



Birches First School

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

December 2023

Issue: 4

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British Value: *The Rule of Law*

Birches Value: *Success & Independence*

Dear Parents...

I did say that November was going to be busy and it certainly has been! 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!

The whole School participated in their Fencing Enrichment activity after feedback from the parent survey regarding clubs and interests. We enjoyed a Multi-Faith Day celebrating Diwali and this week enjoyed a NO



PENS Day! **School Council** made a Poppy Wreath to lay at Codsall War Memorial. We believe at Birches it is so important to show our respects and links perfectly to learning about the past and making comparisons to modern day Britain.

EYFS- Together they enjoyed Nursery Rhyme Week. Nursery have posted their cards to Father Christmas and visited the Library, whilst Reception had a



wonderful visit to the Church.



Year One visited Blists Hill yesterday, to learn about changes in living memory and today they off to the church to enhance their RE unit '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.

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!



Year 4 Visited the Woseley centre and thoroughly enjoyed linking the learning inside in the classroom for Science on their trip!

We were delighted to be able to participate in the Inclusion Festival at Codsall High School, the children enjoyed a range of activities such as Archery, New Age Kurling and Boccia. Thank you to those children who represented Birches so magnificently!



Anti-Bullying week was marked also in school this month, we discussed how all children are to 'make a nose about bullying' 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 our '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.

I am sure you are all very keen to know the outcome of our Ofsted inspection this week. The Lead inspector has informed stakeholders that the report will be released sometime after the holidays in January for you to view.

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

MERRY CHRISTMAS and best wishes

Miss Varricchione



Carols Around the Tree Friday 1st November

7pm

After the huge success last week at Bilbrook Light Switch On, we get to do it all again tonight! The School 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 singing two of their Christmas songs- Jingle Bells and Santa Claus is Coming to Town. I hope that as many children 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 tonight -meet at **6.55pm** by the tree!

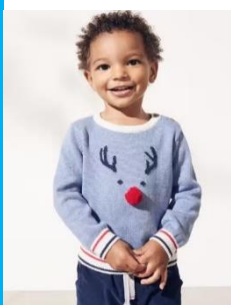


Christmas Pantomime Tuesday 12th December

I am delighted to inform you that we have arranged for a production of Cinderella to be delivered at school for the **WHOLE SCHOOL**. We are asking families for a contribution of **£2.00** towards this enrichment opportunity. Please can this be sent into school by **Friday 8th December**.

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. so I hope that the children enjoy this experience and remember it fondly.

The performance will take place in the school Hall.



Christmas Dinner/Jumper Day Thursday 14th December

A survey will be sent out to collate how many children would like a Christmas Dinner on the above date. **Return by 6.12.23**. Children are invited to wear their Christmas Jumpers/tops on this day to get into the festive spirit.



Children are also welcomed to wear their Christmas Jumpers on the last day of term **Friday 22nd December!**



Christmas Performances

You will have received a letter yesterday 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.

Thank you.

**WITH ALL THE CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES PLEASE PARK RESPECTFULLY
THANK YOU**

Christmas Parties Thursday 21st 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.

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 22nd) when we return in January.

If you received a letter regarding your child's attendance for the first half term (September-October) and this has not improved, Attend our EWO 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 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.

First School/Middle School Admissions 2024

REMINDER

Please be aware that the School Admissions Application System opened on **1st November 2023** for First and Middle Schools. Staffordshire Y4 parents should have received an Admission Letter for Middle School 2024 and Nursery parents a letter via text on 11/10/23. 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 2024**. Please see link below to assist you:-

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-primary/Apply/Overview.aspx>

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 2024/25. 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 2024/2025

Applications opened **1st September 2023** until **15th March 2024**. All applications should be delivered to **Birches First School Office** marked **Nursery Admissions 2024**. Offer letters will be posted to parent/carers on **10th April 2024**. An application form can be found on our website, or the link below:-

<http://www.birches.staffs.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Application-for-Admission-to-Birches-First-School-Nursery.pdf>

Current Nursery 2023/2024

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) offering a '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.



Inclement Weather

If it snows heavily this winter, school closures will be communicated **directly from school**.

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.





Parent Pay- Reminder

Please could all parents check their Parent Pay accounts and pay the outstanding amounts. Mrs. Burkitt and Mrs. Lawley work incredibly hard in the office and it would be very much

appreciated if parents could keep abreast of their accounts so that they can concentrate on their assigned roles. All accounts will need to be settled by the end of the term. Tickets for the performances will be allocated once payment has been made to Parent Pay. Mrs. Burkitt will be sending out a date to which this will need to be completed, in order for her to create and provide a reserved list and allocation.

Thank you for your cooperation with this.

Safeguarding

<p>Miss S Varricchione</p> <p>Headteacher</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Lead</p>		<p>Miss S Hulme</p> <p>Assistant Headteacher</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Year 2)</p>	
<p>Mrs E Buckley</p> <p>EYFS Leader/Reception</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</p>		<p>Mrs C Banks</p> <p>Club Manager (Club/Y3)</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</p>	

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/Paediatric First Aid



At Birches we like to keep parents well informed about our high standards of care for the children. Currently I am the school's designated named First Aid at Work Lead. Mrs Burkitt, has both Paediatric First Aid and Outdoor First Aid.

This is additional to Mrs Banks, Mrs Buckley, Mr Hallmark, Miss Seabridge and I as Paediatric First Aiders. 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.

Dates for the Diary

1st December	Donate a Bottle for Own Clothes Day Codsall Light Switch On- All Welcome
7th December	Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Performance and Special Awards 6pm start, children at school for 5.30pm
8th December	Birches First School Christmas Fayre
9th December	Breakfast with Santa (Details Previously Sent)
11th December	Y3/4 Grandparents/Loved One Performance 9am
12th December	Visiting Pantomime Cinderella
13th December	Reception- Height and Weight Check Y1/2 Grandparents/Loved One Performance 9am 1.30pm Reception Christmas Performance and Special Awards
14th December	Christmas Dinner and Jumper Day Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas Performance and Special Awards 6pm start, children at school for 5.30pm
15th December	1.30pm Nursery Christmas Performance and Special Awards Morning Nursery Children to arrive back at 1.15pm
21st December	Christmas Parties- information to be sent by Class Teachers
22nd December	Break Up- 1.30pm onwards YN-1.30pm YR-1.35pm Y1/2-1.40pm Y3/4-1.45pm Children invited to wear Christmas Jumpers etc. Happy Christmas
8th January 2023	Happy New Year to you all! Welcome Back to School ~ All children in! Welcome to our new Rising 3s, we hope you will be very happy here!

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.