



# Birches First School

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

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Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022

## Plans for 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

As you will be aware, England has returned to Plan A. This news will impact how our school runs. As from **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February** there will be no bubbles at Birches. Using the DfE (Department for Education) and PHE (Public Health England) guidance, we have been working on a plan which we believe will support the safety of our children as we return to 'normal'.

A thorough review of our rigorous risk assessment has been carried out and our Contingency Outbreak Plan continues to be in place as from September. This has been pivotal in the low numbers at Birches. Risk Assessments are uploaded to the website for all stakeholders to view at their convenience.

Please see below an outline of the proposed provision for Birches.

### Organisation of Groups and Classrooms

In line with guidance, *'it is no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups bubbles'*. We will return to playtime and lunchtimes with all year groups mixing and socialising together once again. Children will be able to move freely within school and will not have to walk around the perimeter anymore.

Daily assemblies will commence from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February with the whole school attending.

Classrooms will be ventilated and monitored with our CO2 Monitors. Staff will be mindful and balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature for all.

### Protective Measures

Since reopening in March we have continued to implement many additional measures to maintain the highest levels of safety and minimise risk. These include:

Increased levels of cleaning

Catch it, kill it, bin it approach

Regular handwashing and sanitising

This will all continue to ensure that we are still vigilant and provide an education of good hygiene for all.

## Cleaning

We will continue with additional cleaning measures that have been implemented. Classrooms will be kept as clear as possible to enable cleaning staff to clean surfaces. Resources that are shared will be cleaned after use/daily with wipes/spray. Staff will wipe surfaces in their own areas as necessary during the day. A full school clean will be carried out at the end of each day with a focus on touch points and surfaces.

## Toilets

There is no longer a requirement for classes to have separate toilets. Therefore, from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February children from different classes will all be accessing the shared toilet blocks.

## Arrival and Collection

We will be introducing a new arrival and collection procedure:

Year Group	Arrive	Where?	Collect	Where?
Nursery	8.30am	Playground	3.10pm	Nursery outdoor area gate
Reception	8.30am	Playground	3.10pm	Reception outdoor area gate
Year 1	8.30-8.40am	Playground	3.15pm	Year 1 cloakroom door
Year 2	8.30-8.40am	Playground	3.15pm	Playground door to corridor
Year 3	8.30-8.40am	Playground	3.15pm	Playground door to corridor
Year 4	8.30-8.40am	Playground	3.15pm	Mobile door

Due to staffing and the impact on the Daily Mile, there will **not** be a one way system. Entry to and from school will be via the main pedestrian walk way. Please as you enter and exit school, keep to the **left** to enable a smooth flow of traffic! Thank you.

## Drop off

### Nursery 8.30am

The bell will signal at 8.30am only Nursery adults can come onto the playground and assist their children lining up. As the other children will be accessing school we want to ensure there is a member of staff to lead them into class in a line.

### Reception/1/2/3/4 8.30-8.40am 'Flexi Time'

### You can drop your child off anytime between 8.30am-8.40am

The gates will open at 8.30am, please say a goodbye at the **playground gate** and the children will walk straight into school and to their classroom from the playground door. Please ensure children have their belongings in their hands as they walk up the path. Adults are to walk back down the pedestrian walkway. The children will be supervised in class.

I hope that this ten minute 'fexi' drop off will help all adults with getting to work and also assist with the congestion in a morning!

Gates will be shut at 8.40am-arrival after this will be through the office.

## Collection

### Collection-Gate opens at 3.10pm for Nursery and Reception

At 3.10pm Nursery and Reception adults **only** are asked to collect from the outdoor areas then walk back to the main playground and exit the playground gate or wait to collect any older siblings from the **playground, Year 1 door or at the back of the mobile.**

Older sibling will not be released earlier...please collect EYFS children **first** at 3.10pm. Or if you have a child in Y1 **please collect them first before their siblings in Y2/3/4** as you will need to walk back to the playground to collect the older children.

**Y1/2/3/4-3.15pm Please do not come any earlier as we need to ensure EYFS can leave the site**

**Year 1 Adults** please walk round to the Y1 door at the back of the school to collect your child. Please then make your way back to the playground and exit at the gate.

**Year 2 Adults** please come onto the playground where your children will be waiting for you exiting the main door onto the playground. **There will be a marker to form a line -please could we ask that you form a line and your child will be sent out as you come to the front (as you have been doing so when collecting from the Library door-Miss Hulme guarantees and reassures me this is far more efficient.)**

**Year 3 Adults** please come onto the playground where your children will be waiting for you exiting the main door onto the playground. **There will be a marker for you to line up -please could we ask that you form a line and your child will be sent out as you come to the front (Miss Hulme guarantees me that this is far more efficient as she has been using this method with Y2 adults. This way we can send your child directly to you)**

**Year 4 Adults** please come onto the playground and your child will be dismissed from the mobile doors. **(Please could you stand under the canopy for Mrs Cripps/Hine to dismiss in a line as Y2/3)**

Could I politely remind all adults children are not allowed on the Adventure Playground/EYFS & Y1 Sally Tower at home time. Children are to walk next to their adult and remain on the path.

### **Being Ready for the Day-Reminder!**

Children are asked to bring a Birches book bag to school with them. They should also bring their packed lunch unless having a school dinner. Water bottles are to be brought filled with water only held in their hands-not in Book Bags due to any leakages.

Children will need their PE kit in school in their draw string bag each week. It is advised that children bring it to school on **Monday** and we will send it home to be washed on **Fridays**.

Children will continue to have games with Coach Chris/Ruby. On these days children may come dressed in their Games Uniform. Red Hoodie, White embroidered T-shirt, Grey joggers and trainers. **If your child cannot tie their own laces please provide trainers with Velcro.**

Guidance allows the sharing of resources, therefore all pencil cases will be returned home on Friday and school resources used once again.

Set books and any comments will be recorded in Reading Diaries. We ask that parents/carers write a comment to confirm the book has been completed before children change their books. Please read with your child regularly and change their book at least weekly.

### **Lunchtimes**

Children in Nursery will continue to eat their school dinner (provided as part of their lunchtime care provision) in the Hall, supported by Nursery staff. Children in Reception to Year 4 will also eat in the hall. Lunchtimes will be a social occasion where children may now sit with other children from different year groups. If your child chooses to have a packed lunch, they will also eat this with their peers in the hall.

Children bringing a packed lunch from home will store their lunchbox in their class trolley. Please ensure children can opening items in their lunches independently. A reminder that we are a Healthy School – no fizzy drinks, large chocolate bars or sweets please.

### **Playtimes**

Y1-Y4 will have playtime together. The adventure playground will be used by all year groups on a rota basis. In addition, the EYFS playground will also be accessed by EYFS and Year 1.

Children will continue to be outdoors in almost all weathers so please ensure your child has a waterproof coat (and scarf, hat and gloves in colder months) in school **every day**. On a very wet lunchtime, children will be placed in mixed groupings and supervised in classrooms. We do our utmost to keep children outside, as it is important that children get some fresh air and physical activity during the day.

### **Birches' Before and After School Care**

Club will be open from 7.30am and until 5.30pm

**Arrival/Collection:** Please buzz on the keypad at the pedestrian gate to gain access. A member of club will meet you/bring your child to the main entrance.

Before and after school care will be in the school hall as always. Children attending club will mix freely with activities they choose to access. No restrictions. Please provide snacks that they can eat at 3.15pm and 4.15pm. Equally, please supply any breakfast cereal/bars etc that you wish your child to have in a morning.

### **Children's Wellbeing**

I believe that us going back to 'normal' will indeed have a positive impact on the children. Children will enjoy being together once again and children can become familiar with all staff by being part of whole school assemblies delivered by different teaching staff.

### **Communication with office/staff and School Visitors**

We request that parents continue to contact the office via email or telephone wherever possible. Visits to the office in person should be avoided.

As parents/carers do not come on to the playground in the morning we ask that if parents/carers need to speak with their child's class teacher they email them directly or call the office to arrange a mutually convenient time to speak. Or alternatively pass a message on to myself.

## Attendance

Should your child not be in school for any reason, please let us know on the first day of absence why your child is not in school. If we don't receive a message, the office will call to ensure everyone is safe and well.

## Illness

If a child has displayed any of the main identified symptoms;

A high temperature,

Continuous, new cough

Loss of taste and/or smell

They **should not** attend school. A LTF or PCR test should be arranged as soon as possible. If a positive result is given, parents should notify us as soon as possible and follow the guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

To safeguard all, we will have a zero-tolerance approach to children who cannot adhere to Catch it, Kill it, Bin it as this is a risk to others. Where we believe a child is coughing or sneezing frequently, parents will be asked to arrange collection. As such if your child has hayfever, please do give them antihistamine as we may be concerned about symptoms which may overlap with Covid-19 symptoms.

Please communicate this to us and if your child suffers significantly with hayfever we as a school will administer antihistamine medicine to your child that has been signed in via the office.

If your child is ill with any 'non-Covid-19' symptoms we ask that parents keep them at home if they present a risk of making others unwell. To enable us to sustain our staffing levels we must be vigilant and minimise risk of them becoming unwell and therefore unable to work.

## Confirmed Case in School

Our procedures if we have a suspected case of COVID-19 will remain in place and in line with guidance. Designated spaces have been identified if isolation is necessary. Any child or member of staff displaying suspected symptoms should be tested as soon as possible. If a confirmed case occurs in school, we will continue to take advice as to the required action from Public Health.

I hope the information outlined here has helped. I appreciate that there is a lot to digest and I hope you are not overwhelmed! Plans are, as always, subject to review and may change in line with Government guidance. **Like any new plans there may be hiccups along the way, please be kind whilst we try to make this work! Staff and I will be reviewing it over the next 2 weeks and will communicate any changes to you to implement from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March.**

If you have any further questions, queries, or concerns about your child, please do email [office@birches.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@birches.staffs.sch.uk) and we will respond as soon as we are able to do so.

I would like to reassure you that every decision is made through the eyes of both school leaders and parents, with the best interests of our children, staff and school community at its heart.

As a staff we are very much looking forward to welcoming the new routines and will continue to work as a strong team to ensure this is as safe and positive as possible for all.

S Varricchione

Headteacher