



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



Birches Bulletin

October 2021

www.birches.staffs.sch.uk

Issue 2

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Autumn Term. Birches Value: **(Belief) Independence** British Value: **Individual Liberty**

Dear Parents,

This half term is going so fast and the children are now well and truly settled back into school routines. It has been wonderful to see the children throughout school demonstrating such positive attitudes to their learning, engaging with some fantastic activities and showing a real pleasure to be back at school!

We are trying to continue with as many 'normal' aspects of school life and I am delighted that our School Council are very proactive; they have taken on their new roles with relish and I am most impressed with their ideas and commitment! House Captains will be announced on Friday. ECO Committee and Online Safety are set to follow from Mrs Cain, Miss Owen and Mrs Hine.

I would like to thank all parents/carers who drop off and collect for being so punctual and ensuring that all children walk sensibly around our school site. Following a Covid-19 Response Meeting as a school we have decided to reintroduce our measures as **encouraged** by the authority. Please see separate **Covid-19 information for Parents Letter** and a letter to parents from **South Staffordshire Council**.

If you have a scooter/bike please remember that they must not be used on the school premises for Health and Safety purposes.

I hope that you all manage to have a wonderful half term break; I know there are many wonderful celebrations that happen at this time of year...have as much fun as possible and most importantly please take care, stay safe and come back healthy and happy!

Best wishes

Miss Varricchione

Headteacher

Parents/Staff Communication

May I take this opportunity to ask parents to please be mindful of the teaching staff's workload. Whilst we are very happy for you to contact staff with any questions or concerns that may arise I would ask that you understand that they may not be able to reply to your emails immediately. What is convenient for one member of staff may not necessarily be the same for the other. Therefore, in order to alleviate any additional stress/workload for my staff I have asked teachers to reply at a time when it is convenient for them to do so and in a timely manner.

I sincerely thank you for your cooperation and support with this....teachers need their week-ends and evenings too!



Flu Immunisation



A reminder that the School Age Immunisation Team will be visiting school on **Friday 5th November** to deliver the Nasal Flu spray programme to **Reception to Year 4** children. The office are awaiting correspondence. Last year this was booked via an e-consent system, as soon as we are provided with any information we will communicate this to you. Any questions, please do get in touch.

Training Days

A reminder that school will be closed to children on **Friday 22nd October** for staff training. We look forward to welcoming you back on **Monday 1st November**.

Please have a wonderful break whatever you may do...stay safe.



Gold Star Badges



Each week, teachers select a child to wear the class Gold Star badge.

This award celebrates good behaviour and identifies children who work hard to follow the school Golden Expectations. If your child is chosen they sit at the Golden Table with a friend of their choice for dinner with Miss Varricchione the following Monday!

Please remind your child to return their badge to their class teacher on the Friday so that it can be passed on to another child.

If you find any star badges at home that have previously been lost, please do send them in, thank you.

Harvest Donations

Unfortunately due to the restriction imposed upon us we will not be able to host and perform our Harvest celebrations as we have in the past.

We would like to continue our tradition of helping others who are less fortunate than us and are asking if our school community would be kind enough to donate gifts of tinned and packaged food to help and aid The Well Charity.

A box will be placed at the entrance to the school gate from **Monday 4th October to Friday 8th October** for you to place any items you may wish to donate.

The Well is based in the City of Wolverhampton where they distribute food to families and single people who are struggling to buy food and other essentials.

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity.

Dyslexia Friendly Week 4th October

We are looking forward to celebrating and raising awareness in school. This year teachers are setting tasks within the classroom to help children understand the daily challenges anyone with dyslexia may have to overcome. We will be looking at famous celebrities with Dyslexia and discussing our personal Growth Mindset in order to achieve!

Pattingham Sixes -Y4 & Y3 Boys and Girls

Historically, we have always attended the 'Sixes' competition at St Chad's School, Pattingham in May. We know that making plans too far in advance proves pointless of late however as a group of Headteachers we wanted to be able to run the Sixes this year as we have not been able to for the last two years.

For the health and safety of all taking part, Mrs Yeomans (Headteacher at St Chad's) would like to run the event in school time this year, with no spectators...an event for the children taking part to enjoy. Mrs Yeomans would also like to run the event over two days with a girls tournament and boys tournament. Having Girls play and being celebrated in its own right! The boys will play Wednesday 20th October and the girls Thursday 21st October. If your child is selected we will inform you to gain consent and a letter will follow to explain the arrangements in place.

We are very much looking forward and hoping to participating in this sporting event.

Covid-19 Update

As parents are aware, we have had positive cases in school and our Year 3 children have been placed into a temporary bubble until Friday. I'm so proud of the resilience they have shown and their maturity with the situation presented to them. Thank you Y3.

Staff worked together to get things up and running straight away so that we could put additional temporary safety measures in place for the whole school community to contain the cases within this class as best we can. Thank you to all Y3 parents for coming to school early and collecting at the pedestrian gate, I do appreciate it very much.

Sadly, Covid-19 is still very much with us at the moment, and we rely on support from parents in getting their children tested for Covid-19 when they have symptoms or are identified as a close contact, so that we can all try to limit the spread within our school community.

In order to keep the children safe while they are in school, staff take Lateral Flow Tests twice a week, as well as PCR tests when they have potential Covid-19 symptoms/close contact.

Thank you for your continued support with this.

October Diary Dates

30th September - Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00

1st - Black History Month

4th - Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00

4th - Dyslexia Awareness Week

4th - Harvest Donations to school

8th - Wear Yellow-World Mental Health Day

20/21 - Pattingham Sixes Tournament

21st - School Council Fundraising Day

21st - Break up (21st October-31st October inc)

November Diary Dates

1st - Welcome Back Children



HELLO YELLOW!

Friday 8th October



We will be holding a non-uniform day on Friday 8th October to raise money for Young Minds, a mental health charity for young people. We will be partaking in activities to concentrate on our mental health in classes during this day.

To support the fantastic work that this charity does, we would like to ask the children to come to school dressed in yellow that day. There are some ideas on Young Minds Website! Donations can be made via ParentPay. This will be added as a payment item on your account.

Thank you for your support.

Drop off and Collection Times 1st October

We have reviewed our drop off and collection procedures in line with implementing extra measures.

Drop off	Time
YN	8.30am
Reception	8.30am
Year 1/2	8.35am
Year 3/4	8.40am

Collection	Time
YN	3.05pm
Reception	3.05pm
Year 1/2	3.10pm
Year 3/4	3.15pm

Please see Covid-19 Letter to parents for further information.

Covid-19 Symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Other symptoms:

Headaches, Aches and pains, Feeling very tired for no good reason, Sore throat, Runny nose
Sneezing, Sometimes 'tummy ache' in children

We recognise how difficult the past 18 months have been and the sacrifices that all families, education and child-care settings have had to make.

This has been an enormously challenging time for everyone and we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for everything you have done to support your children and our school community.

Birches Values;

Belief Independence Resilience Curiosity Honesty Enthusiasm Success

Our Mission Statement; Believe, Grow, Succeed...to be the best 'me' I can be.