

September 2019

Believe, Grow, Succeed

Issue 1

Birches Bulletin

www.birches.staffs.sch.uk

Birches Value: **Independence**

British Value: Individual Liberty

Welcome Back & New Starters

It has been wonderful to see you all back safe and sound. Some of you have grown so much!

A very big welcome to the children and families who will be joining our wonderful school this term.

A special welcome to Mrs Sehra, Mrs Miller and Miss Spears who join the Birches staff team working within the Early Years. We hope you will be very happy.

School Information-IMPORTANT

Pupil Information (Reception and Nursery only) sheets should be completed and returned to school by Monday 11th September. Thank you. If there have been any changes for Y1-Y4 children (Telephone numbers/Allergies/Medical) during the Summer Holidays please come and inform the school office to ensure we have the relevant information-many thanks.

Dinner Money

Dinner money is £2.40 per day (£12.00 per week) and should be paid online through 'Parent Pay'.

Reception, Y1 & Y2 are eligible for Free School Meals or may bring a packed lunch if preferred.

If your child has a packed lunch please ensure a small plastic cup is provided for drinking water.

After School Clubs...

will begin week commencing 9th September

Monday: Y1 Multi Skills 3.15pm-4.15pm (details to follow)

Tuesday: Be Active Football
3.15pm-4.15pm Y3/Y4 Cost: £3.50

Thursday/Friday: Keyboards

Y1/2/3/4 7.50am/8.20am

Thursday: Tennis

Y2/3/4 3.15pm-4.15pm

Friday: Spanish Club

Y1/2/3/4 3.15PM-4.15pm

Chair Details to follow...

Lettings/Parent and Toddler

If you are aware of any groups that would like to hire the Hall at Birches please contact Miss Varricchione.

The Governors are exploring the possibility of running a Parent & Toddler Group-if any parents would like to run this group please again contact Miss Varricchione.

Birches PFA

Birches Parent and Friends Association (PFA) work very hard to raise funds to contribute to additional activities/resources for all of our pupils. We are very

lucky to have such a dedicated team of parents,

although we always need more helpers! Please join us

*for the AGM on **Monday 9th September at 6.30pm** - come along and show your support.*

Pupil Premium/School Lunches

All children in Reception and KS1 (Year 1 and Year 2) are entitled to Free School Meals. However, it is important that families who previously qualified for Free School Meals still apply as school receives additional funding for your child which will benefit your child in school. Please can we encourage any parents who are new to Birches and are in receipt of the following benefits to apply. We offer incentives of uniform vouchers to families who qualify for all new free school meal registrations.

The criteria for qualifying would be to be in receipt of one of the following:

Income Support

Income based Job Seekers Allowance

Income based Employment and Support Allowance

Child tax credit and no working tax credit with a household income of less than £16,190

Universal Credit

The 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit

Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

For more information visit www.staffordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals or email freeschoolmeals@staffordshire.gov.uk

Early Years Pupil Premium (Nursery)

Parents in receipt of the above benefits are also eligible to apply for additional funding to support their child in Early Years. For an application form please contact the school office.

Service Pupil Premium (SPP)

The Department for Education introduced the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in 2011 in recognition of the specific challenges children from service families face and as part of the commitment to delivering the armed forces covenant.

Schools which have children of service families from Reception onwards can receive the SPP funding. It is designed to assist the school in providing the additional support that these children may need and is currently worth £300 per service child.

What is my child learning?

Your child's Curriculum Topic Web will be uploaded to school website by the end of this week. The class teachers are really excited about the learning experience they have planned and hope you will continue to support your child as much as possible.

String Teaching

We are fortunate once again to fully subsidise the very successful K2M Ukulele music programme. This will continue in Year 4 on a Wednesday afternoon.

Birches School Governors

Governor details are posted on the school website www.birches.staffs.sch.uk Andrew Holmes Chair of Governors can be contacted directly by email chair@birches.staffs.sch.uk

Penalty Notices for Absences from School

In accordance with Government legislation a request for leave can only be authorised if it is deemed to be an "exceptional circumstance". Where a request is not deemed to be an "exceptional circumstance" a child's non-attendance for this period will be marked as an unauthorised absence. This absence will be retained on record throughout their time at school.

If a child has ten days or more unauthorised absence over two half terms in a row, a penalty notice may be issued to parents/carers of that child. Late marks will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and these will also be taken into account when issuing Penalty Notices.

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Education Welfare Officer based at Staffordshire County Council. On-line spot register checks can be carried out without prior consultation with school and may lead to further investigation by the Education Welfare team.

School Uniform

Children at Birches wear their uniform with pride. Our school colours are red, grey and white. Please ensure that all items of clothing are clearly named to make the task of reuniting any clothing with its owner easier. Names written in using ball point pen need to be checked regularly to ensure the name is still legible. The dress code for winter is red logoed embroidered round-neck sweatshirt or cardigan. White logoed embroidered polo shirt. White or grey socks/red or grey tights. Grey skirts or pinafore dresses, smart trousers for girls and boys.

Footwear

For health and safety reasons well fitting flat shoes are recommended for school wear. Sensible black shoes - not trainers or trainer style. Trainers should be worn for Games only. Sandals with heels and sling backs are inappropriate and should not be worn.

Waterproofs

It is essential that children have rainwear in school. With many children arriving by car we often find that at damp playtimes children are not equipped to go out to play. The weather can change during the day and we do expect children to go out for fresh air and exercise at playtime if the rain is light.

Jewellery and Nail Varnish

We request that children do not wear any jewellery in school. Children with pierced ears should wear small studs. No jewellery is worn during physical activity lessons and these should be removed when participating in sporting activities. Nail varnish should be removed for school. Make up, hair gel, tramlines and highlights are inappropriate for school and should not be worn unless children are attending the school disco.

Sports Kit

PE: Red Shorts, white logoed embroidered T-shirt, elasticated black pumps and red zipped logoed embroidered hooded jumper. Games: Trainers, white logoed embroidered T-shirt, grey jogging bottoms (no logos or brand names) and red zipped logoed embroidered hooded jumper. Lightweight waterproof.

Remember your child needs to bring a water bottle to school everyday to keep hydrated!

If you are uncertain please see the prospectus on our website which illustrate our expectations.

HELP! PARENTS/Grandparents HELP!

Additional adult support is invaluable, as well as fostering the partnership we value between home, school and the community. All volunteers will need to complete a DBS check to comply with Safeguarding procedures. If you would like to help in any way please contact the school office for further information. We would be very grateful for any time you can spare.

T H A N K Y O U

September Diary Dates - (whole year is on our website)

9th	PFA AGM/Meeting	25th	Individual/Sibling Photographs
13th	Roald Dahl Day/dress as a book character	25th	Meet the Teacher/Open Class 3.30-5.30pm
18th	Year 1 Parents' Meeting 6pm	26th	Online Safety Meeting 6pm
20th	Jeans for Genes Day	26th	Year 1 Class Assembly 2.15pm
20th	Year 1 Sparkle Day	27th	MacMillan Coffee Morning 9.00am

Birches Club and Wraparound Care

Birches before and after school club is available to all children and parents who would like to take up the offer of using our onsite Governor run childcare provision. As well as offering 30 hours childcare provision for working parents we also offer Nursery 'wraparound' care to parents who need additional pre-school provision or extended sessions (lunch club). For further information, prices and registration details please contact the school office on 01902 297910. Payments for both facilities are through 'ParentPay'. Invoices will be issued at the end of each month and should be settled immediately.

ParentPay activation letters will be sent out in due course for anyone new to school.

Online Safety Parent Meeting

Online Safety is an important part of keeping children safe at Birches. We have extensive security measures in place, which are monitored both internally and externally to help safeguard children. We can only be successful in keeping children safe online if we work with you to ensure the safety messages are consistent and reinforced at home.

Please join us on Thursday 26th September at 6.00pm for an online workshop.

Please note new Safeguarding Policies have been introduced from September. Please attend to keep up to date with National/Local information.

Year One Parent Meeting

Year 1 Parents meeting will take place on Wednesday 18th September at 6.00pm. Transition from Reception to Y1 will be discussed.

We encourage **all** parents to attend.

Governors — We have TWO vacancies and would welcome applications from people with experience in Finance (Accountant, Finance Manager etc) and anyone who has Governor experience. If you would like to find out more about how you can contribute to governance at our school, then please contact the school office which will then arrange for Miss Varricchione/Mr Holmes to contact you.

Outside of School

We would love to hear of the children's success and achievement out of school. Please bring in photographs, awards and certificates to celebrate within school. The staff and I love to hear what the children are interested in beyond the school gates!

Open Door Policy

We are very proud of our open door policy and want parents to know they are always welcome to come into school and talk to staff. Miss Varricchione will be on the playground every morning from 8.30am to welcome parents and children to school and answer as many queries as possible before the school day begins. However, if you require a private meeting, please do arrange this for a mutually convenient time by contacting the school office, the class teacher concerned or myself.

INSET DATES FOR 2019/2020

Please note the 5 INSET days below, school will be closed for children in addition to the Half term and Holidays listed below in the Term Dates.

Monday 2nd September

Friday 25th October

Monday 4th November

Monday 1st June

Monday 20th July

Term Dates:

Autumn Term (2019)

Term starts: Tuesday 3 September 2019

Half term: Monday 28 October - Friday 1 November 2019

Term ends: Friday 20 December 2019

Holiday: Monday 23 December - Friday 3 January 2020

Spring Term (2020)

Term starts: Monday 6 January 2020

Half term: Monday 17 February - Friday 21 February 2020

Term ends: Friday 3 April 2020

Holiday: Monday 6 April - Friday 17 April 2020

Easter Sunday: Sunday 12 April 2020

Summer Term (2020)

Term starts: Monday 20 April 2020

May Bank Holiday: Friday 8 May 2020

Half term: Monday 25 May - Friday 29 May 2020

Term ends: Friday 17 July 2020

Holiday: Monday 20 July - Monday 31 August 2020

++School is CLOSED THURSDAY 7th May for Polling++

Birches Values

Believe Independence Respect Curiosity Honesty Enthusiasm Success

Our Mission Statement:

Believe, Grow, Succeed