

## Autumn Term 2020



As we come to the end of the term, I would like to say a huge thank you for your ongoing support. We have had a very busy (and fun!) start to Year 2 and all of the children have worked extremely hard. The children have adapted to the 'back to school' routines and expectations extremely well, making a successful start to the year. Your children make me very proud to be their teacher each and every day, and have impressed me with the progress they have already made. We have enjoyed making some very special memories throughout their start to the year and we have shared some of our favourite parts below.

During Dyslexia Awareness Week, we took part in some STEM challenges and focused on our Birches Value: Resilience. This involved making the strongest boat using foil and working well as a team to make a bridge using Kapla.; we had some wonderful creations! It was also lovely to see the children dressed up for Children in Need and we took part in some 'Act your Age challenges'. One of our challenges included making a paper chain as tall as a 6/7 year old using only one piece of paper. Although it seemed difficult to start with, we ended up with some paperchains taller than me! We are enjoying the lead up to Christmas and have taken part in lots of fun activities. We thoroughly enjoyed singing our Christmas songs for the filming and we hope that you enjoyed watching it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

I hope that you all have a happy, safe and restful Christmas and I wish you all well for 2021. I look forward to seeing you in the New Year. As always, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch [shulme@birches.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:shulme@birches.staffs.sch.uk) and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Best Wishes,  
Miss. Hulme and Mrs Savage.

**English** The children have wowed me with their improvement in phonics learning this term and are applying their skills to their writing. We have read a range of Traditional Tales and enjoyed acting out some of the stories in class (...and at playtime too!). We have written an excellent retell of The Three Little Pigs and enjoyed reading some alternative versions such as The Three Little Pugs and the Big Bad Cat, and The True Story of the Three Little Pigs written by the wolf (even though many of the children were not convinced by his tale!). We have focused on using capital letters, finger spaces and full stops correctly, and are beginning to use the conjunctions 'and' and 'because' in our writing.

**Arts / Design Technology/ Music** During our Art lessons we have been developing an understanding of the Formal Elements of Art. We created our own repeating patterns with paint and experimented with 2D and 3D pencils and pastels to create different tones. We enjoyed experimenting when creating our rubbings and learnt about a new technique called 'frottage' to create images. There were some fabulous creations! In our DT unit, we experimented with cylinder structures to see how many books each structure could hold (one even held 33 books!). The children persevered (even though finding the end of the tape was a bit tricky!) and enjoyed making a chair for baby bear. In Music, we listened to music from around the world and learnt about instrument names.

**Religious Education** We have learnt about different religious traditions and have found out about believers attitudes to the natural world. We enjoyed retelling the Creation Story from Christianity and made our own lotus flowers helping us learn why they are important to Hindus.

**Computing** We now know how to keep safe online and have our posters up in the classroom to remind us of our online safety rules. The children impressed me with their coding skills and we enjoyed making a Great Fire of London and Traditional Tales scene with moving characters.

### History and Geography

We have thoroughly enjoyed turning back time to find out about the Great Fire of London in 1666. We challenged Miss Hulme with our secret code messages after finding out about Samuel Pepys' diary and even had a go at writing our own diary entry in quill and ink. We had fun writing our Town Crier speech to tell people about the fire and made our own Tudor house art. We were very surprised to find out how much firefighting techniques have changed since 1666 and how different life was in the past.

Surprisingly, some of us would have liked the job of a Rat Catcher!! Our homework showcases were fabulous and we enjoyed sharing our creations with confidence. Thank you for your support too!

**Maths** The children have really enjoyed our Maths lessons this term and their confidence has improved significantly. The children are using the correct vocabulary to discuss mathematical concepts and we have worked hard to develop an understanding of Place Value within 100. We have used base 10 (tens and ones physical resources) to represent numbers and compare numbers, and moved onto representing numbers pictorially (drawing our tens and ones). We have developed our mental methods for number bonds to 10 and 20. More recently, the children have really impressed me with their addition of 2-digit numbers... even when the questions include exchanging!

**Science / STEM** We enjoyed exploring a range of everyday materials and considered the useful properties of these materials. We made our own poem about unsuitable materials for objects and we know that a chocolate teapot would not be very useful! The children enjoyed having their own playdough too and found out how some materials can change shape by squashing, bending, twisting and stretching. We enjoyed learning about recycling and could not believe how much is involved in the process! We look forward to investigating the most suitable materials for a particular purpose this term.

**PE / Games** The children really enjoy their Games lessons with Coach Chris and have continued to develop their fundamental movement skills. We enjoyed learning a range of playground games and have enjoyed playing these at playtimes and lunchtimes. We are getting really good at Grandma's Footsteps and What's the time Mr Wolf! We have learnt simple movement patterns in Dance and focused on varying direction, level and speed when travelling.

**PSHE** Using the stimulus 'Inside Out', we have explored about our feelings and developed effective strategies to support our mental wellbeing. We have talked about when we may feel these different feelings and steps to developing a 'Growth Mindset'.