



Birches First School

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

April/May 2022

Issue: 8

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British Value: *Mutual Respect* Birches Value: *Honesty/Enthusiasm*

April/May Newsletter

Dear Parents...

I hope you are sitting comfortably...

What a phenomenal March we have had in school! Since returning from half term I am so proud of all the wonderful events and activities that have taken place. World Book Day was fantastic, and I thoroughly enjoyed my Afternoon Tea with the lucky Golden Ticket winners!



May I take this opportunity to thank all parents for their efforts with costumes the children looked incredible and there was a huge VARIETY! It was a truly amazing day.



Y1 and Y3 had a fantastic time at Codsall Library, and I know Y1 particularly enjoyed their journey on the bus!



Y3 have visited the Botanical Gardens and Y1 spent a glorious sunny day at The Black Country Museum!

Thank you to the teachers for organising and the PFA for helping contribute to the visits.

Y2 visited Julia Donaldson at Wolverhampton Grand Station and to top it all off Year 4 had a FANTASTIC time on their residential at Kingswood.



Purple Day was a huge hit and Red Nose Day was another special day where the School Council voted for 'PJ' and 'Red Toy' Day with a red nose painting salon!



It was delightful to celebrate Mother's Day in school on Friday, how fantastic to see everyone chatting, laughing and having a fabulous time in the glorious sunshine! Thank you to the PFA and Mrs Lawley/Mrs Burkitt for all their hard work behind the scenes to make this wonderful event happen, it was very special. Finally....

a **huge** thank you to all the staff for everything you do. It has been a **very** challenging month with many staff absences, but, as always the team has been incredible and everyone has helped to ensure the school remains fully open. I hope staff, parents and children all have a wonderful Easter Break.

Fund Raising

I cannot begin to thank you, our wonderful school community, for your generosity and support with all the charities this year, you have been AMAZING! Over £1000 raised! What a fabulous amount for people less fortunate than us...

Jeans for Genes **£140**
Emergency Service **£139**
Red Nose Day - **£217.30**
Purple Day - £211 which was doubled to **£422**
Ukraine Day - **£175.50**

The donations received for the humanitarian relief in Ukraine was incredible, your kindness will indeed help those in need. I was completely overwhelmed by the generosity from you all...

...thank you.



Easter Competition 6th-8th April

We are very excited to hold our Easter Parade on the school playground from 2.30pm on 6th-EYFS, 7th Y1/2, 8th Y3/4 (please note this will be weather dependent and parents notified accordingly). Parents will be welcomed onto the playground for the procession and Spring Special Certificates and Easter winners will be announced...Models/Easter Bonnets/Crafts have been arriving since 28th March and children have until **Tuesday 5th April** to bring an entry to school. Entries that have arrived so far are fantastic!

Good luck!



Y1 Parent/Special Adult Lunch

After the wonderful success of Reception and Year Two's 'Parent/Special Adult' lunch, we are delighted to invite a 'special adult' to join the **Year One** children on **Friday 1st April**

for lunch at school. It has been wonderful to see the children so excited to have their special adults in school! We look forward to seeing you all.





Football Club 25/4/22



Mrs Burkitt and Mrs Lawley will be starting their football club after school on Mondays starting 25th April. Details have been sent.

Games Lesson Y3/4 AND Lunch/Afterschool Club 25/4/22

Year Three and Year Four will be having their games lessons delivered by Progressive Sports after Easter. Ethan Hand will be in school delivering a lunchtime club to all children who wish to attend on a rota basis and then a Multi Sports Club to Year 1 and 2 on Monday evening. Details have been sent to gain interest and we will be sending out arrangements details in due course.



Summer Uniform



As the weather warms up, children may wear our summer uniform of school embroidered polo shirt and grey school shorts or skirt, or red gingham summer dress. (No jumpsuits/all in ones or 'culottes' please.)

Nursery children can wear red or grey shorts instead of their joggers or a red gingham summer dress. Please ensure all items are labelled and children are wearing school shoes.

Socks/hairbands/bobbles are red, white or grey in line with our uniform policy.

Thank you



HM Queen Elizabeth Platinum Jubilee Celebrations



We have started planning our celebrations for this magnificent, historical event. We would be ever so grateful for any donations such as Great British Flags, Red, White and Blue balloons, bunting, plastic tablecloths (red/white and blue), paper plates and paper cups. We intend to have a week of celebrations and finish with a huge Royal Party on Thursday and a crown competition and planting a tree to commemorate the occasion.

Further details to follow!

PFA

What can I say! The coin wars raised an incredible £532.42 this will be used to purchase more high-quality texts for our Reading Den and Library.

The Mother's Day event was spectacular. I thought the field looked beautiful, the Afternoon Tea was definitely worth the money, and it was a truly special occasion to see all the children having a wonderful time with their special adults.



The Summer Fayre is fast approaching and preparations are underway...please keep **Sunday 26th June** free to come and have some family fun at the Fayre!



Adult helpers

Do you have 10-20 minutes spare to help listen to readers-before the end of school or at drop off? Do you have a morning or afternoon free in which you could help out in school?

If you can help in any way we would love to welcome you in to school.

Please contact the school office and we can discuss arrangements.

Thank you.

Staffing Arrangements-Summer Term

This Friday we say Goodbye and Good Luck to Mrs Miller who will be leaving to pastures new. We wish her all the best to continue her professional development.

After the Easter holidays the following will be in place for support in each class:

Nursery-Miss Lawley, Mrs Causer and Miss Simpson

Reception-Ms Spears

Year One- Mrs Barbe

Year Two-Mrs Bleakley

Year Three- Mrs Banks

Year Four-Mrs Bell

New Nursery Starters

I would like to welcome all the new children, parents, grandparents, special adults who will be joining our lovely school after Easter.

We hope that you will all be very happy here and we are looking forward to working together in partnership with you.

Please remember there is no such thing as a 'silly question' we are here to help and support. If there is anything we can help you with, please do get in touch with Mrs Burkitt and Mrs Lawley in the office and they will happily help.

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Well Done to Year Three, for being impeccably behaved on their recent trip. I was **delighted** to receive this in the post on Monday morning...you have made me a **very** proud Headteacher, what superstars you are representing our school in such a magnificent way!

THANK YOU

Dear Miss Varricchione,

I was so impressed with the behaviour and attitude of your pupils during their recent visit, that I felt it important to congratulate your school and ask you to pass on my congratulations to the pupils (and staff) in question.

Delivered by



25-03-22
CO 47 PB170330



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Letter

Education Officer's comments: Having delivered the animal handling session to your year 3s, I wanted to let you know they were one of the best behaved and ^{most} sensible groups we have ever had at the Gardens!

We love to see photographs or work that has been completed following a visit. Please forward anything available to be seen publicly, to: education@birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

Finally, we would be delighted to see your pupils return anytime and we look forward to welcoming your school again soon.

Yours sincerely,
James Jarvis (Education Manager).

Miss Varricchione

Birches First School

Birches Avenue

Codsall

WV8 2JG

**THE BIRMINGHAM
BOTANICAL
GARDENS**
AN EDUCATIONAL CHARITY

Dates for the Diary

April	
1st April	Y2 Trip Think Tank Y1 Parent/Special Adult lunch
8th April	Break Up- Have a wonderful break!
25th April	Return to School Welcome to all the new Nursery Children starting.
2nd May	May Day- School Closed
16th-20th May	ECO Week
23rd - 27th	HM Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Celebrations
27th May	Break Up - Enjoy the extended holiday!
June	
6th June	INSET DAY- School Closed
7th June	Return to School

Covid Update

Please see below

As you are aware the Prime Minister's announcement on the Living with COVID-19 plan was released on Monday 21st February and is still in place. From 1st April Lateral Flow Test will not be free except for the over-75s and over-12s with weakened immune systems. I am awaiting new guidance on Friday 1st April and will communicate this to you in a timely manner. Until then, we will continue to follow guidance as communicated in the last Newsletter: -

The Prime Minister has set out the next phase of the government's COVID-19 response '[Living with COVID-19](#)'. COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education remains.

Changes to testing in education and childcare settings and children's social care services

From, Monday 21 February, the Government is removing the guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing. Given the government now know that the risks of severe illness from COVID-19 in most children and most fully vaccinated adults are very low, and the successful vaccination programme has achieved a high rate of take-up, they can remove this advice, bringing education into line with wider society.

Changes to self-isolation and daily testing of close contacts

From Thursday 24 February, the Government will remove the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. **At Birches First School we will be following and applying the following guidance to all staff and children. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days, and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days.** In addition, the Government will:

- No longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for 7 days, and remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate.
- End self-isolation support payments, national funding for practical support and the medicine delivery service will no longer be available.
- End routine contact tracing. Contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests. Staff, children and young people should attend

their education settings as usual. This includes staff who have been in close contact within their household, unless they are able to work from home.

- End the legal obligation for individuals to tell their employers when they are required to self-isolate.

More detail can be found in the Living with COVID-19 plan published Monday 22/2/22, ['Living with COVID-19'](#).

The following statement has been taken directly from **DfE Schools COVID 19 Operational Guidance** and will be implemented from Tuesday 1st March. I believe that this is for the best interest for all children, staff, and parents and hope all parents agree that keeping children at home until they are fit and well enough to return is the most sensible approach for all.

Welcoming children back to school

*'In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a pupil with the key symptoms of COVID-19 should **not** attend the school, given the potential risk to others. If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school where they have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, you (School) can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.'*

If anyone has any questions regarding the implemented, please do not hesitate to get in contact via the school office and we will happily answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

S Varricchione

Headteacher