



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



Birches Bulletin

September 2021

www.birches.staffs.sch.uk

Issue 1

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

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome back to school!

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday! I trust that this letter finds you and your family safe and well and all ready for a busy and exciting term ahead. A special welcome to our new children and parents to our amazing school. In addition we have two new Teachers joining the Birches Team, Mrs Lloyd our Nursery Teacher and Mrs Kandola teaching Y1 Mondays and Y2 on Thursdays and Fridays. I am sure you all will be very happy here. I would like to inform any new parents that we strive to keep you fully up to date and involved with school business. If there is anything you feel you would like further clarification on please do not hesitate to ask, no question is too big or too small!

Thank you so much for your tremendous patience and support last year. We are delighted to welcome all the children back to school and are very excited to have the children once again mixing beyond their Key Stage! Please refer to this letter to familiarise yourself once more with 'drop-off' and 'collection' information for tomorrow morning (Text with link to follow for your convenience).

I do understand that many of you will be nervous about the full reopening. We at Birches First School will continue to support our children in our care both educationally and emotionally, their wellbeing is our highest priority. If there is anything that may have happened during the school holiday to impact your child/family please let us know and we will do everything we possibly can to support you. Our full risk assessment is posted on our website for your reference.

We are all looking forward to seeing the school full, happy and busy again...

I wish you luck with your own reestablishment of normal bedtime and getting up routines...I know it will be a huge shock to the system in our home tomorrow morning!

I also wish to reassure you and your children that a few nerves will be whistling around every home tonight, but we will do our very best to make everyone feel welcome and safe when the staff and I greet the children in the morning (Reception and Nursery on their specified days).

Sleep well.

Best wishes

Miss Varicchione

INSET Dates

I would like to draw your attention to the INSET date on Monday 6th June. This was planned prior to the announcement of the additional Bank Holiday. Hopefully some of you may be able to take the opportunity to have a holiday/few days away at possibly a reduced price due to most schools returning on the Monday.

Break Up –Summer Date

As schools do not gain from the additional bank holiday (it falls already within school's holiday) an additional day has been granted. Staffordshire have advised to take this day on Thursday 21st July. Therefore please note school will now close for the Summer Holidays on **WEDNESDAY 20TH JULY.**

Meet the Teacher

We are fully aware that parents have not been able to meet and familiarise themselves fully with their child's 'new' teacher(s). Therefore on Wednesday 22nd September we would like to invite parents to come into school and see your child(ren)'s classrooms and meet their teachers, see where they sit and ask any questions regarding settling over the first two weeks. I hope to see many of you on this date between 3.30pm-6.00pm.

Homework Grids

Homework Grids will be uploaded to our website for parents to access. Any issues please contact your child's class teacher via email.

What is my child learning?

Your child's Curriculum Topic Web will be uploaded to the school website by Monday 6th September. 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.

Roald Dahl Day

13th September

We will be joining in with the world wide celebrations of the life and work of Roald Dahl one of the greatest story tellers. This year teachers will be celebrating his work within classes and we are asking that children come to school in normal school attire.

30th September School Photographs

David will be offering the opportunity for family photos this year before school as it currently stands. In addition children will all have their individual photograph taken and a sibling photograph if applicable. Details to follow.

September Diary Dates -

1st - INSET Day School Closed

13th-Roald Dahl Day

17th—Jeans for Genes

24th—Macmillan Coffee Morning

30th — Individual Photographs

2nd —Welcome Back all Children

14th– Year One Meeting

22nd—Meet the Teacher 3.30-6pm

28th-Phonic Workshop (YN/R/1/2)



Please keep referring to the website and monthly Newsletters for further information.

(Please see Diary Dates on our school website for whole year—subject to change).

Year One Parent's Meeting

Miss Owen and Mrs Kandola would like to invite Year One Parents to a meeting on Tuesday 14th September at 6.00pm. Transition from Reception to Y1 will be discussed and further information will be shared regarding the difference in daily routines now the children have moved into main school.

We encourage all parents to attend.

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!

School Information-IMPORTANT Pupil Information

(Reception and Nursery only) sheets should be completed and returned to school by Monday 6th September. Thank you.

If there have been any changes for Y1-Y4 children (Telephone numbers/Allergies/Medical) during the Summer Holidays please inform the school office to ensure we have the relevant information-many thanks.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

We will be hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning on Friday, 24th September 2021 from 8:30am to 10:30am. Annual coffee mornings across the country have been highly effective in making sure that nobody faces cancer alone and Birches would like to continue to embrace this wonderful project, welcoming parents to catch up over a cup of coffee/tea, enjoy some scrumptious treats and donate the cost of the cuppa to Macmillan Cancer Research!

By joining Macmillan's biggest fundraising event, we will be collecting funds to provide medical, emotional, practical and financial support for people facing cancer, as well as campaigning for better cancer care. There are now 2.5 million people in the UK living with cancer. It would be wonderful if you could come along to this fantastic event and even bring along other family and friends to sponsor the cause. The entrance cost, inclusive of tea/ coffee and cake, will be £2 per person.

All cake/ cupcakes/ biscuits contributions and monetary donations are greatly appreciated. All funds raised will all be sent to Macmillan. If you are unable to attend the coffee morning and would still like to donate, please send in any donation to school with your child in a sealed envelope, labelled 'Macmillan donation'.

Many thanks for your support and we look forward to enjoying a cup of coffee (and cake!!!) with you!

Phonic Workshop

Phonics Workshop for parents of children in YN, YR, Y1 and Y2 will take place on Thursday 28th September at 6.00pm.

We encourage all parents to attend to help support your child with the learning and application of phonics at home.

Birches School Governors

Governor details are posted on the school website www.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 (Please see above regarding current situation)

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 using ball point pen will 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 (preferred) or plain white T-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. If you are sending your child with laced trainers please ensure they can tie them independently. 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: This should be brought to school EVERY MONDAY and will be sent home on a Friday to be washed and returned. Red Shorts, white logoed embroidered (preferred)/plain T-shirt, elasticated black pumps and red zipped logoed embroidered hooded jumper. Games: Trainers, white logoed embroidered (preferred)/plain 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.



Parking

A reminder to please park considerately in the roads around the school.

We continue to receive complaints from parents and residents regarding inconsiderate and sometimes illegal and/or dangerous parking. Cars should not park on the yellow zigzag lines outside school, on the junction of Birches Avenue and Birches Road, block driveways, double park along Birches Avenue or use the school drive to turn.

We appreciate the support of all our parents in keeping all road users safe and maintaining positive relationships with our residents. Thank you.

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 with further support. Please can we encourage any parents who are new to Birches and are in receipt of the following benefits to apply. 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.

Please contact the school office to check if your child meets the eligibility criteria. **We are happy to help in any way.**

Jeans for Genes- Friday 17th September

All children are invited to wear Jeans/Dungarees/Denim Skirts etc with their normal School Logoed Jumper/Cardigan for a £1 donation. Please log on to Parent Pay to donate to this charity. If there is a problem, please let the office know.

Children can wear trainers on this day if they wish.

Parent/Grandparent Helpers

I am delighted to say that we will be once again allowing volunteers into school! If you think you could spare any time within the week please speak to Miss Varricchione or the school office to complete a form and find out how to get involved in the future months. A huge thank you if you can. You will be amazed how much even 10 minutes can help! Please note-

All volunteers will need to complete a DBS check to comply with Safeguarding procedures.

Birches Values;

Belief **I**ndependence **R**esilience **C**uriosity **H**onesty **E**nthusiasm **S**uccess

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