



Birches First School

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

January/February 2023

Issue: 5

office@birches.staffs.sch.uk

01902 297910



British Value: Democracy

Birches Value: Belief & Curiosity

Dear Parents...

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I sincerely wish you a VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR! I am sure the Spring Term will see our fantastic children continue to progress, develop, grow, and as always make us proud.

We had such an amazing end to the term with the spectacular Christmas performances where every child was a true star, I am amazed how they remembered all the words, lines and moves! I know you were as proud of them as we were!

The Christmas Disco was a huge hit, we have some incredible dancing talent and I'm not just talking about the children! It was fantastic to see all the staff and children dancing and having fun, my lasting image of the disco must be Mrs Burkitt leading the conga all around the school- the children thought it was hilarious!



Finally, the pantomime and parties were a great hit too, the laughter, fun and energy



coming from the hall was a real pleasure to hear and see, I hope the children will remember the Christmas period at school with fondness. I thank the staff for all their hard work for making it truly magical for them....let's not mention the elves to them!

Curriculum timetables will shortly be online providing a 'snapshot' of what will be happening in classes this half term. Knowledge Organisers for each class will also be uploaded. Please log on to MarevellousMe to keep updated.

Here's to a great (fingers crossed) 2023!
Best wishes, S Varricchione Headteacher



Multi Faith Day

On Friday 20th January we will collectively celebrate the **Chinese New Year 2023, Year of the Rabbit** at school.
Further details from Mrs Lloyd will follow.



Y2 SATs Meeting 17th January 5.30pm-6.30pm

We will be holding a meeting for Year 2 parents to provide important information regarding these assessments and how they will be delivered.
The SATs will take place in May, please can I remind parents not to book any holidays during this month to avoid any disruption to the administration of the Standard Assessment Test (SATs).
Thank you

Mid-Year Parent Interviews

Tuesday 7th & Wednesday 8th February

We are running two consecutive days for Parents Evening. Both days will be 3.30-6.00pm due to the demand of appointments in October for this specified time.

A survey will be sent for parents to select their 1st/2nd/3rd choice.
We hope to accommodate everyone at a time that is convenient for you.

Mid-Year Reports

Your child's mid-year report will be out on **Monday 13th February**. We have organised it slightly differently again this year hoping that discussions before reports are issued will help parents with the reasoning of why comments and judgments have been made.

We are here to help and support-please let us know if there is anything further, we can do to support you and your child/ren at home.



NSPCC Numbers Day Friday 3rd February



We are very excited that the children at Birches First School are to take part in their first ever NSPCC Number Day, a 'mega maths fundraising' day. All the children will be taking part in some fun maths activities during the day. More information about the day can be found here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/support-us/events-fundraising/social-special-events/number-day/>

Number Day is a great way to make maths fun and bring about a positive, 'can-do' attitude towards it. We will be having a fun day of maths activities and we will be taking part in **Dress up for Digits**. Children can wear an item of clothing with a number on it (football shirt, rugby shirt, stick numbers to clothing or any other creative ways). Or get even more creative by dressing in a maths or numbers theme.

In order to raise vital funds for the NSPCC, we are proposing that the children in each class bring in any loose change to make giant 'coin' numerals.

They should bring their coins in on the morning of February 3rd. So please get searching down the back of your sofas/ in the car for loose change! Every penny helps.



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 **24th 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 **17th 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.



Children's Mental Health Week 2023 **Monday 6th -Friday 12th February**

This year's theme is **Let's Connect**.



Human beings thrive in communities, and this connection is vital for our wellbeing, and our survival. When we have healthy connections – to family, friends and others – this can support our mental health and our sense of wellbeing. **Let's Connect** is about making meaningful connections for all, during Children's Mental Health Week - and beyond. For Children's Mental Health Week 2023, at school we will be completing activities to encouraging people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding, and meaningful ways. Friday we will finish the week with Dress to Express You may choose to dress in your favourite colour or expresses how you're feeling. Either way, Friday is Dress to Express Day and your chance to express yourself!

Safer Internet Day

On Tuesday 7th February we will be supporting **Safer Internet Day 2023**. This year we will be focusing our learning based around the theme...

'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online'.

Safer Internet Day is celebrated globally in February each year to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young people and inspire a national conversation. Class teachers will be reinforcing the message of good internet practice and staying safe online.

Mr Jones our Online Safety and Computing Leader will be co-ordinating this day, generating awareness and knowledge at an age-appropriate level.

School Council Fundraising Day- Thursday 16th February

School Council have decided that they would like to host a

BREAK THE RULES DAY!

The School Council will be writing to you shortly with rules to break and sponsor forms. I am sure this will be another very fun and memorable day for the children!

How I agreed to it again...the School Council have good persuasive skills!!



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 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/>

January/February Dates for the Diary

3 rd January	Back to School
16 – 17 th January	Whole School Art Focus (In school activities based on ARTS)
17 th January	Reception School Trip – Kingswood Year 2 SATS Meeting 5.45pm-6.30pm In the Y2 Classroom
18 th January	Nursery School Trip - Kingswood
20 th January	Multi- Faith Day- Chinese New Year
FEBRUARY	
3 rd February	NSPCC Numbers Day
6 th - 10 th February	Children's Mental Health Week
7 th February	Parent Interviews 3.30-6.00pm Safer Internet Day
8 th February	Parent Interviews 3.30-6.00pm
10 th February	'Dress to Express' for Mental Health Week You may choose to dress in your favourite colour. You might choose a colour which expresses how you're feeling. Either way, Friday is Dress to Express Day and your chance to express yourself!
13 th February	Mid-Year Reports to Parents
16 th February	Break Up – Happy Half Term School Council Fundraising Day- Break the Rules Day Letter to Follow
17 th February	INSET DAY- School Closed for Children
27 th February	Return to School

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.