



# Birches First School

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

December 2022

Issue: 4

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**British Value:** *The Rule of Law*

**Birches Value:** *Belief & Resilience*

Dear Parents...

I did say that November was going to be busy! The whole school have participated in some fantastic initiatives, and I am so proud of the achievements of all children, they are working hard and learning so much, they really are amazing!

**Year 4 and the School Council** made Poppy



and links perfectly to learning about the past and making comparisons to modern day Britain.



Wreaths to lay at Codsall and Bilbrook War Memorial. We believe at Birches it is so important to show our respects



**Year 3** had the most AMAZING day ever with their visit from Outback2basics they learnt so much and were completely engrossed in their learning about Stone Age to Iron Age -I hope it will be a fun memory of their time in Year 3 at Birches!





Year 2 Visited the Jackfield Tile Museum where they looked at the scientific process of making clay tiles, they all created a tile linked to their History unit 'The Great Fire of

London'. I am very much looking forward to seeing the finished product when they arrive in school!

EYFS participated in Nursery Rhyme Week, the children had the most fantastic time celebrating and linking their learning Nursery Rhymes-they made pirate ships and investigated real fish to enhance their wonderful week! All children finished off a fabulous week coming to school dressed as a Nursery Character. The outfits were amazing! A fun filled week for all!



Year One are visiting Holy Cross Church on Wednesday next week, to learn about 'Belonging' and how Christians welcome individuals to their faith by being Baptised, they will be looking at the font and candle and what they signify for the Christian Faith.



I would like to congratulate England Olympian, Mr Buckley (Ours Games Teacher) for competing in the



World European Kickboxing Championship in Turkey last week. He brought in his Gold and Bronze medals to show us. We are so impressed and proud of him! Mr Buckley will go to Saudi Arabia next year to compete to retain his title. Go Mr Buckley!

Anti-Bullying week was marked also in school this month, we discussed how all children are 'unique like a fingerprint' and how important it is to celebrate and support our differences, this linked to why we wore 'odd socks'. We remembered our acronym for Bullying to help us identify and stop Bullying in any form such as texting, online, snapchat, messenger etc. We reminded ourselves of our trusted adults and how we can 'Speak Out' in Miss Hulme's 'Stay Safe Speak Out' Assembly.

**Say STOP to Bullying.....**



The Christmas Tree in the Hall looks magnificent, a huge thank you to all of you who helped the children to make such wonderful homemade decorations, as soon as you walk in you can't help but smile and say 'ahhh', it is beautiful and has certainly put us all in the Christmas Spirit.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming many of you into school as part of our festive celebrations over the coming weeks.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the children and all our parents as well as the extended school community for their support of the school this term it has been an absolute pleasure to come to school every day, the children have been amazing and a real credit to you all.

May your heart and home be filled with all of the joys the season brings.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS** and best wishes

Miss Varricchione

### Year Four Parent Lunch

Thank you to all the adults who joined Year Four for their lunch earlier on in the month, we really enjoy hosting this special occasion. We hope you enjoyed your dinner and the company!

### Christmas Parties Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December

We are very much looking forward to our Christmas Parties this year.



EYFS will have their party in the morning  
Year One and Year Two will have their party in the afternoon  
Year Three and Four After School- further information to be sent directly to parents

Children can come to school wearing their party/Christmas clothes.  
Please ensure sensible footwear as children will be outside at play/lunchtimes.  
Thank you.



### Christmas Tree Festival Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

Birches have been invited to participate in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Nicholas' Church Codsall.



Children will be making decorations in school for our tree within the church. The event will take place from Friday 9<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December if you wish to go and view Birches' Christmas tree alongside others.

### Christmas Dinner/Jumper Day Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

A survey has been sent out to collate how many children would like a Christmas Dinner on the above date. **Return by 28.11.22.**

Children are invited to wear their Christmas Jumpers/tops on this day to get into the festive spirit.



### Carols Around the Tree Friday 2nd December 7pm

Year 3 and Year 4 have been invited to sing around the Christmas Tree at Codsall Village on the above date. This is an annual event that we have historically participated in, and I am delighted we can do it once again. The children will be signing two of their Christmas songs. I hope that as many Y3 and Y4 child can come and represent Birches and it would be lovely to see as many of the Birches community there to support our children. See you there!





### Christmas Performances

You will have received a letter regarding the Christmas performances.



Children returning to school for evening performances (Y1/2/3/4) need to be in school at **5.30pm** to change and prepare for a prompt 6.00pm start.

We will be dismissing the children by returning children to the Hall once they are dressed. Please be patient with staff whilst we return your child/ren to you.

### **COVID-19**

**As we are seeing a rise in cases, please can I remind you all that if you are feeling unwell, have a temperature or any other signs/symptoms of Covid you do not attend the performances. We really want to protect the children, staff and our school community. Thank you for your cooperation with this.**

### Christmas Pantomime Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December

I am delighted to inform you that we have arranged for a production of Goldilocks and the Three Bears to be delivered at school. There will be no cost for this event. I am fully funding this as an experience for the children.

I am fully aware of the current financial climate and how parents are cutting back on some of the additional experience such as theatre visits etc. I hope that the children enjoy this experience and remember it fondly.



The performance will take place in the school Hall.



## Children in Need **BE SPOTACULAR**

Thank you so much for supporting this charity. We had an incredible day.

The children looked amazing in their spots, pyjamas, costumes and crazy hair.



*We raised an incredible £215.00*

The face painting and Cake Sale was a real hit and we all enjoyed raising money for Children in the UK in a crazy, spotty, dotty, way!



## First School/Middle School Admissions 2023

### REMINDER

Please be aware that the School Admissions Application System opened on **1st November 2022** for First and Middle Schools. Staffordshire Y4 parents should have received an Admission Letter for Middle School 2023. If you have not had this; please contact the office.

You should only use this system if your child lives in **Staffordshire**. The closing date is **15th January 2023**.

**Please note if you reside in Wolverhampton, please contact Wolverhampton Admissions directly.**

Please note that children who currently attend our school Nursery will need to apply for Reception 2023/24. Admission to the Nursery class does NOT guarantee a place in the Reception class; a separate application must be made which will be subject to the admissions criteria.

### Nursery September 2023/2024

Applications opened **1st September 2022** until **24<sup>th</sup> March 2023**. All applications should be delivered to **Birches First School Office** marked **Nursery Admissions 2023**. Offer letters will be posted to parent/carers on **17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**. An application form can be found on our website.

### Current Nursery 2022/2023

We currently have availability for both morning and afternoon sessions, please contact the school office. We can take children as soon as they are 3 years old (charges apply) and also offer 'Rising 3' provision (funded from the term after their 3rd birthday) so your child may start our Nursery after the date of their 3rd birthday. Please contact the school office for more information...we will always be happy help.



### **World Cup Enhancement Day Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**

To celebrate the World Cup in Qatar Miss Hulme has organised an enrichment day of sports for the children to participate in. All classes will have the opportunity to participate in team games focusing on the countries playing that day.

Please can all children come to school in their Birches Games Kit.

We look forward to an exciting day of sports.

Thank you



## Christmas Disco- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 3pm- 4.45pm

We are so excited to be holding our first disco in school since Covid.

All children are welcome to attend! Please purchase tickets on ParentPay £5

We will split the children into two groups Nursery Reception and Year 1, and Year 2, 3 and 4. The Early Years and Y1 will have a snack in school then go into the Hall first for their disco. Whilst they are in the Hall Y2,Y3,Y4 will be having a snack/drink and watching a short Christmas Movie with their friends. Then the children will swap so they all have a dance, movie, and something to eat and drink!

Children will need to **bring their Party/Disco/Christmas clothes** to change into in a **named carrier bag** as it is a Games Day in school.

Children will be dismissed from the following places:-

EYFS/Y1 – Playground Door

Y2/3/4- Hall Door- Gate off the Car Park (Under Hall Canopy)

**A SURVEY WILL BE SENT OUT FOR CHILDREN TO PLACE 2 SONGS OF THEIR CHOICES TO DANCE TO!**

**NB:- If there is insufficient uptake, we will cancel the event**



### Attendance- Reminder

Further to last month's Newsletter parents will be notified if their child's attendance is below 90% at the end of the school term (December 16<sup>th</sup>).

If you received a letter regarding your child's attendance for the first half term (September-October) and this has not improved, we will be inviting you into school for a supportive meeting to discuss your child's attendance. I am fully aware that there have been an extraordinary number of colds/infections and genuine illnesses, but as a school after Covid we are required to monitor attendance much more carefully. The meeting is to talk through any issues and support parents if needed.

Further to this we have noticed an increased amount of lateness, please ensure your child is in school by 8.40am as this impacts their learning. Thank you.



### 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. The path at the back of the school leading to Year 1 will also be gritted but, please take extra care when collecting children from Year 1 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.

# Safeguarding Leads

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 have concerns.



**Miss Varricchione**  
Headteacher  
Designated Safeguarding Lead



**Miss Hulme**  
Year 2 Teacher/  
Assistant Headteacher  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



**Mrs Lloyd**  
Nursery Teacher  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



**Mrs Banks**  
Club Manager/ Year 3 TA  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead

## Safeguarding

As you are fully aware Safeguarding is our priority at Birches, we pride ourselves on the care, nurture and support we offer our children.

Please click on the below link to our Safeguarding Page where our Safeguarding Policy and information may be found. If anyone has any Safeguarding concerns, questions or comments please do contact me and I will be willing to offer any support, guidance you may need.

<http://www.birches.staffs.sch.uk/safeguarding/>

## First Aid at Work

I am delighted to inform you that I have completed my First Aid at Work training. The training took place over 3 days to enable me to become the school's designated named First Aid at Work Lead. Mrs Burkitt has now completed her Paediatric First Aid and Outdoor First Aid.

This is additional to Mrs Burkitt, Mrs Banks, Mrs Buckley, Mr Hallmark, Miss Seabridge and I as Paediatric First Aider. Please remember, all other staff working at Birches have St John Emergency Basic First Aid Training to ensure anyone can administer First Aid immediately in any given situation.

## December Dates for the Diary

1 <sup>st</sup> December	Christmas Clothes and Christmas Disco
2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Year 3 and Year 4 Carols around the Tree World Cup Enhancement Day
5 <sup>th</sup> December	Dress Rehearsal Y1-Y4
6 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas Performance and Special Awards 6pm start, children at school for 5.30pm
7 <sup>th</sup> December	9am Nursery Christmas Performance and Special Awards
7 <sup>th</sup> December	1.15pm Reception Christmas Performance and Special Awards
8 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Performance and Special Awards 6pm start, children at school for 5.30pm
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Dinner and Jumper Day  Tree Festival at St Nicolas' Church Codsall
12 <sup>th</sup> December	School Christmas Parties
14 <sup>th</sup> December	Visiting Pantomime Goldilocks and the Three Bears
16 <sup>th</sup> December	Break Up <b>Children invited to wear Christmas Jumpers etc.</b> <b>Happy Christmas</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2023	<b>Happy New Year to you all</b> Welcome Back to School ~ All children in Welcome to our new Rising 3s, we hope you will be very happy here!

### Birches Values:

**B**elief **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.**