



**Birches First School**

Believe, Grow, Succeed...

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



December 2021  
Issue 4

# Birches Bulletin

[www.birches.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.birches.staffs.sch.uk)

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Autumn Term Birches Value: **Resilience**

British Value: **Rule of Law**

Dear Parents,

I can hardly believe that it is December! What a strange and busy year it has been and continues to be! The school is full of the sound of children singing in preparation for the Christmas DVD in Early Years and Sing Song performance in Y1/2 and Y3/4, it is really a delight to hear! We have parties and many fun activities planned for the children to enjoy in the lead up to Christmas...we know how special this time of year is for children and hope to give them memories for a lifetime.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the children and all of our parents as well as the extended school community for their support of the school this term -we couldn't do it without your co-operation. You may have noticed staff are wearing masks since Monday, this is in response to Mr Johnson's announcement on Saturday. We continue to follow our risk assessments and implement all the necessary controls in school to keep everyone safe.

Have a wonderful break-enjoy the precious memories. May your heart and home be filled with all of the joys the season brings. Enjoy! Come back safe and well.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS** and best wishes

from Miss Varricchione



## Christmas Activities

Children are to come to school dressed in their own clothes and Christmas Jumpers with any accessories they wish to wear on **Friday 10th December**-this will also be our Christmas Lunch day. You should have received a google form- please ensure this is returned asap so that Mrs Blakeway can make preparations.

### Christmas Cards

Class teachers have decided that the children will make Christmas cards in school to be given out to their class friends. Each child will make a card and leading up to Christmas a child will receive one from the box. This way all the children will have a card and have the opportunity to make one. Therefore please note NO personal Christmas Cards are to be brought into school this year. Thank you.

### Staff Gifts

Parents once again have asked me about this. I would like to express that staff **DO NOT** expect anything, however, if you feel you would like to do so then staff will accept gifts. As always we are VERY grateful-

I think we all need a bit of joy at the moment!

### Christmas Tree

We would like to thank Peter Moore on behalf of Peter Moore Wealth Management Ltd who has kindly paid for the outdoor Carol Service Christmas Tree.



## Inclement Weather

If it snows heavily this winter, school closures will be decided on a local school group basis and announced on local radio from 7.00am onwards. Therefore, if any Codsall schools are mentioned it will mean **all** Codsall and Bilbrook schools, including Birches are closed. We will also text all parents if school is closed so you can be sure to know what is happening.



Please be assured that should school remain open following snow fall, Mr Tomkinson will grit the following areas: the path to the playground, the entrance to the main school building, toilets and mobile from the playground. Although the path at the back of the school **WILL** be gritted please take extra care when collecting children as this path can remain slippery. Do take care in icy conditions in all areas of the school site and ensure that children are well supervised and also walk sensibly. Thank you so much!

Thank you.



## End of Term Awards



**We are very proud of all of our children and their achievements.**

During the Christmas Sing Song we look forward to presenting our special, end of term awards to children in each class in Year 1-4. Early Years will receive theirs in a special class assembly. Class teachers select four children for making exceptional effort or progress in one of the following areas over a term 'Effort and Improvement', 'Following the Golden Rules', 'Mathematics' and 'English'.

They are very special awards and these elected children should be **VERY** proud of this accolade.

The school community will be notified via the website.



## Christmas Parties

**We are very excited to host our Christmas parties...**



**Thursday 16th December:** Early Years - Parties in the morning

**Thursday 16th December:** Year 1 and 2 - Parties in the afternoon

**Thursday 16th December:** Year 3/4 - 'Chippy' Party **AFTER SCHOOL** 3.15-5pm

Children are invited to come to school dressed in their party clothes- please remember sensible shoes and coats- children will still be outside for lunch and playtimes.

**Year 3/4 Further details will be sent out**

## THANK YOU...

We would like to thank everyone who has supported the school this term. The following has been raised by our fantastic school community. **AMAZING!**

**British Legion Poppy Appeal : £TBC**

**Children in Need : £181     Jeans for Genes : £135**  
**Young Minds: £160**



**THANK YOU!!!!!!**



## Parent Questionnaire

A huge thank you to the parents who completed the questionnaire. Following the survey, we have held an Anti-Bullying Week in school in which we have delivered the below message so that all children know what constitutes Bullying and what they can do if they feel that this is happening to them or a friend. Please reinforce this acronym with your child. Thank you.



We say that bullying happens-  
**Several Times On Purpose.**

To help remember this we can use the acronym **STOP.**



## Raising a Concern—being happy with the outcome

Following the questionnaire I would like the school community to be aware of the steps for raising a concern and the outcome. Please in the first instance email the class teacher who will respond either before or after investigating your concern. If you are unhappy with the outcome and feel that this has not been resolved properly, then please email me and I will happily discuss the concern with you. Please do not leave any worries/concerns you have to 'fester' we will do all we can to help.

## Teachers' Worklife Balance

As you are aware due to the many restrictions imposed within schools, First/Primary teachers are having even less non-contact time from their classes (assemblies/playtimes etc) than ever.

We are in very challenging times, workload has significantly increased not only preparing lessons but, cleaning apparatus, tables, chairs etc. between sessions and not to mention the home-learning that must be provided for any child who is not in school due to Covid circumstances. As always our fabulous teachers NEVER 'grumble' or 'complain' and continue happily (often working from 8am-6.30pm at school and then continuing into the evening) knowing they are doing the very best they possibly can for the children-ensuring they are both safe and happy.

I would ask you to be very mindful of the constant pressures that teachers are under. Currently some teachers are having an overwhelming amount of emails from parents and although I have already expressed in previous Newsletters that teachers can respond in a timely manner which is convenient for them they feel a duty to respond to all emails.

Please before emailing teaching staff could your answers be found via our Newsletter, Website or calling the office. Thank you for your support.

It is my duty to protect the teachers...where would we be without them?!

Thank you so much for your understanding.

Please see our Safeguarding Poster below.  
This outlines our Designated Safeguard Leads in school and who to contact beyond school hours.



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## **SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY**

- **Do you have concerns?**
- **Has someone made a disclosure?**
- **Who can you talk to?**

**At Birches First School the safety of our children is of upmost importance. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our children but speak to one of the people below if you are worried.**

<p><b>Miss S Varricchione</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher</b></p> <p><b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b></p>		<p><b>Miss S Hulme</b></p> <p><b>Assistant Headteacher</b></p> <p><b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Year 2)</b></p>	
<p><b>Mrs G Lloyd</b></p> <p><b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Year Nursery)</b></p>		<p><b>Mrs C Banks</b></p> <p><b>Club Manager (Club/YN)</b></p> <p><b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b></p>	
		 <p><i>Protect and safeguard the welfare of all our children.</i></p> 	

If you have a concern about the safety of a child contact Staffordshire First Response by clicking [here](#) or by phone; **03001118007**

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**



## PFA News

A massive thank you to all parents for the outstanding success of Break the Rules Day. The children absolutely LOVED it! We had a fabulous day and raised over £1000...what an incredible amount of money! This will be used to purchase another set of ipads to use in class.

**A huge thank you to the PFA for purchasing the following:**



Little Wandle Phonic Reading Scheme which totalled £1114.72

Contributing to Y4 and EYFS Trip £2 per child

**Please note each class will receive equally the same amount for their trips.**



Please join us for the Christmas Trail Sunday 5th December I have arranged for Father Christmas to visit us at 11am...HO HO HO!!

## December Diary Dates

**Friday 3rd December**

#UniteTheUniforms for the @999Cenotaph: Colours of Emergency Services

**8th December**

PFA Christmas Movie Night

**6th -10th December**

Y2 Phonic Check

**Friday 10th December**

Christmas Dinner & Christmas/Jumper & Accessories Day!

Y1/2 Christmas Sing Song 3-3.30pm (Please see Letter 18.11.21)

Y3/4 Christmas Sing Song 3.40-4.10pm (Please see Letter 18.11.21)

**Friday 17th December**

Break Up –Have a wonderful Christmas Break with family and friends

**No After School Club**

**Tuesday 4th January 2022-School Closed for Children**

**Return to school:** Wednesday 5th January 2022-TIMES the SAME as before.

## Birches Values

Belief Independence Resilience Curiosity Honesty Enthusiasm Success

## Our Mission Statement

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