/assessment team for the area in which the child resides.

A record of such incidents will be kept, and all incidents will be discussed with the parents/carers.

SCHOOL CLOSURE



When there is extreme weather, schools are occasionally forced to close for the day in the interest of pupils' safety. Parents and guardians will be emailed these details as soon as possible. Very occasionally, the taxi firms hired to transport pupils to and from Bishopswood classes may feel that the weather is too severe for their cars to be on the roads. Should this be the case, we also do our best to contact parents.

HOME SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

We take the view that all parents wish to be informed; some wish and can reinforce work done in school, and many like to play an active role in helping the school. We recognise the fundamental role of the child's family in all aspects of his/her life. The school encourages parents to sign up to a 'Home-School' partnership agreement that outlines parental and school responsibilities in relation to each child's education.



The Home School Partnership policy shows the many ways in which links are fostered.

Please follow the link to read the Home-School Partnership and sign:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Xvgs7CUi8X>

HOW WE LINK WITH YOU:

SPECIALIST SERVICES

There is a Special school nurse together with Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, and Physiotherapy Therapists that support our school. NHS Health clinics, Vision impairment and Dental visits, and immunisation sessions are offered.

HSLW (HOME SCHOOL LIASION WORKER)

The school has an HSLW Home School Liaison Worker who supports families in finding activities outside of school hours, along with help and guidance for additional funding and respite support.

There are other local educational, social services and voluntary organisations to support families with special needs children that our HSLW can advise on.

FINDING OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD DOES IN SCHOOL

Each child has a book that travels daily between home and school (and respite care). In this book, a member of staff will write essential messages, keeping you informed of your child's day and noting down any activity that has been especially enjoyed. Unfortunately, our accounts cannot be exhaustive as limited time is available for teachers to write in these books. However, there are other ways to find out what your child is doing in school.

- The school's website.
- Timetables are sent home on request.
- Schemes of work are available on request.
- Regular Newsletters will keep you informed about school events in general.
- Photographs of events and activities
- Curriculum maps will be sent home half-termly.

FINDING OUT HOW YOUR CHILD IS PROGRESSING

Annual Reviews



We will hold one formal Annual Review meeting to review progress against your child's Education Health Care Plan outcomes. A leadership team member chairs the meeting, and the class teacher is usually present. We aim to celebrate success over the year, identify the next steps, and EHCP amendments.

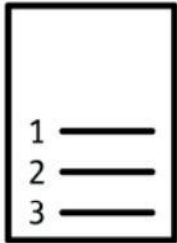
Please note that the Local Authority formalises amendments to the EHCP; the school does not lead this.

Parents' Evenings

We will also hold two parents' evenings to review ongoing progress towards these outcomes. There will be options to have this face-to-face or online. The meetings will be 15-20 minutes to review progress. Appointments are made via ARBOR.



Behaviour Support Plans



Your child may have a Behaviour Support Plan, which will identify any difficulties they may be having, as well as proactive and reactive strategies to manage these behaviours with consistency when they arise. These plans will be shared with you on an ongoing basis.

Individual Learning Plans

An Education Health Care Plan is a legal document, and Bishopswood School should support your child to progress against these identified targets. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) break these longer-term targets into smaller, more manageable steps. These targets are embedded into planning and will be constantly reviewed.

ILP targets are updated termly and will be shared with you.

Evidence for Learning

You will need to download an app called EVIDENCE FOR LEARNING. This is an online learning platform where you will be able to view your child's targets and any photographs or videos related to the targets. You will also be able to contribute to your child's targets through uploading your own videos and photos, showing us how your child is progressing at home with their individual targets.



SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.” **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**”

Our priority is your child's welfare, and therefore there may be occasions when our concern means that we have to consult other agencies even before we contact parents. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) and working with Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) have laid down the procedures we follow.

THE BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Bishopswood has an active school association - Bishopswood School Association (BSA). Please see our website for more details or contact: bsa@bishopswoodschool.co.uk

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Please visit our website to see our Governing Board information and list of Governors.

The Governing Body is looking for further support from our parent community. If you are interested in applying to be a parent governor, please contact Mark Winch, our Chair Of Governors, at mark.winch@bishopswoodschool.co.uk.