



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed ...

...to be the best 'me' I can be.

.June 2024

Issue: 9

office@birches.staffs.sch.uk

01902 297910



British Value: **All Fundamental British Values**

Birches Value: (**E**nthusiasm) and **S**uccess throughout all values

June Newsletter

Dear Parents...

What a busy April/May we have had. We have seen the children enjoy the playground activities set up at lunchtime. The children have been accessing a variety of different activities, from tag rugby, target games, bat and ball games, dressing up and dancing to music to name a few!

Our Year 3 boys; Jacob, Frankie, Coby and Teddy and Isla from Y4 qualified and attended the finals for Cross-Country District Championship. We are delighted to inform you that the boys as a team came first and Isla as an individual came 3rd...to say we are proud is an understatement especially as we are only a 1 form First School! Well done, what an achievement! Thank you to Mrs Burkitt and Miss Hulme for attending with the children.



Reception at Jubilee Woods

Y4 at RAF Cosford



June celebrates Father's Day, and we would like to mark this by inviting Dads/Grandfathers or any special male adult to join the children for a Father's Day Afternoon Tea on Friday 14th June. A survey has already been sent out; we hope as many Dads/Uncles/God/Grandfathers etc can make it!



We had the most amazing ECO Day, where the children modelled their creations from recycled materials! **See how amazing Y2 looked!**

We continue to run Forest School weekly in EYFS and each class within the school also have the opportunity throughout the year. We are so lucky to have a pond and see the amazing wildlife we have; the Nursery children have thoroughly enjoyed

their pond dipping sessions!



If you do get the opportunity this half term to visit RAF Cosford our Y4's work is on display for the public to see, I am immensely proud of the collaborative work with the RAF and honoured that they asked us to showcase our children's work....fantastic Birches!



Y3 Enjoying the chicks that hatched.



Y1 Creating with Natural Materials.

We have an incredibly busy last half term ahead, with many exciting activities planned and most importantly the opportunity for children to spend time in their new classes- we will miss you all Y4, have the best two transition days, we will look forward to hearing all about it!

Thank you for your on-going support to make our school such a special one, with fantastic opportunities for our wonderful children whom I am so proud of.

Here's to a fantastic final half term...where has the year gone?!?!

S Varricchione

Staffing Arrangements
2024/2025 Class Details:

Nursery: Mrs Fear, **Reception:** Mrs Buckley, **Y1:** Mr Jones,
Y2: Mrs Kandola and Miss Hulme, **Y3:** Miss Cartwright, **Y4:** Miss Ayling
TA Support YN- Mrs Wardlaw/Mrs Causer **YR-**Mrs Bleakley(am)Mr Hallmark (pm),
Y1-Mr Hallmark (am) **Y2-** Mrs Bell, **Y3-** Mrs Barbae **Y4-** Mrs Banks

We are delighted to welcome our new teachers Miss Cartwright and Mrs Fear to the Birches Team. It is with an extremely heavy heart we say goodbye to Mrs Lloyd, however, her family must come first. We will miss your care, love and amazing talent.

Reception Parents

Please note from this half term we ask you to say a farewell to the children at the gate. This is in readiness and preparation for their transition into Year 1. We find if we start with small changes the children naturally transition with ease. The children will be spending some time weekly in the Year 1 class from 12th June to help with their transition into main school. We know this transition is a big step for our little ones and try to do all we can to help with this move. Please contact Mrs Buckley if you have any questions and she will happily help.

Sun Protection



As the weather becomes warmer, we are aware that some children may be particularly sensitive to exposure to the sun. Please apply an all-day sunscreen before your child comes to school.



Children should not bring sunscreen into school.

Please remember sun hats and water bottles every day.

Adult Helpers

Do you have 10-20 minutes spare to help listen to readers-before the end of school or at drop off? Do you have a morning or afternoon free in which you could help in school? If you can help in any way, we would love to welcome you in to school.

Please contact the school office and we can discuss arrangements.

Thank you.



D-Day Celebration

On Thursday 6th June we will be coming together as a school to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day. We are inviting all children to come to school dressed up in either the British Flag colours, red, white and blue, any 40s clothing or indeed any service clothing (naval, air, land)! A letter has been sent home we are looking forward to celebrating this very significant historical date.



Healthy School

We are working very hard at school to promote healthy and active lifestyles at Birches. Our school lunches are all prepared in house and not via a catering agent like some schools. We take pride in buying our meat from the local Coven butchers and greengrocers for our fruit and vegetables. For those children who have a packed lunch we ask that a healthy lunchbox is packed for the children comprising of the following sandwiches/wraps, fruit, yoghurt, a small chocolate treat and crisps. Please ensure you pack only what your child is capable of eating as the lunchtime staff see this as your recommended portion for your child and will encourage them to eat it-as they all want to rush out to play!



Equally, for Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y2 fruit is provided for their mid-morning snack. Year 3 and Year 4 are asked to bring their own fruit. If you would rather provide your child's snack in other years, please do so, remembering **fruit only** and grapes must be cut lengthways to avoid choking.



Finally, please remember no snacks are to be brought onto the school site and eaten. Please refrain from giving any snacks to your children at the end of the day until they are off the premises.

Thank you for your continued support with this.

School Uniform Uniform

As many of you will be buying new uniform soon, I would like to remind all parents of our school uniform.

<http://www.birches.staffs.sch.uk/uniform/>

If you have any questions regarding uniform, please do speak to me directly.

School Bags/PE Bags

Children ONLY need a Birches book bag and if sandwiches, a lunchbox. On PE days a labelled **red Birches pump bag** to place their Birches White T-shirt and Red Shorts-NO black pumps. Children will wear bare feet for PE.

Thank you.

Trainers

Children will only need trainers on their Games Day. As previously communicated since last year these are to be **plain black or white and VELCRO-NO LACES UNLESS CHILDREN CAN TIE THEIR LACES**. We will continue to ask parents that children come dressed to school in their Games Uniform on Games Day.

Forest School

I am delighted to inform you that this will be continuing next academic year. As the children are rotated throughout the year, please DO NOT buy any Forest School items until communicated. I would be very sad to hear children have grown out any items bought. I appreciate that you do supply Forest School clothing, which I know can be expensive.

Earrings

As you are aware children are not allowed to participate in PE/Games with earrings. Please, if you are considering piercing ears, ensure this takes place at the beginning of the **summer holidays!** Children will need to remove earrings for PE/Games. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Hair

All hair must be tied up with the school colour accessories.

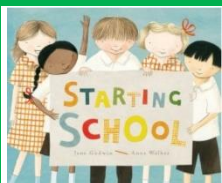
No **extreme** haircuts, **tram lines** and **shaved patterns**- this is part of our school uniform and if wanted should take place in the summer holiday so they can grow out in time for school.

PLEASE LABEL ALL UNIFORM!



Second Hand Clothes

If your child has grown out of any clothes and they are worthy of a second wear, please bring them to the school Office. We will have a Tabletop Sale where parents can offer donations for items.



Induction Visits

Induction visits for new **Reception** and **Nursery** children will take place on **Wednesday 12th and 19th June.**



Move Up Days

We also look forward to welcoming our new Reception children into school for **all day of Wednesday 26th June and Wednesday 3rd July.**

Whole school transition will also take place on these days with children visiting their new classes and teachers.

Children will be dismissed from their **NEW** classes on Induction Dates i.e.: -

Current CLASS	Collection	Collection Time
Reception	Year 1 Door (around the back by Nursery)	3.05pm
Year 1	Playground Door	3.10pm
Year 2	Playground Door	3.15pm
Year 3	Year 4 Mobile (back door by canopy)	3.15pm

Children who have a place at CMS will attend CMS for the 2 days. Any children not attending CMS are to come to Birches as normal.

In the morning, to ease with transition, Class Signs will be placed on the playground for children to line up and teachers will come to greet their new classes. I will be on hand to help and direct any parent/carer for collection!

Please note Y3 will be staying in the MOBILE for their Y4 class year with Miss Ayling.

I am sure the children will all enjoy their induction and transition opportunities, helping to pave the way for a super, smooth, and successful start to 2024/2025!

Sports Day

Our annual Sports Day will take place on **Monday 24th June** (weather permitting).

Early Years Sports (Nursery & Reception)- 9.00-10.00 am.

Y1-4 Sports - 10.30-12.00 pm

As Sports Day is between EYFS and Main School we are permitted under our Health and Safety compliance to allow more spectators. We welcome all family members and pre-school siblings to attend. We are looking forward to a great morning!

If you can make/buy a cake for our refreshment stall they would greatly be received on the Monday morning!

The PFA needs help with refreshments; Y1-Y4 parents in the morning **9-10 am** and Nursery/Reception parents **10.20-12pm**. Please volunteer if you can.

T H A N K Y O U !



PFA Summer Fayre Sunday 30th June

The PFA are busy with their preparations for the Summer Fayre.

Our next meeting **will be shared via text/MM**. Please do come and join us to help with our biggest event. Last year really was a great afternoon for all.



We hope it will be a sunny, wonderful family day out!

Attendance Changes from August 2024

Attendance is a national as well as a local concern. Government figures published recently confirmed that in the Autumn term of 2023, 16 percent of primary pupils were classed as persistently absent. From August 2024, schools' daily registers will be shared online with the DfE and LAs as part of the government's drive to improve attendance and the following changes regarding attendance documentation and regulations will also come into force from August 2024.

It is imperative that parents and carers understand these changes at the earliest opportunity, as we know that some parents may be considering booking holidays now which will no doubt apply for the new school year. **Holidays in term time are not permitted and cannot be authorised.**

The regulations will be as follows: -

There is a limit of two penalties and escalation in cases of repeat offences. A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. Therefore, from Autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at **£160**. This will be reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days. (The £60 fine was introduced in 2013 and has not been increased in the 11 years since.) A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of **£160** if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice **cannot** be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This can include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Please note that the **school is merely the administrator** of the penalty notice, we do not benefit from this in any fashion. Funds gained from any penalty notices are not given to individual schools, but rather to the local authorities.

From August 2024 this will be the process that has to be followed, so parents should familiarise themselves with the information contained within the letter and understand the implications of taking their child out of school during term time.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Lawley or Miss Varricchione if you need further clarification regarding attendance, documentation or regulations.

School Fund £1/Glue Sticks

As you are fully aware schools nationally are struggling with increased costs and Birches budget for the next financial year has been reduced by over £10,000.

We are asking all families if they would be able to contribute via ParentPay (£1 per week) to assist with school purchasing resources and providing additional activities. If you could make one contribution within the school year, we would be very grateful.

Please could all children bring a **glue stick** to school for the last half term to use in class. Please could you ensure that it is reputable one and not coloured! When your child's glue stick has finished, we will contact you for a replacement. Thank you.

Dates for the Diary	
3rd	School INSET-Closed for Children
4th	Welcome back all!
6th	Birches Celebrates the 80 th D-Day Anniversary 9.15am
4th -14th	Y4 Multiplication Timetable Check
10th- 14th	Y1 Phonic Screening Check
6th	Reception 2024/2025 Induction Evening 6pm
12th/19th	Nursery/Reception September 2024 Starter Visits
13th	St Christopher's Vs Birches Rounders
14th	Father's/Grandad/Significant Male (Uncle/God Father etc) Afternoon Tea All Welcome 3pm
21st	Bring a Bottle and Wear Own Clothes Day
24th	Sports Day EYFS-9am Main School – 10.30am
26th	1 st Move up Day 'Induction Day' Y4-Whole Day at Codsall Middle-Have fun!
27th	Birches Vs St Christophers' Football Match?
30th	Summer Fayre 12pm- 4pm
JULY	
3rd July	2 nd Move up Day 'Induction Day' Y4-Whole Day at Codsall Middle-Have fun!
8th	Reports to Parents
11th	Open Morning 9.00-10.30am Open Afternoon 3.15-4.00pm Parent Interviews 4.00- 5.30pm Dismissal will be 3pm to allow teachers a comfort break before School is re-opened at 3.15pm Further Details to Follow
22nd	School Closes at 1.15pm for the holidays

Birches Values:

Belief Independence Resilience Curiosity Honesty Enthusiasm Success

Our Mission Statement: -

Believe, Grow, Succeed...to be the best 'me' I can be.

Safeguarding

Please see below our Birches' Safeguarding Team. Safeguarding is all staffs' responsibility. At Birches, we have and pride ourselves on our strong Safeguarding Culture. All staff are Level 1 trained, and everyone below has received Level 1/2/3 Safeguarding Training. (Miss Varricchione Level 4 in addition).

Miss S Varricchione Headteacher Designated Safeguarding Lead		Miss S Hulme Assistant Headteacher Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Year 2)	
Mrs E Buckley Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Reception/EYFS Leader)		Mrs C Banks Club Manager/Y3 Teaching Assistant Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	



Protect and safeguard the welfare of all our children.



If you have a concern about the safety of a child contact Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS) by clicking [here](#) or by phone; **0300 111 8007** Opening times: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm
Outside of the hours above, on weekends or bank holidays, please contact the Emergency Duty Team by phoning **0345 604 2886**

Governors / Local Academy Board (LAB)

Birches First School is one of the members of Codsall Multi Academy Trust (CMAT, established October 2016)) along with Codsall Middle School and St Nicholas First School. CMAT is governed by its Trustees and Members and operates within the confines of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Each school within the MAT is supported and governed at local level by a Local Academy Board which is led by a Lead. Our LAB Lead is Mrs Karen Lawley who can be contacted by email on gov.Karen@birches.staffs.sch.uk Karen carries out many of the roles previously carried out by a Chair of Governors.

The Local Academy Board's (LAB's) Role

LABs are expected to have a strong focus on core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the school's curriculum and pedagogy
- Monitoring and challenging the progress of the school in achieving its priorities
- Ensuring all pupils are included and have opportunities to thrive

Categories of LAB Member

There are five types of school LAB Member on our Board:

Parent Members – elected by the parents and carers of children in school

Co-opted Members – selected by the Governing Body to bring the expertise of the local community to the school

Staff Members – elected by employees of the school, with the exception of the Headteacher who holds an ex – officio role.

LAB Members

LAB members are typically elected for a term of 4 years. LAB members sit within a committee and report formally back to the MAT Board termly.

Committee Members
<p>Mrs K Lawley- Local Academy Board Leader</p> <p>Mr T Abbiss Mr K Duffy Mr K Goodridge Mrs K Graham Miss S Hulme Miss S Varricchione</p>

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a LAB member, then please contact Miss Varricchione at office@birches.staffs.sch.uk outlining any skills or experiences that you feel would make you a suitable candidate.

Academic Year 2024- 2025

Please note the following **Inset Days** for your diaries:

Monday 2nd September 2024

Monday 4th November 2024

Monday 24th February 2025

Monday 2nd June 2025

Monday 30th June 2025

(SCHOOL CLOSED ON THE ABOVE DATES)

Autumn Term 2024

Inset day: Monday 2 September

Term Starts: Tuesday 3 September

Holiday: Monday 28 October – Friday 1 November

Term Ends: Friday 20 December

Holiday: Monday 23 December – Friday 3 January

Spring Term 2025

Term Starts: Monday 6 January

Holiday: Monday 17 February – Friday 21 February

Term Ends: Friday 11 April

Holiday: Monday 14 April – Friday 25 April

Summer Term 2025

Term Starts: Monday 28 April

May Day: Monday 5 May

Holiday: Monday 26 May – Friday 30 May

Term Ends: Monday 21 July

Holiday: Tuesday 22 July – Friday 29 August

Autumn Term 2025

Inset day: Monday 1 September

Term Starts: Tuesday 2 September

Birches Values:

Belief Independence Resilience Curiosity Honesty Enthusiasm Success

Our Mission Statement:

Believe, Grow, Succeed...to be the best 'me' I can be.